

Morning Sermon Outline – July 16, 2017

“Changing Minds” Genesis 6:5; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

I. *An accurate evaluation and description of the sinful human mind, thoughts and heart –*

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Genesis 6:5 NKJ)

... and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Genesis 6:5 KJV)

This was not only a pre-flood evaluation, it is the same after the flood, even right after righteous Noah offered a sweet-smelling offering, and the only people on the earth were Noah’s family –

And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done. (Genesis 8:21 NKJ)

How bad is the sinful human mind / heart?

1. *So bad God destroyed His once beautiful world because of it –*

A. *We have little clue what the world was like before sin –*

Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good... (Genesis 1:31 NKJ)

B. *We know God made man upright, but ... –*

Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes." (Ecclesiastes 7:29 NKJ)

C. *God destroyed the entire earth because of sin. Despite the fact He originally made man upright, and the creation was “very good” He (God) was willing to destroy it all and start over –*

And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.⁷ So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping

thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." (Genesis 6:6-7 NKJ)

2. *In fact, the word in Genesis 6:5 translated “imagination” in the KJV and “intent” in the NKJV in this context can imply that evil men were attempting their own forming, imaginative wicked creativity with the earth –*

יָצַר yetser {yay'-tser} Meaning: 1) form, framing, purpose, framework 1a) form 1a1) pottery 1a2) graven image 1a3) man (as formed from the dust) 1b) purpose, imagination, device (intellectual framework)

Oh, how imaginative and inventive we are with sin! Let me count the ways:

(1) *If I were to list only imaginative methods of torture people have used against one another, you would agree God was right to destroy the earth –*

For instance, A. **SAW TORTURE** - In this method, the victim is hung upside down, so that the blood will rush to their heads and keep them conscious during the long torture. The torturer would then saw through the victims’ bodies until they were completely sawed in half. Most were cut up only in their abdomen to prolong their agony.

I have a list of 24 more tortures, for a total of twenty-five and know of a 26th, steamrolling in the street, done as a torture in North Korea for the crime of Bible Study ... enough for every letter of our alphabet!

(2) *There is imaginative idolatry –*

Professing to be wise, they became fools,²³ and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man-- and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. (Romans 1:22-23 NKJ)

(3) *In our country, we live in the time of imaginative sexual sin!*

3. *However, what is bad and obvious, both from Genesis 8:21 and from history, and even from current events is:*

- A. *This sinful imagination continues, after the flood, after grace,*
B. *Even after conversion*

Arnold A. Brevick

II. How do we go about changing minds?

This is at least part of our calling as a church –

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,⁵ 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, (2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NKJ)

1. *We start with our own minds, our own thinking –*

A. *Know we are blessed –*

... **But we have the mind of Christ. (1 Corinthians 2:16 NKJ)**

They cannot see / understand / know –

Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3 NKJ)

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. (1 Corinthians 2:14 NKJ)

"I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see..." We are born again, therefore we do see, we have a knowledge of God the world does not, however this knowledge is far from perfect –

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. (1 Corinthians 13:12 NKJ)

B. *Though blessed, we should be humble about such a blessing, our new birth is just a beginning, our minds are in a state of repair, renewal –*

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.³ For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. (Romans 12:2-3 NKJ)

B1. *Note we are called not to be conformed to this world but transformed*

B2. *Note our minds need renewed*

B3. *Note Romans 12:3 calls us to think, think and think and not too highly but soberly. Our minds need the walkers and wheelchairs of God's Word to carry our thinking aright!*

C. *We are called to humility about our thinking –*

The humble He guides in justice, and the humble He teaches His way. (Psalm 25:9 NKJ)

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6 NKJ)

D. *Our humility is not only about our own personal thinking, but about mankind's thinking in general –*

D1. *It is destructive, it leads to death -*

There is a way *that seems* right to a man, but its end *is* the way of death. (Proverbs 14:12 NKJ)

There is a way *that seems* right to a man, but its end *is* the way of death. (Proverbs 16:25 NKJ)

D2. *We are guided away from the counsel of the ungodly and ways of the world to the ways of God's Word –*

Blessed *is* the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;² But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.³ He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.⁴ The ungodly *are* not so, But *are* like the chaff which the wind drives away.⁵ Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.⁶ For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish. (Psalm 1:1-6 NKJ)

