

## Do I Have a Sound Christian Mind?

**2 Timothy 1:7:** (KJV) *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

### POWER & LOVE & SOUND MIND



**2 Timothy 1:7**



Have you ever thought about what it means to be given the *spirit of power and love and sound judgment*? With this *spirit of power*, should not all enemies of God cower before us as we call them out for what they are? With this *spirit of love*, should we not be able to bridge any gap and overcome any difference among us? With this *spirit of a sound mind*, which means sound judgment or discipline, should we not be able to see through the traps of the adversary and the cunning selfishness of our own minds and always think, speak and act in exact accordance with God's will? If it were only that easy! We need to develop and engage these things as tools in our everyday against all things godless. Instead of imagining ourselves as superhero avengers who have the power to call out evil, let us instead see ourselves as blessed to be learning how to use what God has given.

What is the *spirit of fear*?

**Fear:** Strongs #1167 *deilia*; timidity, fear  
(Greek English Lexicon) timidity, fearfulness, cowardice

This is a helpless kind of fear. This Greek word *fear* <1167> is only found once in the Bible - in our theme text of 2 Timothy 1:7.

This is contrary to "appropriate" fear:

**Fear:** Strongs #2124 *eulabeia*; properly, caution, i.e. (religiously) reverence (piety); by implication, dread (concretely)

There are many Scriptures translated *fear* in English, but the proper meaning is "reverence." Reverence can make you afraid, such as when you are in the wrong and going before God.

### Good fear:

Hebrews 12:28: (KJV) *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly *fear* <2124>.*

That could also be "godly caution" or "godly dread." We have to look at God with awe, understanding that we are small and He is big. We need to maintain appropriate fear, but seek to replace fear/cowardice with *the spirit of power, love and a sound mind*.

Peter's denial of Jesus is a practical example of what cowardice looks like. We can all relate to making mistakes.

**Peter's denial was a practical example of what the cowardice that truly lives in all of us can do:**

(combined) Matthew 26:67-75: (NASB) and Luke 22:56,58,62: (ASV) <sup>67</sup>*Then they spat in his face and beat him with their fists; and others slapped him, <sup>68</sup>and said, Prophecy to us, you Christ; who is the one who hit you?*



Jesus is being beaten and mocked while Peter watches.

*<sup>69</sup>Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, <sup>56</sup>and a certain maid seeing him as he sat in the light of the fire, and looking stedfastly upon him, said, This man also was with him. <sup>70</sup>But he denied it before them all, saying, I do not know what you are talking about.*

Peter denies he was with Jesus and denies the power of Jesus in his life. This is such an awkward, horrible, pressure-filled situation that Peter gives in to the pressure.

*<sup>58</sup>And after a little <sup>71</sup>when he had gone out to the gateway, another servant-girl saw him and said to those who were there, This man was with Jesus of Nazareth. <sup>72</sup>And again he denied it with an oath, I do not know the man.*

He even denied him knowing Jesus with an oath, giving in to the flesh. An oath is something which has been pledged or promised. Peter was saying, "I PROMISE you, I was not with the man!" Peter now denies the love of Jesus in his life by swearing with an oath. This is an example of where we end up when cowardice overtakes us.

*<sup>73</sup>And after the space of about one hour the bystanders came up and confidently affirmed, Surely you too are one of them; for even the way you talk gives you away. <sup>74</sup>Then he began to curse and swear, I do not know the man!*

Now his denial escalates. By yelling and cursing, Peter denies any soundness of mind he had received from Jesus. He has lost control. All of the soundness Jesus had presented to him is gone, because fear overwhelmed him. Can he ever recover from this?

*....And immediately a rooster crowed while he yet spake. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how that he said unto him, Before the cock crow this day thou shalt deny me thrice. <sup>62</sup>And he went out, and wept bitterly.*

The Scriptures also say that Jesus looked directly at him as he heard Peter's denials. Peter realized what he had done and was a broken man. We note this took place before Pentecost, and Peter was not yet given a measure of the Holy Spirit, God's power and influence.

