

MENTAL ATTITUDE DYNAMICS

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Preface

Before you begin your Bible study, if you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, be sure you have named your sins privately to God the Father.

If we confess our [known] sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our [known] sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness [unknown or forgotten sins]. (1 John 1:9)

You will then be in fellowship with God, filled with the Holy Spirit, and ready to learn Bible doctrine from the Word of God.

“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in [the filling of the] spirit and [biblical] truth.” (John 4:24)

If you have never personally believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, the issue is not naming your sins. The issue is faith alone in Christ alone.

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey [the command to believe in] the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” (John 3:36)

THE WORD OF GOD is alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and the marrow, and is a critic of thoughts and intents of the heart. (Heb. 4:12)

All Scripture is God-breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God might be mature, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Tim. 3:16–17)

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Tim. 2:15)

YOU ARE WHAT YOU THINK

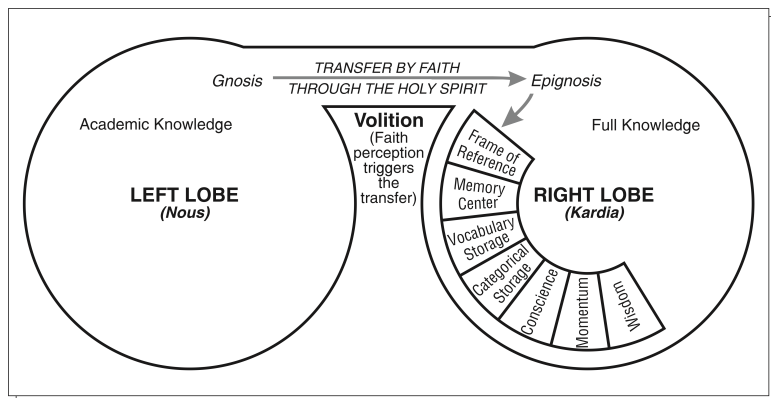
GOD, WHO CREATED THE HUMAN MIND, reads our minds like an open book! Even though God's omniscience has known everything we will ever think from eternity past (Heb. 4:13), He allows us freedom of thought and freedom of choice. However, God holds us responsible for what we think or choose, so our thinking is all-important.

For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he. (Prov. 23:7a)¹

You may be judged by your overt behavior, but you are what you *think*! You are not what you do. Your mental attitude determines, motivates, and influences your behavior and actions.

1. See Appendix B. Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture in this book is quoted from the King James Version (KJV). Bracketed commentary reflects amplification as taught in Bible class lectures (available on MP3 CD from R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, Houston, Texas).

The Bible always relates the thought pattern to the right lobe of the mentality of the soul.² The right lobe is where Bible doctrine is applied. The right lobe is designated in the Greek by the word καρδιά (*kardia*, translated “heart” in the English) and in the Hebrew by the word לֵב (*leb*), in contrast to the left or perceptive lobe, νοῦς (*nous*,



LEFT AND RIGHT LOBES OF THE SOUL

translated “mind”) which is the staging area for knowledge.³ Doctrinal knowledge in the left lobe is called γνῶσις (*gnosis*), “academic knowledge,” in the Greek. In the right lobe it is called ἐπίγνῶσις (*epignosis*), “full knowledge.”

When *epignosis* enters your right lobe, the application of doctrine can begin. Doctrine first enters your frame of reference and memory center, the initial staging areas for retaining and storing information. From there it flows into the vocabulary storage compartment for developing the ability to think divine viewpoint.⁴ Next, doctrine flows into the categorical storage compartment where concepts are organized

2. The human soul is that rational, immaterial aspect of mankind composed of self-consciousness, mentality, volition, and conscience. See R. B. Thieme, Jr., *The Plan of God* (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2003). Hereafter, cross-references to my books will cite only author, title, date of publication (in the first reference), and page(s). See also Thieme, *The Origin of Human Life* (1994).

3. Thieme, *Reversionism* (2000), 6–7.

4. Divine viewpoint is the thinking, value system, and problem-solving ability gleaned from Bible doctrine, an orientation to life based on God’s perspective.

and accumulated. From this doctrine, norms and standards are created in your conscience. Now, you can grow and develop momentum in your spiritual life and manifest wisdom—the application of divine viewpoint to experience.

This study analyzes several passages of Scripture which teach that your approach to life and the effectiveness of your doctrinal application are dependent upon what you think. Even physical attractiveness and health can be affected by your thoughts.

The Correlation between the Mind and the Body

There is a great deal of truth in the common expression, “I am worried sick.” Medical science is becoming increasingly aware of the connection between physical health and the thought pattern. Many illnesses are a direct result of psychoses of the mind. In order that we might understand the correlation between what we think and how we feel, we must examine the subject of psychosomatics. The word itself is made up of two Greek words: ψυχή (*psuche*), meaning “soul,” with emphasis on mentality, and σῶμα (*soma*), meaning “body.”

The concept of psychosomatics is very simple. Any mental attitude of fear, worry, or anxiety—any continuous mental tension—will eventually overflow and affect the body. This can result in unusual behavior. For example, it was discovered during the Korean War that many American soldiers died in prison camps from what we call “give-up-itis.” With the perpetuation of this mental attitude over a period of time, an individual would simply fold up, lie down on the ground, and say, “Leave me alone.” If he were left alone for two or three days, he would die! Our physicians in the prison camps reported a substantial number of these cases and diagnosed their cause of death to be a mental attitude of hopelessness and despair.

It is also common for people to suffer from such ailments as eczema, skin rashes, warts, allergies, asthma, hypertension, goiter, ulcers, and many other disorders simply from the overflow of the pressures from the mind to the body. Interestingly enough, a change of mental attitude—a stabilizing of the mentality—results in the removal of the symptoms. I am not trying to explain the cause of a sudden appearance of some rash and its equally sudden disappearance as being psychosomatic in *your* case. I am saying that at last medical science

has discovered what has been recorded in Scripture—that physiological problems can be related to our thought processes.

This brings us to an issue we must all face as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. When our right lobes think divine viewpoint through Bible doctrine, the result is inner peace, a relaxed mental attitude, stability, and inner happiness. But when our right lobes operate on human viewpoint,⁵ or when mental attitude sins such as pride, jealousy, bitterness, vindictiveness, implacability, guilt complex, and hatred dominate the mentality of our souls, the result is inevitably self-induced misery. Mental attitude sins, plus the absence of Bible doctrine, lead to human viewpoint and can only produce disorientation to grace⁶ and agony of soul.

THE TWO VIEWPOINTS OF LIFE

Let the wicked forsake his way,
 And the unrighteous man his thoughts:
 And let him return unto the LORD,
 And he will have mercy upon him;
 And to our God,
 For he will abundantly pardon.
 For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts,
 Neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD.
 For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth,
 So are my ways higher than your ways,
 And my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isa. 55:7–9)

While there are many different mental attitudes, there are only two basic viewpoints—the divine viewpoint and the human viewpoint. Not only are these viewpoints antithetical, but God's viewpoint is infinitely superior to that of man. The unbeliever is capable only of human viewpoint, “being alienated from the life of God” (Eph. 4:18) and the

5. Human viewpoint is any human or satanic system of thinking, values, or problem solving that is contrary and opposed to divine viewpoint, values, and problem solving as revealed in the Bible.

6. Grace is all that God is free to do for mankind on the basis of the saving work of Christ on the cross. Mankind can never accomplish or achieve the approbation or favor of God through his own efforts, work, energy, or morality.

enemy of God in his thinking (Col. 1:21). However, the believer constantly struggles between the divine and human viewpoints.

While the believer is “not *of* the world,” he is *in* the world (John 15:19, italics added), and the norms and standards, as well as the philosophies of *cosmos diabolicus*⁷ bombard him from all sides (Col. 2:8, 20–22). The world expects the believer to be like the rest of humanity, conforming to satanic systems. But God desires for him to “be transformed” to His way of thinking (Rom. 12:1–3). Therefore, it is of paramount importance that we as believers learn the divine norms and standards, which should govern our thought pattern.

Your decisions depend on what you think. If human viewpoint is predominant in your right lobe, it will neutralize your Christian life. You cannot live God’s way because you do not think God’s way. Instead you try to be spiritual by means of taboos, ecstasies, or asceticism. Operating on human viewpoint, you think you must work for what you get. While it is generally true in life that the harder you work the more you receive, this axiom cannot be transferred into the spiritual life. God designed your spiritual life to be a life of grace. By grace you simply appropriate all that God provides!

The Source of Human Viewpoint

Many factors influence our thinking: environment or background; training in the home through both observation and teaching; education; culture (the history, traditions, attainments, and way of life to which we adhere); religion⁸ or any system of faith and worship. However,

7. *Cosmos diabolicus* is Satan’s orderly, cohesive, and multifaceted system of thinking, which includes a purpose, policy, and structure of authority designed to subvert the human race and gain control over the world he now rules. His diverse tactics express one strategy: to encourage human arrogance and sponsor human antagonism to God. See Thieme, *Satan and Demonism* (1996), 13–15.

8. Religion is an antigrace system whereby man by his own human good works, effort, and merit seeks to gain salvation or the approbation of God. Christianity is not a religion but a relationship with Jesus Christ by grace through faith alone. As the Satan-inspired counterfeit of God’s grace plan, religion is antithetical to Christianity. It is the devil’s ace trump in the deception of the human race. Religion distracts unbelievers from the Gospel of Jesus Christ and from the laws of divine establishment. Religion also leads believers into moral or immoral degeneracy, which diverts them from executing God’s plan, will, and purpose for their life. *Ibid.*, 4–6.

human viewpoint did not originate in the human mind. It began with Satan in eternity past when he revolted against God (Isa. 14:13–14). Since Satan cannot indwell believers, he attacks them through their minds. He uses his demons,⁹ as well as unbelievers, to expedite his schemes. If he can infiltrate the minds of believers with human viewpoint, he can neutralize them, and they become casualties in the angelic conflict.¹⁰

Human viewpoint was launched into the human race when Eve was deceived by the subtle suggestion that she could be as smart as God if she would eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. So cunning and convincing is the devil's viewpoint of life that entire nations are deceived by his philosophies (Rev. 12:9; 13:14). For example, when the unbeliever or carnal believer¹¹ tries to solve the world's problems from human viewpoint, he looks to such international organizations as the United Nations and the World Council of Churches. The panaceas of internationalism and universal brotherhood sound so beautiful and broad-minded that he falls for them. What has happened? Satanic viewpoint has become human viewpoint and now pervades human thinking.

The human viewpoint of the 'brotherhood of man' leads to the idea of a one-world state. Yet, God divided the world into nations (Gen. 10:30–31) for the preservation of the human race and so that there may be freedom to evangelize.¹² Every attempt to unify all nations throughout history has failed—from the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1–9)¹³ to the present-day United Nations. Has the latter been successful in maintaining world peace? Check the record! There have been numerous wars since the United Nations was formed. No matter how sincere man's attempts may be to make this a better world, he

9. Ibid.

10. The angelic conflict is the invisible warfare between the forces of Satan and the forces of God. In eternity past Satan and one-third of the angels revolted against God, who subsequently tried and condemned them to the lake of fire (Matt. 25:41). Satan appealed this judgment, and in grace, God created the human race to resolve this ancient conflict, which continues as spiritual warfare in human history. See Thieme, *The Angelic Conflict* (2012).

11. Carnality is the absolute status of the believer's soul under the control of the sin nature resulting in loss of fellowship with God because of unconfessed sin in the life (1 Cor. 3:1–3). Carnality is the opposite of spirituality.

12. Thieme, *Witnessing* (1992).

13. Thieme, *Freedom through Military Victory* (2003), 12–13.

will fail. This is Satan's world (2 Cor. 4:4), and no created being, not even the evil genius of Satan, has the omniscience or the omnipotence to bring about a perfect world. Until Jesus Christ returns to reign over this world in the Millennium,¹⁴ there will be no successful attempt at a one-world state.

The Satan-inspired view that man is basically good is another part of his strategy to trap the mind of man. How does this measure up to God's estimate of man?

