

Thinking Like God

(Sermon Notes) By Warren Zehrung 11/4/2017

There are an awful lot of people on this earth. But who would even want to think as God thinks? The thought would never enter their mind about what God thinks.

How would one ever know what God was thinking? Where would you begin – where would you start to figure out what God had on His mind?

Where would the motivation come from to even start to wonder if our thinking was like God's thinking?

What does God have on His mind? What is He thinking? How much are our thoughts like God's thoughts?

When someone that we are familiar with makes a strange comment that we cannot grasp – we say, "Where is he coming from?" Let's ask the question, "Where is God coming from?" What is on His mind? What is He thinking? What is He up to?

We might even be so bold as to think, "Maybe God could use a little help from me – maybe I could set Him straight on a few things. Job tried that approach. Paul touched on this line of reasoning in:

1Corinthians 2:16 For who has known the mind [*nous*'- intellect, understanding] of the Lord, that he may **instruct** Him [or be His **counselor**]?

Romans 11:33-34 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who **hath known the mind of the Lord**? Or who hath been His counselor?

Paul goes on in 1Corinthians 2 to talk about the **mind of God** and the **mind of Jesus Christ**. **Thinking like God** is something every Christian should seek, desire and aspire to. There is nothing more that we would like - than to **think** that we are on the same page God is on. So, how does one begin to **think** like God?

Does **thinking** like God come naturally to you? Paul says that **Thinking Like God** does not come naturally to us. Paul recognized it in himself.

Romans 7:23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the **law of my mind**, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

Sometimes we like to **think**, "Just you and me Lord," but that is not the kind of relationship that we are to have with our God.

We are given the principle that we serve God - whom we cannot see - by serving our fellow man that we can see:

Matthew 25:40 The King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, **ye have done it unto me**. [God says.]

1John 4:20 If a man says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar: for he that loves not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

1John 4:21 And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loves God love his brother also.

Proverbs 27:17 Iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.

As iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpens a friend's character. God designed man to be interactive with others – allowing a two-way flow of information between each other – especially in a spiritual way. After all, we are to be our **brother's keeper**, and if we are not, how much different are we than Cain who killed his brother.

Genesis 4:9 The LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?

When we **stand before** Jesus Christ to give an answer for ourselves, one of the questions He will ask us is, "Who did you bring with you?"

Romans 14:10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou despise thy brother holding him in contempt? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

Romans 14:11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

Romans 14:12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Steering someone else into the Kingdom of God may very well be **our ticket** to get in as well.

Paul desired greatly to teach the Corinthians to think as God thinks. He sought to raise their thinking above the mere basics – to the higher spiritual concepts of the mind of God. Sadly, we read that he was unable to do so because of their unwillingness to rise above their base nature.

1Corinthians 3:1-3 Brethren I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal:

Brethren, where do **you live**? (Not your address – but your spiritual state of mind) Do you live in this world – with your home, with your family, with your bills, your jobs, your pastimes, your hopes and your fears? Are those the things **on your mind** – in your thoughts – in your heart?

If that is where **you live**, it is time to move on to the world of Christianity – a whole new world. Do you get up every day – and take on a whole new day with your **mind-set** being God's Kingdom? To live in His Kingdom today, to look forward to it, to live by the rules of the Kingdom – even now? To bring God's Kingdom about with everyone and everything you touch? Do you walk, eat, sleep and think the Kingdom of God in all that you do? Is that where **you** live?

Why else did Jesus tell His students to forsake – leave behind – all your homes, brothers, or sisters, father, or mother, or wife, or children, and possessions, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold in this lifetime, and shall inherit everlasting life. (Matthew 19:29) Jesus added – it is not for everyone to live His way:

Matthew 19:30 But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.

How do we move out of our earthly mind-set and begin **Thinking Like God**?

How do we adopt **the way**, the culture, and the customs of the way of life of the Kingdom of God – even now?

Colossians 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, **seek those things which are above**, where Christ sits on the right hand of God.

