Phase 2, Session 9 - Romans 12:1-8

Please feel free to bring up comments on any of the subjects listed below.
1. The Lord cautions us about the limitations of our minds
2. The tripartite man and the difference between our soul and our spirit
3. Jesus tells us how we should use our mind
4. His thoughts compared to ours
5. How does the mind change?
6. About knowledge
7. Imagination and Invention
8. Put an end to the slavery of the carnal mind
9. His Promises

I. Objectives of Session 9 - Romans 12:1-8

1. Demonstrate that the first verse of Romans 12 is not only about taking good care of our bodies, but mainly to present them according to our new identity.
1 Corinthians 3:16
1 Corinthians 6:19
Ephesians 4:1
Colossians 2:6-7

2. Explain how the reading and understanding of the first part of the second verse of Romans 12 give clarity about what really transforms our lives: obedience to the Lord.
Matthew 7:24-25

3. Explain how we judge ourselves, understanding that we are part of the body of Christ and that each one of us plays an important role in the kingdom of God. Bring participants to look at how much they have served in the body of Christ and explore if their call has changed.
2 Corinthians 13:5-10

II. Email to participants before Session 9

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

During our next session, we will be talking about Romans 12:1-8.
Please read, pray and meditate on Romans 12:1-8.

If you have the opportunity, review the verses and materials below which provide context to our study of Romans 12:1-8.

V1
Romans 6:19
1 Corinthians 6:19-20
1 Corinthians 3:16
Colossians 1:21-23
1 Thessalonians 3:12-13
Philippians 2:15

V2
See attachment and read the following text:

I know that many great preachers, say that Romans 12:2 is telling us to renew our minds. However, I just see that they are probably missing the beginning of the verse, and I would like to encourage you to study what it says.

"Do not conform to the patterns of this world"

What is not conforming to the patterns of the world?

It is living according to the Spirit, Not living according to the flesh
It is walking by faith, Not walking by sight
It is living according to the tree of life, Not living according to the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

What do the Scriptures say about this?
Genesis 2:17
Galatians 5:16
2 Corinthians 5:7

This is what Jesus says in
John 15:19
If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Wisdom comes from our submission to the Holy Spirit.
John 14:26

John 16:13
Proverbs 9:10
Ezekiel 36:27

That is how our minds are renewed. This is how we receive the mind of Christ.
1 Corinthians 2:16

We can't do this on our own, for it is He who transforms us. This is clearly explained in Philippians 2:13, 1:6; Proverbs 23:7 and James 3:1-11.

The renewing of our mind comes as the result of non-conformance to the patterns of this world (Romans 12:2); when we live according to the Spirit and not according to the flesh, we are transformed (passive voice) by the renewing of our mind. It is when we do what the Lord says that we receive the wisdom of what He says; then, as a result, our mind is renewed. Experiencing what God says is how "you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

The conjunction "but" implies contrast between conforming and not conforming to this world. The "be transformed by the renewing of your mind" is the result of obedience to the mandate not to conform to this world.

To say renew your mind so you will become a new person is to assume that the mind can transform itself, and this is not what the Scriptures say. On the contrary, this is the basis of psychology. Check what the Scriptures say about the human mind and assess if that is something in which we could even begin to trust. Is the mind something that would have the slightest potential to be the source of transformation for us (Proverbs 3:5)?

We are transformed when our minds are renewed as a result of our obedience to the Lord; when we do what He says; when we walk by faith, not by sight; when we walk according to the Spirit, not according to the flesh; and when we do not conform to this world.

This is confirmed when we look at the language used:
"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will".(Romans 12:2 NIV)

"The renewing" (of your mind) is a gerund, a verb that has been transformed into a

noun. It is a thing, an event or process, not a verb. It isn't saying that you have to renew your mind but that you would be transformed by the renewing of your mind. This noun, event, process, is the result of the non conformance to the patterns of this world. Observe that it doesn't say "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by renewing your mind".

If you were to say "but be transformed by renewing your mind", the statement would open the possibility of signifying a command to renew your mind, but this is not what the verse says.

You are transformed by a thing, the renewing of your mind. It is not a command to renew your mind, a noun can't be a command. The command is the passive "be transformed."

Finally, this verse could be restated as "Conform to the patterns of God, and be transformed by the renewing of your mind".

This attachment offers a different view; the view that is most often taught.

V3
Review email and verses "About our Identity in Christ" from Part 1.
Compare KJV with all other versions. Is it **a** measure of faith or **the** measure of faith?
Galatians 5:22-23

V4-5
1 Corinthians 12:12-26
John 17:11,20-26
Colossians 1:18
Ephesians 5:20-33

V6-8
1 Corinthians 12:1-11 and 27-31
1 Corinthians 13:1-13
1 Corinthians 14:1-40

In Christ,

Hernando
Receiving His Life Ministries

III. Email to participants after Session 9

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Review this email to explore and understand how the way in which we use our minds has an impact in creating, accepting and enlarging fear, thus blurring our relationship with God.

This is the additional content that we have included in Phase 2, Session 9, when we discuss Romans 12:1-8. There are 9 sections in this email and many verses. Just read, pray and meditate on one verse from 3 or 4 of the sections below.

This email is dedicated to analyzing in more detail some of the issues related to the human mind in the biblical context under the following sections:

1. The Lord cautions us about the limitations of our minds
2. The tripartite man and the difference between our soul and our spirit
3. Jesus tells us how we should use our mind
4. His thoughts compared to ours
5. How does the mind change?
6. About knowledge
7. Imagination and Invention
8. Put an end to the slavery of the carnal mind
9. His Promises

There is a long list of Scriptures provided in this email; you don't have to read them all to follow the issues discussed. In some cases I have included many verses addressing the same idea with the sole purpose of showing the significance and importance of the issue being presented.

About the Mind

1. The Lord cautions us about the limitations of our minds when He says:

Proverbs 3:5 "*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;*"

Genesis 6:5 "*Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth,*

and that every intent of the <u>thoughts of his heart</u> was only evil continually.

The Lord confused their languages when they were building the Tower of Babel using bricks instead of stones and asphalt instead of mortar (Genesis 11:1-9)

Psalm 94:11 "*The Lord knows the thoughts of man, That they are futile*."

Matthew 15:16-20 "*So Jesus said, "Are you also still without understanding? Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man.* ***For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies****. These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man*."

Jeremiah 17:9 "*The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it*?"

Mark 8:33 "*But when He had turned around and looked at His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, "Get behind Me, Satan!* ***For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men***."

