



Mind Matters: #5, Other Qualities of a Spiritually Mature Mind
1 Corinthians 14:20 and Others
October 13, 2019

Having the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5; 1 Corinthians 2:16) is a mark of spiritual maturity. In context, the “mind of Christ” is primarily an attitude of humility, self-denial, service, sacrifice, and suffering. Other passages that don’t use the exact phrase nevertheless commend the same attitude (1 Corinthians 14:20; Romans 12:17; 1 Peter 4:1). People with spiritually mature thinking share a number of other characteristics as well:

1. They are sober-minded. All Christians are urged to be sober minded, and certain groups are specifically taught to be so, including elders (1 Timothy 3:2), Ministers (2 Timothy 4:5), women (1 Timothy 3:11), and older men (Titus 2:2). Being sober-minded is in contrast to the unhealthy way of being that can be described as a “drunken stupor” (1 Corinthians 15:34, literally and ESV). To be sober-minded means we are not drunk with desire nor emotion. Instead, we think clearly.

Being sober-minded helps us be ready for action (1 Peter 1:13), able to pray (1 Peter 4:7), and alert to the danger of our adversary (1 Peter 5:8). Notice that sound thinking leads to right living.

- 2 They set their minds steadfastly on God and Christ. Their mind (here the idea is intention or purpose) is steadfastly fixed on God (Isaiah 26:3). They choose to live by the Spirit, and so their minds are set on the things of the Spirit (Romans

8:5-6). Both of these passages say that such a mind yields peace, and so the presence of peace becomes a test for whether our minds are set on Christ and God. This is in stark contrast to the mind set on the flesh (Romans 8:5-8) or even to a mind set on fringe matters of Christianity (Romans 14:17, in context).

Christians with mature thinking also fix their thoughts (consider, contemplate) on Christ (Hebrews 3:1). This includes his example of faithfulness (vv. 2, 6) and helps them in their struggle with temptation and sin (Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:14-16). By being mindful of God, they are also able to endure suffering (1 Peter 2:19). Faithful living and personal peace begin with minds that are fixed on God and Jesus personally.

3. They know God’s will and consistently live according to it. Like Solomon, they have the humility to acknowledge that they are only children and don’t know how to carry out their duties, so they ask God for discerning hearts or minds to distinguish right from wrong (1 Kings 3:7-9). God is pleased when we ask for this, and he gives a heart or mind that can know what is truly right and wrong (v. 12; cf. James 1:5). Similarly, Paul prayed for others to be filled with a knowledge of God’s will, again for the express purpose of living in a manner worthy of the Lord (Colossians 1:9-14). As God renews our minds and so transforms us, it will result in the ability to test and approve God’s will (Romans 12:2). Similarly, mature Christians have put the word into practice so consistently in their lives that their powers of discernment have been trained to distinguish good from evil (Hebrews 5:14).

Minds renewed in these and other ways will be so different from minds distorted by sin, that the latter will often consider the former to be crazy (Mark 3:21; Acts 26:24-25).

