

The
**THINKING
PROCESS**
of the
CHRISTIAN MIND

Position, Practice, and Perspective in Christ



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Christian Discipleship & Worldview

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DEDICATION

*“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed
by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern
what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”*

— Romans 12:2

*To every Christian who is working out their salvation with fear and trembling,
who refuses to think the way this world thinks,
and who is pressing forward toward the mind of Christ.*

You are the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

Keep shining.

Keep seasoning.

Soli Deo gloria.

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Preface

The Christian mind is both human and redeemed. It is human because it is time-bound, finite, and embedded in a particular culture and moment in history. It reasons one step at a time, perceives only in part, forgets easily, and carries every limitation that belongs to creaturely existence. It is redeemed because the Spirit of Christ dwells within it, renewing it from the inside out and aligning it, step by step, with the mind of Christ. Paul puts the matter in one sentence: “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ” (1 Cor. 2:16).

I have preached and taught on this subject for many years, and I have found that most believers are never shown the process by which a Christian mind actually takes shape. We are told, rightly, to renew our minds. We are seldom told where that renewal begins, what it looks like in daily life, or where it is finally headed. This study answers those three questions in order. The process starts with real repentance from sin and genuine faith in Christ, which is the believer’s position in Christ. It proceeds through the practical life of discipleship, which is the believer’s practice. And it culminates in a comprehensive way of seeing the world, a Christian cosmoscope, which is the believer’s perspective. Position, practice, and perspective are the three parts of this book, and I have given one chapter to each.

Let me say plainly what I am not offering. I am not offering a Christian version of secular intellectualism, as though the goal were to win arguments or to collect impressive ideas. I am describing the formation of minds that think God’s thoughts after Him, that live as His image-bearers in this broken world, and that look ahead to the glory of the age to come. A mind like that is not produced by cleverness. It is given by grace and worked out with fear and trembling.

I wrote these pages first for the pastors, elders, and lay leaders who have sat under my teaching in the fellowship of HELP, Inc. I write them

now for every believer who wants to think and live as a disciple of Jesus Christ. My prayer is that the Lord will use this small book to renew your mind, steady your walk, and widen your vision, so that all you think and do may be offered back to Him in worship.

Soli Deo gloria.

Introduction: The Human and Christian Mind

“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”

— 2 Corinthians 3:18

The Christian mind has a process. It does not arrive at full maturity at the moment of conversion. It is a mind in motion: being renewed, being transformed, being conformed more and more to the image of Christ. Paul gathers all of this into a single appeal: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind” (Rom. 12:1–2). His word is both a command and a promise. The transformation is real. The process is ongoing. And the standard is Christ Himself.

Notice first what Paul does not say. He does not tell us to add a few religious opinions to a mind that otherwise thinks as the world thinks. He says the mind itself must be renewed. The Greek word behind “renewal” speaks of making something new in quality, not merely of patching what is old. What is renewed is the whole manner of thinking, valuing, and judging, and the Spirit of God is the One who renews it. That is why the same apostle can say in another place that we are “being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another” (2 Cor. 3:18). The word is in the present tense, because the work is still going on.

Notice also that Paul speaks of a mind that is both human and Christian. It is human, so it is limited. It cannot know everything, it forgets, it is easily distracted, and it is shaped by the family, the culture, and the age in which God has placed it. It is Christian, so it is indwelt.

The Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead has taken up residence in a creature of dust, and He is not content to leave that creature as He found it. The Christian mind therefore lives in a tension that will last until glory: it is truly renewed and not yet perfected. Paul himself confessed as much when he wrote, “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face” (1 Cor. 13:12). To think as a Christian is to think as a pilgrim, who knows the way because the Guide has spoken and who knows also that the journey is not over.

Three markers define this process, and they give the book its shape. The first is the believer’s position in Christ, which is who the Christian is by God’s gracious act. The second is the believer’s practical life as a disciple, which is how the Christian lives in light of that position. The third is the believer’s perspective on the world and on life, the comprehensive worldview that the Christian mind develops as it matures in faith and knowledge. I call this perspective the Christian cosmoscope, a word I will explain in the third chapter. Position, practice, and perspective are the architecture of the thinking Christian life. Each depends on the one before it. Practice without position becomes moralism, and perspective without practice becomes mere theory.

The process starts from the inside out, with real repentance from sin and genuine faith in Christ. Without that beginning, there is no Christian mind. There is only a secular mind that has learned some Christian vocabulary. With that beginning, the transformation Paul describes becomes possible: the mind of Christ, given by the Spirit, working itself out in a life that shines like light and seasons like salt in a darkened and tasteless world. Jesus said, “You are the salt of the earth” and “You are the light of the world” (Matt. 5:13–14). He did not say that we should try to become these things. He said that we are, and then He commanded us to be what He has made us.

The chapters that follow take up the three markers in turn. In the first chapter I ask where the Christian mind begins, and I answer that it begins with being given to Christ by the Father, born again by the Spirit, and turned to Christ in repentance and faith. In the second chapter I ask what that new life looks like when it is lived, and I answer that it looks

like self-denial, devotion to Christ and His Word, and a shining, seasoning presence in the world. In the third chapter I ask how the renewed mind learns to see everything else, and I answer that it sees the whole world as created by God, the whole of life as lived for His glory, and the whole of history as governed by His righteousness. I close with a short conclusion and with questions for personal study. Read slowly, with your Bible open, and ask the Lord to do in you what He has promised.

CHAPTER 1

Our Position in Christ: The Foundation of Christian Thinking

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

— 2 Corinthians 5:17

The Christian mind begins not with a philosophical system but with a theological reality: union with Christ. Everything about the Christian’s identity, thinking, and living flows from the foundational truth of what God has done in Christ. A person may read widely, reason carefully, and speak well about spiritual things, and still have no Christian mind at all, because the Christian mind is not first a matter of what we know. It is a matter of where we stand. The process of Christian thinking must therefore begin at the beginning, with the position that the believer occupies by God’s grace alone.