Paul says, "Think on these things." (Philippians 4:8)

Colossians 3:2 Set your affections – set your **mind** on things **above**, not on things on the earth.

Paul tells us to bury the past – move out of your old neighborhoods – habits – worries – and the things that once occupied your mind and time – and **live** as Christians.

Colossians 3:3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Paul chided the church brethren for not being as mature as they could be. It was a very serious reproach by Paul, pointing out that they were yet unskilled in the Word of Righteousness.

Paul presents a foundational – short **seven point** outline – to begin **Thinking Like God**. They are the **Doctrine of Jesus Christ**. Paul goes on to enumerate seven steps in the Plan of God, and he calls each of these basic points – the Doctrines of Jesus Christ. Sometimes we use the phrase, “It goes without saying,” but then, for emphasis, we say it anyway! Paul uses a similar approach when writing to the Hebrews.

Because of the extreme gravity of the subject material Paul says, “Not laying the foundation again...” But then he goes on to list the foundational principles of the Doctrine of Jesus Christ.

These are a true reflection of what **God is thinking**.

First - **repentance** from dead works. Sin brings the penalty of death. Without repentance – there is God’s judgment.

Second - **faith toward God** – not faith in this world that we used to live in – because our citizenship is now with God – who is in heavenly places (Philippians 3:20).

Third - the doctrine of **baptisms** – it is plural because we must make a choice between destructive fire or the glory of God’s Spirit in God’s Kingdom.

Matthew 3:10-12 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the **fire**. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with **fire**: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable **fire**.

This third doctrine reveals whether our thoughts remain in the material world, **or** if we’ve been baptized into the mind of God and His Kingdom. We cannot have the mind of God without having the Spirit of God for they are one and the same.

1Corinthians 2:11 For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God. [in him]

Fourth - of **laying on of hands** – setting apart by ordination of God. If we are progressing according to the **mind of God** – we are now the sons of God – having received a token of His Holy Spirit whereby we cry, “Abba” Father.

We don’t often think of these traits in this way but, these are some of the **characteristics** of God’s nature – this is what **God is thinking**.

In the flesh, each of us resembles our fleshly dad who gave us our earthly existence and temporal life. In the exact same way, when God the Father gives us of His Spiritual life at baptism with the laying on of hands, we become capable of acquiring those characteristic traits of the Spiritual mind of God that are necessary for eternal life.

1 John 5:11 This is the record [testimony] that God hath given to us, eternal life, and this life is in his Son [Jesus Christ].

Fifth - **resurrection of the dead** – all who are in the graves shall come forth. (John 5:28)

Sixth - **eternal judgment**

John 5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the **resurrection of life**; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Seventh - **go on unto perfection** Thinking like God and becoming like Christ.

Hebrews 6:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

Hebrews 6:2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

Paul is trying to drive home the **point** and the **necessity** to **think as God thinks**. He is encouraging Christians to grow up in their faith – and not settle for mediocrity. He says to the churches of all ages: “Seeing ye are dull of hearing,” I have to start all over from scratch:

Hebrews 5:12 For when for the time ye **ought** to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

Hebrews 5:13 For every one that uses milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

Hebrews 5:14 But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their **senses exercised** to discern both good and evil.

Without spiritual discernment we would come to the aid of a fellow member who is sinning – because he is a good friend. And in that way we cost him his salvation because we have enabled him in his sin – rather than rebuke him to Godliness.

Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee.

We do not come by that Godly discernment naturally. When we get to thinking that **we think a lot** like God does, we need to remember what God says:

Isaiah 55:8 My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord.

Isaiah 55:9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

God’s thoughts exceed our by so much – we do not attempt to go there.

1John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, **we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.**

Then we will see Him in His Creative abilities: But for now – His creative abilities far exceed even our ability to comprehend.

Proofs of God reveal what He was thinking – and His thoughts were certainly higher than our thoughts.

God created **life**. He breathed it into man.

Genesis 2:7 The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the **breath of life**; and man became a living soul.