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.
(Rom. 3:23)

The heart [right lobe controlled by the sin nature]¹⁵ is
deceitful above all *things*,
And desperately wicked:
Who can know it? (Jer. 17:9)

God declares you to be a sinner. Your sin nature makes you deceitful and desperately wicked! Have you ever thought that if you were just good enough, you would eventually make it to heaven? You are wrong! You have embraced human viewpoint straight from the mind of Satan! Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). We are saved by faith alone in Christ alone, not by being good.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that [salvation] not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. (Eph. 2:8–9)

14. The Millennium is a literal period of one thousand years beginning after the second advent of Jesus Christ in which He will fulfill all unconditional covenants to Israel, reign over the earth, and establish worldwide peace and perfect environment. See Thieme, *The Divine Outline of History: Dispensations and the Church* (1999), 74–78.

15. Except for Jesus Christ, the sin nature is an integral part of every human being, the center of man's rebellion toward God. The sin nature was acquired originally by Adam at his fall, is subsequently passed down genetically to all mankind through procreation, and resides in the cell structure of the human body. The sin nature is the source of total depravity for all mankind. The sin nature is the "old man" of Ephesians 4:22; the Adamic nature of "flesh" of Romans 8:3–4; the principle of "sin" of Romans 7:8–20; the genetic perpetuation of the sin nature and spiritual death "in Adam" of 1 Corinthians 15:22.

The Source of Divine Viewpoint

For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind [thinking] of Christ.
(1 Cor. 2:16)

The Bible is the only source of divine viewpoint. It is the very mind of Christ, the living Word (John 1:1) expressed in written form. Therefore, if you, as a believer, are to have the divine viewpoint of life, you must know Bible doctrine. If you do not know God's thoughts on any given matter, how can you possibly think according to the divine viewpoint?

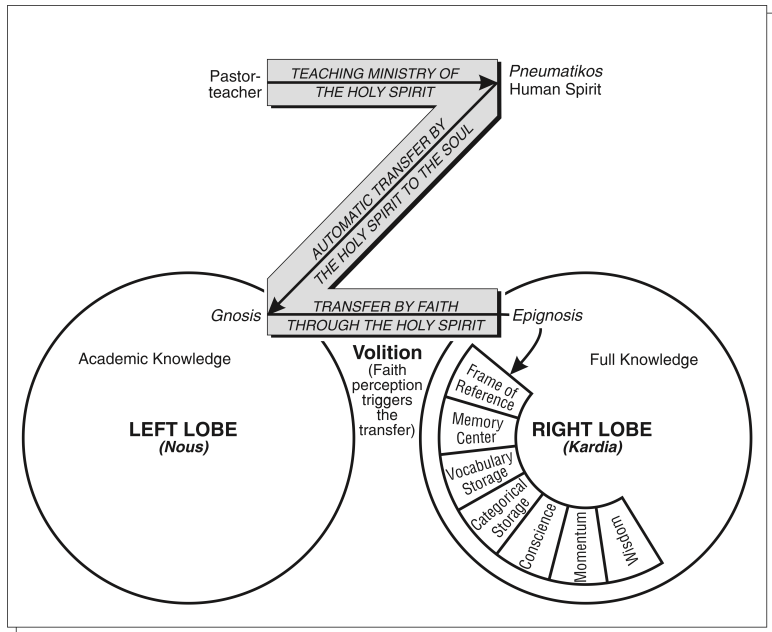
The biblical command is to "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). What mind? The thinking of Christ, divine viewpoint! Christ set the pattern; we are to follow. How can we have the mind of Christ? Divine viewpoint resides in our souls only through daily study and absorption of God's Word through the function of the grace apparatus for perception.¹⁶

Initially Bible doctrine, communicated by a pastor-teacher, is made understandable to the human spirit by the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 16:13).¹⁷ This doctrinal information is automatically transferred from the human spirit to the left (perceptive) lobe of the soul by the Holy Spirit where it becomes *gnosis*, the objective comprehension of doctrine or academic knowledge.

For momentum in the spiritual life, positive volition must be exercised. Doctrine must be believed. Academic knowledge must be converted into spiritual knowledge. How? When the believer exercises faith-perception by believing the doctrine, *gnosis* is converted by the Holy Spirit into *epignosis* and doctrine is transferred from the left lobe into the right lobe of the soul.

16. Grace apparatus for perception (GAP) is a nonmeritorious system of spiritual comprehension empowered by the filling of the Holy Spirit. GAP enables every believer to understand, learn, and apply the whole realm of Bible doctrine, regardless of education or human IQ. See Thieme, *Reversionism*, 3–7.

17. The human spirit, created and imputed to every believer at the moment of salvation, is the home for eternal life. It is the immaterial part of mankind that enables man to have a relationship with God. The human spirit is designed by God to make spiritual phenomena or Bible doctrine understandable (1 Cor. 2:12). See Thieme, *Tongues* (2000), 51–53.



GRACE APPARATUS FOR PERCEPTION

As doctrine is cycled into the right lobe—to the frame of reference, memory center, vocabulary storage, categorical storage, conscience, momentum, and wisdom compartments—divine viewpoint is available for application to experience.

The Victory of Divine Viewpoint

The general view today seems to be that when people become Christians, they should stop using their minds and, instead, operate on their emotions. Some even think they are supposed to work themselves up into an ecstatic lather and speak in gibberish, commonly known as ‘speaking in tongues.’¹⁸ Such gross misunderstanding and misapplication

18. Thieme, *Tongues*.

of Scripture comes from lack of Bible doctrine and from pastors who do not teach the Word of God. Instead, they substitute programs and mental sublimations, such as the power of positive thinking, a system of self-hypnosis, for the Christian way of life. Christianity is *what* you think—Bible doctrine!

We often assume that someone who has physical strength and pushes his weight around is tough. However, the toughest people are not the bullies but those who never give up mentally, even when facing defeat. To illustrate: In Bastogne, Belgium, Christmas, 1944, the Germans demanded the surrender of the 101st Airborne Division. Surrounded and facing annihilation, General Anthony McAuliffe replied, “Nuts!” His answer typified the fighting spirit of the American soldier in World War II.

Toughness is a mental attitude—it has nothing to do with the physical body. Many people give up, as the old expression says, “when the first shot is fired.” They quit because of their cowardly and defeatist mental attitude. The enemies of the United States know this and attempt to intimidate by threats and terrorism in order to neutralize the mental attitude of the American people. How can this tactic be countered? A nucleus of believers with divine viewpoint can turn the tide.

Your mental attitude always makes a difference. You may be physically exhausted. You may be completely defeated as far as the odds are concerned. You may be deprived of your liberty, but no one can stop you from thinking those things which eventually will overcome the pressures and adversity of your situation.

How true this is in the spiritual realm! The Christian way of life is designed so that a believer can think at all times. One of the by-products of Christianity is the ability to discern the real issues. To see life habitually from the divine viewpoint is one of the greatest stabilizers for the believer in time. I have noticed that those who concentrate in Bible class learn to think categorically; they learn to discern divine viewpoint from human viewpoint. Those who do not concentrate consistently revert to emotionalism and human viewpoint. An academic education is not the important factor, or even a prerequisite to divine viewpoint. Discernment and stability of soul come from the use of the biblical techniques of the Word of God by the believer who is positive toward Bible doctrine.

The Bible, a Critic of the Thoughts

For the word of God *is* quick [alive], and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner [critic] of the thoughts and intents [motivations] of the heart [right lobe]. (Heb. 4:12)

The Bible is the only accurate discerner of what you think, and it is the only source for straightening out your mental attitude. Let the Bible ‘umpire’ your thoughts. It is your most constructive critic.

Search me, O God, and know my heart:
Try me, and know my thoughts:
And see if *there be any* wicked way in me.
(Ps. 139:23–24a)

Ask yourself: Does what I think jibe with the Word of God? If so, you will have the power, impact, peace, strength, stability, and inner happiness that God has provided for every believer and which cannot be disturbed by adversity or prosperity. In short, you will have reached the supergrace life!¹⁹ However, should your thinking fail to line up with the divine standard, it needs to be evaluated honestly and straightened out quickly. Your confusion often lies in a misunderstanding of certain areas of mental attitude.

AREAS OF MENTAL ATTITUDE

Worldliness

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. (Rom. 12:2)

19. Supergrace is the initial stage of maturity beyond the Edification Complex of the soul. It is the “greater grace” of James 4:6 (NASB), the place of utilization of grace in either adversity or prosperity. Characterized by spiritual and material blessings, this is the road to glorify God for the believer who has maximum doctrine in his soul.

This verse constitutes a command: “Be not conformed to this world—be transformed!” In other words, do not be worldly! How can you not be worldly? By giving up some objectionable activity? No! By the *renewing of your mind*. Worldliness is not something you do; it is not an overt act. Worldliness is a mental attitude of human viewpoint!

“This world” refers to every thought and action contrary to the absolute criterion of the Word of God. Worldliness is the operation of the human viewpoint of *cosmos diabolicus* in the right lobe. Worldliness includes slavery to circumstances, as well as spirituality through legalism.²⁰

In some churches in the United States today, you would be considered ‘worldly’ for using cosmetics. However, whether you paint yourself up until you look like an Apache on the warpath, or you use no cosmetics and look as if you had stuck your head in a flour barrel, neither are worldly. Worldliness stems from your mental attitude! Whether you put on makeup or not is a matter of personal judgment and taste.

Perhaps, you have learned to ‘play poker’ in church. You sit with a pious expression on your face appearing to be deep in prayer or meditation. But, you are planning ahead—thinking about getting your wardrobe ready for spring or about where you will go on your summer vacation. You fold your hands and think these things while maintaining such a saintly façade that no one would ever call you worldly. Yet God’s Word says that you are! Church is a time to concentrate on doctrine, not the things of this world. The believer must learn doctrine in order to distinguish between human good and divine good,²¹ one of the great conflicts in the issue of worldliness.

In order not to be conformed to human viewpoint, you must have a new mental attitude. The tragedy is that there are thousands of Chris-

20. Legalism is man’s futile attempt to gain salvation, spirituality, or the approbation of God through good deeds.

21. Human good is the benevolent production or deeds of the believer who is under the control of the sin nature. The good deeds of a carnal Christian are indistinguishable from good deeds performed by an unbeliever, have no spiritual value, and are not rewardable in heaven.

Divine good is any Christian service or deed performed by a believer under the filling of the Holy Spirit. Only divine good, which has intrinsic and eternal value, is acceptable to the perfect standards of God and receives recognition and reward from Him in heaven. See Thieme, *Reversionism*.

tians who are worldly, but they are totally unaware of it because they have no understanding of Romans 12:2. Consequently, they assume their overt activities are the key, and they never realize they are worldly because of what they think!

“Be ye transformed” (present passive imperative) is a continuous process involving rebound and Bible study.²² Doctrine must be in your right lobe as the basis for *transforming* and *renewing* the thought processes. The mechanics of “renewing . . . your mind” are the functions of the grace apparatus for perception (GAP). Divine viewpoint in the right lobe is the defense against the mental attitude of worldliness.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (Col. 3:1–2)

The “things which are above,” or literally, the “upward things,” constitute the sum total of the divine viewpoint of life. “Set your affection on” is literally, “keep thinking about the upward things.” “Things on the earth” are the sum total of the human viewpoint of life. This verse emphasizes the believer’s continual mental attitude struggle between human and divine viewpoints.

Inner Happiness

Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. (Phil. 2:2)

Even though the believer is positionally perfect at the point of salvation, his soul has a deficiency.²³ It is empty. God’s plan of grace

22. Rebound is the grace provision for the carnal believer to recover the filling of the Holy Spirit through naming personal sins privately to God the Father; the method of restoring the believer’s fellowship with God to resume the spiritual life. See Thieme, *Rebound and Keep Moving!* (1993).

23. The moment any human being expresses faith alone in Christ alone he is positionally sanctified—baptized by the Holy Spirit, entered into union with Christ, justified or declared righteous, and the recipient of thirty-six other irrevocable absolutes plus one revocable absolute (filling of the Holy Spirit). See Thieme, *God the Holy Spirit vs. The Sin Nature* (2013), Appendix C.

calls for this deficiency to be filled through Bible doctrine.²⁴ This is the meaning of “fulfill” (πληρώω, *pleroo*). As doctrine fully possesses and fully influences the believer, God fills his soul with His own happiness. “Joy” (χαρά, *chara*) in the Greek refers to inner happiness. With the addition of the possessive pronoun “my,” joy refers to perfect happiness or God’s happiness. This sharing of God’s happiness is potential, depending on whether or not the believer functions under GAP and builds the Edification Complex in his soul.