Paul states that position in a single compact sentence: “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17). The phrase “in Christ” is the signature of his letters. It describes a real and living bond, which theologians call union with Christ, by which the believer is joined to the Savior so that what is true of Him becomes true of us. In Christ we are forgiven. In Christ we are accepted. In Christ we are being made new. The apostle does not say that we are improved or that we are religious. He says that we are a new creation, and the word he chooses is the word used for the creation of the world. What God did when He said “Let there be light” He does again, in the dark interior of a sinner’s heart and mind.

This truth is the foundation of everything else in this book, because the Christian mind cannot be understood apart from the Christian person. A new way of thinking springs from a new way of being. For that reason, I begin where the Scriptures begin when they speak of our salvation: not with what we have done, but with what the Father has

done in giving us to His Son, and with what the Spirit has done in giving us new birth. In this chapter I will take up three elements of our position in Christ. The first is that we are given to Christ by the Father. The second is that we are truly converted, turned from sin to Christ in repentance and faith. The third is that we are justified and set free, so that we have peace with God and obey Him from the heart.

A. Given to Christ by the Father: The Reality of Regeneration

The first and most fundamental element of the Christian's position is this: we, Christians, are given to Christ by the Father. Jesus declares, "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out" (John 6:37). Read the sentence slowly. There is a giving, there is a coming, and there is a keeping. The Father gives, the sinner comes, and the Son never casts out. The order matters. The coming of the sinner is the fruit of the giving of the Father. This is the deepest ground of assurance a believer can have, because it means that my place in Christ does not rest on the strength of my grasp but on the strength of His.

1. The Father's Gift to the Son

The Christian did not choose God in the first instance. God chose the Christian. Jesus said so to His disciples on the night before the cross: "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit" (John 15:16). This is not a doctrine to be argued over in the abstract. It is a truth to be received with humility and wonder. When I look back on the day I first believed, I remember my own decision. But when I read the Scriptures, I learn that my decision was the echo of a decision made long before, in the counsel of the triune God. The Father purposed our salvation, the Son accomplished it, and the Spirit applies it. The Father gave us to the Son, and the Son received us, and the Spirit brought to us the salvation that the Father purposed and the Son accomplished.

Paul sets the same truth in an even wider light when he writes that God “chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him” (Eph. 1:4). Notice that we were chosen “in him.” Our position in Christ was fixed before we had done anything, good or bad. This is why Jesus can promise that He will lose none of those whom the Father has given Him. A mind that grasps this truth is a mind at rest. It does not have to wonder each morning whether it has done enough to remain in God’s favor. It can think, plan, and work from security rather than from fear.

“I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.”

—John 10:28

2. The New Birth and the New Mind

The Father’s giving is carried out in time through regeneration, which is the new birth. In the broader sense, regeneration is the entire work of the Spirit in bringing the elect to new life. James says, “Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures” (Jas. 1:18). Notice whose will is acting: “his own will.” Notice also the instrument: “the word of truth.” God does not bring us to life apart from His Word, and He does not leave us in ignorance of what He has done. John says the same thing from another angle. Those who receive Christ are given “the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12–13). We are born of the Spirit, not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, and not of the will of man, but of God.

This new birth is the source of the new mind. The regenerate person has, in principle, a fundamentally different orientation of knowing and valuing than the unregenerate person. Paul describes the difference in stark terms: “The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Cor. 2:14). The natural person is not simply uninformed. He is unable, because the capacity to receive

spiritual truth is something that only the Spirit can give. The very next verse in that passage ends with the astonishing claim that settles the matter for the believer: “But we have the mind of Christ” (1 Cor. 2:16). This is not because we have mastered all that Christ knows. It is because the Spirit who knows the mind of Christ now lives in us and teaches us to think according to Him.

God had promised this long before Paul wrote. Through the prophet Ezekiel the LORD declared, “And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh” (Ezek. 36:26). In the Scriptures the heart is the center of the person, the seat of thought, desire, and will. A new heart means a new way of thinking, a new way of wanting, and a new way of deciding. Paul reminds Titus that this work is entirely of mercy: God “saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5). Regeneration is the washing, and renewal is the ongoing work that follows. They belong together, as the root belongs with the branch.

What does this mean for the way you and I think? It means that we should neither despise nor overrate the mind we had before Christ. We should not despise it, because it was made by God and still bears His image. We should not overrate it, because it was darkened by sin and could not find its way to Him. The proper response to the truth of regeneration is gratitude. If I understand anything of God today, it is because He opened my eyes. If I love Him at all, it is because He first loved me and gave me a heart to respond.

B. True Conversion: The Experienced Reality of New Life

In the narrower, experiential sense, regeneration is experienced as conversion, which is the conscious turning of the whole person from sin to Christ. Jesus described the necessity of this change to Nicodemus, a learned man who knew his Bible well: “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless

one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” (John 3:5). Nicodemus was educated, devout, and respected, and he still needed to be born again. Education does not replace the new birth, and neither does religious practice. Regeneration is God’s work within us, which no one sees. Conversion is what we do, and what we are seen to do, in response to that work. The two cannot be separated, and they must not be confused.

Conversion involves two things that the Scriptures regularly place side by side. The first is genuine repentance, the turning away from sin with grief and the turning toward Christ. The second is genuine faith, the trusting embrace of Christ as Savior and Lord. When Jesus began His public ministry, He preached with both in view: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15). Repentance without faith leaves a person sorry but hopeless. Faith without repentance leaves a person hopeful but unchanged. The true convert has both, and both are gifts. Paul reminds the Ephesians that salvation is “by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph. 2:8–9).

The converted mind is the mind that has been born again. It sees differently. It values differently. It desires differently. It sees sin as sin and not as a mere weakness or a misfortune. It values the glory of God above the approval of men. It desires holiness, even when the flesh still pulls the other way. Paul described the change to the Ephesians in terms of a change of clothing: they were “to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph. 4:22–24). Notice the phrase “the spirit of your minds.” The renewal reaches to the very spirit of the mind, to its inclinations and its governing loves.