Ezekiel 11:5-6 "*Then the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and said to me, "Speak! 'Thus says the Lord: "Thus you have said, O house of Israel;* ***for I know the things that come into your mind. You have multiplied your slain in this city****, and you have filled its streets with the slain*."

These are the words of caution to us from the Lord through Paul and what is expected from our identity in Christ:

Ephesians 4:17-24 "***This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.*** *But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness*. "

1 Corinthians 8:1-3 "*Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.* ***And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know****. But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him"*

Romans 1:28-29 "*And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers*,"

2 Corinthians 3:12-18 "*Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech— unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away.* ***But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament****, because the veil is taken away in Christ. But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord*."

2 Corinthians 4:1-6 "*Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,* ***whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them****. For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*."

Philippians 3:18-21 "*For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly,* ***and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things****. For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself*."

1 Timothy 6:3-5 "*If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling,* ***evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth****, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself*."

2 Timothy 3:1-9 "*But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts,* ***always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth****. Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth:* ***men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all****, as theirs also was*."

Titus 1:13-16 "*This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth. To the pure all things are pure,* ***but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled****. They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work*."

Be aware.

2 Corinthians 11:3 "***But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ***."

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

Romans 12:16 "*Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble.* ***Do not be wise in your own opinion***.
This is why Jesus died, so we no longer would live for ourselves but for Him. In other words, we would rest in Him; we wouldn't rely on our own minds."

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 "*For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if*

One died for all, then all died; ***and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again*****."**

This explains why "*If we are "out of our mind," as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you*." 2 Corinthians 5:13 NIV

2. The three part man and the difference between our soul and our spirit

1 Thessalonians 5:23 "*Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole* ***spirit, soul, and body*** *be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*."

It is through our spirit that we communicate with God and that we become aware of who we are.

We worship Him in spirit and in truth.

John 4:24 "*God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth*."

We are one spirit with Him.

1 Corinthians 6:17 "*But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him*."

This is also the meaning of the analogy of the vine and the branches in John 15:5 and in Jesus' prayer in John 17:20-23

John 15:5 "*I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing*."

John 17:20-23 "*I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;* ***that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us****, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me*."

God speaks to us through our spirits.

Romans 8:14-17 "*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.*

For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." ***The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God****, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together*."

Some people believe that the soul and the spirit are the same, but there is, without a doubt, a difference, as explained in Hebrews 4:12 *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,* ***piercing even to the division of soul and spirit****, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*.

Luke 1:46-47 "*And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior*."

We are spirit, soul and body. We are spirits who have souls and live in bodies. Our spirit is heaven ready, justified, as clean as it can be by the blood of Jesus. Our soul is in the process of sanctification, which will be complete when we see the Lord (Philippians 1:6), and our bodies are temporal, until we receive our new, glorified bodies at the second coming of Jesus.

There are some people who favor a two part man. Some say that the issue is mainly semantic and that the metaphysical aspect, the soul, is the combination of our soul and the Spirit of the Creator. Hebrews 4:12 tells us that it is not just a semantic distinction, but two distinct parts. Romans 8:16 tells us that there is a difference between our spirit and the Holy Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 5:23 says that we are spirit, soul and body and John 4:24 says that we worship God in spirit (our spirit) and truth. Since we worship Him in spirit and truth, this bypasses the mind, which is part of the soul (together with our emotions and our will). It is beyond the mind, as we see in the Greek word "metanoia" (meta - beyond and noia - mind/knowledge). This word in the New Testament is translated as "repent." This was the first command of Jesus to us in a public setting. Also, review 2 Corinthians 5:13 NIV *If we are "out of our mind," as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you*. We are not our mind. The mind is a tool that the Lord gave us to help us understand and explain revelation received through our spirit. Jesus gives us a hint of this in John 5:19,30; 6:38; 8:28,38; 12:49-50; 14:10,26; 15:26; 16:7,13.

Finally, when we talk about justification, sanctification and glorification, we are talking about the spirit, the soul and the body respectively, based on the Scriptures.

The danger of not separating the spirit from the soul is that you can not know that the spirit of the believer is as clean as it can be, so clean that the Holy Spirit dwells in us. This cleansing happened at once and is justification. This is why we can come boldly into the Throne of Grace (Hebrews 4:16). The soul, on the other hand, is in the process of sanctification (Philippians 1:6) and glorification will occur when we receive our new bodies (Romans 8:18-23 and 1 Corinthians 15:50-58).

3. Jesus tells us how to use our minds:

Just read and meditate on a couple of these verses, particularly John 14.10 and 24. I have included many verses for reference for those who want to have more detail and want to delight in the beauty of the Scriptures.

John 5:19 "*Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner*."

John 5:30 "*I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me*."

John 6:38 "*For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me*."

John 7:16-18 "Jesus answered them and said, "***My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me****. If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him*."

John 7:28 "*Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, "You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know*."

John 8:28-29 "*Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself;* ***but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things****. And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him*."

John 8:42 "*Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I*

proceeded forth and came from God; ***nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me***."

John 8:50-51 "*And I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks and judges. Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death*."

John 12:49-50 "*For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life****. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.***"

John 14:10 "***Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works***."

John 14:24 "***He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me***."

How should we use our minds?

How we use our minds is certainly at the center of the meaning of having the mind of Christ. 1 Corinthians 2:16 *For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?"* ***But we have the mind of Christ***.

Romans 11:32-36 "*For God has committed them all to disobedience,* ***that He might have mercy on all****. Oh, 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 has known the mind of the Lord?*** *Or who has become His counselor?" "Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?" For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen*."

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

2 Corinthians 10:4-6 "*For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God,* ***bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ****, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled*."

Our minds are to understand revelation, to understand what the Father says to us through the Holy Spirit, according to John 14:26 and 16:13. Our minds are to be used to recognize that we are hearing from the Lord by reflecting upon, examining and comparing what we hear against the Scriptures. We are to use our minds to discover and discern what He is saying to us so we can obey Him. We are to meditate on what He says, so His words won't depart from us (Joshua 1:8) and that we let His words dwell in us richly in all wisdom (Colossians 3:16).

Joshua 1:8 "***This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night****, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success*."

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*."

We are not to study the Scriptures so much as we are to meditate on them and, relying on the Lord, gain understanding.

Isaiah 1:18 "***Come now, and let us reason together," Says the Lord****, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool*."

This is who we were:

Ephesians 2:1-3 "*And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others*."