The Edification Complex is an immaterial edifice constructed in the right lobe of the soul of a mature believer. *Epignosis* is the building material. On the foundation of the filling of the Holy Spirit, a five-story superstructure is erected:

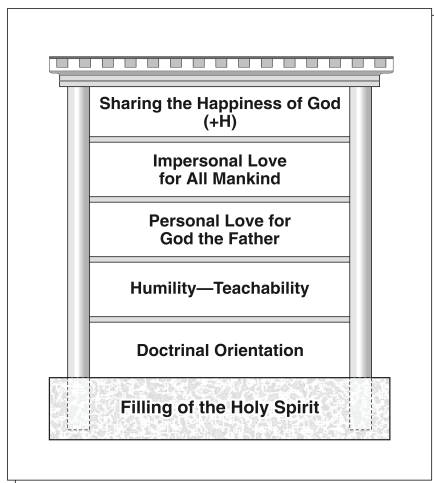
1. Doctrinal orientation—the correct perspective of your purpose and destiny in the plan of God;

2. Humility—teachability, thinking that adapts to grace procedures;

3. Personal love for God—enduring devotion and respect for God from *epignosis* knowledge;

4. Impersonal love for all mankind—a relaxed mental attitude of patience, forgiveness, compassion, and kindness toward all;

5. Inner happiness or sharing the happiness of God—a spectrum of happiness that masters the details of life and does not depend on people or circumstances.



EDIFICATION COMPLEX OF THE SOUL

A completed Edification Complex in the soul produces the capacity for the divine viewpoint of life. The Edification Complex is the backbone of the soul and the bridge to the supergrace life.

24. Thieme, *The Plan of God*.

Peace or Confidence

Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace,
Whose mind is stayed on thee:
Because he trusteth in thee. (Isa. 26:3)

The mind fixed on Christ—occupation with Him²⁵—is the basis for perfect peace. You can neither know Christ nor love Him apart from doctrine in the right lobe. Only the consistent, daily intake of Bible doctrine can produce the “peace of God, which passeth all understanding.” That doctrine “shall keep [garrison] your hearts [right lobes] and minds [left lobes] through Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:7).

The word “peace” (εἰρήνη, *eirene*) has the connotation of prosperity, benefit, welfare, and tranquillity. This peace reflects the transfer of *gnosis* doctrine stored in the left lobe of the soul to *epignosis* in the right lobe of the soul of the supergrace believer. Peace from God in the supergrace life acts as a stabilizer for all kinds of circumstances encountered in the Christian life. Perhaps you do not realize it, but there are dangers in prosperity as well as in adversity. The peace from God makes it possible for the believer to face both catastrophe and great prosperity with the same mental attitude: freedom from worry (1 Pet. 5:7–8) and confidence for living as well as dying (2 Cor. 5:1, 6, 8).

Have you ever seen someone in athletics try too hard? I once coached a boy like that in baseball. He was eager and there was not a lazy bone in his body, but he struggled so hard that he was constantly uptight. As a result, he often could not catch the ball; yet potentially, he was a good baseball player. What was wrong with him? He had no peace of mind—no confidence. He would drive himself into such a state of tension that he was no longer controlled by his mind but by his emotions. Every time he made a mistake, he broke down and cried. Several other boys who did not have his drive and eagerness played a better game. Why? They were relaxed. You must have peace of mind in order to have the by-products of confidence and stability.

I often think of that boy when I see believers who fall apart at the slightest provocation or come unglued under every wind of adversity. What happens to you when the pressure is on? Do you break down and cry? Do you look for a crutch? If you do not have peace under

25. Thieme, *Freedom through Military Victory*, 76–83.

pressure, there is something wrong with your mental attitude (Prov. 24:10). The Christian way of life is designed for believers to have peace, not only when the going is rough but also in times of prosperity. The peace resulting from doctrine in your right lobe produces a confidence that will sustain you through prosperity (without your becoming arrogant) and through adversity (without your falling apart)!

Stability

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power,
and of love, and of a sound [stabilized] mind. (2 Tim. 1:7)

The stabilized mind is a direct result of the tranquil mind—a mind free from worry or fear. “Fear” is human viewpoint caused by a lack of faith-rest.²⁶ Paul demonstrated a maximum stabilized mental attitude under pressure. He exhorted the Thessalonians to have the same steadfast attitude in the face of adversity:

That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us.
(2 Thess. 2:2a)

One of the most impressive examples of stability in modern history is that of General Robert E. Lee during the Battle of Gettysburg—the most decisive battle of the War Between the States. Everything was about to collapse for the Confederacy. Officer after officer reported in: “General Lee, my division does not have many men left . . . my regiment . . . my battalion . . . my company is wiped out . . . we are out of ammunition.” After each disastrous report, Lee would answer, “That is all right. I will take the responsibility. Take the remnants of your force and move south and form up with General . . .” and so on. He remained completely calm and stable as he issued orders.

Stability is judged by the overt act, but behind every decision and command given by General Lee was a mental attitude that produced the stability for the situation. It is not what you *do* that stabilizes circumstances—it is what you *think*! A person who can think under pressure is one who has a stabilized mental attitude.

26. Faith-rest is mixing the promises of God with faith, resulting in inner peace. See Thieme, *The Faith-Rest Life* (2004).

Giving

For if there be first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to that a man hath, *and* not according to that he hath not. (2 Cor. 8:12)

Every man according as he purposeth in his heart [right lobe], *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. (2 Cor. 9:7)

True biblical giving is first of all a mental attitude.²⁷ You may not always have the money, but you can always have the basis for giving—a willing mind, which is literally positive volition based on doctrine. This switches giving from what you give as an offering to what goes on in your right lobe. The amount of money you give is not important. The Bible never states the quantity to be given but the quality of your mental attitude. Do not confuse tithing with giving. Tithing was an income tax for believers and unbelievers in Old Testament Israel; it had nothing to do with giving or offerings.

The New Testament principle is to give “as *God* hath prospered” (1 Cor. 16:1–2). In some cases that could be ninety percent, while in others, it could mean one percent. Nowhere does the Bible say that anyone is to deprive his family of the necessities of life in order to give ten percent—or any percent! The next time you are led by the Lord to make an offering, remember that the basic principle of giving is what you think.

Suppose you think something like this: “I saw Smith put fifty dollars in the plate. I know that if I don’t come through with the same amount my name will be ‘mud’ around the church. It makes me mad because I had other plans for that money—but here goes!” So fifty dollars goes into the plate. People may say, “How wonderful!” But God says, “How terrible!” This is giving “grudgingly, or of necessity.” This is giving for the praise of men and under pressure, and is an abomination to the Lord! If you give with thanksgiving and out of love for the Lord, one tenth of a cent is acceptable to Him; whereas, hundreds of thousands of dollars given with the wrong mental attitude is not acceptable.

27. Thieme, *Giving: Gimmick or Grace?* (1990).

Love

And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart
[right lobe], and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.
(Deut. 6:5)

[Love, ἀγάπη, *agape*] Doth not behave itself unseemly,
seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no
evil. (1 Cor. 13:5)

The Greek word *agape* confirms the principle that the true concept of love in the Bible is a mental attitude. *Agape*, which comes from the filling of the Holy Spirit and *epignosis* knowledge of doctrine, is found only in the mentality of the soul and is the capacity to love God and people. *Agape* is the relaxed mental attitude of the Edification Complex and reflects freedom from mental attitude sins. It is impossible to sustain a relationship with the Lord or with any human being and be filled with mental attitude sins. The command to love other believers is not an order to demonstrate your love in an overt manner, nor even to love everyone with personal love. This is strictly an order to use impersonal love and to maintain a relaxed mental attitude.²⁸ *Agape* is the divine viewpoint that will prompt overt manifestations of either personal or impersonal love (1 Cor. 13:4–8a; 1 John 4:11, 19).

SECOND CORINTHIANS 10

THE MENTAL ATTITUDE DISSERTATION

Second Corinthians 10 is one of the great mental attitude passages in the Word of God that relates the spiritual conflict to our thought pattern.

Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence *am* base among you, but being absent *am* bold toward you. (2 Cor. 10:1)

The word “meekness” means “gentleness of mind” and is a word for a mental attitude of grace. “Gentleness” is literally “graciousness”

28. Thieme, *Freedom through Military Victory*, 75–76; *Christian Integrity* (2002), 35–37.

or the application of grace. At the very outset of this passage, the Apostle Paul cites the tremendous grace orientation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Why? The critical mental attitude of the Corinthian believers toward Paul was a satanic attempt to destroy Paul's own mental attitude of grace orientation.

In this passage Paul answers his critics in the Corinthian church. He was not going to 'turn the other cheek' when they were attacking the authority of his apostleship as a way to discredit him. He writes to them as a man with the authority to settle the dissension.

The last phrase of verse 1 is generally misunderstood. Paul not only fights back, but he sarcastically quotes his critics. He caustically remarks that these legalists claim he is obsequious and timid in their presence but bold and courageous in his epistle. This is a reference to the epistle of 1 Corinthians in which Paul wrote a blistering exhortation to the Corinthian believers concerning their carnality.

But I beseech *you*, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. (2 Cor. 10:2)

Paul is requesting that his critics have a change of mental attitude to grace orientation. The nit-picking and bullying hindered Paul from communicating doctrine. But Paul was not afraid of his legalistic critics. He remained absent from Corinth because he preferred to return under relaxed conditions, which are ideal for teaching, rather than with a get-tough policy. Through doctrine Paul had great moral courage, and whether in their presence or absent from them, he was faithful to Bible doctrine. The greatest expression of love by a pastor-teacher for his sheep is the communication of doctrine.

The attack of the legalists expressed their emotional revolt and reversionism.²⁹ In deeming Paul overbearing and carnal, they actually ascribed to him their own condition of soul.

29. Emotional revolt of the soul is spiritual anarchy in which the reversionist believer makes emotion rather than doctrine his criterion for life. See Thieme, *Reversionism*, 26-29.

Reversionism is the way of life the believer chooses when he turns away from God's plan, will, and purpose for his life and returns to a former belief, a former viewpoint, a former modus operandi indistinguishable from an unbeliever. The reversionist has not lost his salvation, but he is under the influence of Satan's cosmic system (1 Tim. 4:1).

For though we walk in the flesh [human body], we do not war [in the angelic conflict] after [according to] the flesh [sin nature]. (2 Cor. 10:3)

With his characteristic humor and sarcasm, Paul makes a play on words and uses the word “flesh” in both its literal and spiritual connotations. It is true that Paul’s soul is walking *in* the sphere of the flesh (the human body), but it is not true that he is teaching *according to* the standards of the flesh (the sin nature). Just because Paul ‘chews out’ the Corinthians does not mean he is out of fellowship. He possesses legitimate apostolic authority. Thus, his hard-nosed teaching is not carnality. The criticism of Paul by the Corinthians is invalid and represents the self-righteousness of human viewpoint and legalism.

Our warfare in the Christian life is neither physical nor fleshly; it is spiritual. Though we live in this world, we do not engage in the spiritual conflict according to the standard of this world. In the conflict we do not use our human energy or talents, our human personalities or ingenuity. We use our God-given assets. The Lord has provided information whereby we can transform our thinking and advance victoriously toward overt production compatible with divine viewpoint. This is a very important principle, for it will explain Paul’s mental attitude dissertation.

Our Spiritual Weapons

(For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to [against] the pulling down of strong holds.) (2 Cor. 10:4)

In spiritual warfare, we do not pick up a rifle or grenade to defeat the devil. Since we do not fight according to the flesh, we must have spiritual armament for combat in the angelic conflict (Eph 6:11–17). “Carnal” in this verse refers to the system of earthly standards. Our weapons in the angelic conflict do not belong to the physical realm. Rather, the weapons of our spiritual warfare are “mighty” because their source is God.

The devil’s system promotes human viewpoint, human ability, human power. But God has provided in grace divine equipment and weapons to defend against the assaults of Satan. What are these

weapons that enable us to resist the sin nature, human viewpoint, and the evil in the devil's world (2 Cor. 4:4; James 4:7)? They are our thoughts! The factor that empowers, motivates, and strengthens a believer is his thought pattern of divine viewpoint. But if the believer thinks human viewpoint, he has succumbed to satanic infiltration. He is useless, miserable, and indistinguishable from the unbeliever.