The regenerate mind is not merely a mind with new information. It is a mind with new sight, the sight of faith that perceives the invisible realities of the kingdom of God and orients all of life around them. Jesus

told His disciples, “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden” (Matt. 5:14). A light is not a lamp that someone has put on a shelf. It shines because of what it is. When the Spirit gives us new sight, we begin to see what we could not see before: the holiness of God, the depth of our sin, the sufficiency of the cross, and the certainty of the resurrection. These are not ideas we have decided to believe. They are realities that we now perceive to be true.

The maturing, consistent Christian shows that he or she has truly been born again, not by claiming a past experience but by the ongoing fruit of new life. I have known people who could tell me the date and hour of their conversion and who now show no interest in the things of God. I have known others who cannot name the day, but whose lives bear witness every week to the reality of a changed heart. The test is not the memory of a moment. The test is the direction of a life. Position in Christ is not a static achievement. It is the living foundation from which the entire process of Christian thinking and living unfolds.

C. Justified and Set Free: Peace with God and Obedience from the Heart

The third element of our position is the double blessing that Paul sets out in his letter to the Romans, where he moves from what God has declared about us to what God has done within us. First, God declares the believing sinner righteous. This is justification, the verdict of the divine Judge by which the righteousness of Christ is counted as ours and our sin is counted as His. Paul writes, “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1). The verb is in the past tense and the result is in the present: we have peace. The war is over. The quarrel between a holy God and a guilty sinner has been settled at the cross, and the settlement can never be undone.

A mind that has peace with God thinks differently from a mind that is still at war with Him. The unforgiven mind is always defending itself, hiding, or making excuses. It must either deny its guilt or drown in it.

The forgiven mind can look at its sin honestly, because it knows that sin has been paid for. It can face its failures without despair and its successes without pride. It can receive correction without bitterness. It can hear the law of God as a loving Father's instruction and not merely as a hostile Judge's sentence. This is one of the most practical consequences of justification, and I have seen it transform the way believers pray, work, and treat others.

Second, God sets the believer free from the dominion of sin. Paul continues: "But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17–18). Two things stand out. The first is that obedience is "from the heart." God does not merely change our behavior. He changes what we love, and obedience follows. The second is that Paul speaks of a "standard of teaching." The Christian mind is not left to invent its own morality. It is committed to a form of doctrine, a clear and recognizable body of truth, and it is happy to be bound by it. The freedom of the believer is not the freedom to do anything he wishes. It is the freedom to do at last what he was made to do.

*"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works,
which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."*

— Ephesians 2:10

The believer who understands this position stands on firm ground. He knows that he has been given to Christ by the Father, that he has been born from above by the Spirit, that he has turned to Christ in repentance and faith, that he has been declared righteous, and that he has been set free to serve. Each of these truths is a stone in the foundation. Remove any one of them, and the whole structure of Christian thinking begins to lean. Keep all of them, and the mind has a place to stand while it learns, grows, and engages the world. The next chapter turns from who we are to how we live, because a position of this kind cannot remain hidden. It must take shape in the daily life of a disciple.

Reflection Questions — Chapter 1

1. How does the truth that you were given to Christ by the Father, and that He chose you before you chose Him, shape your sense of identity, security, and gratitude? How does it change the way you relate to God in prayer?
2. What is the difference between regeneration (the Spirit's sovereign work of new birth) and conversion (the conscious experience of turning to Christ)? Why do both matter for understanding the Christian's position, and how would you explain the difference to a new believer in your church?
3. How does your identity in Christ, as a new creation born of God, actually change the way you think day to day? Where do you still think more from your old identity than from your new one, and what will you do this week to bring that area under the Word?

CHAPTER 2

Our Practical Life as Disciples: The Shape of Christian Living

“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.”

— Luke 9:23

Position in Christ is not an abstraction. It has a shape. It takes form in the concrete, daily, and sometimes costly practice of discipleship. The maturing Christian’s position in Christ inevitably produces a practical life as Christ’s disciple, and there is no authentic Christian thinking that does not issue in Christian living. The mind renewed by the Spirit always moves toward a life conformed to Christ. A mind that claims to be Christian and never changes a habit, a speech pattern, or a priority has not yet understood what it claims.

The word “disciple” means a learner, one who attaches himself to a master in order to become like him. Jesus used this word of His followers from the beginning, and He never withdrew it. We do not graduate from discipleship in this life. Even the apostle Paul, after decades of ministry, could write, “Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own” (Phil. 3:12). The Christian mind is a disciplined mind, and discipleship is learning to think and live as Jesus did.

In this chapter I consider three marks of the disciple’s practical life. The first is self-denial and following Christ, which is the surrender of self-lordship. The second is devotion to Christ and His Word, which is the way the renewed mind is fed and formed. The third is a life that shines as light and seasons as salt, which is the outward witness of the whole. These three are not separate programs. They are three views of one life, lived in the power of the Spirit to the glory of God.

A. Self-Denial and Following Christ

The first and non-negotiable mark of Christian discipleship is self-denial. Jesus put it without softening in the words that open this chapter: “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23). The same demand appears in Matthew’s Gospel, where Jesus told His disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Matt. 16:24). Notice that the words are addressed to “anyone” who would come after Him. There is no second tier of Christians who are exempt. And notice the word “daily,” which Luke alone records. The cross is not taken up once, in a moment of high emotion. It is taken up every morning.

1. What Self-Denial Is Not

Self-denial is not the asceticism that denies the goodness of creation. Paul warned Timothy against those who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods, “that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth” (1 Tim. 4:3). The disciple does not despise the gifts of God. Neither is self-denial self-hatred, a cruel contempt for the person God made. Nor is it mere outward religion, a show of piety which leaves the heart untouched. Jesus condemned that sort of display in the Pharisees, who looked clean on the outside and were full of disorder within.