But this is who He made us to be:

Ephesians 2:4-10 "*But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ by grace you have been saved, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace*

you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

This was said about Jesus:

Mark 3:21 "*But when His own people heard about this, they went out to lay hold of Him, for they said, "**He is out of His mind***."

This is what Paul said regarding us when we are out of our mind:

2 Corinthians 5:13 NIV "***If we are "out of our mind," as some say, it is for God****; if we are in our right mind, it is for you*."

In the New Testament, the word "repent" comes from the Greek "metanoia", which means beyond the mind (that is, in the Spirit). Some people say that it means to change your mind. However, from the Jewish point of view, the word means turn or return and in that context means to turn from sin and return back to God. It implies an action (not just thinking) which now we know is only possible when we walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16).

4. This is what the Lord says about His thoughts compared to ours:

Isaiah 55:8-9 "*For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts*.

These Scriptures make clear that our minds are very limited and shouldn't be trusted when walking according to the flesh:

1 Corinthians 1:18-31
1 Corinthians 2:6-16
1 Corinthians 3:18-23
Romans 8:5-8

What can our minds do or not do?
Our minds can not generate, produce or create truth. The Lord is the only source of truth (John 14:6). Truth comes to us from God through revelation. He is the source of truth.

It is with Him that we should read the Scriptures, as we mentioned above:

Isaiah 1:18 "***Come now, and let us reason together,*** *" Says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool*."

Our minds don't sanctify us; His truth does (John 17:17). The mind can not fix itself; it can not renew itself. It is obedience to the Lord that gives us wisdom and renews our minds.

The mind is a tool that the Lord has given us to understand revelation. He has told us that "*The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law*." Deuteronomy 29:29. The mind was given to us to understand those things that have been revealed to us.

The mind isn't us; neither should it be what tells us who we are. We are who God says we are. Giving such importance and preeminence to the mind, by making it who we are or what tells us who we are, leads to relativism and humanism. It leads us to believe only what "makes sense" to us and to accept only what appears "reasonable" to us. We forget the scriptural truth, "... ***that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation****, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*." 2 Peter 1:20-21. The mind isn't designed to judge what the Scriptures say — to arrive at its own conclusion, decide what it likes and what it doesn't like, and to take what it likes and leave what it doesn't like. This view of preeminence or supremacy of the mind is what turns into perceptions of the Scriptures that say, "Well, it is my opinion against yours". The Scriptures are given by inspiration of God, and they are not a matter open to our own interpretation.

2 Timothy 3:14-17 "*But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood* ***you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus****. All Scripture is given* ***by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine****, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work*."

We read, pray and meditate on the Scriptures to understand God's revelation. We explain and demonstrate in order to persuade. The mind doesn't create truth; it just

applies reason to the Scriptures to discover the truth that God has revealed to us.

Acts 17:2-4 "*Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths **reasoned** with them from the Scriptures, **explaining and demonstrating** that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ." And **some of them were persuaded**; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and Silas*."

5. How does the mind change?

The mind doesn't fix or change itself. It is obedience to the Lord that produces a regeneration of the mind. Doing what He says brings wisdom. Start by doing what He says and you will gain understanding. You have to do what He says in order to understand. As an example, I could mention "love your enemy". I only understood this truth when I obeyed and did it. The fear of the Lord is reverence and obedience. The mind is renewed when we experience His truth. It happens when we don't conform to the patterns of this world but live in the spirit and not in the flesh. It happens when we do what He says, then we understand. When we understand, our mind is renewed, and when it is renewed we are transformed.

When we meditate on His word (Psalm 1:2, Joshua 1:8, Philippians 4:8, 1 Timothy 4:13-15), we are not conforming to the patterns of this world. When we meditate on His word, we live according to the Spirit, not according to the flesh, for His words are Spirit and they are life (John 6:63). This is why I don't mind when people misinterpret Romans 12:2 but say, "Let's meditate on His word to renew our mind." The interpretation is wrong, but the solution given is correct. Please see this interpretation in the attachment included below.

Romans 12:2 "***And do not be conformed to this world**, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God*."

I know that many great preachers say that Romans 12:2 is telling us to renew our minds. However, I just see that they are probably missing the beginning of the verse, and I would like to encourage you to study what it says.

"***Do not conform to the patterns of this world***"

What is not conforming to the patterns of the world?

-It is living according to the Spirit, not living according to the flesh (Galatians 5:16)
-It is walking by faith, not walking by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7)
-It is living according to the tree of life, not living according to the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17)

What do the Scriptures say about this?

Galatians 5:16
2 Corinthians 5:7
Genesis 2:17

Being conformed in the Greek means to not be guided by the ways of this world. When Paul tells us to not conform to the patterns of this world, what he is saying is do not let yourselves rely on the things of this world because they are temporary. The word for transformed in Greek is the English word metamorphosis. Being metamorphized means we are changed in form and we are transformed. This work is of the Holy Spirit at work in us, the sanctifying grace of God at work in our life. Philippians 2:13 and 1:6 testify of that.

The renewing of our mind comes as the result of non-conformance to the patterns of this world (Romans 12:2). When we live according to the Spirit and not according to the flesh, we are transformed (passive voice) by the renewing of our mind. It is when we do what the Lord says that we receive the wisdom of what He says; then, as a result, our mind is renewed. Experiencing what God says is how "... *you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*" Romans 12:2.

The conjunction "but" implies contrast between conforming and not conforming to this world. The "be transformed by the renewing of your mind" is the result of obedience to the mandate not to conform to this world.

To say renew your mind so you will become a new person is to assume that the mind can transform itself, and this is not what the Scriptures say. On the contrary, this is the basis of psychology. Check again what the Scriptures say about the human mind and assess if that is something in which we could even begin to trust. Is the mind something that would have the slightest potential to be the source of transformation for us (Proverbs 3:5)?

We are transformed (*but be transformed*) when our minds are renewed as a result of

our obedience to the Lord; when we do what He says; when we walk by faith, not by sight; when we walk according to the Spirit, not according to the flesh; and when we do not conform to this world.

This is confirmed when we look at the language used:

"*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will*".(Romans 12:2 NIV)

"The renewing" (of your mind) is a gerund, a verb that has been transformed into a noun. It is a thing, an event or process, not a verb. It isn't saying that you have to renew your mind but that you would be transformed by the renewing of your mind. This noun, event, process, is the result of the non conformance to the patterns of this world.