The believer with doctrine in the right lobe has divine viewpoint ready for application in order to stand up to Satan's power. Such a believer has moved into the supergrace life and has the capacity to understand that "all things work together for good" (Rom. 8:28). He casts all his cares on the Lord (1 Pet. 5:7); he knows and applies the doctrine of divine essence³⁰ and the principles of Christology. This believer cannot be defeated! As long as the believer has divine viewpoint in the right lobe that says, "I will fight to the end," he cannot be overcome!

The Mental Attitude in the Conflict

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against [in opposition to] the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. 10:5)

The concept of bringing every thought into captivity for Christ has been interpreted in as many ways as there are confused or revisionistic believers. The 'meditators,' the 'agonizers,' the 'positive thinkers,' all believe they are bringing their thoughts into captivity for Christ. Instead they are substituting human systems of sublimation for divine viewpoint.

When this verse is analyzed in the Greek, it clearly reveals that every phrase relates to military function. "Casting down" (καθαίρω, *kathaireo*) indicates the power of a thought to demolish the treachery of Satan. The strategic victory of the cross, followed by the resurrection, ascension, and session of Christ at the right hand of the Father, has placed Satan in a precarious position during the Church

30. The attributes of deity are summarized as: sovereignty, righteousness, justice, love, eternal life, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, immutability, and veracity. See Thieme, *The Trinity* (2003).

Age.³¹ This is the intensified stage of the angelic conflict, the time of Satan's desperation (Rev. 12:12). With his fate sealed by the cross, Satan can only employ delaying tactics.

Believers are the troops designed by the Lord to demolish Satan's sedition. When they fail, it is because of negative volition toward doctrine, the malfunction of GAP, the opening up of the ματαιότης (*mataiotes*)³² causing scar tissue of the soul³³ and reversionism. Under these conditions the mind becomes the prisoner of Satan. To triumph over the unseen foe requires a heavy concentration of doctrine!

What is Satan's plan of attack? "Imaginations"? Not at all! Satan is far too clever to function on the basis of imagination. The word, incorrectly translated "imagination," is λογισμός (*logismos*), systems of thought or reason, and refers to the reasoning powers of cosmic doctrine and human viewpoint (1 Tim. 4:1). Satan has two tactics for his aggression: first, to infiltrate the minds of men, both believers and unbelievers, with Satanic doctrine; second, to intensify the angelic conflict, which indicates his desperation because of his strategic defeat at the cross.

Satan's *modus operandi* is described as "every high thing" (πάς ὕψωμα, *pas hupsoma*), or "every obstacle of pride." Satan attacks with obstacles of pride. The very sin that caused his fall (Isa. 14:12–17) is the tactical artillery barrage with which he softens up those who would oppose him. Pride is both a mental attitude sin and a human viewpoint system of thought, which hinders objectivity. Through pride the devil attempts to keep the believer off balance.

31. The Church Age is the present dispensation, which began on the Day of Pentecost (fifty days after the crucifixion of Christ) and will terminate with the resurrection or Rapture of the Church (Eph. 1:10; 2:1–5, 8–9; Col. 1:25–26). See Thieme, *The Divine Outline of History*.

32. *Mataiotes*: Greek word translated "emptiness," as in Ephesians 4:17. This is a vacuum in the soul created by negative volition toward God and Bible doctrine.

33. The seventh stage of reversionism is synonymous with "hardness of heart" (John 12:40; Eph. 4:18–19). Scar tissue is formed by the influence of evil on both the left and right lobes of the soul. As scar tissue accumulates, the *mataiotes* draws false doctrine ever more rapidly into the left lobe, exerting increasingly greater pressure on the right lobe. Divine viewpoint is blocked out (Ex. 17:1–7). Promiscuity, drug addiction, alcoholism, or any other frantic search for happiness intensifies this hardening. See Appendix B; see also Thieme, *Reversionism*, 33–37.

Of course, a greater danger to the believer who resists Satan's initial assault is a second more powerful one, as the next phrase demonstrates. "Every high thing that exalteth itself" (ἐπαίρω, *epairo*) means "to elevate the assault." Satan is capable of a stronger attack with his human viewpoint and cosmic doctrines. What does he attack? "The knowledge [*gnosis*] of God." Satan attacks the academic understanding of doctrine (*gnosis*) in the left lobe of the believer. If *gnosis* is distorted it cannot become *epignosis*. If the Holy Spirit is grieved (Eph. 4:30) and quenched (1 Thess. 5:19),³⁴ *gnosis* cannot be cycled into the right lobe.

If these attacks are successful, Satan makes a prisoner of your mind. On the other hand, if you successfully resist cosmic viewpoint, you "bring into captivity" (αἰχμαλωτίζω, *aichmalotizo*) or make a prisoner of "every thought" (νόημα, *noema*)—literally, "every system of thought." You have staved off the attack, and Satan has been repulsed.

Logismos is Satan's successful attempt to capture and eliminate GAP. *Noema* is the believer's successful attempt at resistance. In other words, *logismos* denotes human viewpoint; *noema*, divine viewpoint. Every system of thought sponsored by Satan can be captured by the believer and changed from *logismos* to *noema* through application of doctrine.

Making a prisoner of every human viewpoint system of thought is accomplished under the principle of authority. "Obedience" (ὕπακοή, *hupakoe*) does not connote "submissiveness" so much as "authority."

Resisting cosmic thought, and every obstacle of pride attacking against the academic knowledge of the God, and making a prisoner of every human viewpoint system of thought to the authority of Christ. (2 Cor. 10:5, corrected translation)

The authority of Christ is Bible doctrine—"the mind [thinking] of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16). There is a divine plan by which you can advance, outmaneuver Satan, and gain victory in the devil's world. This plan is divine viewpoint—Bible doctrine! Every battle in life can be won if you follow the divine instructions.

34. The carnal believer, out of fellowship with God through sin, grieves and quenches the filling ministry of God the Holy Spirit.

If you fail to follow divine instructions, you will inevitably be overrun by the satanic attack of human viewpoint on your soul. What are some of the human systems of thought used by Satan in the attack?

DIRECT ATTACK

In this system a person reacts to the problems and frustrations of life through anger—a fit of temper, a tantrum, or physical aggression. This mental attitude stems from one of the lust patterns of the sin nature: approbation lust (to get attention), power lust (to control people and the environment around them).³⁵ Then, from emotional revolt and mental attitude sins come vindictiveness and implacability (to be spiteful and seek revenge).

DEFENSE MECHANISMS

When the carnal believer is confronted with pressures he is too weak to bear, he protects himself by reverting to human viewpoint solutions in order to block out reality. In his spiritual immaturity he attempts to cover his own failures or inferiorities in a number of different ways.

Rationalization. This is a form of self-justification, a state of mind that justifies sinful activities or blames God or others for all adversity. The reversionistic believer functioning with scar tissue of the soul, a warped conscience, and human viewpoint does not take responsibility for his failures. When rationalizing, the reversionistic believer does not rebound and advance in *epignosis* knowledge.

Denial. The human viewpoint of denial is a means of coping with unacceptable feelings, anxieties, memories, hostilities, or sins and failures. The carnal believer will disguise from himself the reality of his circumstances, instead of facing the reality of adversity or failure with doctrine resident in his soul.

Sublimation. When a believer becomes bored, lonely, discouraged, or filled with mental attitude sins, he will seek an antidote for his frustrations. He launches a frantic search for happiness through fornication, alcohol, drugs, entertainment. He becomes a slave to the details

35. Thieme, *The Plan of God*, 14–15.

of life and loses his capacity for life, love, and happiness. Therefore, he sublimates.

One of the most common and subtle sublimations is the escape into dream world. In your mind you visualize a place to retreat where you can compensate for the frustrations, adversities, and disappointments of life. When someone is promoted over you, in your bitterness you hop over into dream world. Your dream world is a wonderful, glorious place, for here in 'never-never land' you are supreme. You can see yourself exalted over this person, as he waits on you hand and foot in abject slavery to your every whim.

Perhaps someone jilted you, but in your dream world that person comes crawling back, begging forgiveness and pledging undying love. After a fight with your husband you may say, "I'll show you," and then go on a buying spree that would shake Fort Knox! After a fight with your wife you may get together with the guys at a bar and say, "I do not understand women." In either case you are avoiding the reality of your disappointments and heartaches.

When you retreat from reality to human viewpoint sublimation, you will still possess your bitterness and frustration. You are still upset! Instead, you must apply doctrine to your experience to overcome sublimation! The more Bible doctrine you know, the more you will find strength, comfort, and power when facing the realities of life.

Subjectivity. When emotion dominates thought, subjectivity controls the life. Believers who wear their feelings on their sleeves and are constantly upset about something or someone are subjective thinkers. If certain members in a church do not rush up to greet them and give them the 'glad hand,' they write it off as an unfriendly congregation. They feel left out and depressed. They shop around for another church. Having failed miserably at the office, the country club, or home they want a church where they get attention. They want a church that will substitute for a lonely hearts club. This is a manifestation of self-pity and self-absorption. Such hypersensitivity and subjectivity leaves them vulnerable to a host of mental attitude sins.

There is no excuse for any human viewpoint system of thinking in believers. Your life was designed by God to have peace, happiness, and blessing. Each time you face an adverse situation, you have a choice: you will either retreat into human viewpoint or advance into divine viewpoint. When you arrive at the place of maximum divine

viewpoint, you become occupied with the person of Jesus Christ and move into a place of perfect happiness. As long as you remain stabilized in perfect happiness, nothing can move you (Ps. 16:8).

But that is not all! You become more attractive every second that you look at life from the divine viewpoint. You become a different person. People will gravitate to you because they see your stability. They may not know what the source is, but they know you possess qualities they would give anything to have. Your whole life reflects what you think! This is a part of the concept of inner beauty from the filling of the Spirit and the supergrace life. You need not knock on doors or pass out tracts on a street corner to lead unbelievers to Christ; they will approach you. You will find that leading such people to the Lord is like shooting a duck at two paces with a twelve-gauge shotgun. You cannot miss!

The tragedy is that there are not many believers around with that much stability. Do you know why? Few people know enough doctrine to fill a thimble. They are trying to live up to the 'little light' they have, but it is about to go out! Nowhere does the Bible command you to live up to a little light; rather, you are told to let as much "light" as possible into your right lobe (Ps. 119:130). You cannot get too much doctrine! Doctrine maintains your divine viewpoint and stabilizes your mental attitude.

The Garrison in the Soul

And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience,
when your obedience is fulfilled. (2 Cor. 10:6)

Satan has many clever systems for controlling the soul of believers, but God has provided a security system to protect the soul. "Having in a readiness to revenge" is a military term denoting security and could be translated, "to garrison troops at a certain point to prevent revolution." This verse is a warning against revolution in the soul. When the believer goes negative to Bible doctrine resulting in emotional revolt, reversionism, human viewpoint, and apostasy, his soul is in revolution.

At no time in the Christian experience is the believer invulnerable to emotional revolt. Emotion in itself is an empty physiological re-

sponse; emotion contains no doctrinal content, no mentality, no norms and standards, no common sense. Emotion reflects the character of that to which it responds. If the right lobe contains doctrine, the emotional response is appreciation for truth and divine viewpoint (Ps. 16:7–8). The result is capacity for life, love, happiness. However, if the right lobe is controlled by the sin nature, the authority of doctrine is rejected and the emotions react with wide mood swings—irrationality, egocentricity, instability, imbalance. The person who is led by his emotion is exhilarated when circumstances are pleasant but depressed when they are adverse.

Satan's objective in the angelic conflict is to make your soul a battlefield. He already has an ally in your body—the sin nature, which controls your soul through carnality and reversionism. However, the sin nature can produce only carnality, human good, and evil.³⁶ It takes an outside attack force of satanic doctrine or the “doctrines of demons” (1 Tim. 4:1, NASB) to completely destroy the effectiveness of your soul.

Your soul must have a garrison. If it does not, you become vulnerable to all the emotional activities in Christianity today—the one-shot dedications, the tongues movement, or ‘divine’ healing chicanery. “Having” is a present active participle, linear aktionsart of ἔχω (*echo*), meaning “to have and to hold,” and indicates a certain way of life. Your way of life should maintain a continual guard mount in the soul.

When an infantry battalion is on the move, it must be protected by a “point”—a small group of soldiers placed in front of the main column. There must also be flank and rear protection. When troops rest or bivouac, they set up a perimeter defense with outposts for security.