2. What Self-Denial Is

Self-denial is the surrendering of self-lordship in favor of Christ’s lordship. The Christian who has been given to Christ by the Father no longer lives for himself. He lives for the One who died for him and was raised. Paul states the logic plainly: Christ “died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised” (2 Cor. 5:15). The purpose of the death of Christ was not only to rescue us from the penalty of sin, but to change the center around which our lives revolve. Before, I was the sun and

everything else moved around me. Now, Christ is the sun and I move around Him.

Self-denial is the practical outworking of position in Christ. Because I am a new creation, because the old has passed away and the new has come (2 Cor. 5:17), I no longer have to live according to the old patterns of the flesh. Paul gave his own testimony in these words: “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). The cross that I take up daily is the willingness to say no to the self that wants to reclaim its throne, and yes to the Christ who sits on the throne of the universe and calls me to follow Him into sacrificial love.

This has direct implications for how the disciple thinks. The self-governed mind asks, “What do I want? What will benefit me? What will make me look good?” The Christ-governed mind asks, “What does the Lord require? What will bring glory to Him? What will serve my neighbor?” Paul urged the Philippians to think in exactly this way: “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5). He then described the mind of Christ as one that emptied itself and took the form of a servant. To deny oneself is therefore not first a matter of giving up pleasures. It is a matter of adopting a different way of thinking about oneself in relation to God and to others.

Each of us has to find where this surrender is most costly. For one it may be the love of money, for another the need to be admired, for another a quick temper, and for another the quiet comfort of never being inconvenienced. The old self is clever. It will happily give up a hundred small things in order to keep one large thing. This is why the command is to deny ourselves, not merely to deny some of our habits. The disciple must ask the Spirit to show him the throne that he has not yet surrendered, and then he must come down from it.

“Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.”

— Luke 14:27

B. Devotion to Christ and His Word

The second practical mark of discipleship is devotion to Christ and His Word. Paul writes to the Colossians, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God” (Col. 3:16). The Christian mind that is being renewed by the Spirit is a mind that is saturated with the Word of God. There is no Christian thinking apart from engagement with Scripture. The believer cannot think God’s thoughts after Him unless he has first heard what God has said.

1. The Word in the Heart

The psalmist describes the blessed man as one whose “delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night” (Ps. 1:2). He does not merely read the law. He delights in it, and he meditates on it, turning it over in his mind as a man turns over a stone to see every side. Another psalm says, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Ps. 119:105). A lamp does not light the whole landscape. It lights the next step. The disciple who comes to the Word each day receives light for the day’s decisions, and that light is enough.

Jesus prayed for His disciples, “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth” (John 17:17). Sanctification, the growth in holiness by which a believer is made more like Christ, is carried forward by the truth of God’s Word. The Spirit does not sanctify us by mystical impressions apart from Scripture, but by applying the Scripture to our minds and consciences. This means that a disciple who neglects the Bible has cut himself off from the primary instrument of his own growth. No amount of enthusiasm can replace it.

2. The Word in the Community

Devotion to the Word is not merely intellectual. It is relational, worshipful, and communal. Look again at the text from Colossians. The Word of Christ dwells richly in the community of the church: teaching

happens, admonishing happens, singing happens, and thanksgiving happens. The renewed mind is formed not in isolation but in the body of Christ, where the Word is preached, sung, practiced, and embodied together. The disciple who neglects the gathered church is cutting himself off from the primary means of mental and spiritual renewal.

The author of Hebrews gives a sober instruction on this point: “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” (Heb. 10:24–25). Notice that the aim of meeting together is to “stir up one another.” We do not gather merely to receive. We gather to give and to provoke one another toward love and good works. In my years of pastoral ministry I have watched believers who treated the gathered church as optional slowly lose their appetite for the Word, then their sensitivity to sin, and finally their joy. I have also watched believers who gave themselves to the life of the church grow steadily in wisdom and in love.

3. Devotion That Guards the Mind

Devotion to Christ and His Word also protects the mind from capture. Paul told the Colossians, “See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elementary principles of the world, and not according to Christ” (Col. 2:8). We live in a world that is eager to shape our thinking, and it does so more through the constant repetition of its assumptions than through its formal arguments. The disciple answers by surrounding his mind with a different and better voice. He fills it with the Word, and then, as Paul says in another place, he takes “every thought captive to obey Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5).

That phrase describes a daily labor. A thought arises in the middle of the day, perhaps a suspicion, a resentment, a fear, or a lustful image. The disciple does not simply let it pass through unexamined. He brings it before Christ and asks whether it obeys Him. If it does, he lets it stay. If it does not, he sets it aside and replaces it with something true. Paul gives the positive side of this discipline when he writes, “whatever is true,

whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things” (Phil. 4:8). The command is to think about these things, and it is given as a duty for the mind.

C. Light and Salt: A Life That Shines and Seasons

The third mark of the disciple’s practical life is outward and visible. Jesus described it with two simple pictures in the Sermon on the Mount: “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet” (Matt. 5:13). Then He added, “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16). The Christian mind is not meant to be kept in a private room. It is meant to affect the world around it, as salt affects meat and as light affects a dark house.

1. Salt in a Tasteless World

Salt does two things. It preserves, and it flavors. In the ancient world, before refrigeration, salt was rubbed into meat to slow its decay. The Christian, living among people whose lives and cultures are decaying under the effects of sin, is meant to slow that decay by his presence. He does this by speaking truth when lies are fashionable, by doing justice when it is costly, and by showing mercy when it is not expected. Salt also gives taste. The world apart from God is a tasteless place, because it has lost the knowledge of the purpose for which it was made. The Christian, by his joy and his hope, shows what a life with meaning tastes like.

Notice what Jesus says about salt that has lost its taste. The point is not that a genuine believer can cease to be a believer, but that a disciple who has been so shaped by the world that he no longer differs from it has nothing to offer. A believer who thinks, speaks, and spends exactly

as the world does cannot season the world. Salt must remain different from the meat in order to do the meat any good.