We do not wish to create life – that is God’s right, privilege and prerogative. Life necessitate a Life-giver. Life comes from life. God is the only source of life. **Life is a proof of God.**

Law is a proof of God

James 4:12 There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy.

Kind after kind is a God given law, and a **proof of God.**

Dogs never have kittens. Horses never have cows.

Genesis 1:25 God made the beast of the earth after its kind, and cattle **after their kind**, and everything that creeps upon the earth after its **kind**: and God saw that it was good.

We are man-kind** – the only Kind that is privileged to put on the characteristics of God and to think about things with the same perspective that God has toward things.

We seek His thoughts and **His will.**

Design is another **proof of God.**

Psalms 139:13-14 Thou hast possessed my reins: thou has **knit me together** in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knows right well.

Fulfilled prophecy is a **proof of God.** God says:

Isaiah 46:10-11 I Declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My Plan shall be accomplished, and I will bring to pass all my pleasure... yes, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.

Miracles are a **proof of God.**

Acts 2:22 You men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as you yourselves also know:

Acts 2:23 Him, being delivered by the predetermined **Plan of God**, and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.

Answered Prayer is a **proof of God.**

2Chronicles 7:14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, **and pray**, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

1John 5:14-15 This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He hears [and answers] us: And if we know that He hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him...

1Jn 3:22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

We know what the life of Jesus Christ represented.

God's Characteristics.

The Holy Spirit is the Life of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit is the Power, Wisdom, Mind, Holiness, Love, Mercy, and a multitude of divine characteristics of God.

The Holy Spirit is not a person or a separate third member of the Godhead. The Bible reveals that God is not a trinity of beings.

John 4:23-24 The hour comes, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

And yet, there is no more important goal for a Christian than to begin **to think as God thinks** so that we might know God and become like God. Make no mistake about it – we **do not think** much like God at this point.

The night before He died, Jesus spoke of knowing the **Mind of God** being necessary for eternal life. Jesus prayed:

John 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee [God the Father] the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

Every act of God is an act of Godly love. How can we begin to comprehend God's thoughts and actions? First, we have to come out of this present evil world and be separate. We are warned not to get the "big head" which would prove to be our undoing.

Romans 12:2 Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the **renovation of your mind**, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, **not to think of himself more highly** than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Zechariah 4:6 Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.

We are told to remember the humility of Jesus Christ if we are to have the **mind of Christ**:

Philippians 1:27 Only let your conversation be as it becomes the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

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

Philippians 2:3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem the other better than themselves.

Philippians 2:4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

Philippians 2:6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

Philippians 2:7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

Philippians 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross

There is nothing more important than **Thinking like God**.

1Corinthians 2:16 For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may **instruct** Him. But **we have the mind of Christ**.

This is not saying that we desire to be as powerful as God or possess the wisdom and creative might of God. That is carnal thinking.

1Corinthians 1:29 No flesh should glory in His presence.

We do not pridefully desire to be equal in majesty or sovereignty with God Almighty. What we strive for as Christians is to acquire the **characteristics** of God's **thinking** in order to be pleasing in His sight. That is how we begin **thinking like God** – and becoming in His image. We must become in His image – and make no mistake about it – we are not in His image yet.

Genesis 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, [Please notice that this is **future tense**] after our likeness: ...

Verse 27 is **not** past tense:

Genesis 1:27 So God created man [to be] in His own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

What we desire as Christians is to put on the **attributes** of God so that we are thinking what He is thinking about all matters. These distinguishing qualities, these Godly traits, these characteristics describe the mind of Christ. Here are a few:

Colossians 3:12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness **of mind**, meekness, longsuffering;

This is the way that **God thinks**.

Colossians 3:13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

We do not forgive the sins of the world – that's God's job. We do not forgive the Islamist terrorists who drove over all those people last week in New York – because he has not repented – he is still glad. Jesus said,

Luke 17:3 Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and **if he repents, forgive him**.

God judges those who are sinning, and God forgives those who repent. We have to put on that same **mind-set of forgiving** those who have hurt us and are now sorry they did so.

