
THE MIND OF THE SPIRIT

Session II: The Mind of Faith

- I. Identity
 - A. Humans were created in the image of God. However, when Adam and Eve sinned God's image was distorted. Thus, they lost their identity as true sons and daughters of God.
 - B. Human attempts fix this have.
 - C. The battle of the mind begins with claiming a new identity.
 - 1. How you view yourself will determine how you think, which then determines actions, those actions will dictate the course of your life.
 - 2. If we want to change our thinking, then we must change our identity.
 - 3. In order to change our identity, we must have a picture of what that new identity looks like.
- II. New Identity
 - A. Romans 6:11 (NIV) *"In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus."*
 - B. Just as God has "counted us" or "reckoned us" as righteous, in right standing with Him, we must begin to "count ourselves" or "reckon ourselves" as people in a right relationship with God.
 - C. Our thinking should match what God has already spoken over us.
 - D. Our reckoning is not what gives us new life. It is a recognition of what has already transpired.
 - E. Our change in thinking begins by coming to grips with our new position. We are dead in regard to sin, but alive in Jesus.
 - F. This "counting" or "reckoning" can only happen by faith.
 - G. 1 Corinthians 1:2 (NIV) *"To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours."*
- III. Unity With Jesus
 - A. We are united with Jesus in baptism
 - 1. We metaphorically share in Jesus' death and resurrection in water baptism. It points to what has happened when we trust in Jesus by faith.
 - 2. We become united in Christ by the Holy Spirit at conversion. We are now part of the body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:13 (NIV), *"For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body"*
 - B. Romans 6:4 (NRSV) *"Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."*

- C. Our union has the purpose of allowing us to live a new life. That life is characterized by different thinking. The only way to receive this new life—to engage in unity with Christ is by faith.

IV. Faith

- A. Faith is not...
 - 1. Wishful thinking
 - 2. Leaping into the dark
 - 3. An emotional reaction
- B. “Faith is more a sense that recognizes the accurate, divine perspective on reality and acts accordingly.” — Craig S. Keener
- C. Faith is necessary because we live in two worlds.
 - 1. We live in the old age of sin and death, but we have been inaugurated into the new age of Christ.
 - 2. We live in this world, but we must think like the next world even though we cannot see what lies beyond.
 - 3. The tension between the already/not yet of the Kingdom of God requires faith.

V. Abraham

- A. Abraham was “credited” or “reckoned” by God to be righteous.
 - 1. Romans 4:3 (NIV) *“What does Scripture say? ‘Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.’”*
- B. This did not happen because of Abraham’s actions. *“Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before!”* (Rom. 4:10 NIV)
- C. Through his relationship with God, Abraham was able to believe God for the promised son.
- D. Romans 4:19-21 (NIV) *“Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead —since he was about a hundred years old —and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.”*
- E. Abraham’s belief, i.e. faith, in God allowed him to transform his thinking.
 - 1. Everything pointed to his inability to conceive a child by Sarah.
 - 2. He was persuaded to believe God in spite of what he saw. He trusted his new identity in God’s covenant.
- F. We are the heirs of Abraham.
 - 1. Romans 4:23-25 (NIV) *“The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.”*
 - 2. Just like Abraham, we are credited with righteousness by faith and not any effort on our own.
 - 3. Because we are in right standing we can now think like Abraham did and change our behavior.

VI. Application

- A. Our new identity allows us to be set free from old patterns of thought.

1. Romans 6:12 (NRSV) *“Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions.”*
 2. We are no longer under the control of old thoughts.
- B. The battle of the mind is primarily a battle of faith—we trust in the victory that Christ has already accomplished.