The Strong's Concordance says that renewing (anakainosis G 342) is a feminine noun and means a renewing/renewal, a renovation, or a positive change. The root of this word, as expected, is a verb — G 341 to renew. (See charts at the end)

Observe that it doesn't say "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by "renewing" your mind".

If you were to say "but be transformed by renewing your mind", the statement would open the possibility of signifying a command to renew your mind, but this is not what the verse says.

You are transformed by a thing, the renewing of your mind. It is not a command to renew your mind; a noun can't be a command. The command is the passive "be transformed."

Finally, this verse could be restated as "Conform to the patterns of God, and be transformed by the renewing of your mind".

1 Corinthians 2:11-12 "*For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God*."

That is how our minds are renewed. This is how we receive the mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:14-16 "*But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?"* ***But we have the mind of Christ***."

Wisdom comes from our submission to the Holy Spirit.
John 14:26
John 15:26-27
John 16:13
Proverbs 9:10
Proverbs 1:7
Ezekiel 36:26-27
Ezekiel 11:19-20

This is what Jesus says regarding the impact that our submission to Him has in John 15:19 "*If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you*."

We aren't limited by our mind when we are born of the Spirit and live according to the Spirit *The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit*." John 3:8

6. About knowledge

It is important for us to understand that "to know" in the Scriptures is most often relational, such as in Genesis 4:1 *Now* ***Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain****, and said, "I have acquired a man from the Lord*." Also in Matthew 1:24-25 *Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife,* ***and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son****. And he called His name Jesus*.This is what Jesus said in Matthew 7:23 *And then I will declare to them, '****I never knew you;*** *depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness*!' It isn't that He doesn't know who they are, but that He doesn't have a relationship with them. To "know" in the Scriptures is relational; it means to have a personal encounter. The same message is conveyed to us in Galatians 4:9, Hebrews 8:10-11 and 1 Corinthians 8:1-3.

Hosea 6:3 "*Let us know,* ***Let us pursue the knowledge of the Lord****. His going forth is*

established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth."

Hosea 6:6 "*For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings*."

Ephesians 1:15-23 "*Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all*.

In the following two instances, however, the word knowledge appears to be related to mental or intelectual knowledge:

Ecclesiastes 1:18 "*For in much wisdom is much grief, And he who increases knowledge increases sorrow*."

Ecclesiastes 12:12 "*And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is wearisome to the flesh*."

This is opposite to the relational meaning of knowledge in Hosea 4:6 "***My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*** *Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children*."

We constantly hear the world tell us that education is the key, that knowledge (intelectual) is what brings about change. Really? How many people do you know who stopped smoking, getting drunk or using drugs because they were educated on the harmful effects that those actions produce? How many people stop using pornography or committing adultery because they learn about their devastating effects? How many

people do you know who overcame sin because of a change in their mental knowledge? Our mind doesn't transform us; it is the Lord who transforms us "*for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure*." Philippians 2:13

7. Imagination and Invention

This is a sample of what the dictionary says about these words:
"imagine - form a mental image of something that is not present or that is not the case
imagination - the formation of a mental image of something that is not perceived as real and is not present to the senses
invent - come up with (an idea, plan, explanation, theory, or principle) after a mental effort
invention - the creation of something in the mind"
The free dictionary by Farlex

Implicit is the concept of something that is made up by the mind, something that doesn't exist and isn't real.

We don't imagine what we read in the Scriptures. We see, we visualize, we picture and we experience what we read, for what is written in the Scriptures is real; it is a spiritual reality. The spiritual world is real and preceded the physical world, for God spoke the physical world into existence (Genesis 1:1-31). These verses are also a confirmation that what is of the Spirit does not have to be imagined, merely experienced, because it is real.

Hebrews 11:3 "*By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible*."

2 Corinthians 4:18 "*while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal*."

God's words are Spirit and they are Life (John 6:63). They won't return to Him void but will fulfill the purpose for which He sent them (Isaiah 55:11). His words transform us (Philippians 2:13 and 1 Thessalonians 2:13), heal us (Psalm 107:20), cleanse us (John 15:3) and sanctify us (John 17:17).

When you read and meditate on the Scriptures, see with the eyes of your heart (Ephesians 1:18) that you are talking with Jesus. He is within you (just look inside of

yourself) or sitting next to you, and you wish to experience the love that He has for you. You want to ask Him to show His love for you.

I use "see with the eyes of your heart" (Ephesians 1:18) because, when we meditate on the Scriptures, we are talking with Jesus. We are with Him because He is the Word of God. We are not imagining; it is not a made up world, or a symbolic world, but the very real world of the Spirit. We are to have a picture of the reality of the spiritual world, not something created by our imagination. This is why we make sure that we don't decide what Jesus is going to say or do in response to our prayer. We are simply to be with Him and wait for Him to speak and show us what He wants us to see. What He shows us, we will see with the eyes of our heart. "*Come now, and let us reason together," Says the Lord*, ..." Isaiah 1:18

The Scriptures are very clear about the dangers of our imagination.
For example, fear is an outcome of the imagination; it is a Fake Event Appearing Real. Fear is the result of relying on what is temporal in nature, that is reliance in the things created, the things of the world. It is the result of imagining that we could rely on anything that is not God. Fear is not from God; it is a product of the imagination, and it is evil. "*For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind*." 2 Timothy 1:7.

In summary, the Lord cautions us to be careful with our imagination, because it can so easily be used by the enemy to tempt us into sin. It is not that we can't use it at all, but we must be very careful to rely on the Guidance of the Holy Spirit when we do and we must not use it when dealing with the word, the truth, the law of God — where imagination has no place. These are spiritual realities; they already exist, so we only have to visualize them, not recreate them in our imagination.

It doesn't take much to understand the great danger that imagination plays in human sexuality. Instead of enjoying the reality of the physical relationship, many couples, particularly men, opt for the darkness of pornography, usually leading to greater darkness, perversion and dissatisfaction.

The Scriptures tell us to cast down arguments and imaginations.

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 "*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)* ***Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth***

itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled*."

Casting down imaginations is possible for us when we abide in Him and He in us and we acquire His mind, when His mind is manifested in us: "*For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ*. 1 Corinthians 2:16

By faith we receive what God has given to us. Faith releases the power of God in us and allows us to appropriate what He has already done.

Why is imagination dangerous?

Why is imagination depicted in the Scriptures as something dangerous, and why do they tell us to cast it out? Some believers may ask, "Why should I cast out imagination, since I love to use my imagination and it's been good to me?" They may also ask, "Wasn't it God who gave us imagination?" The answer to that question is, "No."