2. Light in a Darkened World

Light, too, does its work simply by being what it is. Jesus said, “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house” (Matt. 5:14–15). Our light is not an achievement of our own. Jesus is the light of the world, and we shine because we reflect His light. But we are told to let it shine. The light is to be seen in “your good works,” and the result is that others “give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” The goal of the shining is never to draw attention to ourselves. It is to draw the eyes of the watching world to God.

This is why a Christian’s work, his marriage, his friendships, and his speech all matter for witness. The people around us may not read the Bible, but they are reading us. Peter urged believers to “honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect” (1 Pet. 3:15). Notice that the defense is given to someone who asks. The question arises because something about the believer’s life has made a stranger curious. The shining comes first, and the explanation follows.

3. Following the Pattern of Christ

All of this rests on the pattern set for us by our Lord. Peter writes, “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps” (1 Pet. 2:21). Paul teaches the same thing when he says that the Lord is the Spirit, “and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom,” and that we are “being transformed into the same image” (2 Cor. 3:17–18). The disciple is not left alone to imitate Christ by effort. The Spirit who dwells in him makes him free to follow, and gradually remakes him in the likeness of the One he follows.

I ask you to consider where the Lord has placed you as an arena of gospel witness. It may be an office, a farm, a classroom, a household, or a clinic. It is there that your light is to shine and your salt to season. Do not wait for a larger stage. The disciple who is faithful in the place where God has put him is doing exactly what Jesus described. The practical life of a disciple, then, is a life of self-denial that makes room for Christ, of devotion that feeds on His Word, and of witness that shows His glory to the world. The mind that is being renewed will lead naturally to a new way of seeing the world, and that is the subject of the next chapter.

Reflection Questions — Chapter 2

1. What does self-denial look like in your specific cultural and personal context? Where do you find the old self most insistently reasserting its claims, and what does it mean to deny it there?
2. How does the command to let the Word of Christ dwell richly in you differ from a minimal, obligation-oriented engagement with Scripture? In what ways is your church community actively contributing to the renewal of your mind, and what is missing?
3. Jesus says that you are salt and light. Where are the places in your life where the people around you can see your good works and be led to glorify your Father in heaven? Name one place where you have been hiding your light, and describe the first step you will take to let it shine.

CHAPTER 3

Our Perspective: The Christian Cosmoscope

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

— Romans 12:2

The maturing Christian mind develops a comprehensive perspective on the whole of life. I call this perspective the Christian cosmoscope, a word built from the Greek *kosmos*, meaning “world,” and *skopeo*, meaning “to view.” A telescope brings far objects near, and a microscope brings small objects into focus. The cosmoscope is the Christian’s way of looking at everything, near and far, large and small, with eyes that Scripture has trained. It is not a systematic ideology, worked out by philosophers and handed down to students. It is a spiritually formed way of seeing: seeing the whole world as created by God, the whole of life as lived for His glory, and the whole of history as under His righteous governance.

Romans 12:2 is the charter of the Christian cosmoscope. The transformed mind “discerns the will of God.” That word “discern” means to test and approve, as a metalworker tests a coin. Paul does not say that the renewed mind will be right about everything. He says that it will have the ability to test what it meets in every area of life by the standard of God’s revealed will, and to tell what is “good and acceptable and perfect” from what is not. The domain of that testing is unlimited. It covers the laboratory and the legislature, the family table and the financial market, the story we tell about where the world came from and the hope we hold about where it is going.

Every person has a cosmoscope, whether he knows it or not. Everyone carries some picture of where the world came from, what it is for, and how it will end. The question is not whether we will look at the world through a lens, but which lens we will use. The world gives us its lens freely, and we absorb it from childhood. The Christian mind is renewed when the Spirit replaces that lens with the one Scripture

provides. In this chapter I show three parts of the cosmoscope: the whole world is created by God, our whole life is for His glory, and our whole life is under His righteousness.

A. The Whole World Is Created by God

The Christian cosmoscope begins with creation. The Bible opens with the sentence on which everything else rests: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). John, writing of the Son, says, “All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). And the author of Hebrews adds that the Son “is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power” (Heb. 1:3). The universe did not come to be on its own, and it does not now continue on its own. It was made by the Son and it is held together by the Son.

1. Creation as Creation

The Christian mind sees creation as creation. It does not see it as an accident, or as a self-generated system, but as the work of the personal, purposeful, sovereign God. The psalmist says, “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork” (Ps. 19:1). Paul says that God’s “invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse” (Rom. 1:20). The world is not silent about its Maker. Everywhere the believer looks, he sees the signature of a Mind behind the order, the beauty, and the complexity of what has been made.

The creation account also tells us what human beings are. “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them” (Gen. 1:27). Human beings are not clever animals who happened to climb higher than the rest. They are image-bearers, made to know God, to love Him, and to rule creation under Him. This is the root of human dignity, the reason why every human life,

at every stage and in every condition, is precious. It is also the root of the Christian's confidence that human thought, though fallen, is capable of discovering real truth about the world. The mind that God made is suited to the world that God made.

“And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”

— Colossians 1:17

2. Creation Against Naturalistic Reductionism

This creation conviction stands against every form of naturalistic reductionism. Naturalism is the belief that nature is all there is. Reductionism is the habit of explaining everything, including thought, love, and moral duty, as nothing more than the working of lower and simpler parts. Over the last two centuries, a number of influential theories have tried to account for the existence and complexity of the universe without a personal Creator. Chemical evolution, associated with Oparin and Haldane, proposed that life arose from non-living chemicals. Uniformitarianism, associated with Lyell, held that the earth's past is explained entirely by processes now at work. Macroevolution, associated with Darwin, proposed that all living things descended from common ancestors by natural selection. And Big Bang quantum cosmologies, such as those associated with Hawking and Hartle, attempted to describe the origin of the universe without a divine cause.

