



SHARED THINKING

Read Together

1 Corinthians 2:6-16, Philippians 2:5 & Romans 12:2

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

(Romans 12:2)

Learn Together (watch week 5 video lesson)

In 1 Corinthians 2, Paul calls some people “the spiritual” and some “the unspiritual.” Simply put, for Paul, what defines someone as “spiritual” or Christian is that the person has received the Holy Spirit, which includes of course having faith in Jesus, and that the person has “the mind of Christ.” Paul believes that every Christian has the Holy Spirit and the mind of Christ, but that we often don’t act or think as though we do. He believes that we can pattern our thinking after the “mind of Christ”—having the same attitudes and character. To imitate the pattern of Christ is what Paul means by saying, “have the same mind that Jesus has” or “we have the mind of Christ” or by his reference to the “renewing of our minds.”

Even though we are “spiritual” believers, our being human with “unspiritual” or fleshly residue that still gets in the way means that we must grow and mature in our ability to think like Jesus. We dare not think of ourselves as somehow the spiritually elite who have the only true and right thinking. The telltale evidence of not being spiritually mature is the presence of quarreling, jealousy, division, and factionalism or cliques and partisanship among God’s people. This is clear in 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 where Paul indicates that the divided Corinthians are not able to engage in “spiritual” thinking even though they are Christians. Destructive “quarreling over opinions” about theological differences is a clear sign that we are blocking out the Holy Spirit as we try to think theologically. The mark of mature, spiritual “Shared Thinking” is that it clears a pathway to church unity, not uniformity of thought but respectful shared thinking that searches to know the mind of the living Lord.

John Wesley gives us the Wesley Quadrilateral, a four-part “thinking” method that he, the apostle Paul and faithful Christians over time have engaged to discern God’s message, will and work. It comprises (1) Scripture, the primary source, (2) tradition, (3) reason and (4) experience. Through these, the church can reach a shared understanding — both diverse and unifying — of God’s will and work.

Pray Together

God, we humbly submit ourselves before you today, opening ourselves to the movement of your Holy Spirit. Fill us with your wisdom, helping us bring our gifts and graces alongside your Spirit so that we might share the mind of Christ. May we learn from and be aided by those within our church, as iron sharpens iron, while we look toward you.

Amen



SHARED THINKING

Reflect Together

If “no one can comprehend what is truly God’s” (1 Corinthians 2:11), then how are we to “have the mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:16)?

As you grow in your faith, how do you discern what is the will of God and what are conformities of the world (Romans 12:2)? How are the several terms: see, hear, conceive, comprehend, understand, interpret and discern, found in 1 Corinthians 2:6-16, helpful in grasping the totality of shared thinking?

Make a list of core faith statements. How easy was it for you?

Serve Together

Spend this week praying for McFarlin's newly confirmed eighth graders, that after this foundational step in their faith, they would embrace continued learning about and searching for God.

NEXT WEEK: SHARED HEALING