Let's look at the origin of imagination, since that would give us the understanding we seek. When was the first time that imagination appeared in the Scriptures?

Genesis 3:1-7 "*Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it,* ***nor shall you touch it,*** *lest you die.'" Then the serpent said to the woman, "****You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.****" So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate*. ***Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings***."

In this passage, we can see that Satan led Eve to imagine what it would be like to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, have her eyes opened and not die. Satan led her to imagine what it would be like to be like God. It is imagination because it is outside of what the Lord had told them; it is contrary to what God had said. Satan's

invitation was “Eve, imagine what it would be like to be like God”. Implicit in their decision to eat from the forbidden tree was that they imagined that God wasn’t telling them the truth about dying and that God had some mean ulterior motive to keep the knowledge of good and evil away from them. Adam and Eve were making their own reality. They were making the world the way they wanted it to be, a world in which they could eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil and not die, a world outside of God’s word — which is the true reality.

It is important to understand that the devil didn’t make Eve eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He enticed her with the good of the world (Genesis 3:6) and encouraged her to imagine a world other than the one created by God: a world in which they could eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, have all the knowledge of God and be like God, and never die. It was Eve’s own imagination that led to her free will decision to eat.

God doesn’t violate our free will. Neither can the devil. The only way the enemy could have gained power was through persuasion and deceit. He couldn’t have forced Eve to do anything, but human imagination is a powerful tool in the hands of the devil.

Imagination adds something to the world, and to the word, that isn’t real, something that doesn’t exist. This is why in Revelation 22:18-19 we are commanded not to add and not to take away from His word. Take a look at the exposure created when Eve said, “***Nor shall you touch it.”*** We know that the Lord never said that. The text doesn’t say that this statement was what gave way to the final outcome, but the fact that she touched it without dying or feeling shame could have influenced her decision to go ahead and eat.

No, it wasn’t God who gave us imagination. It was our imagination that led us to disobey and be apart from God. Imagination was man’s creation, under the influence of Satan. Imagination came out of greed and pride to make up a world thought to be greater than God’s creation (see Luke 1:51 KJV below).

Another question that I have heard is, “I was in Israel by the Sea of Galilee and I imagined that I was there talking with Jesus. That is imagination because I wasn’t there at the time of Jesus. Isn’t that good imagination?” If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, you are not imagining. You are in Him, and in Him you have eternal life — so you were there with Him, just as you were with Him on the cross. That is a spiritual reality, not imagination. (Galatians 2:20, 1 John 4:17, John 6:54, Colossians 3:3)

You may say, I think imagination can be a dangerous thing just like many things, but I

believe God can use our imaginations for good. Look at CS Lewis who is the author of the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. He is a Christian who wrote these books for children and adults to communicate the good news of Christ in a made up world, an imagined world. There are many Christian themes in his writings and he had to use his imagination to create this world and to embed Christian theology in his books.

Both C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien used “imagination” to depict worlds unknown to man (and most likely unreal — as far as we know), but they stayed loyal to the spiritual reality and truth of God. Using the eyes of their hearts, they visualized and described, in a very new way, worlds that were built upon God’s universal truth, His laws, and His understanding of the very nature of good and evil. Their purpose and intent was to describe other worlds and creatures in a way that made it easier for people to understand and remember the same universal truth of God that rules this world and is contained in Scripture. They were not creating worlds that contradicted God’s truth. In that sense, they were merely presenting the reality of God’s creation in the form of an unknown, unearthly environment, inhabited by strange beings. In other words, there is no use of imagination or creativity in the presentation of the spiritual truth and laws of God; they are universal and exist in all realms, both natural and fictional. These writers were merely revealing spiritual reality through unusual and enticing settings and characters. That serves a good purpose and doesn’t violate the Spiritual laws of God.

On the other hand, the Harry Potter books are a perfect example of the danger of imagination. Millions of people have read them and love them, not only because they are entertaining but also because they satisfy the human fantasy of acquiring power over other people and over our environment. The stories are set in the reality of this world, but J.K. Rowling violates the physical laws of this world by giving certain “human” characters the innate power of magic. She also violates the truth and laws of God in her stories by imagining that evil creatures (such as witches, ghosts, werewolves, etc.) and evil activities (casting spells, communing with the dead, etc.) are actually good. Her books have, in fact, led many people into dabbling with the occult. Rowling’s use of imagination is not only dangerous but utterly evil.

Most verses about imagination are related to evil, with the exception of 1 Chronicles 29:18 KJV “*O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee*:”

You may ask the question, “If imagination is good in this verse, might it be that imagination can be good or bad depending on how you use it?”

The reason that imagination is fine in this verse is that the verse is actually part of a a prayer which starts in verse 17; David prays that all that remains in his people's imagination be in compliance with the Lord, that their hearts be always towards the Lord:

1 Chronicles 29:17-18 KJV "*I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee. O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee:*"

It also seems that "imagination", as we understand the word, may not be the best translation of the Hebrew for this particular verse. "Intent, purpose, framework" (as several Bible versions have it) of their thoughts would be a better translation. See Strong's entry in the attachment below.

Imagination applied to the Lord's laws is evil because it is adding to or taking away from something the Lord has said (Genesis 3:1-3, Revelation 22:18). However, if imagination is used in accordance with the truth, the word, the laws — the spiritual reality of God, then it can be a helpful tool for expressing that reality. People may use their imagination, with care, to create new worlds and unusual beings to inhabit those worlds, but God's universal spiritual truth must still prevail in those worlds and over those beings. Good can not be imagined as evil, nor can evil be good (Isaiah 5:20).

What follows is a long list of Scriptures that prove that we shouldn't rely on our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5) and that we should be aware of the danger of imagination to our walk with the Lord. Just read and meditate on a few of these verses and let the Lord speak to you.

Luke 1:51 KJV "*He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts*."

Romans 1:21 KJV "*Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was was darkened."*

Genesis 6:5 KJV "*And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*."

Genesis 8:21 KJV "*And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done*."

Genesis 11:6 KJV "*And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do*."

Deuteronomy 29:19 KJV "*And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst*:"

Deuteronomy 31:21 KJV "*And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: for I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I sware*."

Jeremiah 3:17 KJV "*At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord , to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart*."

Jeremiah 7:24 KJV "*But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward*."

Jeremiah 9:14 KJV "*But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them*:"

Jeremiah 11:8 "*Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart: therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do: but they did them not*."

Jeremiah 13:10 KJV "*This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing*."

