

A Lord's Day Snippet!

Biblical And Southern Studies

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460

1 Take Thou our minds, dear Lord, we humbly pray,
Give us the mind of Christ each passing day;
Teach us to know the truth that sets us free;
Grant us in all our thoughts to honor Thee.

2 Take Thou our hearts, O Christ, they are Thine own;
Come Thou within our souls and claim Thy throne;
Help us to shed abroad Thy deathless love;
Use us to make the earth like heaven above.

3 Take Thou our wills, Most High! Hold Thou full sway;
Have in our inmost souls Thy perfect way;
Guard Thou each sacred hour from selfish ease;
Guide Thou our ordered lives as Thou dost please.

4 Take Thou ourselves, O Lord, heart, mind, and will;
Through our surrendered souls Thy plans fulfill.
We yield ourselves to Thee—time, talents, all;
We hear, and henceforth heed, Thy sovereign call.

William H. Foulkes (1877-1961)

Mindless Christianity

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God ... with all thy mind."

Matthew 22:37

There is a danger today of mindless Christianity. This is what we could call the Festus Fallacy. What would that be? Perhaps King Festus should speak for himself; and in a loud voice he said, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad" (Acts 26:24). "Mad," the word used by the king was *mania* from which we get our word *maniac* and means insane. Thus, to this king Paul's overuse of his mind made him insane. How many Christians today view true education with a jaundiced eye because the systems of education are in shambles? God's people were given minds and they should seek to prepare them and use them for His glory. The people of God are even commanded, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." No, Christianity is not to be a leap into irrationality. This author once was travelling and listening to a religious radio

broadcast in the car. A young preacher was on the air pontificating against education, and he declared, “I am ignorant, and getting ignoranter every day, bless God.” His pronunciation was a bit different as he gasped between breaths in his ranting. Who had mistaught this young man with such warped thinking? Is that loving God with the mind? “Mindless Christianity is no Christianity at all. You can’t love what you don’t know” [R. C. Sproul].

Our text is part of Jesus’ answer to the question, “Master, which is the great commandment in the Law?” At this point Jesus gave the first and great commandment in partial answer. He said, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” Thus, with the *heart* we owe our affection to the Lord, and with our *soul* we owe our lives to the Lord, and with our *mind* we owe our mentality to the Lord. God created us rational beings and to deny that is to deny our humanity. “[W]e here have a psychology of man as it is conceived by man’s own Creator who certainly knows man better than man can possibly know himself” [Lenski]. Yes, our being is to be devoted to the Lord.

Our aim in this article is the “mind” or the mental functions that Jesus refers too. “And with all thy mind.” Jesus is saying we should love the Lord intelligently, with the mind we are blessed with, with all our mental powers; thus, we are to bring our memory, our thinking, our imagination, our reasoning, and our judgment, in other words all our mental faculties, are to be made subservient to the Lord in adoration and affection.

We are not to be “conformed” or pressed into the mold of this world system of evil. But positively we are to “be transformed by the renewing of our mind, that we may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Rom. 12:2). No, we are not to be “conformed” but we are to be “transformed.” The word “transformed” in the Greek is “*metamorphousthe*” from which we get our word metamorphosis; we are changed in our relation to the world to which we had been conformed, and this change was by being changed into the image of Christ. The entomologist uses the word “metamorphosis” to envisage the transformation of the caterpillar through the chrysalis stage into the beautiful winged butterfly. This is a change in form from ugliness to beauty. It is through “the renewing of our mind” or the seat of our thinking and understanding that we are renovated by the will of God. “The mind and memory, reason and emotion, indeed, everything in the Christian’s life, the inmost and the outward, from the highest to the lowest, all must be included in this metamorphosis into harmony with the new aeon” [Nygren].

Dr. R. C. Sproul asserted, “And so, insofar as faith has content, and the only way content can be processed is by the mind, then Christianity at that point is profoundly intellectual. I mean, I hate to even take the time to labor that point, and I do it only because I’m

convinced, we're living in the most anti-intellectual period in the history of Christianity. And again, what I mean by that is not anti-academic, not anti-scientific, not anti-technological, but anti-intellect, anti-mind, as if the mind were some kind of bad thing. But it is the mind that God has given you as the means to hear, embrace, and to understand His Word. Mindless Christianity is not Christianity at all, because mindless Christianity would be a Christianity with no content."

Dr. Justus Jonas told Dr. Martin Luther of a noble and powerful individual who above all things occupied himself in amassing gold and silver, and was so buried in darkness that he gave no heed to the five books of Moses, and had even said to Duke John Frederic, who was discoursing with him upon the gospel, "Sir, the gospel pays no interest." Luther interrupted, "Have you no grains?" and then told this fable: 'A lion, making a great feast, invited all the beasts, and with them some swine. When all manner of dainties were set before the guests, the swine asked, "Have you no grains?"' Luther continued, "Even so, even so, in these days, it is with our epicureans; we preachers set before them, in our churches, the most dainty and costly dishes, as everlasting salvation, the remission of sins, and God's grace; but they, like swine, turn up their snouts, and ask for guilders (money); offer a cow nutmeg, and she will reject it for old hay. This reminds me of the answer of certain parishioners to their minister, Ambrose R. He had been earnestly exhorting them to come and listen to the Word of God. 'Well,' said they, 'if you will tap a good barrel of beer for us we'll come with all our hearts and hear you.' The gospel at Wittenberg is like unto the rain which, falling upon a river, produces little effect; but descending upon a dry, thirsty soil, renders it fertile."