The Christian mind does not dismiss the empirical data these traditions have assembled. The believer should be glad of every true discovery, because every true discovery is a discovery of what God has made. What the Christian mind insists on is the philosophical and theological framework that alone makes sense of that data: the Creator God who made things from nothing, who designed creatures for their purposes, and who upholds all things by the word of His power. Facts do not interpret themselves. They are always read within some framework, and the framework of unbelief is not neutral. The psalmist says that “the fool says in his heart, “There is no God” (Ps. 14:1), and Paul describes the consequence as “the futility of their minds” (Eph. 4:17). The issue is not a lack of intelligence but the direction of the heart.

The Scriptures teach that the beginning of knowledge is found in God. “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Prov. 1:7). A mind that begins elsewhere may gather an enormous amount of information, but it will not arrive at wisdom. A mind that begins with the fear of the LORD has a foundation from which to explore every field, and it explores with joy rather than with suspicion, because it knows that the truth discovered in the laboratory and the truth revealed in the Bible come from one Author.

3. The Question of Theistic Evolution

Theistic evolution is the attempt to merge Darwinian evolution with Christian creation theology. It holds that God used the process of biological evolution to bring about living things, including human beings. This view has been held by serious thinkers, from the Baptist theologian Augustus H. Strong to some who have been influenced by Karl Barth. I do not dismiss these men with a wave of the hand, because many of them loved the Lord and wished to honor both Scripture and science. But the Christian cosmoscope must evaluate this position with both intellectual seriousness and theological fidelity to what Scripture actually teaches about the origins of the cosmos and of human beings as uniquely made in the image of God.

Two questions press upon the believer who considers this view. The first is whether the plain testimony of Scripture about the creation of the world, of Adam, and of Eve can be harmonized with the claim that human beings descended from earlier forms of life by an unguided process. The second is whether the doctrine of the fall, and with it the whole gospel of redemption, can stand if death and suffering were part of God’s original and good design. Paul builds his gospel on the contrast between the first Adam and the last Adam. A reading of Genesis that weakens the first Adam weakens the foundation of the second. I invite my readers to study these questions with the Bible open, with patience toward those who differ, and with unwavering loyalty to the Word of God.

B. Our Whole Life Is for His Glory

The Christian cosmoscope does not restrict the glory of God to religious activities. Paul writes, “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31). The comprehensive scope of this command is the comprehensive scope of the Christian cosmoscope. There is no square inch of human life, whether professional, domestic, intellectual, recreational, or relational, that does not belong to God and is not to be offered to Him as an act of worship. He repeats the principle in his letter to the Colossians: “And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Col. 3:17).

1. Scripture as the Controlling Center

The Scriptures are the controlling center of this life lived for God’s glory. Paul reminds Timothy, “and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:15–17). Three dimensions of the Scripture-saturated life follow from this passage. The first is salvation in Christ, the wisdom that leads to faith (verse 15). The second is spiritual orthodoxy, which is right belief, shaped by teaching, reproof, correction, and training (verse 16). The third is service to God and to our fellow men, the “good work” for which the believer is equipped (verse 17). The cosmoscope integrates all three: knowing, believing, and doing for God’s glory.

2. The Four Divine Dimensions

The divine dimensions that constitute the framework of this life for God’s glory are four. The first is the Divine Decree. God has ordained all things for His purpose. He speaks of Himself as “declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done,” and says, “My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose” (Isa.

46:10). Paul says that God “works all things according to the counsel of his will” (Eph. 1:11). The second is Divine Creation: the world belongs to the Creator, and so we are not owners but stewards. “The earth is the LORD’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein” (Ps. 24:1).

The third dimension is Divine Providence. God governs all things for His elect and for His glory, and He does so in every detail. Nothing in the believer’s day falls outside His rule. The fourth is Divine Righteousness, which is God’s theodicy, His just governance of the moral universe. Theodicy is the study of how God is righteous in His rule over a world in which evil and suffering exist, and I will say more about it in the next section. These four dimensions, the Decree, Creation, Providence, and Righteousness, form the theological skeleton of the Christian cosmoscope. Take away the skeleton, and the cosmoscope becomes a loose collection of religious opinions. Keep it, and the believer has a frame on which every part of life can be hung.

3. The Whole Person

The whole person is engaged in this life lived for glory. The cosmoscope calls for spiritual wisdom, physical embodiment, spirituality toward God, and spirituality toward neighbor. Luke 2:52 provides the pattern. Of the boy Jesus the Gospel says, “And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.” In four short phrases, Luke names four dimensions of growth: the mind (“wisdom”), the body (“stature”), the relationship to God (“favor with God”), and the relationship to others (“favor with man”). Jesus grew in all four, and He is the model for all who follow Him.

The Christian cosmoscope is therefore not a disembodied intellectualism. It is a holistic vision of creaturely flourishing in all dimensions of life, from pre-school education through graduate study, from physical health through spiritual formation. The Lord Jesus summarized the demand in His great commandment: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matt. 22:37). The mind is named alongside the heart and the

soul, and not below them. A Christian who neglects his mind dishonors the God who gave it. A Christian who worships his mind has forgotten who gave it. The cosmoscope keeps both errors in view and corrects them.

In practical terms, this means that the farmer, the engineer, the nurse, the teacher, the mother at home, and the pastor in his study are all engaged in the same task, which is to offer their work to God. Paul says, “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men” (Col. 3:23). A believer who sees his work in this way will bring to it a different quality of care, a different standard of honesty, and a different sense of purpose. His Monday morning will be no less a matter of worship than his Sunday morning.

C. Our Whole Life Is Under God’s Righteousness

The third dimension of the Christian cosmoscope is theodicy, the recognition that our whole life is under God’s righteous governance. This is the part of the cosmoscope that is tested hardest in the furnace of suffering. It is easy to confess that God is the Creator when the sun is shining. It is more difficult when the diagnosis arrives, when a child is lost, or when injustice goes unpunished. The Christian cosmoscope does not ignore these things. It sets them within a frame large enough to hold them.

That frame is made of four convictions. First, God has His eternal decree, “My counsel shall stand” (Isa. 46:10). Second, God is revealed in His creation, which is the testimony of Romans 1:20. Third, God works all things for the good of those who love Him. Paul says, “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28). And he goes on to explain what that good is: “For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers” (Rom. 8:29). The good that God is working is our conformity to Christ. Fourth, God is always right, with a reason beyond our reason. Abraham asked the question that

the cosmoscope answers: “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?” (Gen. 18:25).