For the angelic conflict God provides two types of security: eternal security (John 10:28) and temporal security—the maintenance of a garrison in your soul (2 Cor. 10:6). The protection against the takeover of the soul by cosmic doctrines is Bible doctrine. “All disobedience” (παράκοή, *parakoe*) connotes “deviation from obedience or authority.”

36. Evil is Satan's thinking and reflects the subtlety of his genius. Sin and human good are part of his policy. Satan uses evil to corrupt the human race in his attempt to control the world he now rules (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Cor. 4:4). See Thieme, *Reversionism*, 14–19.

You must mount guard in your soul to “revenge all disobedience to authority,” which is revolt in the soul. “Revenge” (ἐκδικέω, *ekdikeo*) denotes punishment and indicates that all these revolts must be punished or put down.

The fact that you are a believer does not mean your soul is automatically garrisoned—this is potential. As you learn categories of doctrine, the ‘troops’ move in, and a garrison is set up in your soul. When you know enough doctrine through the function of GAP, you can quell every revolt in your soul. This is the point at which “obedience is fulfilled.” Doctrine in the right lobe is the main perimeter of your defense—your greatest protection.

What does a new believer do until he develops a garrison in the soul? He fights with a slingshot, bows and arrows, or fists; in other words, he uses the faith-rest technique as a holding force until he builds a stronger and more permanent defense. Faith-rest is designed simply to claim promises and principles in the Word in order to stabilize the soul. The full-strength garrison is the full knowledge of Bible doctrines in the right lobe that builds the Edification Complex and the supergrace life.

Meditate [keep thinking] upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting [progress] may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save [deliver] thyself [from satanic doctrine], and them that hear thee [those over whom you have influence]. (1 Tim. 4:15–16)

Holding in readiness [the garrison of doctrine] to punish all deviation from obedience [revolt], when your obedience [deficiency of doctrine] has been fulfilled, so as to fully influence you. (2 Cor. 10:6, corrected translation)

The Danger of Superficial Evaluation

Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ’s, let him of himself think this again, that, as he *is* Christ’s, even so *are* we Christ’s. (2 Cor. 10:7)

The first phrase of this verse is the biography of the believer without a garrison. In the Greek it is a statement, not a question. It says literally, “You are in the habit of looking at things according to the standard of superficial appearance.” “Look” in verse 7 is βλέπω (*blepo*), a “superficial glance,” in contrast to ὁράω (*horao*), a “close look,” a look based on doctrine. *Blepo* indicates soulish revolt in the Corinthians. Although no demon can enter the body of a believer, satanic doctrine can infiltrate the soul when the garrison goes to sleep through neglect of Bible doctrine.

One of the great dangers we face in the Christian life is to assume that we know something when we know nothing. People in this category inevitably reveal the nothingness in their souls by their superficial evaluations. They view circumstances completely through human viewpoint—the outward appearance (1 Sam. 16:7). Such believers get their eyes on other people, things, or self and have no discernment relative to spiritual values. They are souls without a garrison, overrun and neutralized by the devil. Carried away by emotion they may sing hymns about ‘power’ in the blood,³⁷ dedicate, rededicate, and call this the victorious Christian life. But, where does God look? On the *emotions*? No! God evaluates what goes on in the heart—the *right lobe*! That is where the garrison should be.

“If anyone has confidence [and you do] regarding himself that he belongs to Christ” (2 Cor. 10:7b, corrected translation) means that the Corinthians have not gone so far into reversionism that they think they have lost their salvation. But at this point that is about all they remember. How will they recover? Paul knows they cannot think doctrine while in emotional revolt and reversionism; therefore, he directs their attention to his authority.

He reminds them that when they criticize him, they are criticizing a member of the Body of Christ. Furthermore, he has authority over them by divine appointment. As the communicator of doctrine, Paul, as well as all pastor-teachers, have special authority (Heb. 13:7, 17). When people in the congregation nit-pick and criticize the pastor, and attempt to tell him how to do his job, this is a sign of emotional revolt. Therefore, in 2 Corinthians 10:8, Paul defends his authority and his right to judge on the basis of his spiritual gift of communication (Eph. 4:11; 1 Thess. 5:12).

37. Thieme, *The Blood of Christ* (2002).

The Issue of Authority

For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord [Holy Spirit] hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed. (2 Cor. 10:8)

Paul includes all three communicators who had ministered to the Corinthians—Timothy, Titus, and himself—when he says, “For if I [maybe I will and maybe I will not—third-class condition] should boast a little too much concerning our authority.” Paul’s critics were saying that he was a great braggart and that authority had gone to his head. They insisted that he was abusing his authority by keeping them under his thumb.

Ironically, this is exactly what the legalists were doing. Their strategy was to shame him by making the use of his authority appear as bullying, so that he would not use his authority to check their power lust. By repudiating his authority through their legalistic teaching, they were destroying the Corinthian church. But Paul, knowing that his authority was from God, was neither ashamed nor afraid to use it. In fact, he would become a ‘drill sergeant’ and pull rank on them.

The gift of pastor-teacher has been sovereignly bestowed by God the Holy Spirit for the purpose of edification of the saints. The *primary* objective of the communication of doctrine is the construction of the Edification Complex in the soul. The *ultimate* objective is for believers to reach the supergrace life. Even though the pastor-teacher may find it necessary to severely admonish his flock, it is not for their “destruction”; to the contrary, it is to keep them from reversionism. No believer ever builds an Edification Complex in the soul or moves into supergrace without accepting his right pastor-teacher’s authority, which has graciously been provided by the Holy Spirit and is exercised through ICE teaching³⁸ of the Word of God.

That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters.
(2 Cor. 10:9)

38. ICE is an acronym for isagogics, categories, and exegesis. It is the hermeneutical method I adopted for interpreting the Scriptures in rightly dividing the Word of Truth using the original languages (2 Tim. 2:15). See Thieme, *Daniel Chapters One through Six* (1996), 3–4, 199.

Paul's critics claimed he was terrorizing and intimidating the Corinthian believers with his epistles. Obviously, parts of the Corinthian epistles were for reproof. Because of this, the critics wanted Corinthian believers to reject Paul and his epistles as a source of doctrine and divine viewpoint. Therefore, it became necessary for Paul to defend the authority issue through the doctrine of inspiration.³⁹ As in communication, so in inspiration, the authority of the message is provided by God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit used the writers of Scripture to record God's complete and coherent thought toward man. Paul's hard-nosed rebuke was conducted in the ministry of the Holy Spirit under the principle of divine inspiration. Certain portions of the Bible are harsh, designed to warn believers against reversionism. Whatever the subject, every portion of Scripture is vital and necessary (2 Tim. 3:16–17)!

For *his* letters, say they [the critics], *are* weighty and powerful; but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible. (2 Cor. 10:10)

Again, his critics are quoted as saying that his letters are “severe and vehement” (literal translation). These words imply that Paul is tyrannical and lacks love and compassion. The critics resent his dogmatism and authority in teaching. From their critical attitude toward his message, they move on to ridicule his personal appearance and public speaking ability. When anyone rejects the doctrinal message, inevitably he will find something to reject in the person of the communicator: “*his* bodily presence *is* weak [sickly], and *his* speech contemptible.”

Greek culture especially revered two things: a beautiful body and a skillful orator. Since most of the heroes of ancient Greece were either strong, muscular men or people with eloquent tongues, the Greeks worshiped these two attainments. The legalists made an issue of Paul's appearance. His critics pointed out that Paul did not meet any of the heroic specifications of Greek culture. They intimated that he would

39. In inspiration, God the Holy Spirit so supernaturally directed the human authors of Scripture, that without waiving their human intelligence, vocabulary, individuality, literary style, personality, personal feelings, or any other human factor, His message to mankind was recorded with perfect accuracy in the original languages of Scripture, the very words bearing the authority of divine authorship. See Thieme, *Canonicity* (1973).

have no influence in a Greek city like Corinth because of his sickly body and his shortcomings as a public speaker.

This description of Paul is confirmed by a number of extrabiblical historical sources, one of which describes Paul as being “short, bald, bowlegged, with meeting eyebrows and a hooked proboscis.” A fourth-century manuscript, ascribed to Lucian, portrayed Paul unflatteringly as the “bald-headed, hook-nosed Galilean.” John of Antioch, in the sixth century, characterized Paul as “round-shouldered and having greyish eyes, aquiline nose, meeting eyebrows and ample beard.”

Apparently, Paul did not make a good first impression, and frankly, I am delighted that he did not. Paul is a good illustration of the invisible power in the Christian life. To serve the Lord, it is not necessary to work out with barbells and develop muscles. Nor is the secret in eloquent speech. In fact, there are too many eloquent speakers in pulpits today who know how to say nothing beautifully!

If Paul had some type of speech impediment, he never seemed to be disturbed or hampered by his human handicaps for an obvious reason: He depended on the power of God! He knew that the power of God not only provided more than adequately for any human deficiency, but also it was the only source for a successful ministry.

Human viewpoint said, “Paul, you will never make a preacher; you are an unrefined public speaker; you have no presence, and your appearance detracts. You simply will never be able to hold an audience, so do not bother to come to our seminary or apply to our pulpit committee. You do not fill the bill!” Human viewpoint demands a tall, attractive, eloquent gentleman—someone who will be a social lion, have the right kind of a personality, and raise money.

What is the divine viewpoint? Does he teach the Word of God? Does he use divine power? Paul illustrates in this passage the difference between divine and human viewpoints. He declares that from the human viewpoint he could not serve anywhere as a pastor, but God has graciously given him the gift of authority—apostleship. Further, God has given him the gift of teaching, and regardless of his lack of eloquence, Paul is unsurpassed as a teacher. From the human viewpoint, he was totally handicapped. From the divine viewpoint, he was a complete product of grace.

When you use God’s Word and God’s power—the filling of the Spirit—all the handicaps of life cannot hinder you from fulfilling the

responsibility for which the Lord has left you in this world. It is not how you look, it is what you think! Do not take this to mean that you should be sloppy in your appearance. As a representative of the Lord, you should groom yourself to the best of your ability. It is not how you speak; it is not your personality; it is what you think! All the handicaps in the world are inconsequential if you have divine viewpoint in your right lobe.

Although the critics could not permanently damage Paul's ministry, they were permitted by God to continue their activities to test the discernment and positive volition of believers. The tests are no different today. Are you occupied with Christ or with people? Do you truly love the Word, or are you concerned only with superficialities?

Let such an one [the critic] think [consider] this, that, such as [of what sort] we are in word by letters when we are absent, such *will we be* also in deed when we are present. (2 Cor. 10:11)

Paul comes back at his critics with a declaration of his consistency. He said, "Let the critics and Judaizers consider the facts. I have been consistent whether present or absent."

Paul preferred to teach God's Word in a gracious manner, but when the occasion called for it, he could lower the boom. We know this from the second chapter of Galatians. In Antioch, Paul had found it necessary to reprimand the leader of the local church. Do you know whom he reprimanded? Peter! Paul rebuked Peter saying, in effect, "You are a legalist! You are wrong!" (Gal. 2:11–21). He chewed Peter up one side and down the other!

What is the divine viewpoint in 2 Corinthians 10:11? "When I come back, I am going to get tough!" Those who had fallen for human viewpoint would have a positive demonstration of the correct viewpoint when Paul returned. Then he goes on to ask, "Who are these people who are criticizing me? And what is the source of their viewpoint?"

The Inconsistency of Human Viewpoint

For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but

they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. (2 Cor. 10:12)

Occasionally, after I have interjected a little sarcasm into my teaching, I receive an anonymous letter. Someone rises up in ascetic wrath against my use of sarcasm, writing “sarcasm has no place in the pulpit, it is antibiblical.” But notice again the use of Paul’s sanctified sarcasm under the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

“We do not have the boldness,” Paul says, oozing sarcasm, “to judge ourselves worthy” (“of the number” is not in the original Greek). To “make [or judge] ourselves” means “to evaluate ourselves in the same place or rank.” In other words, he is saying, “the legalists are *so* superior to me, that I am not even in the picture! I could never qualify for such a great society; I am *too far* beneath them!”