We can relate to this in an encouraging way, knowing it happened even to the great Apostle Peter.



Thinking and acting in a chaotic manner is not godly. This is what we need to get away from so we can move towards the spirit of a sound mind.



## Is the spirit of power, love and a sound mind three different things or parts of one thing?

However we look at it, the key beginning point is to see this text as an action of replacement. We are all born of sinful stock, and therefore have a great propensity towards cowardice when we are faced with the uphill battle of standing against the pressures of a worldly crowd. Cowardice is natural to all of us.

We have all had that feeling and hate giving in to it. There are areas of life where one person may be more cowardly yet another person might be bolder. We react differently at various times.

### Critical thinking, *Five Tips to Improve Your Critical Thinking, Samantha Agoos*

- *We're bombarded with so many decisions that it's impossible to make a perfect choice every time. But there are many ways to improve our chances, and one particularly effective technique is critical thinking. This is a way of approaching a question that allows us to carefully deconstruct a situation, reveal its hidden issues, such as bias and manipulation, and make the best decision. If the critical part sounds negative, that's because in a way it is. Rather than choosing an answer because it feels right, a person who uses critical thinking subjects all available options to scrutiny and skepticism. Using the tools at their disposal, they'll eliminate everything but the most useful and reliable information.*

We can be skeptical, using the sense of logic and sequence to figure something out, instead of "...but it does not feel right." We cannot take all of the emotion out, but we can put the emotion *behind* critical thinking.

What is the *spirit of power*, and why did the Apostle Paul write our theme text to Timothy? It was the last thing he wrote before he died. It had to make a forceful impact in Timothy's life so he could carry on the work of the gospel after Paul was gone.

**Power:** Strongs #1411 *dunamis*; force (literally or figuratively); specifically miraculous power (usually by implication, a miracle itself)

When used in the New Testament, this Greek word is always about the power of God or Jesus, or the power of miracles. The word describes an elevated kind of power.

Timothy was living during a difficult time of persecution throughout the Roman Empire and needed to be reminded to step out using God's power instead of being fearful. The Apostle Paul would die soon, leaving a void. Timothy, as Paul's spiritual son, was being encouraged to continue the work.



**2 Timothy 1:5-8:** (NASB) <sup>5</sup>*For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you...*<sup>6</sup>*For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.* <sup>7</sup>*For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.* <sup>8</sup>*Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God...*

He is encouraging Timothy. *Join me in suffering for the gospel - it takes a lot of strength to stand, so we must not be fearful.*

**We MUST exercise this power by relying on our spiritual mind - not our earthly thinking and concerns:**

1 Corinthians 2:14, 16: (NASB) <sup>14</sup>*But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them...* <sup>16</sup>*For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he will instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.*

Paul compares the mind of a spiritual man and the mind of a natural man. To the natural man, God's providence and overruling seems foolish.

This power is miraculous. While we cannot perform miracles (because miracles are not for today) - WE are living miracles if we have God's power abiding in us.

Ephesians 3:16: (KJV) *That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with **might <1411>** by his Spirit in the inner man.*

How do we access this special power that comes from God and dwells in our spiritual mind?



**CONSCIOUSLY CHANGE YOUR SOURCE OF STRENGTH.  
RELY ON GOD AND NOT SELF.**

Isaiah 40:28-31: (NRSV) <sup>28</sup>*The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.* <sup>29</sup>*He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless.* <sup>30</sup>*Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted;* <sup>31</sup>*but those who wait for the LORD shall **renew <2498>** their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.*

Even those in the vitality of youth having strength and stamina by earthly standards will fall exhausted. This is talking about spiritual vitality, not physical.