Jeremiah 16:12 KJV "*And ye have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk every one after the imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me*:"
Jeremiah 18:12 KJV "*And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own*

devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart."

Psalm 2:1 KJV "*Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing*?"

Psalm 38:12 KJV "*They also that seek after my life lay snares for me: and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long*."

Psalm 62:3 KJV "*How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence*."

Psalm 140:1-2 KJV "*Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man: preserve me from the violent man; Which imagine mischiefs in their heart; continually are they gathered together for war*."

Proverbs 6:18 KJV "*An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief*,"

Proverbs 12:20 "*Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counsellors of peace is joy*."

Hosea 7:15 KJV "*Though I have bound and strengthened their arms, yet do they imagine mischief against me*."

Nahum 1:9 KJV "*What do ye imagine against the Lord? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time*."

Zechariah 7:10 KJV "*And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart*."

Zechariah 8:17 KJV "*And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord*."

Acts 4:25 KJV *"Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things*?"

All mentions of inventions, which appear mostly in the KJV, are related to evil:

Romans 1:30 NIV "*slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents*;"

Ephesians 4:14 GNBDC "*Then we shall no longer be children, carried by the waves and blown about by every shifting wind of the teaching of deceitful people, who lead others into error by the tricks they invent*."

Psalms 99:8 KJV "*Thou answeredst them, O Lord our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions*."

Psalms 106:29 KJV "*Thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them*."

Psalms 106:39 KJV "*Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions*."

Ecclesiastes 7:29 KJV "*Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions*."

Jeremiah 23:26 GNT "*How much longer will those prophets mislead my people with the lies they have invented*?"

Amos 6:3-7 NKJV "*Woe to you who put far off the day of doom, Who cause the seat of violence to come near; Who lie on beds of ivory, Stretch out on your couches, Eat lambs from the flock And calves from the midst of the stall; Who sing idly to the sound of stringed instruments, And invent for yourselves musical instruments like David; Who drink wine from bowls, And anoint yourselves with the best ointments, But are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph. Therefore they shall now go captive as the first of the captives, And those who recline at banquets shall be removed*."

8. **Put an end to the slavery of the carnal mind**

Only in Christ can we receive freedom from the slavery of the carnal mind: *For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ*. 1 Corinthians 2:16

John 8:31-36 "*Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "**If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed**. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*." *They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, 'You will be made free'?*" *Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. **Therefore if***

the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed."

When you live according to the flesh, you are surely a slave to your mind. It is only when you live according to the Spirit that you receive the mind of Christ and the liberty that comes with Him "*Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*." 2 Corinthians 3:17

Examine yourself

Slavery to the mind is manifested in the following ways (among others): When you think that you are your mind, when your identity is defined by your mind, when you can't stop thinking, when you have difficulty falling asleep because your mind is very active, when you are unable to live in the present because your mind is thinking about the past or making plans for the future, when your present is just a stepping stone to the future, when you suffer from worry, anxiety or fear, when you want to have faith but your mind brings up doubts, when you rely on your mind rather than on God.

If one or more of these things keeps happening to you, you are probably a slave of your mind.

From the Scriptures and the issues discussed above, we learned that the mind (as we are in the flesh), is both unreliable and temporal (Proverbs 3:5, Jeremiah 17:9-10 and Psalm 147:3-5, Jeremiah 17:5-8). The mind can't be trusted. Reliance on the mind brings worry, anxiety and fear. It is prone to make mistakes, since the mind is unable to foresee the multiple ripple effects of our decisions; this fosters instability, agitation and lack of tranquility.

Reliance on our minds and ourselves is dealt with very severely in the Scriptures. This is what caused the fall of man (Genesis 3:1-14), this is why Moses wasn't allowed to reach the promised land (Numbers 20:11-12) and this is why Jesus addresses the Pharisees so harshly (John 8:37:47 and 12:37-50).

We were created to be in reliance on the Lord. This is, as we discussed above, how Jesus showed us how to use our minds — that is, to understand revelation (John 5:19,30, 6:38, 7:16,28, 8:28,42,50, 12:49-50, 14:10,24). The most severe indictment that I have seen in the Scriptures against reliance on the mind is in the words of Jesus in Matthew 11:20-30. The good news is that it concludes with the certainty that in Him we find peace. We are all aware of sexual immorality and all the harmful consequences that such practices bring, but we tend to overlook the serious sin of reliance on our

minds. In the passage mentioned above, Jesus says in Matthew 11:23-24 *And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you*."

In Jesus' day, Capernaum was known as a center for the intellectual elite; its synagogue school was considered one of the best, as were its rabbis. The people of Capernaum were proud of their superior intellect and understanding of scripture. They, like us, were well aware of the grave nature of sexual immorality. They, however, failed to realize that in God's eyes reliance on the mind — reliance on ourselves — is far worse than anything else, including Sodom! Haven't we noticed that we live in Capernaum, where we give so much credence to our intelectual prowess and self reliance?

This seems to be one of those things that is hidden in plain sight. We fail to see that we are slaves to our minds and that this slavery greatly hinders our ability to overcome the world. The words of James make it clear to us that he whose mind causes him to doubt is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind:

James 1:5-8 "*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.* ***But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.*** *For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways*."

The Lord says "hear and obey" (Matthew 7:24-27, James 1:22), not hear and think about it! This is what Lordship means — we hear and we obey the Lord without questioning. We say that Jesus is our Lord, but we don't understand Lordship. "***But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say***? Luke 6:46. This misunderstanding significantly undercuts our ability to overcome the world, yet we are, for the most part, unaware of this weakness. The moment that we hear His word and decide to consider it, rather than simply obey, we introduce doubt. At that point, we are already doubting. Doubt is treacherous in that it counters faith; it has the most damaging effect on our faith. What should we then expect when doubt is pervasive in our souls? *And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him,* "*O you of little faith,* ***why did you doubt***?" Matthew 14:31. When we doubt, we sink in our circumstances rather than overcome them. We fail to live the abundant life that Jesus came to give us.

From Mark 4:26-29 (Parable of the Sower), we understand that the process of increasing the manifestation of our faith involves a gradual progression and does not happen all at once. Like the wheat that is sown and develops first the blade, then the head, and then the full grain, the manifestation of our faith develops in stages over time, as we live in relationship with God. The passage below is probably one of the best illustrations of what may happen as a result of being unaware of our doubt and unaware that we must sow consistent obedience to the Scriptures in order to reap the full harvest that comes with faith:

Acts 19:13-16 "*Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, "**Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded***.