Joseph’s testimony is the paradigm. After years of betrayal, slavery, and imprisonment, he stood before the brothers who had wronged him and said, “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today” (Gen. 50:20). Joseph did not call the evil good. His brothers had truly done wrong, and he did not pretend otherwise. But he saw a second Author behind the first, a God who was using even their sin to accomplish a gracious purpose. The Christian cosmoscope sees all events, whether suffering, injustice, loss, or confusion, within the framework of the sovereign God who is always working all things together for good for those who love Him.

“Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.”

— Psalm 115:3

This is not naive optimism. It is the hard-won confidence of those who have wrestled with God and found Him faithful. It does not mean that we are spared grief, and it does not mean that we can always explain what God is doing. The apostle Paul, who understood the doctrines of God’s sovereignty better than most, ended his great argument in Romans with a cry of adoration rather than an explanation: “Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!” (Rom. 11:33). He then gave the verse that summarizes the entire cosmoscope: “For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen” (Rom. 11:36).

Paul preached the same truth to the Athenians, when he told them that God “gives to all mankind life and breath and everything” and that “in him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:25, 28). We exist in God, not beside Him. Every breath is borrowed from Him, and every circumstance is permitted by Him. The cosmoscope teaches the believer to look at the world with this knowledge, and to trust where he cannot see. In seasons of suffering, confusion, or injustice, the mind that has

been shaped by this perspective does not collapse. It bows, it prays, and it waits for the Lord. And it finds, as Joseph found, that the God who rules the world is faithful in the darkest hour.

Reflection Questions — Chapter 3

1. How does the Christian cosmoscope, which sees all of life as created by God, for God's glory, and under God's righteous governance, change the way you approach your work, your relationships, your recreation, and your suffering?
2. The Christian cosmoscope engages seriously with alternative worldviews, such as naturalism, evolution, and postmodernism, rather than dismissing them. What is the most significant intellectual challenge to the Christian worldview that you encounter in your context, and how do you engage it with both conviction and gentleness?
3. How does the conviction that God is always right, with reason beyond our reason (Gen. 50:20; Rom. 11:36), sustain the Christian mind in seasons of suffering, confusion, or injustice? What does it mean to trust a God whose judgments are unsearchable and whose ways are inscrutable (Rom. 11:33)?

Conclusion: Think, Live, and Shine for God's Glory

The real and true Christian has three defining characteristics. The first is a position in Christ: “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1), and we have become “obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed” (Rom. 6:17). The second is a practical life that imitates Christ: where the Spirit of the Lord is, “there is freedom” (2 Cor. 3:17), and the free disciple is being changed into the likeness of the One he follows. The third is a perspective that is different from the sinful world system: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind” (Rom. 12:2). These three are not achievements to be earned. They are gifts to be received and then worked out. Paul says so in a single sentence: “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Phil. 2:12–13).

The Christian mind is being renewed. It is not yet complete. It still wrestles with conformity to this world. It still sees in part. It still struggles to take every thought captive to obey Christ. I do not say this to discourage you, because I include myself in every word of it. I say it so that we will not be surprised when the old patterns of thought push back, and so that we will not mistake a mind that is still under repair for a mind that has not been touched. The direction is set and the power is given. We “are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:18).

Here is where the three chapters meet. Our position tells us what is true of us, whatever we feel on a given day. Our practice tells us what we are to do in response, whatever it costs. Our perspective tells us how to see everything else, whatever the world around us is saying. A believer who has the position but neglects the practice will be assured but fruitless. A believer who has the practice but forgets the position will be

busy but anxious. A believer who has both but never develops the perspective will be faithful but narrow, and will not know how to bring the Lordship of Christ into the office, the classroom, the clinic, or the voting booth. God intends for us to have all three.

So I leave you with a few searching questions. Are we really Christians, not only in orthodoxy, which means right belief, but also in orthopraxy, which means right practice? Do we shine as His spiritual lightbearers, and do we serve as spiritual salt for this darkened and tasteless world? Are we thinking differently from what this world thinks? The call is urgent and the means are given. Let us be sure that we are real and true Christians. Let us keep our lives shining before this darkened world. Let us keep seasoning the people around us with the hope of the gospel. And let us keep changing our thought-life for good and, above all, for God and His glory.

Soli Deo gloria.

Personal Questions and Challenges

On Our Position in Christ

1. Are we really Christians, not only in our stated beliefs but in the transformed quality of our minds and lives? What evidence do you see in your own life that you have genuinely been born of the Spirit?
2. How secure is your assurance that you are in Christ, given to Him by the Father and kept by the Spirit? On what do you base that assurance: on your own faithfulness, or on God's?
3. Where does the old creation, meaning the patterns of thinking, valuing, and behaving from before your conversion, most stubbornly persist in your life? What does new creation look like in that specific area, and what is one concrete change you will make this week?

On Our Practical Life as Disciples

1. Do we shine our lives as His spiritual lightbearers and spiritual salt for this darkened and tasteless world? What specific relationship, community, or context is your primary arena of gospel witness and Christlike influence?
2. Self-denial, taking up the cross daily, is the pattern of discipleship. What cross are you carrying in this season? Is it the cross of genuine discipleship, or a burden of your own making?
3. How does your devotion to Christ's Word, in personal study, in corporate worship, and in community, compare to what you know it should be? What practical change will you make to your daily schedule to bring it into closer alignment?

On Our Perspective on the World

1. Are we thinking like what this world is thinking? In what specific domain (politics, money, relationships, success, or suffering) is your thinking most shaped by the world rather than by the Word?
2. How does the Christian cosmoscope, a comprehensive worldview that sees all of life through Scripture, apply to your professional vocation? What would it look like to bring your work fully under the lordship of Christ?
3. What would it look like in practice to keep on changing our thought-life for good and, above all, for God and His glory? What are the three most important changes your mind needs to undergo in this season, and which will you begin tomorrow morning?

