



REALITY

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Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. ³For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. (Colossians 3:1-4 NASB)



For you have died... In order to be born again, we had to die, correct? We died in Christ when he died on the cross. Yesterday, chatting with my son about this verse, he asked me, "How can it be that we are living in the 21st century and yet we died in Christ on the cross?" I replied, "If your Granny puts \$20 in the bank for you, the money is there in the bank and it's yours. But it won't do you any good until you withdraw it from the bank. In the same way, when Jesus died on the cross you died in Him. But what he did for you on the cross didn't benefit you until the moment when you accepted Him into your heart."

So, the moment that you prayed, "Lord, I want a new life," your old man died, even though it already died in Christ centuries ago. We have died in Christ and our life is hidden with Christ in God. We are new creations.

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17 KJV) Our old, sinful self has died in Christ, and God has made us new in Christ. So if we are new creations, why do we sin at times? Because the sinful nature still lives in our physical bodies and wants to express itself. But it's like a thief that comes into the house at night. He is not part of the family, he doesn't belong or live in the house, he has no authority in the family, he's a thief! So it is with the sinful nature that lives in us. It's like a thief. But we are new creations and in Christ we can say "No" to the thief. The power of this thief died in Christ on the cross.

Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ... We died in Christ on the cross and we were raised up with Him when He rose again. We were dead in our sins but He raised us to a new life. If we're born again, we have made what He did for us on the cross our very own.

Keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Seek the things above. *Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.* Today we'll focus on this. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. What does this mean for us? Basically that we need to think like God thinks. We need to think according to His thoughts and not those of the world.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. ⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8-9 KJV) God's thoughts are those of above, and man's thoughts are those of below, of the earth. And God says that there's a great distance between the two. At times we read something in the Bible and it surprises us and we ask, "How can this be?" We react like that because we are looking at things from a human perspective rather than God's. But He wants us to learn to see things His way, the reality of His Word.

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. ¹⁶For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? but we have the mind of Christ. (1 Corinthians 2:14-16 KJV)

According to this, what kind of person cannot perceive the things of God? The carnal man. The natural man. The man who doesn't have Christ in his heart. Before coming to Christ, I thought that the things of God were foolishness. When my sisters began to share the gospel with me, I laughed at them. I told them, "You've gone crazy!" I couldn't understand the things of God. I needed Him to open my eyes. He did just that, and now that I have Christ in my heart, I understand. Now these things are not foolishness to me. In fact, now the way the world thinks is foolishness to me.

**EAT AND
DRINK THE
WORD OF GOD.**

The things of God have to be discerned spiritually, and if we have Christ we have the Spirit living in us, and He explains them to us. Many people who don't have Christ have told me, "You know, I read the Bible but for me it just doesn't make sense. For some reason I can't understand it." And I always tell them, "You have to have the Spirit of God living inside you if you want to understand."

But he that is spiritual judgeth all things... But we have the mind of Christ. In other words, if you have the Spirit of God, you can understand what God wants to say to you. You can judge and evaluate the things of God, by the Spirit who lives in you. You have the mind of Christ. In Isaiah we read that God's thoughts are much higher than man's thoughts. But now we are not only human beings, we also have the Spirit of God. In some ways we are now supernatural beings. Therefore now we certainly can think God's thoughts, see things God's way.

It says that we have the mind of Christ. But where? Where can we see and discover the mind and thoughts of God? The mind of Christ is revealed in the Bible, and also in our hearts by the Spirit of Christ who lives in us. Amen? That's why it's important to keep on reading the Bible. Eat and drink the Word of God. Why? Because the mind of Christ is revealed there.