E. *We have to be humble about our thinking because God's ways are greater and His thoughts are not ours –*

"For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, Nor *are* your ways My ways," says the LORD.⁹ "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. (Isa. 55:8-9 NKJ)

F. *We see this Great Difference between God's thinking and ways and ours dramatically illustrated in the meeting of the humility of Christ and wrong expectations of the Jewish people –*

Jesus came to save them from sin! He would die on the cross to accomplish this salvation –

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (1 Corinthians 1:18 NKJ)

- *They expected Him to run roughshod over the Romans, so His apparent WEAKNESS before them drove them MAD or MADDER against Him –*

So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him.² And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe.³ Then they said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with their hands.⁴ Pilate then went out again, and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him."⁵ Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!"⁶ Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" (John 19:1-6 NKJ)

Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"¹⁵ But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" (John 19:14-15 NKJ)

- *Yet, this very seeming weakness was the Power and strength of God –*

Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?² For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, *There is* no beauty that we should desire Him.³ He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, *our* faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.⁵

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:1-6 NKJ)

III. *It is this very same different power; different mind God expects us to have and wield in our witness to men –*

Therefore if *there is* any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,² fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind.³ Let nothing *be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men.⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of death*, even the death of the cross.⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,¹¹ and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:1-11 NKJ)

1. *Philippians 2:1-11 is rightly focused on Jesus Christ and that should be our focus too, but as you look at these verses look also at their focus on our minds –*
 - A. *In verse :2 we are called to be "like-minded" and of "one mind"*
 - B. *In verse :3 we are called to "lowliness of mind" esteeming others better than ourselves ...*
 - C. *In verse :5 we are called to the "mind" "which was also in Christ Jesus, we are called to follow Him in humility and obedience, even to the death of the cross*
 - D. *This passage communicates the opposite extreme of looking out for #1!*

2. *This different mind is the start of our convincing, winning others, we also use different tools / weapons –*

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,⁵ 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, (2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NKJ)

A. *Craftsmen vs Horns (Beast) weaponry –*

Note Paul talks of arguments, not swords, he talks of these being mighty in God, not carnal. This is very similar to what God called little Israel to, their minds, their commitment to God's Word, relationship with God should have been the strength of their influence. They were to be craftsmen with skills vs beast (the ungodly nations) with horns, teeth and claws -

And I said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these?" So he answered me, "These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."²⁰ Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen.²¹ And I said, "What are these coming to do?" So he said, "These are the horns that scattered Judah, so that no one could lift up his head; but the craftsmen are coming to terrify them, to cast out the horns of the nations that lifted up *their* horn against the land of Judah to scatter it." (Zechariah 1:19-21 NKJ)

B. *We are called to God's Word, faith, truth, prayer, these are our weapons, they are spiritual and not carnal weapons –*

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit,

which is the word of God;¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints--¹⁹ and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. (Ephesians 6:10-20 NKJ)

B1. *We are called to dependence upon God – Ephesians 6:10*

B2. *This is because our enemies and circumstances are stronger than us otherwise – Ephesians 6:11-13*

B3. *Our first listed weapon is the Belt of Truth - :14A*

B4. *Our second listed weapon is Breast plate of Righteousness – :14B*

B5. *Our third listed weapon is the Gospel of Peace - :15*

B6. *Our fourth listed weapon is the Shield of Faith - :16*

B7. *Our fifth listed weapon is the Helmet of Salvation - :17A*

B8. *Our sixth listed weapon is the Word of God - :17B*

B9. *Our seventh listed weapon is All Prayer - :18 -20*

These are the non-carnal weapons that are mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that would exalt itself against the knowledge of God. These are the weapons we use to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

“Whole armor” is panoplia (πανοπλία), made up of pas (πας), “whole,” and hoplon (όπλον), “weapon”; literally “all the weapons.” The word is from panoplos (πανοπλος), “wholly armed, in full armor.” It means “full armor, complete armor,” shield, sword, lance, helmet, greaves, and breastplate. The word “panoply” is the English spelling of our word. In classical Greek, the word was used of the full armor of a heavy-armed soldier. ... The emphatic thing, as most exegetes notice, is the panoplian (πανοπλιαν), the idea being that we need not only a divine equipment, but that equipment in its completeness, without the lack of any single part. K.S. Wuest