Paul now adds humor to sarcasm: To “compare ourselves” is a paronomasia. However, the play on words is lost in the English. He says, “We do not have the boldness to either judge ourselves worthy (ἐγκρίνω, *egkrino*), or to compare ourselves favorably (συγκρίνω, *sugkrino*) with certain ones who constantly recommend themselves favorably.” The critics always consider themselves better than everyone else. They have found in Paul a common target for criticism, and while they malign and judge him, they flatter each other and stimulate their own approbation lust. Paul is completely ostracized from their mutual admiration society. Yet from the divine viewpoint, not one of them was worthy to clean the mud from his sandals.

To compare yourself with another believer is a very subtle form of carnality. Do you know why? Because it involves a mental attitude of pride, and pride is one of the most insidious of mental attitude sins. Paul says these people are not wise because they have rejected doctrine and are operating on human viewpoint.

The Standard of Bible Doctrine

But we will not boast of things without *our* measure, but according to the measure of the rule [authority of the κανών, *kanon*] which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you. (2 Cor. 10:13)

“But” is a conjunction that sets forth a contrast between the human viewpoint of the mutual admiration society of verse 12 and the divine viewpoint of believers with doctrine in the right lobe. The Greek says literally, “But we will not boast with reference to things not measured.” Paul will not boast about false standards that do not line up with doctrine.

The next conjunction of contrast describes that which Paul will boast about: “but according to the measure [standard] of the *kanon*.” A ruler or measuring stick, the *kanon* (from which we derive the word “canon”), is used here for infallible Scripture. God has not left believers in the dark regarding the divine standards for life. They are found in the *kanon* of the Word of God and nowhere else. While in their state of emotional revolt and reversionism, Paul’s critics have rejected the *kanon* or rule, “which God [through the Holy Spirit] hath distributed to us [in the *kanon*].” The Word of God is given to us through the human writers of Scripture.

“A measure” is the divine viewpoint, the absolute criterion for the believer. But this time, in contrast to being distributed in the *kanon*, it reaches us through the *communication* of doctrine. “To reach even unto you” (ἄχρι καὶ ὑμῶν, *achri kai humon*), as it is translated in the English, robs it of its sarcasm. It actually means “as far as you all.” The reversionistic believers have received the divine standard, but they have rejected it for the persuasiveness of the legalists.

Results of Divine Viewpoint

For we stretch not ourselves beyond *our measure*, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in *preaching* [proclaiming] the gospel of Christ. (2 Cor. 10:14)

In order to understand the divine viewpoint in this verse, we must explore some background. When Paul first came to Corinth (Acts 18:1), he communicated the concept of grace from the absolute criterion of doctrine. The Corinthians responded positively to his dogmatic presentation of the Gospel of grace and then to his continued grace teaching of Bible doctrine. After Paul left them, they became carnal and he was equally dogmatic in his rebuke about their carnality,

as expressed in the first Corinthian epistle. This is the reason that 1 Corinthians was so unpopular. The Corinthians reacted to his rebuke with emotional revolt.

Now, in 2 Corinthians 10:14, Paul uses the illustration of their salvation to explain the divine viewpoint. He says, literally, "For not reaching toward you [with the Gospel], as we did not overextend ourselves; for as far as you also we have advanced in the Gospel of Christ." What is Paul saying? "When I first came to Corinth, none of you were believers. I came in and dogmatically laid grace on the line! Did I overextend myself? You have been criticizing me for being too dogmatic. You claim I am going too far! Why did you not say that when you responded to my dogmatic presentation of the Gospel?"

Why the sudden complaint about dogmatism? Because he stepped on their toes. So they reacted saying that he was a bully and a dictator! Yet Paul is consistent; they are inconsistent and out of line. If Paul had gone beyond the bounds of the Gospel and taught salvation by works, none of them would have been saved. But Paul neither went outside the boundaries of grace in salvation nor beyond the limits of doctrine in reproofing them.

Paul rebuked them with regard to their carnality. For them to advance, they must take the reprimand, rebound, and accept the discipline under the authority of the Word of God. These believers cannot advance spiritually unless they accept the entire communication of doctrine and the authority of the pastor-teacher. They cannot reject what they do not like without retreating into emotional revolt, scar tissue, and reversionism.

Not boasting of things without *our* measure, *that is*, of other men's labours; but having hope [confidence], when your faith [doctrine] is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly. (2 Cor. 10:15)

Boasting is dependent on human ability and human accomplishment and is, therefore, related to human good and human viewpoint. Paul refuses to boast in human viewpoint or in anything that lacks orientation to the grace and doctrine of God. Even though he founded the Corinthian church, he does not boast in these accomplishments. But he has a right to have confidence regarding them as the fruits of his labor. He anticipates that they will rebound and recover from

emotional revolt and reversionism through a change of attitude toward doctrine. As a result they will grow up spiritually. His ministry will thus be extended in their lives, and doctrine will be enlarged or magnified (Ps. 138:2).

While it is possible for a child to do certain things like an adult, we do not consider that child an adult. He is still a child! Children have changeable behavior patterns—one moment they may act like a child, and the next, like an adult. But we hope that eventually their actions will be consistently adult. What causes a child to mature? Not by occasionally acting like an adult, but by growing up mentally.

To mature is to grow up mentally, both in the human life and the spiritual life. There are periods in the life of a Christian when he will do something spiritually right, but that does not constitute spiritual maturity. Maturity is what you habitually think, not what you do! Often you see someone who, as a result of some mental retardation, develops physically, but whose mind never catches up. Mentally, he will always be a child, even though he has an adult body. Just as a person is not an adult on the basis of the maturity of his human body, so the believer does not become an adult on the basis of his actions.

I am going to make a dogmatic statement—and I hope you will never forget it: No Christian can ever become spiritually mature apart from a maximum knowledge of God's Word! "So then faith [doctrine] cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Doctrine can be increased only by the absorption of the Word through the function of GAP.

Divine Viewpoint in Witnessing

To preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to boast in another man's line of things [false standard] made ready to our hand. (2 Cor. 10:16)

When doctrine is magnified in a local church through the daily function of GAP, there is an increase in effective witnessing⁴⁰ and a greater missionary outreach. The "*regions* beyond" refer to any place from next door to ten thousand miles away. Again, Paul says he will

40. Thieme, *Witnessing*.

not “boast in” or cater to the false norms and standards of the legalists, who have gone far afield with their human viewpoint. But he knows that when reversionism is cured by a change of mental attitude toward doctrine and the daily function of GAP, the Corinthians will then move out with the Gospel and make the salvation issue clear. All witnessing and evangelism must be biblically accurate and presented on a grace basis.

“Things made ready to our hand” means “with reference to the things prepared.” Legalists never start their own work but will tear down the work of others. Their norms are formed by human viewpoint. They have a public relations ‘Madison Avenue’ approach to witnessing which, though appealing, is nonbiblical. There is no place in witnessing for human viewpoint or gimmicks, which become substitutes for the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Gimmick-witnessing is a false standard sponsored by those who are ignorant of, or in revolt against, Bible doctrine. Those who criticized Paul were boasting of others who evangelized via the human viewpoint method.

No believer in emotional revolt and reversionism can effectively communicate the Gospel. He always has an axe to grind, such as legalism. He invariably adds something to the Gospel and confuses the issue for the unbeliever. He wants the unbeliever to give up certain sins that shock him. He thinks the unbeliever must believe *and* be baptized; believe *and* confess his sins; believe *and* join the church. But the issue is grace—faith *plus* nothing: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31).

Divine Commendation

But he that glorieth, let him glory [keep on glorying] in the Lord. (2 Cor. 10:17)

This is a quotation from Jeremiah 9:24a, which warns believers of the danger of reversionism. The context of the Jeremiah passage describes the national disintegration of Judah, which had reached its peak following an eleven-year period of rejecting doctrine. The Jews had all three categories of prosperity stated in context: success, economic, and spiritual (Jer. 9:23). For a period of time they had functioned under GAP. But, through neglect of doctrine, they went into emotional revolt

and reversionism and became “wise in their own conceits” (Rom. 11:25; 12:16)—they thought they knew it all!

In prosperity, the believer is more vulnerable to reversionism than under adversity and pressure, for in prosperity there is a tendency to neglect doctrine. Through pride of their success, the Jews started down the road toward reversionism. They boasted of their achievements and wealth, but without an Edification Complex and supergrace these attainments are meaningless. Although God has a supergrace prosperity package for every believer, the capacity for supergrace blessings must come from Bible doctrine in the right lobe.

Paul now makes the same application for the Jews of his day. “If you feel you must boast,” he says, “change it to glorying in the Lord.” Second Corinthians 10:17 does not mean that you run around saying “Praise God, hallelujah, Jesus is wonderful!” That can be as phony as a lead nickel. People use these phrases like an amulet worn around the neck for good luck in the hopes of staving off failure. Glorying in the Lord is *thinking* Bible doctrine!

How do you keep on glorying in the Lord? To glory in the Lord, doctrine must be taken in daily. Transferred to the right lobe by faith and the filling of the Spirit, doctrine goes into the frame of reference, memory center, vocabulary storage, categorical storage, conscience, momentum, and wisdom compartments. You cannot neglect doctrine even for a day.

For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but
whom the Lord commendeth. (2 Cor. 10:18)

The Corinthians were commending or recommending themselves for favorable attention because they thought they had arrived at the epitome of spiritual and economic prosperity. In reality, like their earlier counterparts in Judea, they were in emotional revolt and reversionism.

Today, you will find ‘Corinthians’ who are in the business of commending themselves wherever you go. At every opportunity they will tell you what a great battle they are fighting for the Lord. They make it very clear that they are doing “great things for God” around the church or in some Christian organization. What are they seeking? Approval! Perhaps in other walks of life they have never been recognized, and they are starved for approbation. They want some pastor to publicly express thanks for their accomplishments.

If your activities are motivated solely for the purpose of securing approval and recognition, you may be doing a right thing but in a wrong way. What trips you up? Mental attitude human viewpoint! All your efforts should be discontinued until you can do them as unto the Lord. When you do your job as unto the Lord, you leave the commendation in His hands, to His discretion and His wisdom. Forget all the other one-upmanship activities designed to promote self. The believer cannot be blessed under these conditions.

God does not approve when you promote yourself or take credit for yourself. When you criticize, judge, or slander another believer you are, in effect, attempting to promote yourself. However, your human gimmicks are worthless. If the Lord does not promote you, you are not promoted (Ps. 75:6–7). All evaluation is in the Lord's hands. Judging and promotion are divine prerogatives.

David perfectly illustrates the principle that at the right time the Lord promotes the mature believer. No treatise on mental attitude would be complete without a mention of his rise to prominence.

THE ASCENDANCY OF DAVID

David began his career not only from an obscure position but as a nonentity. If you want to know what a nonentity is—it is the eighth son in a family! The other seven were being promoted, pushed along, and educated. This took all of the father's resources, which were vested in sheep. Someone had to take care of the sheep to keep the other seven boys in school and moving along in their careers. Being the eighth, David was the logical choice. He was on the bottom rung, the forgotten son of the family. He lived more with the sheep than he did in his father's home in Bethlehem.

From this anonymous place as a shepherd, David went all the way to the highest position in the land. He was truly a great man in history, from both the divine and human viewpoints, and was one of the greatest rulers of all time. We are familiar with his many courageous acts: how he alone challenged and killed the giant; how he became the highest ranking general in the land; how he became the most popular man in the court; how, in exile, he forged a band of fugitives into a crack military outfit; and finally, how he became king. In fact, we

often become so lost in the action of the story that we forget his actions were based on mental attitude. All the time that David was engaged in these overt activities, he was not simply doing—he was thinking! The principle that made David a great king and gave such tremendous vitality and power to so many of his actions was the thinking in his right lobe. A mental attitude based on doctrine was the secret of his success.

The Contrast between Human and Divine Viewpoints

In 1 Samuel 16:1–5, God instructed the prophet, Samuel, to go to Bethlehem to anoint the next king of Israel. Saul was to be succeeded by a son from the family of Jesse. When the seven sons were paraded before Samuel, the eldest appealed to Samuel. Tall, handsome, and wearing his new uniform as a second lieutenant in the infantry, he was preparing to go to war against the Philistines who had invaded Israel.

And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD'S anointed is before him. But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart [right lobe]. (1 Sam. 16:6–7)

Notice the contrast stated: “man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the right lobe.” From the human viewpoint, here was a tall, handsome, personable individual whom anyone might have selected to fill the job. But God said, “No! You can go up and down that line as much as you want, but I have rejected these seven boys—even though they are all fine looking!”