Please review the email that I sent after Phase 1, Session 6, for more detail about faith, unbelief and doubt.

How do we put an end to the reign of the carnal mind?

Two steps are necessary to do this:

The first step is to become aware of what we just discussed above. We will remain slaves of our mind unless we become aware of the damage that reliance on our mind does to our Christian walk. This is not a minor issue; together with mammon (love of money), it is probably the most significant issue, according to the Lord.

The second step is understanding the three-part man (1 Thessalonians 5:23), that we are spirits, who have a soul (mind, emotions and will) and live in a body. Our spirit is life itself and our awareness, including the awareness of our thoughts. Our thoughts, regarding who we think we are, are irrelevant. These thoughts are simply a description of our ego, a type of fleshy pseudo-identity. They are fleeting and changeable. What matters regarding our identity is who the Lord says we are.

1) Hear and Obey

On a deeper level, come the "thoughts" of our hearts. According to Proverbs 23:7, "*As*

he thinks in his heart he is." As with the thoughts of our minds, the thoughts of our hearts are also related to our emotions and behavior, rather than our identity. The thinking of the heart is the result of our accumulated life experiences and can't be changed through mental thought. We can not change who we are, be transformed, by simply changing our thoughts. In Romans 12:2, we see how we can be transformed, "*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God*." When we do not conform to the patterns of this world (we walk in the Spirit, not according to the flesh), our "mind" (the thoughts of both our hearts and mind) is renewed. Our thinking changes by not conforming to the patterns of this world and, thus, having our minds renewed. That renewed mind transforms us. It is not that we can change who we are by changing our thinking; God is who changes us as we walk in the Spirit (Philippians 2:13).

We don't get our true identity from our mind. If we rely on our mind for our identity, we are deceived. We get our identity from God. If a person is not a believer in Jesus Christ, God says that he is a sinner, darkness, a son of the devil. If, however, a person believes that Jesus Christ is their Savior, Lord and Advocate in heaven, then God calls them a saint, light and a child of God.

Whom we obey is what produces the transformation in our lives (see point 5 above, how does the mind change?). What we experience in life is what changes us, including our thoughts, and then we are transformed by the renewing of our mind, but the mind doesn't change itself. Those who live in the flesh grow in darkness. Instead, when we obey the Lord, we are changed towards His image.**Obedience to the Lord is one way in which we are transformed**.

2) Meditate on His Word

Another way is through His word, because His word is Jesus. His word is Spirit and it is Life. His words will not return to Him void but will fulfill the purpose for which they were sent, for it is God who works in us both to will and to do for His good purpose (Revelation 19:13, John 6:63, Isaiah 55:11 and Philippians 2:13). We are sanctified by His truth (John 17:17), His words have cleansed us (John 15:3), His word works in us (1 Thessalonians 2:13), His word heals us (Psalm 107:20) and gives light and understanding (Psalm 119:130).

3) Live according to the Spirit

A third way is to learn to live according to the Spirit and not according to the flesh. Please refer to materials in Phase 2, Sessions 2 and 3.

4) Fasting, Stillness and Meditation

Fourth, is to employ the practices of fasting and stillness and meditation. When we fast, our body and our soul throw at us every reason why we should stop fasting. “What are you doing? You are killing me. This is unhealthy. This makes no sense. This is stupid. Stop, this is torture! . . .” It is a great opportunity for us to discover our spirit. It is a practice by which we discover the reality of our spirit and we establish the supremacy of our spirit over our soul and body. Fasting is a feast for our spirit.

This is how we may see fasting:

Isaiah 58:3-5 ‘*Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and You have not seen? Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?’ “In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, And exploit all your laborers. Indeed you fast for strife and debate, And to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as you do this day, To make your voice heard on high. Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, And an acceptable day to the Lord?*

This is what the Lord intends us to experience while we fast*:*

Isaiah 58:6-7 *“ Is this not the fast that I have chosen:* ***To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke?*** *Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh?”*

This is what we experience when we fast as the Lord intends:

Isaiah 58:8-12 “***Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, And your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.*** *Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, ‘Here I am.’ “If you take away the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, If you extend your soul to the hungry And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, And your darkness shall be as the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually, And satisfy*

your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. ***Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In***."

The Lord wants us to experience His presence. This is the benefit that we receive when we are in stillness and meditating. This is why He says to us in Psalm 46:10 "*Be still and know that I AM God*". Since God is love, when we experience His presence, we experience His love. Then, we might ask, "How great is His love?" Read, pray and meditate on these verses to gain understanding of His love for us:
John 3:16 — He gave His Life for us
John 15:13 — there is no greater love than to lay down your life for your friends
John 17:23 — the Father loves us as He loves Jesus
John 15:9 — Jesus loves us as the Father loves Him

What does His love do in us? The answer might be found in 1 John 4:18 and 2 Timothy 1:7. Fear takes away power, love and self control.

Ask the Lord to reveal His love for you every morning and as often as you can. Pray the love prayer that you will see below.

Experience the presence of God. There is no effort involved, so do not try. Do not row; we are sailing. If you don't experience His presence, give it time; there is no hurry. Be in His presence at least 5 minutes twice a day, "Be still and know that I am God." Ask the Lord a question and quiet your mind so that you can hear Him. Meditate, reason together with Him (Isaiah 1:18). If you have a hard time quieting your mind, do any of the following: picture yourself talking with Jesus — you want to be quiet so that you can listen to Him; listen for silence around you; listen to your heart beat; watch your breathing; look inward and feel your body from head to toe and toe to head. If you have doubts or concerns about meditation, read Psalm 1:1-6, Joshua 1:8-9, Philippians 4:8, 1 Timothy 4:15, Luke 21:14. It is a conversation with the Lord, as stated in Isaiah 1:18.

Rather than imagining, a person should visualize something they have seen before or read about, like the example above of sailing rather than rowing. Visualization, seeing with the eyes of our hearts (Ephesians 1:18), is an important way to viscerally connect us with the reality of the word, the truth, the laws of God. We do not, however, need to imagine these things; they exist within us. The Vine and the branches, the Shepherd

and the sheep, etc. These are analogies taken from the real world that help us understand spiritual laws. The laws of God don't need imagination, they are spiritual realities.

Stillness and Meditation teach us to control and exercise dominion over our mind. These practices allow us to quiet the mind when we don't need to use it. Remember that the mind isn't us, but merely an instrument that the Lord has given us to understand revelation. We use it when we need it, and make it quiet when we want to enjoy the present, be fully aware and delight in the presence of God.

