

Renewing the Mind

By Clark Dugger

Certainly our mind controls our actions, for all that we do or say must first come from our mind. But the word "mind" can refer to more than just thought process. The apostle Paul uses the word "mind" on many occasions to refer to the attitude and disposition that an individual has towards life, and uses the word to indicate purpose, inclination and intent. He speaks of those at variance with God as having "reprobate minds" (**Rom. 1:28**), "corrupt minds" (**1 Tim. 6:5**), "defiled minds" (**Titus 1:15**), and says that such individuals "walk in the vanity of their mind" (**Eph. 4:17**).

For one to be converted to the Lord there must first be a radical change in mind or attitude toward God and His will. This change of mind will manifest itself in a change of behavior. But conversion is more than external reforms. It is a transformation of character, a change of heart or mind from which flow the issues of life. The wise man says: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (**Prov. 4:23**). As people of God we are concerned exclusively with serving and pleasing Him so that we might be able to "dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

We therefore reflect the Divine viewpoint in life. We set our "minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth" (**Col. 3:2**). Being spiritually minded rather than carnally minded we have the mind of Christ who emptied self, took the form of a servant and "humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (**Phil. 2:5-8**).

But such transformation is not a one time occurrence. It is, rather, a continuing process that must be constantly renewed. And so Paul writes, "And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (**Rom. 12:2**). This renewing process is essential to the new man, the man of God who is striving to become more like his Lord. And so we "have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him" (**Col. 3:10**). May God help us to continue this renewing of our mind so that we may be truly transformed into His image.



Classes This Week				
Sun 5:15 PM Kids Class at Building	Tuesday 7 PM Ladies Class at the Davis'	Tuesday 7 PM Bible Reading at Hannah Alexander's	Thursday 10 AM Ladies Class at the Rouse's	Thursday 7 PM Revelation Class at Caleb George's Apt.

Sick			
Fran Snyder (Mother of Carla Humphrey)	Lori Holloway	Chuck Wade	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Carrie Chavers (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	Bill Rhodes and James Hall (Toni Herd's Uncles)	Philip Locke (Jeremiah Johnson's Uncle)
Josie Keith (Friend of Heath Fowler)	Grandparents of Mary Ann Roberts	Easton Alexander (Phillip Box's cousin's baby)	Jerry Sandlin (Megan Lee's Grandfather)
Richard Call (Seth Humphrey's Uncle)	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Erlene Davis (Walker Davis' mother)	Mary Smith (Nathan Smith's Grandmother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)	Dale Herd (William Herd's brother)	Larry Alexander (Friend of Phillip Box)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Stacey Harrell (Marcus Harrell's Dad)	Ann Robinson (Sharon Bailey's Mom)	Mike Reed (Friend of Long's)

September Birthdays

- 1 - Ryan Seymore
- 2 - Denise Davis
- 3 - Trenton Anderson
- 4 - Kevin Anderson
- 10 - BJ Winslett
- 10 - Matthew Sullivanne
- 10 - Joshua Carter
- 10 - Eleanor Weldon
- 11 - Sheryl Fowler
- 12 - Jared Johnson
- 14 - Patsy Ogle
- 17 - Laura Weldon
- 21 - Sarah Chandler
- 24 - Wade Winslett

News and Notes

- Let us remember Matthew Johnson, David Golden and Tim Morton in our prayers as they are deployed overseas.
- Eric Swenson was baptized into Christ on Wednesday Night!
- We rejoice at the recent restorations of David Rabren and Troy Swenson
- Today is last picture day after services with Josh Pender in foyer
- The membership committee will meet after services with those who have requested to become members.
- The next student devotional will on September 11.
- Please sign up on the bulletin board to host or teach 1st-6th grade or 7th-12th grade monthly classes.
- CD's of all sermons will be available immediately after services.

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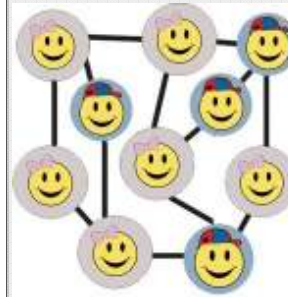
The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)

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Thoughts to Ponder

A loving person lives in a loving world,
A hostile person lives in a hostile world,
Everyone you meet is your mirror.

Social Relationships in a Local Congregation

By Larry Rouse

The Lord's design for His people is that they be "knit together in love" (**Col 2:2**). "If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it" (**1 Cor 12:26**). We cannot serve God and be separate from people, but rather we are called to serve others. The power of love was such a firm purpose of our Lord that He described this characteristic, above all others, as the identifying mark of His people. "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (**John 13:34-35**).

Only the gospel has the power to bring Jew and Gentile, slave and free-man, the rich and the poor into the same local congregation and make that group a close-knit, loving family (**Gal 3:28**). When men are humbled and see the gospel as their only identity, then educational differences, racial differences and any other man-made distinctions will be laid aside as rubbish—they view their brethren not just as equals, but as better than themselves. It is in this spirit that service to others becomes a privilege! "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better

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than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others" (**Phil 2:3-4**).

The Ideal versus the Real

Have you been a member of a church that abounded in love for each other? There have been times in my life where the congregation that I attended was approaching this spirit of service and love. I have also learned that it is a great challenge to find and maintain that spirit. There are so many pitfalls and temptations that can easily turn a church from a place of edification to a place of discouragement. Consider some common problems that we face in working with our brethren.