Immediately Samuel hit a stone wall. Where was the answer to this dilemma? The answer was out with the sheep, faithfully on the job. When one of the lambs was caught in the cactus, David retrieved it. When a wild animal took a sheep from the flock, he gave chase and killed the animal! Why? He had the right mental attitude—the divine viewpoint of life. He was occupied with the person of Christ (Ps. 23). When he heard that Samuel had come to town, he did not run into town; he remained with the sheep.

Samuel asked if these were all Jesse's sons. In derision Jesse said, "There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep" (1 Sam. 16:11*b*), implying that the youngest was of no importance. Yet this was the son whom God had chosen! Do you see the contrast? Human viewpoint: pick one of the tall, good-looking boys—any one of them would make a fine-looking king! Divine viewpoint: there is a boy out with the sheep who is faithful and who has doctrine in his right lobe.

Two incidents in 1 Samuel 17 illustrate the doctrine David had been storing up.

And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock. (1 Sam. 17:34)

"Kept his father's sheep" is literally, "kept on keeping his father's sheep" and there is a vast difference. He was not a temporary, one-day shepherd, he was out there full time. What makes people keep on keeping on, even when they are tired, worn out, discouraged, disgusted, hurting, or sick? Divine viewpoint in the right lobe! With doctrine you will be faithful in every situation, as was David.

In the first incident a lion, which can run the hundred-yard dash in five seconds, attacked the flock and carried off a choice lamb. As far as human viewpoint is concerned, this crisis was now over. The lion had come, the lion had departed, and David was still in one piece. What else mattered? Do we read that David sat down, mopped his brow, and let his nerves unwind? Not at all! That lamb was *his* responsibility.

How easy it would have been for David to think human viewpoint: "That is just one little lamb, and I do not want to tangle with that lion." But divine viewpoint told David that no matter what the cost, he should be faithful and do his job. Undoubtedly, David learned the principle, "the battle *is* the LORD'S" (1 Sam. 17:47), while he was still with the sheep. And since David believed it, he knew the Lord could whip the lion, just as he knew he could not do it by himself. So without a second thought, he followed and killed the lion and delivered the lamb back to the fold!

Notice that the emphasis is not on the incredible feat that he accomplished. God's Word very clearly and succinctly reveals what David *thought*. Unlike the modern sportsman on safari, David did not

have the benefit of a .375 H & H Magnum, nor did he have a gun bearer as a backup in case he missed! He went after that lion with anything but lion-hunting equipment, yet he bagged a lion! But, *he* did not do it—the Lord did it!

In the second incident David was tested by a bear. The bear is also a tough customer. One whack with his paw and he can crush a back-bone. The bear too picked out a choice lamb and took off for the feast. But before the bear could get the lamb ‘on the table,’ David was hot on his trail.

Now David could have rationalized and said, “After all, I am the only young boy who has ever killed a lion, so I think I will just rest on my laurels and sit this one out.” Not David! He knew he had a responsibility before the Lord, and he did his job as unto the Lord. David could not whip the bear, but he knew the Lord could. He would go after the bear and let the Lord take care of the rest.

The supergrace believer does not quit in the middle of testing. Having passed the test of the lion, David did not shirk the test of the bear. Doctrine is as good for one type of combat as for another. Later, doctrine would deliver him in hand-to-hand combat with a loud-mouthed giant who was not as tough as either the lion or the bear.

David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. (1 Sam. 17:37a)

This was success, especially to one so young, but David did not suggest that it was in any way due to his power, ingenuity, or ability. He did not take credit for himself, nor did he become arrogant about his victory. He did not ballyhoo himself by calling the news media of his day to photograph himself with the carcass. In fact, he told no one about the incident at that time. Why? Because he persisted in habitually looking at life from the divine viewpoint that says, “For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth” (2 Cor. 10:18).

The lion and bear victories were dress rehearsals for the Goliath crisis. Unseen by others and without human encouragement, David had defeated both adversaries. If he had flunked the lion and bear incidents, he would have failed the Goliath test. God prepares His man in secret for

victory in public. The victory is won in the secret places of the Most High (Ps. 91) and in the mental attitude of the supergrace believer.

Jesse might have sat up and taken notice if he knew that this young lad who “keepeth the sheep” had already killed a lion and a bear. In his right lobe David had that which would make him the greatest ruler of all time apart from Jesus Christ. If you want to know some of David’s thoughts during those years while he kept the sheep, read the Davidic Psalms. Note how many times the divine viewpoint is expressed: “The LORD *is* my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (Ps. 27:1). Humanly speaking, everyone has some area of fear, but David had conquered fear (Ps. 56:3). Why? Because he looked at life from the divine viewpoint. And where did he get the divine viewpoint? From doctrine in his right lobe. In every Psalm David wrote you will find a beautiful picture of God’s deliverance and power.

Do you panic every time you read the newspaper or hear some rumor on the radio? Do you come unglued at the slightest provocation? What goes on in your mind? Why do you become upset every time you face adversity? Why do you fall apart? I will tell you why: there is either no Bible doctrine in your soul, or you have failed to apply what you know!

The Prosperity Test

Let us examine other examples of divine viewpoint in David’s life. King Saul was suffering from manic depression (1 Sam. 16:14) and his doctors recommended musical therapy. They wanted classical music played skillfully on the psalter—the ten-string harp. One of Saul’s servants knew of a boy out in the hills of Judea who was an accomplished harpist, and so it was that David was brought into Saul’s court.

David played day after day and Saul’s condition improved. In appreciation, Saul appointed David as his armorbearer (1 Sam. 16:21). That may not sound like much to you. You may picture him weighted down with heavy battle equipment and assigned to a tough job. But David had servants to carry the breastplate, helmet, and other accouterments. Armorbearer was an honorary position. A person who was

an armorbearer of the king would one day be a general, a prime minister, or would hold some other high office in the land. It was a guarantee of future prominence.

From the human viewpoint, David had reached a pinnacle as the armorbearer of the king. "But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem" (1 Sam. 17:15). Now most people would have told David that he was out of his mind—he had just forfeited the opportunity of a lifetime. I can just see Jesse when David came home. He probably said, "David, what are you doing here? You are the king's armorbearer. I have told everyone how important you are to the king. Did the king send you back?"

David would have replied, "No, the king did not send me home. I returned to take care of the sheep. God has anointed me and I will wait on Him for promotion." Jesse would have been furious. Why? Human viewpoint! But divine viewpoint said, "God did not promote me; He did not say for me to stay at the palace. Therefore, I will stay with the sheep." David's head was not turned by prosperity. The super-grace hero has the mental attitude to pass the prosperity test. Most people would have been too proud to go back to the humdrum of daily routine after success in the king's court. But, David returned to the sheep to wait for God's timing. Supergrace believers do not jump ahead of the Lord! God promoted David at the right time.

The Man for the Crisis

We now come to the incident for which God had been preparing David—a crisis designed by God to introduce the next king of Israel. Goliath, the nine-foot-nine-inch giant of Gath, represented the military crisis Israel faced. For forty days he had daily bellowed his challenge for someone to fight him, while the soldiers of Israel trembled in their tents. On the fortieth day David arrived at the camp. As the king's armorbearer? No! As a boy carrying ten cheeses for the battalion commander, plus a supply of rations for his three brothers.

When David heard the challenge of 'Old Loudmouth,' did he say, "Who is this giant that he should dare stand in front of Saul's Imperial Guard and make such remarks?" No! David said, "For who *is* this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" (1 Sam. 17:26b). David regarded the Philistine as an unbeliever,

rather than as a powerful giant. He considered it disgraceful and dishonorable that forty days had elapsed without anyone accepting the challenge. After all, they were soldiers of the living God! That was the first time divine viewpoint was expressed in the entire situation. Goliath was not defying Saul and his army, he was defying God.

The Attack of Human Viewpoint

As David went to meet the challenge, he had to confront his own brother before he could fight the giant. Eliab accused him of arrogance and branded him a deserter of his “few sheep” (1 Sam. 17:28). Eliab was loaded down with the mental attitude sins of pride, jealousy, anger, bitterness, and revenge. Ignoring the insults of his brother, David won his first battle against subjectivity, pettiness, and reversionism. David was a supergrace hero known to God, but this status was unknown by his family or anyone else in Israel.

To win the battle against Eliab, David retreated; to defeat the giant, David would advance. Not all battles in the spiritual life are won in the same way. Although Eliab’s remarks were inaccurate, unfair, and uncalled for, David did not defend himself. He recognized that this was a doctrinal issue. If David had lost his temper with his brother, he would not have been ready to fight Goliath. While Eliab put David down, God brought David up! Your supergrace victory over pettiness today may result in ‘killing the giant’ tomorrow.

The Attack of Worldliness

King Saul had once been a courageous soldier, but in reversionism he had turned into a coward. Now during a crisis that he could not solve, a cunning plan took shape in his distorted mind—Saul offered David his armor (1 Sam. 17:38). “If David is lucky and defeats Goliath,” reasoned Saul, “I could take credit for the victory because David is wearing my armor.” Here was yet another test—an attack of worldliness—before David could get to Goliath. Saul’s armor on David represents worldliness. But good weapons and armor would not destroy Goliath. David knew that only the power and grace of God would defeat the giant.

No weapon or armor can ever replace the power of God. Grace excludes human ability, human equipment, human help. Bible doctrine had taught David to be independent of *cosmos diabolicus* in any form. David preserved the grace of God in his soul by refusing the armor of Saul. He rejected the worldly means of facing the crisis. It was not the armor but the attitude of soul. David would face the crisis with Bible doctrine, not fancy armor on his body!

The Mental Attitude of a Supergrace Hero

Goliath, armed with spear and shield, could scarcely believe his eyes when David walked out on the battlefield. Affronted by this measly offering from the Jewish camp, he began to mock David, shouting, “Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?” (1 Sam. 17:43). Goliath viewed the situation in this way: Saul had sent out a mere boy to do combat with the greatest gladiator of the Philistines! The Jews must have had a very low opinion of him.

What was David carrying? He held the shepherd’s crook in one hand and a sling in the other (1 Sam. 17:40). Goliath said, “You might fight a dog with a stick, but you will never defeat me with such flimsy protection! You had better go back and get yourself a javelin, boy, because you are going to need it!” *Human viewpoint!* Then we read that Goliath cursed David by “his gods”—not by the Philistines’ gods, but by David’s God, יהוה (*Yahweh*). Goliath said to David, “Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field” (1 Sam. 17:44). *Human viewpoint!*

Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. (1 Sam. 17:45)

David, as a supergrace believer, is quick to express the true issue and to identify himself with the living God—Jesus Christ. *Divine viewpoint!*

This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will

give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. (1 Sam. 17:46)

By this time, Goliath's mouth was probably hanging open. No one had ever spoken to him like that! He had never heard such words. Did David speak these words to demonstrate his prowess in combat? No, but to make known "that there is a God in Israel"! Unfortunately, in the telling of the story of David and Goliath, the emphasis is all too often on what David *did*—how he hit the giant with a stone, knocked him out, and beheaded him. But, where does God's Word focus your attention? If you understand 1 Samuel 17:45–47, you can see that God's Word emphasizes David's *thinking*, not what he accomplished a few minutes later.

And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle *is* the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands. (1 Sam. 17:47)

This magnificent declaration, "the battle *is* the LORD'S," is one of the greatest principles in the Christian life. Spoken under maximum pressure, we see the stabilized mental attitude of the supergrace believer. David was the only one there that day who had enough doctrine in his soul to meet the challenge. Having made his decision based on Bible doctrine in his right lobe, David went into action.

David ran toward the army of the Philistines to meet Goliath (1 Sam. 17:48). As he went forward, David 'cranked up' his sling and released the stone, hitting Goliath squarely in the middle of his forehead. Down went the giant, out cold! David then stood on his chest, pulled out Goliath's own sword, and decapitated him. The action of the story is well known. But before there was any action, there was a mental attitude based on Bible doctrine. David's thought pattern, not just his ability to fight, distinguished him from all the warriors in Israel.