5) Abide in Him and He in us — Rest in Him

Finally, it is all about abiding in Him and He in us. As long as we are in Him and He is in us, we have the mind of Christ and the Holy Spirit leads us to follow His commands (Ezekiel 36:27).

Please read, pray and meditate on any or all of these Scriptures: John 15:5, John 6:56, 7:37-38, 8:31-32, 15:5, Romans 5:5, 8:5-8, Colossians 2:6-7, Galatians 2:20, 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 1 Corinthians 6:17 and 1 John 4:17.

Rest
Jesus is our Sabbath. He calls us to abide in Him and He in us. He calls us to rest in Him (Matthew 11:28-30), for in Him we find peace (John 16:33). For believers, the Sabbath is not a day but a person — the Person of Jesus Christ — in whom we abide, rest and find peace at all times. In Jesus, the holy day of the Lord is every day.

Genesis 2:1-3 "*Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made*."

The rest of God means that He stopped, that He had finished or completed the work of creation, not that He was tired and needed to rest.

When Jesus said "I*t is finished!*" in John 19:30, it has the same connotation, that His work is finished, that it is complete.
John 19:30 "So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ***"It is finished!"*** *And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit*."

Isaiah 58:13-14; "*If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, From doing your pleasure on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a delight, The holy day of the Lord honorable,* ***And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, Nor finding your own pleasure, Nor speaking your own words, Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord;*** *And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the Lord has spoken***.**"

This text in Isaiah contains the essence of what the Sabbath is all about, the end of self-centeredness and the beginning of full reliance on the Lord, which is humility. It is through humility that we access the Sabbath, our rest on the Lord. He completed the work, so we can rest and stop the works of the law, for in Him we fulfill the law. This is why, in Mark 2:27, *He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath*." The Sabbath was made for us, so that we would rest in Christ from the works of the law.

Matthew 12:6-8 "*Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. But if you had known what this means, I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless.* ***For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath***."

He took the law away from us and nailed it to the cross.
Colossians 2:13-14 "*And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh,* ***He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses****, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us.* ***And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross***."

Colossians 2:16-23 "*So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon* ***or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.*** *Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God."*
Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations*— "Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle," which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men?* ***These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh***.

Hebrews 4:1-13;"***Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it****. For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.* ***For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said: "So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest,' "*** *although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "****And God rested on the seventh day from all His works****"; and again in this place: "They shall not enter My rest." Since therefore it remains that some must enter it,* ***and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience****, again He designates a certain day, saying in David, "Today," after such a long time, as it has been said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts." For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day.* ***There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His. Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience****. For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account*."

Jesus is our Sabbath, "F*or it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure*." Philippians 2:13. It is He who does the work in us.

It is the Spirit of the Lord who leads us to follow His commands
Ezekiel 36:27 "*I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them*."

As stated in the parable of the sower, we just have to throw the Seed, which is the Word of God, the Lord does the heavy lifting, while we rest in Him.

Mark 4:26-29 "*And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come*."

9. His promises

Hebrews 8:10 "*For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord:* ***I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts****; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people*."

Jeremiah 31:33 "*But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord:* ***I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts****; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people*.

Hebrews 10:16 "*This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord:* ***I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them***,"

Scriptures mentioned above:
Proverbs 3:5
Jeremiah 17:9
Genesis 6:5
Genesis 11:1-9
Psalm 94:11
Matthew 15:16-20
Ephesians 4:17-24
1 Corinthians 8:1-3
Mark 8:33
Romans 1:28-29
2 Corinthians 3:12-18
2 Corinthians 4:1-6
Philippians 3:18-21
1 Timothy 6:3-5
2 Timothy 3:1-9
Titus 1:13-16
Ezekiel 11:5-6
2 Corinthians 11:3
Colossians 3:2
Romans 12:16
1 Thessalonians 5:23
John 4:24
1 Corinthians 6:17
John 15:5
John 17:20-23
Romans 8:14-17
Hebrews 4:12

Luke 1:46-47
2 Corinthians 5:13
Hebrews 4:16
Romans 8:18-23
1 Corinthians 15:50-58
John 5:19,30
John 6:38
John 7:16,28
John 8:28,42,50
John 12:49-50
John 14:10,24
1 Corinthians 2:16
Romans 11:32-36
2 Corinthians 10:4-6
John 14:26
John 16:13
Joshua 1:8
Colossians 3:16
Isaiah 1:18
Ephesians 2:1-3
Ephesians 2:4-10
Mark 3:21
2 Corinthians 5:13
Isaiah 55:8-9
1 Corinthians 1:18-31 NKJV, AMP
1 Corinthians 2:6-16 NKJV, AMP
1 Corinthians 3:18-23 NKJV, AMP
Romans 8:5-8
John 14:6
John 17:17
Joshua 1:8
Deuteronomy 29:29
2 Peter 1:20-21
2 Timothy 3:14-17
Acts 17:2-4
Romans 12:2
Galatians 5:16
2 Corinthians 5:7
Genesis 2:17

1 Corinthians 2:11-12
1 Corinthians 2:14-16
Proverbs 9:10
Ezekiel 36:27
Matthew 15:11
John 3:8
Genesis 4:1
Matthew 7:23
Galatians 4:9
Hebrews 1:10-11
1 Corinthians 8:1-3
Hosea 6:3,6
Ephesians 1:15-23
Ecclesiastes 1:18
Ecclesiastes 12:12
Hosea 4:6
Philippians 2:13
Hebrews 8:10
Jeremiah 31:31-34
Hebrews 10:16

Other relevant Scriptures in relation to the mind:
Jeremiah 51:15-19
Ecclesiastes 9:3
Romans 1:21-23
2 Corinthians 4:3-4 NKJV, AMP
2 Corinthians 5:13 NIV
2 Corinthians 10:3-6 NKJV, AMP, NIV
Ephesians 4:17-19 (Futility or Vanity of the mind - Vanity: the uselessness and transient nature of the mind)
Romans 8:20-21
Ephesians 4:20-24
Colossians 1:21
Colossians 2:4,8,18
2 Timothy 3:13
Titus 1:15
Hebrews 3:13
1 Corinthians 13:12 NKJV, AMP
Psalms 111:10 NKJV, AMP, ESV, NIV

Psalms 119:130 NKJV, NASB
Proverbs 2:6
Proverbs 15:33
Proverbs 16:3
Philippians 2:5
Luke 1:51

Blessings,

Hernando
Receiving His Life Ministries