Let the word [spoken by] Christ have its home and dwell in you in [all its] richness, as you teach and admonish and train one another in all insight and intelligence and wisdom... (Colossians 3:16 AMP) Let the word of Christ dwell in you in **all its richness**. This can also be translated, **abundantly**. Imagine that someone invites you to dinner and prepares a variety of delicious food for you. Arriving hungry, you see the table laden with wonderful food. Your host says, "Eat, eat well!" What would you do? Would you eat a tiny chicken wing and then leave? Hopefully not! Hopefully you'd eat abundantly! Because your host prepared the food for you, and I imagine that he or she may be a little offended if you didn't eat. In the same way, God has given us delicious and abundant food in the Bible, and it's not right to only eat from time to time, and even then only eat a tiny bit. God wants the Word of Christ to dwell in us **abundantly**. How does that happen? By reading the Word of God, thinking on it, receiving it.

Just as we have the mind of Christ in the Bible, and we need to eat it abundantly, so we also have it in our spirits. *For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts* (Hebrews 8:10) If you have Christ in your heart, God has written His law on your heart and has put it in your mind. It's already there. Even if they destroy all the Bibles on the face of the earth, we are not left helpless, because the Spirit of God lives inside us, and He has written His laws, His desires, His thoughts and His will on our mind and in our heart. In fact, He **is** the living Word! We must always remember this.

Thank God that we have the written Word, but even without that, we have the Spirit of God who has written His Word in our hearts! We have the **living Word**, living inside us! Amen? So we need to cultivate our fellowship with the Christ who lives inside us, spending time with Him, talking with Him, letting Him talk with us.

So it **is** possible to think God's way. In fact it's our duty to set our minds on the things above. To learn to think according to the Word and will of God, rather than according to the way of the world.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (Romans 12:2) *Be not conformed to this world* means, don't set your mind on the things of earth. Don't think according to what the world tells you. Lean to think according to what God tells you.

Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. God wants you to renew your mind. To replace the worldly thought-patterns you have with God's thought patterns, according to His word. God's word is reality! **Society, culture and the world think very differently to God.** Even though we are new creations and we have the mind of Christ in the Bible and in our spirits, we still need to invest time in renewing our minds and learning to think according to the Word. That's how we'll be transformed. We are saved if we are in Christ. But we still need to be transformed more and more into the image of Jesus Christ, correct? So we need to renew our minds, learn to see things God's way, decide to think and set our minds on things above and not of the earth.

The world bases its thinking on falsehoods. Illusions. Lies. Yesterday I saw someone selling lottery tickets. She shouted, "Here in my hand I have three and a half million!" All I saw in her hand were a few scraps of paper. The world is very good at creating illusions and deceits. It says you should dedicate yourself completely to your own comfort, and that's how you'll find happiness. What a lie. You can only find permanent and true joy by following God's will. Amen?

Let's look at a Biblical example of someone whose eyes God opened so he could set his mind on things above and not just things on earth. *[The King of Syria] sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city.* ¹⁵*Now when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?"* (2 Kings 6:14-15 NASB) The Syrian army has come to attack this city in Israel, to destroy it. The man of God is Elisha. His servant sees the huge army surrounding them, and asks, "What shall we do?" No doubt he is thinking, "We're going to die!"



So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." ¹⁷*Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see" And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.* (2 Kings 6:16-17 NASB)

Who did the servant see now? God's protection. God's provision. God's angels. But he couldn't see them with his natural eyes. God had to open his spiritual eyes so he could see the angels. Then he could see reality.

When they came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD and said, "Strike this people with blindness, I pray." So He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha. (2 Kings 6:18 NASB) The story continues and the Syrians return home without attacking Israel.

Here is a quote from Matthew Henry about this passage: *What Elisha said to his servant is spoken to all the faithful servants of God, when without are fightings, and within are fears. Fear not, with that fear which has torment and amazement; for they that are with us, to protect us, are more than they that are against us, to destroy us. The eyes of his body were open, and with them he saw the danger. Lord, open the eyes of our faith, that with them we may see thy protecting hand...* (MH Concise Commentary on the Bible)

With our natural eyes, we see things from the world's perspective. The dangers, the discouragements, the struggles, the pressures. But now we are spiritual people if we have Christ in our hearts. So we can see things from God's perspective. We can see that God is with us, even when we don't feel His presence.