The supergrace believer has no emotional hangups, no subjectivity, no fear. David had no qualms about killing the enemy, no guilt complex after the battle was over. He was a perfect combat soldier because his soul was prepared by doctrine long before his body advanced into battle. The action of the supergrace believer reflects his

thinking so that he is perfectly coordinated in soul and body. David personified the principle of 2 Corinthians 10:5:

Assaulting and demolishing cosmic thought, and every obstacle of pride attacking against the objective knowledge of God, and making a prisoner of every human viewpoint system of thought to the authority of Christ.

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF THE DOCTRINE OF MENTAL ATTITUDE

- I. What you think is what you really are. Therefore, your mental attitude determines both your life and your character (Prov. 23:7).
- II. During the angelic conflict and human history, there are two conflicting attitudes striving for control of the mentality of the soul: divine viewpoint and human viewpoint (Isa. 55:7–9).
 - A. Divine viewpoint is the “mind of Christ” and the believer’s orientation to life based on the thinking, value system, and problem-solving ability gleaned from Bible doctrine.
 - 1. God’s plan, Operation Grace, demands a transformation of the thinking of the believer-priest to divine viewpoint (Rom. 12:2; 2 Tim. 1:7).
 - 2. The intake of doctrine under the daily function of GAP changes the believer’s mental attitude to divine viewpoint (1 Cor. 2:16; 2 Cor. 10:4–5; Phil. 2:5).

3. Divine viewpoint results in:
 - a. Confidence under all circumstances in life (2 Cor. 5:1, 6, 8);
 - b. Stability in adversity or prosperity (Phil. 4:7; 2 Thess. 2:2);
 - c. Inner happiness that produces capacity for life, love, and blessing (Phil. 2:2);
 - d. Giving with the proper motivation of grace orientation (2 Cor. 9:7);
 - e. Capacity to love God, and a relaxed mental attitude toward people (1 Cor. 13:4–8a; 1 John 4:19).
- B. Human viewpoint is any human or satanic system of thinking, values, or problem solving that is contrary and opposed to divine viewpoint, values, and problem solving as revealed in the Bible.
 1. Mental attitude sins produce self-induced misery (Prov. 15:13).
 2. Worldliness is human viewpoint mental attitude rather than overt activity (Rom. 12:2; Col. 3:2).
 3. Evil is something you think rather than something you do (Matt. 9:4; Gal. 6:3). Doing results from thinking.

Appendix B

DOCTRINE OF THE HEART

I. Definition

- A. The word “heart” in the Bible (from the Hebrew, *leb*, and the Greek, *kardia*) rarely refers to the physiological heart, but it is used for that part of the mentality of the soul called the “right lobe,” the locale for thinking divine viewpoint (1 Sam. 16:7; Prov. 23:7).
- B. The usage of the word “heart” for the right lobe of the soul is based on the analogy to the physical heart. Just as the heart is the pump that circulates blood throughout the body and thereby supports physical life, so the right lobe of the soul circulates Bible doctrine that supports the spiritual life of the believer.
- C. The heart or right lobe is the target of GAP, the source of concentration and application of doctrine to experience (1 Kings 3:9, 12; Job 38:36; Ps. 19:14; 119:11; Prov. 2:2, 10; 3:3; 4:4; 10:8; 15:14; 18:15).

II. The essence of the heart

- A. The frame of reference is the first compartment where doctrine enters the right lobe and becomes *epignosis* knowledge. Here, doctrine accumulates gradually in increments and is used by the Holy Spirit to increase the believer's capacity to learn more doctrine. Truth builds upon truth, one doctrine upon another. The frame of reference not only retains doctrine but cycles it to the other compartments of the right lobe.
- B. The memory center is where *epignosis* doctrine is stored and recalled (Ps. 119:16, 93). Recall has nothing to do with a good human memory but with the inculcation or repetition of doctrine and the mentorship of the Holy Spirit (John 14:20). The memory center supplies pertinent doctrines for all other compartments (Lam. 3:20–21; 2 Cor. 10:4–6; 2 Pet. 3:2).
- C. The vocabulary storage is the dictionary of the soul. This compartment accumulates technical theological words and concepts to define God, man, salvation, the Christian way of life, and every other category of doctrine. Thinking demands vocabulary. Once these theological terms are mastered, they work together with the frame of reference and memory center to develop the believer's ability to think divine viewpoint (Deut. 8:3; Jer. 15:16; Matt. 4:4).
- D. Categorical storage organizes principles of doctrine from the frame of reference and vocabulary storage. Scripture is compared with Scripture so that doctrine is classified according to subject matter. Knowledge is built on knowledge. Categorical storage becomes the basis for understanding more advanced doctrines (Prov. 2:2, 10; 3:3; 15:14–15; 18:5).
- E. The conscience is where norms and standards reside. It is the faculty of the soul that separates right from wrong, establishes priorities, and guides and regulates life. A strong conscience has standards built upon divine viewpoint, while a weak conscience is acquired from human viewpoint (Dan. 1:8; Acts 24:16; Rom. 2:14–15; 13:5; 1 Cor. 8:7; 2 Cor. 4:2; 5:11; 1 Tim. 4:1–2; 2 Tim. 1:3; Titus 1:15; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 2:18–19; 3:14–16).⁴¹

41. See Appendix C.

- F. Momentum combines *epignosis* doctrine with the power of the filling of the Holy Spirit to motivate and accelerate spiritual growth (2 Pet. 3:18).
 - G. Wisdom is the result of *epignosis* knowledge and motivation from all other compartments of the right lobe. In this final compartment, the thinking of *epignosis* doctrine is converted into action—divine viewpoint applied to the circumstances of life. Wisdom builds the Edification Complex for living the spiritual life (Prov. 3:21–22; 2 Cor. 10:4–6; Col. 1:9; James 3:17).
- III. The relation of the heart to thinking and perception
- A. Positive volition (Rom. 10:9–10)
 - B. Function of GAP (Deut. 29:4)
 - C. Thinking of reversionism (Ps. 10:6, 11, 13)
 - D. Thinking of atheism (Ps. 14:1)
 - E. Rationalization of education (Eccl. 1:13–18)
 - F. Rationalization of mental attitude sins (Isa. 47:10)
 - G. Communication of false teachers from the deceit of their hearts (Jer. 14:14)
 - H. Meditation on doctrine (Luke 2:19)
 - I. Ambitious thinking (Luke 9:46–47)
- IV. The facets of the heart
- A. The heart can reject Bible teaching (Prov. 5:12–13).
 - B. The heart is the source of discord and trouble making (Prov. 6:14, 18).
 - C. The heart of the prostitute is cunning (Prov. 7:10).
 - D. Hatred emanates from the heart (2 Sam. 6:16).
 - E. The heart suffers disappointment from promises not kept (Prov. 13:12).
 - F. The heart promotes mental attitude sins.
 - 1. Bitterness (Prov. 14:10)
 - 2. Sorrow and disappointment (Prov. 14:13)
 - 3. Pride (Prov. 21:4; Obad. 3)
 - 4. Worry (Eccl. 2:23)
 - G. A frantic search for happiness is related to the heart (Eccl. 1:13).
 - H. Reversionism is described in terms of the heart (Jer. 17:5, 9; Zech. 7:12).

- I. Revolution and insubordination are described as being in the heart (2 Sam. 15:6; Jer. 5:23; Ezek. 6:9).
- J. Hypocrisy is related to the heart (Job 36:13; Ps. 55:21).
- V. The heart and emotion are analogous to husband and wife.
 - A. Just as the husband has the authority over the wife, so the heart has the authority over the emotion.
 - B. Emotion in the body is designed to respond to doctrine in the right lobe just as a woman is designed to respond to her husband (Eph. 5:22–24).
 - C. The heart and emotion are linked in the following Scriptures (Ps. 26:2; Jer. 11:20; 17:10; 20:12).
- VI. Happiness is located in the heart.
 - A. Gladness of heart (1 Kings 8:66; 2 Chron. 7:10; Esther 5:9)
 - B. Merry heart (Prov. 15:13, 15; 17:22)
- VII. The heart and carnality
 - A. In carnality the sin nature takes control of the heart and short-circuits the spiritual life (Ps. 66:18; 101:5; Prov. 6:18; Matt. 12:35; 15:18–19; Luke 6:45; 24:25).
 - B. The heart is related to psychosis (Isa. 13:7–8).
 - C. Revenge is a malfunction of the heart (Prov. 24:1–2; Ezek. 25:15–17).
 - D. Reversionism in the heart results in national disaster (Deut. 28:47–48).
- VIII. Hardness of the heart (right lobe)
 - A. Scar tissue of the soul, or hardness of heart, is that stage of reversionism that accompanies blackout of the soul (Eph. 4:18).
 - B. When the effects of the blackout of the left lobe reach the right lobe, scar tissue prohibits doctrine from circulating in the soul.
 - 1. The ability to utilize the frame of reference and memory center as a source of doctrine evaporates.
 - 2. Doctrine is no longer fed into the vocabulary to develop doctrinal categories.
 - 3. Norms and standards degenerate.
 - 4. Momentum halts.
 - 5. There is no wisdom for application in the believer's life. Without the flow of doctrine into the right lobe all spiritual functions shut down.

- C. Instances of the hardness of the heart
 - 1. Hardness of the Jews during the Incarnation (John 12:40)
 - 2. The “Meribah revolution” (Ps. 95:8; Heb. 3:8, 15; 4:7)
 - 3. The hardening of Nebuchadnezzar’s heart (Dan. 5:20)
 - 4. Zedekiah’s hardness of heart (2 Chron. 36:11–13)
 - 5. Hardness of Pharaoh’s heart (Ex. 7:22–23; 8:15, 32; 9:34)
- D. The hardness of the neck is the same as hardness of the heart, but emphasizes insubordination more than negative volition (2 Kings 17:14; Neh. 9:16; Jer. 7:26; 19:15).
- E. Solution to hardness of heart: Since it is the result of negative volition toward doctrine, the solution demands rebound and positive volition toward doctrine. However, this positive volition must express itself in the consistent function of GAP (Eph. 3:16–21; 4:11–16; Heb. 6:1–6).
- IX. The heart in relation to the growing believer
 - A. Grace function (Prov. 24:17)
 - B. Grace orientation (Ex. 23:9)
 - C. Happiness (1 Sam. 2:1)
 - D. Stability in a crisis (Ps. 112:7–8)
- X. The heart in relation to motivation in life
 - A. Temporal life (Ex. 35:25–26, 35; 36:8)
 - B. Spiritual life (1 Kings 8:17; 2 Cor. 9:7)
- XI. The heart as an anthropomorphism (1 Sam. 2:35; Jer. 23:20; 30:24). Derived from the Greek *ἄνθρωπος* (*anthropos*), “man,” plus *μορφή* (*morphe*), “form,” an anthropomorphism is language of accommodation that ascribes to God human physical characteristics, which He does not actually possess, to explain His policies, acts, and decisions in terms of human anatomy.

Appendix C

DOCTRINE OF THE CONSCIENCE

- I. The conscience is located in the heart or right lobe of the mentality of the soul (Rom. 2:15; Titus 1:15).
- II. In the conscience norms for both human and divine relationships (Acts 24:16) are established.
- III. The conscience convicts of evil or wrongdoing (John 8:9).
- IV. In the conscience norms for both morality and laws of divine establishment (Rom. 2:15) are established.
- V. Doctrine and the laws of divine establishment in the conscience are the basis for patriotism (Rom. 13:5).
- VI. The function of GAP establishes the divine standards in the human conscience (1 Tim. 1:5, 19; 3:9).
- VII. In the conscience norms and standards for serving God (2 Tim. 1:3; Heb. 9:14) are established.
- VIII. Divine norms and standards must reside in the conscience of the communicator of doctrine to avoid intellectual dishonesty and snobbery (2 Cor. 4:2).

- IX. The conscience containing doctrine is the basis for enduring maltreatment and misunderstanding without defending self (1 Pet. 2:19; 3:16).
- X. The believer's testimony to the world is based on compliance with the standards of his conscience (2 Cor. 1:12).
- XI. The law of liberty (freedom) and certain superseding laws (love, expediency, supreme sacrifice) are related to the function of the conscience (1 Cor. 10:24–29).
- XII. The conscience can be distorted or destroyed by reversionism (1 Tim. 4:1–2).
- XIII. False norms and standards in the conscience produce legalism and self-righteousness (1 Cor. 8:7). Immediately after the fall of man, false norms were established in the conscience resulting in the first act of legalism (Gen. 3:7).

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