

Prayer: Colossians 1:9 – “... asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.”

When desiring to change our mindset it is helpful to understand and believe in why we should change in the first place. At times, the need to change is obvious, such as the breaking of a habit harmful to our health; harmful to our relationships; harmful to our careers.

What of God’s requirement we change within? Do I mean to change things in us not so obvious? Yes. Teachings in the New Testament exhorts to this type of change. Jesus taught ways to change and live in accordance with God’s will. Paul, James and Peter, all wrote of the need to change. (Paul writes in Romans 7 of the difficulties he faced in his efforts to change) Common Christian teachings strive to instruct us to change likewise and ‘become like Christ.’

I have found it very helpful to know *why* I should follow instructions concerning the changing of my thoughts, habits and focus of our lives so I will *believe in it*. This is serious business - tampering with our minds - and we should really consider why the need to change is *necessary*. Is the Christian life and the requirement to change from our old nature to a new nature simply for the purpose of sin avoidance? Sin avoidance is important and plays a vital role in becoming like Christ. However - consider this: Our being Christian is for fellowship and friendship with God, with Christ, with His Holy Spirit dwelling in us, and with that relationship right, with other believers. Yes, we avoid sin, but as a *means* of reaching God’s best for us.

I believe the primary reason to renew our minds and change the way we think is for us to come near God. In the relationships you have with friends, or even family, everything depends on our abilities to interact with them. When we are at odds with others in our circle of contacts, we either resolve the conflict or withdraw from them. (In dysfunctional relationships, we stay stuck in conflict and drama) God does not want conflict, though He will confront when necessary. He wants to interact with us; be close to us. We choose to allow God in close, or to walk away.

Going back to sin avoidance, we have a requirement in our salvation in which we fulfill right behavior towards God by refusing to willfully sin. If we belong to Him – He as our King – Father – Savior, etc. then He rightfully expects us to follow His commands and teachings in the Bible for right living. I hope you and I are living for God the best we know how; and yet even when we live for Him, something seems to be missing. What then is it?

To find what is missing, I want to focus on the reasons renewing our minds with God’s teachings will take us to heights of *experience* with God’s love and will show us the depths of His mercy. I believe that what we are missing – is the experience of God’s love.

Do you want more out of your experience with God? Really? Are you willing to take the time necessary to spend time *alone* with God? It is hard to follow through on this even if you want it. In our culture we are slaves to ‘busyness’ and are chained to the ‘urgent.’ Want to test this and see if it is true? Ok... the next time your cell phone rings – DO NOT LOOK AT IT – that’s right - Don’t look at it and see what happens to you. And when it happens – let it sink in.