

WHY YOUR MIND MATTERS

(A simple survey of Scripture)

CONTEXT: responding to all the doctrine laid out in Romans 1-11

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, **in view of God's mercy**, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Rom 12:1-2)*

CONTEXT: the doctrine of speaking in tongues and prophecy

*Brothers and sisters, **stop thinking like children**. In regard to evil be infants, but **in your thinking be adults**. (1Cor 14:20)*

CONTEXT: Paul's defense of his teaching ministry and spiritual warfare

*The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to **demolish strongholds**. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. (2Cor 10:4-5)*

CONTEXT: the importance of spiritual gifts in the teaching ministry of the church

*So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,¹²to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.¹⁴**Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.**¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. (Eph 4:11-15)*

CONTEXT: Paul's prayer for the believers at Colossae

*For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to **fill you with the knowledge** of his will through all the **wisdom** and **understanding** that the Spirit gives,¹⁰so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, **growing in the knowledge of God**. (Col 1:9-10)*

CONTEXT: our personal holiness and our great salvation

Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation,³ now that you have tasted that the Lord is good. (1Pet 2:2-3)

CONTEXT: confusion over the priesthood of Jesus and specific doctrines

We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand.¹² In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! ¹³ Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. ^{6:1} Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, ² instruction about cleansing rites, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. (Heb 5:11-6:2)

CONTEXT: false teaching about the Day of the Lord

Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking.... Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2Pet 3:1, 17-18)

CONTEXT: the doctrines of death, resurrection, and the Second Coming

Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. (1Thes 4:13)

If there is a religion in the world which exalts the office of teaching, it is safe to say that it is the religion of Jesus Christ. It has been frequently remarked that in pagan religions the doctrinal element is at a minimum—the chief thing there is the performance of a ritual. But this is precisely where Christianity distinguishes itself from other religions—it does contain doctrine. It comes to men with definite, positive teaching; it claims to be the truth; it bases religion on knowledge.... The Christian doctrine of revelation, far from making the human mind unnecessary, actually makes it indispensable and assigns to it its proper place. God has revealed himself in words to minds. His revelation is a rational revelation to rational creatures. Our duty is to receive his message, to submit to it, to seek to understand it and to relate it to the world in which we live. (John R. W. Stott, *Your Mind Matters*)