

## THE NEW MIND VS. THE MIND OF THE FLESH

**"To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." – Rom. 8:6.**

THERE is a distinction between the New Mind and the New Will which we all must recognize. The New Will is the determination of the New Mind. There must be some mind there in order to have a will, in order to reach a determination, and there must be knowledge upon which a will can be intelligently exercised. We are "born in sin and shapen in iniquity" (Psa. 51:5); we have this natural tendency to begin with. Our minds, at first conformed to earthly things, generally take the earthly view of matters, the selfish view. Then the Lord, through his Providences, brings certain propositions to our attention and sets before us that there is another way, "a more excellent way"; that God is now holding out a special prize to those who will live contrary to the flesh and according to his will.

When this proposition reaches the individual, our Lord says that he should "sit down and count the cost." He should not rashly say, "Yes, yes"; but he should deliberate as to what this means – the cost in self-denials and the giving up of earthly preferences. After having counted the cost, and after having made the consecration his will or determination should be so set as not to allow it either to favor the flesh or to be guided by the flesh. He should resolve that henceforth whatever is God's will shall be *his* will, whether he understand all about that will or not. He must, however, see the outlines of the Divine will and something of the advantages accruing, before he can form the decision. This is the class which the Father accepts and begets of his holy Spirit.

The new mind may sometimes be misled by false reasoning of the flesh. Our natural minds have their preferences, ambitions,

aims and desires and they sometimes argue about certain things and say, "God never intended that that should be given up; God would not expect you to do anything so unreasonable as that!" And so, perhaps, the New Creature is deceived, and allows the flesh to have its way; but just so surely as it is a New Mind it has not intelligently or willfully assented to a wrong course; but, as the Apostle says, "Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me." (Rom. 7:11.) So there is a continual battle on the part of the new will, the New Creature, after being begotten of the holy Spirit, and he must watch lest the Adversary try to make him think that which is wrong to be right, and that which is right to be wrong. These, then, are snares which the Adversary places for the feet of the New Creature, and he uses the flesh in connection with its ensnarement; but the New Creature in his will, his intention, must remain loyal to the Lord and to righteousness. If he yield his will to unrighteousness or ignore God's will, then he has ceased to be a New Creature; the new things are passed away and all things become old again. This is a condition, we understand, from which he can never be recovered. – Heb. 6:4-6.

In this connection, the Apostle James, in speaking of saving a soul from death, is evidently referring to one who is going into that careless condition where the new mind has become, as it were, stupefied, where the old mind has gotten the ascendancy over it. If we see one of the Lord's people getting into such a condition, we should seek to restore him, "considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1); and those who do recover such an one "save a soul from death." (Jas. 5:20.) Thus brotherly kindness and assistance are specially commended of the Lord. A special blessing comes to all those who have an earnest desire thus to save an erring brother; a great reward is suggested for those who are successful in such an attempt.

## HOW MAY WE KNOW WHEN WE ARE IN DANGER?

It might be asked how one could know when he was traveling toward that point of danger, so that he might arrest his progress. To one not blinded by the Adversary, the point of deflection from harmony with God's will would be as easily detected as would the border line between two States. The only ground upon which we were granted our present standing was our renouncement of sin and our consecration to the Lord – the giving up of our wills, complete surrender to him; and thus we came into the position of having the imputation of Christ's merit. If we should go back again and our will for righteousness become dead, this, of course, would imply that another will is there. We *must* have a will of some kind. If our will is no longer a righteous will, then it has gone across the border line and, according to the great Apostle, such never retrace their steps. "Christ dieth no more." There can be no more imputation of Christ's merit to such. They have had their blessing and if they, as the Apostle says, "return like a dog to his vomit," the step must prove fatal. – I Pet. 2:21,22.

True, the new mind at first is weak, undeveloped; and so the Scriptures represent the New Creature as being merely "a babe in Christ," a babe in knowledge and a babe in the development of grace. But the Scriptures tell us that just as we care for a babe – specially handle it, specially feed it, specially deal with it, and do not treat it as we would treat an adult – so the Lord proposes that he will deal with all those who are babes in Christ. "He will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able to bear, but with every temptation will provide a way of escape." (I Cor. 10:13.) The temptations will be permitted only in proportion to their feeble strength. He will supply for them the milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby, and gives them the assurance that all things shall work together for good to them. – Rom. 8:28.

The trials at the beginning, therefore, are commensurate with the weakness of the New Creatures. It is true in some instances, however, that the New Creature seems to have a great deal of courage and strength at the beginning – perhaps more than is ever exhibited afterward. This, of course, is not a satisfactory condition of [R4628 : page 190] things. We ought to go from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge; after a time, we ought to be teachers, as the Apostle says, and not need to be taught again the first principles of the doctrines of Christ. God deals with us now as New Creatures under the direction of the Head. He supervises all the interests of each member of the Body. All things, if properly accepted, are overruled of the Lord for good to us individually.

This is one of the great lessons of faith that the Lord's people need to learn, even after they have been in the way a good while. There are some Christian people who seem to have the impression, or at least give it to others, that they did this and that or saw so and so by their own wisdom. True, we all should use all the wisdom and strength we have; but the Christian who is relying upon himself is in a very dangerous position and quite likely the Lord will find it necessary to give him a lesson. For while it is his duty to rule his life so as to walk in the right paths, yet he needs continually to exercise faith in God and in the Lord's oversight and direction of his affairs, for "the steps of a righteous man are ordered of the Lord." If, in the Father's providence, some of the circumstances connected with our earthly affairs turn in this or that direction, our hearts should look to the Lord for the lesson to be drawn therefrom, and thus be able to glorify God thereby. The Christian should never view any experience as being lucky or unlucky, but should remember that all things connected with him, if he be living close to the Lord, are ordered and directed by the Lord. – Psa. 37:23.