Very rarely do I feel the presence of God. In fact, most of the time I don't feel it. But that doesn't matter too much to me, because God has opened the eyes of my spirit, and I know without a doubt that He is with me. I have learnt to fix my mind on His truth. What happened with Elisha's servant is an example of how we need to think on things above and not just those of the earth. We can face up to earthly circumstances, and at the same time fix our minds on God's realities (see 2 Corinthians 4:17-18).

We struggle with the sinful nature, with Satan's temptations, with circumstances, and the struggles seem to be unequal because we feel inadequate. But what does God's Word say about those struggles? *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.* (1 John 4:4 KJV)

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Little children... We could stop right there! “Little children”. We have a Father who loves us. *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them...* speaking of demons, Satan’s attacks, and the like. *Because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world...* Do we believe that? Greater is He who lives in us than he that is in the world. Yes, there are temptations, yes there are struggles, yes, at times we fail, but He who lives in us is greater than all that. And when temptation does come, He always provides a way out. We have the power within us to overcome evil and walk in what is right. Amen?

Do you see the similarities between this verse in 1 John and what we just read from 2 Kings? Except that Elisha and his servant were surrounded by a human army, while we are surrounded by demons, by Satan’s lies, by the pressures of the world, by discouragement that tells us, “Better just give up! There’s no reason to keep on fighting. You are so weak, you have so many struggles, there’s no reason to try to move forward!...” No, no, no! The One who lives in us is greater. And if we allow ourselves to see with our spiritual eyes, to think according to the mind of Christ that is here in the Bible and in our spirit, we will end up being encouraged just like Elisha’s servant ended up being encouraged. We’re dealing with the difference between illusions and reality. The world is full of illusions. In the Bible and in the Spirit of God we have reality.

Here’s one more example of an area in which we can decide to see things God’s way instead of what the world tells us. *"Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' 32"For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. 34"So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.* (Matthew 6:31-34 NASB) What’s God telling us not to do? Even though we know God, at times when faced with difficult situations, instead of choosing to trust God and seeking His help, we give ourselves over to worry. God always shows Himself faithful. We all have different trials, but often there is a strong pressure to worry. And here God tells us not to worry. Obviously we have to think about things on the earth; for example we have to work or we will not eat. As the Columbians say, “Man can’t live on love alone!” In fact the Bible says *This we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.* (2 Thessalonians 3:10) Food doesn’t just fall from heaven. So we have to think about things on earth, but not **only** things on the earth, and not in an attitude of worry. The world preaches this message, “It’s not worth thinking about God. Set your mind totally on your food, your clothing, your comfort...” God says, “Little child, I’m your Father. I know your needs and I will take care of you. Do what’s necessary to work but don’t worry. Set your mind on things above. Seek Me and My Kingdom first, and I will take care of the rest.”

This is a different way for us to think and live. We’ve grown up in a world that doesn’t know God, so it’s difficult for us to begin to see things from a different perspective. But we have to renew our minds and learn to think according to God’s Word. That’s how we get in touch with reality.

So next time you feel discouraged, like you are a failure, like the struggle is too fierce and unequal, what will you do? Remember that the One who lives in you is greater than the one who lives in the world. Remember that your Father God loves you, and you have every reason in the world to keep moving forward. Amen?

Next time you are tempted to worry, what will you do? Trust that God will provide for you, giving you wisdom and all that you need. Trust in Him.

Life is busy, full of pressures and stresses. It’s full of opportunities to either set our minds on our circumstances or the realities of the Word of God. It’s important to connect with reality by daily spending time with your Father God, drinking in His Word. And then as those enemies surround you, your eyes will be opened to see that greater is He who is in you. That is reality. Let’s set our minds on it.

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“IF ANYONE THIRST, LET THEM COME TO ME AND DRINK”- JESUS
(JOHN 7:37)