Colossians 3:14 And above all these things put on **Godly care and love**, which is the bond of perfectness.

Colossians 3:15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Colossians 3:17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

There is another set of Godly characteristics that when we have made them a part of ourselves, we have put on **the mind of God**:

Galatians 5:22 The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Galatians 5:23 meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Those are Godly attributes that we must put on for eternal life. Brethren, those are Godly attributes that must be at the foundation of our thought process. Until that's the way we think – we have not yet begun **thinking like God**.

If by God's infinite mind the vast universe came to be in existence... What does that foretell for those of us who are **thinking like God**? Daniel provides the answer:

Daniel 12:3 They shall shine as the brightness of the stars forever and ever.

That speaks of the Incredible Human Potential and eternal life of those who are **thinking like God**.

End: Thinking Like God

Handout:

This is the Seven Step Plan of God as revealed in the Doctrines of Jesus Christ and the Seven Annual Feasts of the Lord.

1. FOUNDATION OF REPENTANCE

"The foundation of repentance from dead works..." (Hebrews 6:1)

Repentance means to "turn around," and stop sinning.

"In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's Passover."
(Leviticus 23:5)

The Feast of Passover pictures deliverance, Christ's shed blood, past sins covered...

God calls us and grants us repentance (John 6:44, 65, Acts 5:31, Romans 2:4)

2. BELIEVE GOD – FAITH TOWARD GOD

"Faith toward God..." (Hebrews 6:1)

Faith = belief = obedience = come out of sin (John 6:29).

The Days of Unleavened Bread picture coming out of sin. This leads to reconciliation to the Father (2Corinthians 5:19, Isaiah 59:2, Leviticus 23:27).

Beginning with the Night to be Much Observed (Exodus 12:42), "The fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread unto the Lord: seven days ye must eat Unleavened Bread." (Leviticus 23:6) Israel came out of Egypt at this time.

3. BAPTISMS – DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS

"The doctrine of baptisms (pl)..." (Hebrews 6:2)

Choose God – or choose death.

"He [Jesus] shall baptize you with Holy Spirit, or with fire."
(Matthew 3:11)

"Our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." (1Corinthians 10:1-2) This occurred at Unleavened Bread. (Leviticus 23:6)

4. NEW SPIRIT – LAYING ON HANDS

"The laying on of hands..." (Hebrews 6:2) The laying on of hands, after baptism, is when God the Father gives of His Spirit, conveying son-ship to the recipient - now are we the sons of God (1John 3:2). God put His Spirit in those at the first Pentecost (Acts 2:1, John 3:5) (Leviticus 23:15-17 is Pentecost, also known as the Feast of Weeks and Feast of Firstfruits). "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:34) will see God's Holy Spirit poured out on all men (Joel 2:28).

5. NEW LIFE – RESURRECTIONS

"The resurrection of the dead..." (Hebrews 6:2) (All 1Corinthians 15)

"If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." (1Corinthians 15:17)

Christians are a part of the first and better resurrection
(1 Thessalonians 4:16, Hebrews 11:35)

There is an order to the resurrections (1Corinthians 15:23, Revelation 20:12, John 5:28).

The Feast of Trumpets pictures the time when Jesus will return with the resurrected saints (Leviticus 23:24, Rev 19:14)

The Feast of Atonement will see another fulfillment after Christ's return, when all the world has opportunity to be reconciled to the Father (Leviticus 23:27).

6. FINAL DISPOSITION – ETERNAL JUDGMENT

“Eternal judgment...” (Hebrew 6:2, John 7:37 Last Great Day)

We shall all give account of ourselves (Romans 14:9-12). “I saw a Great White Throne... And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” (Revelation 20:11-12, Leviticus 23:36)

7. ETERNAL PERFECTION – GOING ON TO PERFECTION

“Let us go on unto perfection...” (Hebrews 6:1) (All of Revelation 21 (a new heaven and a new earth), John 7:37 Last Great Day)

“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:13)

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.” (1Corinthians 2:9)