Glossary

Conversion: The conscious turning of a person away from sin and toward Christ in repentance and faith. It is the experienced side of the new birth that God works in the heart.

Cosmoscope: A word used in this book for the comprehensive way a Christian sees the whole world, formed by Scripture. It joins the Greek words for “world” and “to view.”

Divine Decree: God’s eternal and wise purpose, by which He has ordained whatever comes to pass for His own glory.

Divine Providence: God’s continual care and rule over all His creatures and all events, by which He carries out His purpose.

Naturalism: The belief that nature is all there is, and that everything can be explained without a Creator or anything beyond the physical world.

Orthodoxy: Right belief; holding to the teaching of Scripture and the historic Christian faith.

Orthopraxy: Right practice; living in a way that fits what one believes.

Regeneration: The new birth, in which the Holy Spirit gives spiritual life to a person who was dead in sin so that he or she can see, love, and trust Christ.

Sanctification: The lifelong work of the Holy Spirit by which believers are made more and more holy and more like Christ.

Theistic Evolution: The view that God used the process of biological evolution to bring about living things, including human beings.

Theodicy: The study of how God is righteous and just in His rule over a world in which evil and suffering exist.

Uniformitarianism: The belief that natural processes have always worked at the same rate and in the same way, so that the past is explained entirely by what we see happening now.

Union with Christ: The believer's living bond with Christ, by which all that Christ has done is counted as the believer's own and the believer shares in His life.

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Ephesians	<i>1:11</i>	<i>Chapter 3</i>
Ephesians	<i>2:8–9</i>	<i>Chapter 1</i>
Ephesians	<i>2:10</i>	<i>Chapter 1</i>
Ephesians	<i>4:17</i>	<i>Chapter 3</i>
Ephesians	<i>4:22–24</i>	<i>Chapter 1</i>
Philippians	<i>2:5</i>	<i>Chapter 2</i>

Philippians	<i>2:12–13</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>
Philippians	<i>3:12</i>	<i>Chapter 2</i>
Philippians	<i>4:8</i>	<i>Chapter 2</i>
Colossians	<i>1:17</i>	<i>Chapter 3</i>
Colossians	<i>2:8</i>	<i>Chapter 2</i>
Colossians	<i>3:16</i>	<i>Chapter 2</i>
Colossians	<i>3:17</i>	<i>Chapter 3</i>
Colossians	<i>3:23</i>	<i>Chapter 3</i>
1 Timothy	<i>4:3</i>	<i>Chapter 2</i>
2 Timothy	<i>3:15–17</i>	<i>Chapter 3</i>
Titus	<i>3:5</i>	<i>Chapter 1</i>
Hebrews	<i>1:3</i>	<i>Chapter 3</i>
Hebrews	<i>10:24–25</i>	<i>Chapter 2</i>
James	<i>1:18</i>	<i>Chapter 1</i>
1 Peter	<i>2:21</i>	<i>Chapter 2</i>
1 Peter	<i>3:15</i>	<i>Chapter 2</i>

About the Author

Pastor Baltazar A. Niangar is a Pastor Emeritus who holds the degrees of Th.B. (Bachelor of Theology), A.B. (Bachelor of Arts), and D.D. (Doctor of Divinity). He has devoted his life and ministry to the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the rigorous theological formation of God's people, and the equipping of pastoral leaders for faithful and effective ministry in church and society.

Pastor Bal served for many years as a pastor and theological educator, and has been a central figure in the work of Holistic Enhancement for Lay-leaders and Pastors (HELP, Inc.), a parachurch ministry committed to equipping the whole people of God for faithful service across every sphere of life. His monthly theological lectures to the HELP, Inc. fellowship have addressed the most foundational questions of the Christian faith, and these studies, expanded, deepened, and formatted for print, have shaped the theological works he continues to write.

His theological formation reflects sustained engagement with the whole of the Reformed and evangelical tradition. Among those whose thought has most shaped his own are Augustine of Hippo, John Calvin, Abraham Kuyper, Louis Berkhof, Benjamin B. Warfield, Oscar Cullmann, Herman Dooyeweerd, Karl Barth, Paul Jewett, Francis Schaeffer, R.C. Sproul, and Ravi Zacharias. He reads every theological question through the lens of the whole counsel of God, and has spent a lifetime teaching others to do the same.

The present work, *The Thinking Process of the Christian Mind*, represents Pastor Bal's engagement with the question of how a redeemed mind is formed and how it learns to see all of life under God. Tracing the believer's position in Christ, practice as a disciple, and perspective on the world, it offers pastors and lay leaders a clear and Scripture-saturated account of what it means to think, live, and shine for the glory of God.

Other theological works by the author:

Spiritual Unity and Personal Diversity in Christ
Why God Did Decree and Allow Evil to Exist
What the Christian Church Should Be
The Reformed Theological Paradigm
The Holy Loving Triune Lord God
The Seven Loci of Dogmatics
Biblical Salvation: A Study in Soteriology
Vital Words Related to Salvation
The Athanasian Creed Understood by Faith
Divine Election unto Salvation
Comparing and Contrasting Calvinism and Arminianism
In Everything, Give Thanks to God
The Seven Churches of Revelation
The Main Subjects of Luther's Ninety-Five Theses
Our Attitude Towards Wealth
The Five Illustrations of Divine Truths
The Reformed Theological Summary of Life
The Work of the Holy Spirit
Paul's Summary of His Message in the Ministry
Six Calvinistic Schools on Soteriology
The Seven Loci of Christian Theology
Doctrines of Divine Grace: Part II
Millennium in the Bible

He lives with his beloved wife, Estrella. He is the father of Dr. Ellazar and Zarelle Grace. He continues to preach, teach, write, and intercede for the reformation and renewal of the Church of Jesus Christ, until the day when faith gives way to sight and the knowledge that is now partial becomes the knowledge that is full.

Soli Deo gloria.