(Continued on page 2)

Do You Have a Bible Question?
Call (334) 734-2133 or
E-mail:
LarryRouse@aubeacon.com



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

Check Us Out On the Internet: www.aubeacon.com

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On the Outside Looking In

It is crucial that every member understands that he truly belongs and is cared for. When a Christian believes that he is an outsider among the brethren he assembles with, he becomes vulnerable to many temptations. It is easy in that situation to give into jealousy, bitterness or to be overwhelmed by guilt (**2 Cor 2:7-11**). Good people can become careless and fail to see the needs around them, especially when they are satisfied with the associations they have.

Certain Visitors Not Welcome!

A few years ago I was working with a couple that showed great interest in the gospel. They started attending services where I preached and also began a home Bible study with me. It was not very long until they privately began referring to the church as "the clique." This concerned me, since I had a good relationship with them. At the end of one service I decided to step back and observe the interaction of others with this couple. At the dismissal of services, I watched as this couple waited for some time near the back of the auditorium at the place where everyone would exit. My heart ached as I observed how on that day very few spoke to them, while most Christians were rushing to visit with the ones they always talked to after services. My brethren, while not realizing or meaning to, communicated very clearly that this couple was not welcome.

The Haves and the Have-Nots

The divide between those who are "rich in this world's goods" and those who are not can provide a great challenge to a local group. It is far easier to associate only with those who have your tastes and can do the things that you do. It also is very easy to look down upon those who have less and even harden your heart toward them. "But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?" (**1 John 3:17**).

I have seen churches where groups of couples go on trips to ski resorts, cruises and other expensive trips. It is not wrong to do this, nor should one stop this because others cannot afford it. However, it is important to make every effort to do things that will also allow you to associate with those Christians

who have less than you! If you exclusively associate with the rich, then you do not have the heart of our Lord (**Mt 11:5**).

Attitudes from Parents to Children

Unfortunately children too can display a cruel tendency to exclude and even punish those who are different. Christian parents must remain alert for these attitudes, challenge them and correct them. What a great lesson for parents to teach their children - giving to "unlovable" people the love that they need. It is in the home that we teach our children to include others that are "difficult" in our activities because that is exactly what our Lord wants us to do! "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?" (**Mt 5:46**).

Sadly, I have also seen where a mother became bitter towards another couple or even towards a child, and in both spoken and in unspoken actions encouraged their children to snub and exclude other children. It is a far greater hurt for a parent to consistently see their child excluded from group plans than if that same action was taken towards them as adults. It becomes very difficult for a parent to instill faith in their child when the actions of others are so contrary to the gospel of Christ. When this scenario occurs and is not corrected, that congregation will likely lose an entire generation of young people.

Putting a Wet Blanket over the Assembly

When problems arise in a local church in the relationships between Christians, it is crucial that the leadership address these issues with haste. When these problems are ignored, they will only grow until the assemblies of the church become stressful and strained, and in some cases contrary to the encouragement it ought to be.

The early church successfully faced challenges like this. The neglect of the Greek widows in the church at Jerusalem was quickly recognized and corrected (**Acts 6:1-7**). The apostles were quick to point out occasions of neglect and preference by strongly rebuking and correcting these attitudes (**Phil 4:2-3; 1 Cor 11:20-22**).

Let love reign in the place you assemble! Why not make plans now to include a brother that is not in your normal group of associates? You will find that the more you give to and involve others, the greater the blessing you will receive.



Awareness of Weaknesses is the Key to Strength

By Tim Nichols

The world has it all backwards. Most seem to think that we can accomplish great things when we become the strongest, wisest, smartest, and most beautiful. Worldly achievement may well depend on some of these things to some degree. Even there, however, there is room for using the principles that we will discuss here.

Our work for the Lord is not in the same category and the approach that we take in that work is altogether different from what many would commend in worldly pursuits. Here, the principle might be stated something like this: Recognize that you are weak and unable to do it alone, trust God, and set out to do it.

The notion that we ought to wait until we, ourselves, are wise enough or strong enough before we set out to obey God is simply unbiblical. Although it is right and reasonable to obtain training and to prepare ourselves as best we can, it is also true that the time to begin doing the will of God is the moment we learn what that will is regarding any matter. God will guide, strengthen, and comfort us by His word, assist us by His providence, and bless our efforts with success. He will give the increase.

When God told Moses leave the desert to go back to Egypt and lead the children of Israel out, Moses protested that he was not equal to the task. God did not argue with that point. Instead, He promised to go with him and assured him of success. In effect He said, "I will meet you back here with My people!"

But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?" So He said, "I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain" (**Exodus 3:11, 12**).

Joshua, as great a man as he no doubt was in his person, was not equal to the task of conquering the land when that assignment was given to him. God seems to have suggested that inherent in the command to act is the promise of aid.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go (**Joshua 1:9**).

Jeremiah could not get away with declaring that his personal weakness disqualified him.

Then said I: "Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth." But the Lord said to me: "Do not say, 'I am a youth,' for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of their faces, for I am with you to deliver you," says the Lord. Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth,

and the Lord said to me: "Behold, I have put My words in your mouth (**Jeremiah 1:6-9**).

Paul so relied upon God's guidance, and so looked beyond passing difficulties that he could declare that his work was actually God's work being done through his willing hands.

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me (**1 Corinthians 15:10**).

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God (**2 Corinthians 3:5**).

Isaiah gave a command and a principle that will hold true for all time and under every covenant. Are we listening?

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; He will come and save you" (**Isaiah 35:3, 4**).

He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint (**Isaiah 40:29-31**).

Paul actually reached the point at which he was able to see that he could only be strong when he was weak.

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong (**2 Corinthians 12:7-10**).

Now how about you? Are you aware of your own weaknesses? Good! You have reason to be genuinely humble. Are you allowing these weaknesses to keep you out of God's service? If so, then you need to trust God and proceed, in spite of what you may see as personal inability, to attempt what you know you cannot do -- by yourself.