**Renew:** Strongs #2498 *chalaph*: to slide by, i.e. (by implication) to hasten away, pass on, spring up, pierce or change, abolish, alter, change, cut off, go on forward, grow up, be over, pass (away, on, through), renew, sprout, strike through

Notice many of these definitions have to do with changing. We are not just renewing something that was already there; we are changing something.

**The same Hebrew word is used here:**

Genesis 41:14: (KJV) *Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and **changed <2498>** his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh.*

He changed his clothes. He took off the old and put on the new.

Therefore, the meaning in Isaiah 30:31 can be stated as, "Those that wait upon the Lord *change the source of their strength.*" How do we do that?



### Paul showed us how:

**2 Corinthians 12:7-10:** (NRSV) <sup>7</sup>...even considering the exceptional character of the revelations. Therefore, to keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. <sup>8</sup>Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, <sup>9</sup>but he said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for **power <1411>** is made perfect in weakness. So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the **power <1411>** of Christ may dwell in me. <sup>10</sup>Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

Paul requested his physical ailment (probably his eyesight) be healed, but the reply was *power is made perfect in weakness*. Paul's response was to *boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me*. It was not about being miraculously healed; rather, miraculously being guided and strengthened by God's power.

If the faith-healing ministries would only understand this verse and believe it, they would not continue to preach against God's word about physical healing. That false, satanic power can influence people in the wrong way and hurt them.

The spirit of power is the miraculous indwelling of God's Spirit within the faithful followers of Christ. It can give us guidance and direction to be able to move forward in accordance with the will of God.



**WE ARE POWERLESS AGAINST COWARDICE,  
BUT BY GOD'S SPIRIT WE CAN OVERCOME IT.**

**We literally have the miraculous power of God with us!  
Does the spirit of love work the same way?**

Cowardice is a natural human reaction. We can overcome it by first using the spirit of power - the miraculous infusion of God's influence into our lives. Once we claim that power, we then need to expand its reach and influence by doing what Jesus did - having benevolent love.

What is the *spirit of love* and how does it work?

**Love:** Strong's #25 *agapao*; to love (in a social or moral sense):

**Love:** Strong's #26 *agape*; from 25; love, i.e. affection or benevolence; specially (plural) a love-feast

It is the kind of love that gives without any thought or need to receive. It gives simply because it wants to. This love understands there is great blessing in giving. This is what Jesus did until he breathed his last breath.

This is a level of selflessness and benevolence that surpasses brotherly love, as there is no thought of reciprocation. It is only concerned with the well-being of those to which it is giving. This is a beautiful (but hard) thing to accomplish.





The next audio clip uses the example of taking a million monkeys and asking them to predict if the stock market will go up or down next week. If we asked every week, eventually we would find one who was always right. People would study that monkey to find out what he ate, what he did in his spare time, etc. There must be something special about that monkey - this is the "outcome bias" the speaker is talking about.

 **The outcome bias, *The Art of Thinking Clearly*, Rolf Dobelli, Zurich Minds**

- *A fallacy we fall into, and that's called the outcome bias. We look at the outcome, but we don't see the process by which this outcome came about. And that's a mistake we often fall into when we look at the world. We now are at a privileged position: we know the story of this monkey, I just told you, it's pure randomness, pure chance, a pure statistical coincidence. But when you look at the world, all we see is outcomes, and we generally don't see what's behind this outcome.*

He is saying instead of making the monkey a celebrity, realize that the process was more important than the outcome. The outcome was based on randomness. We need to remember that the outcome does not always equal all that went into it. It is important in our critical thinking to not get stuck with the outcome bias.

To fully use the spirit of a sound mind (the spirit of sound judgment/discipline) we first rely on God's power to strengthen and enlighten us for action. Next we must apply this strength and enlightenment through benevolent love to keep our actions pure and Christlike. It is one thing to have a miraculous infusion of God's influence, but it is another thing to use it in the proper way. This is why love follows the spirit of power.

**This is the level to which we are commanded to aspire:**

John 15:11-17: (NKJV) <sup>11</sup>*These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. <sup>12</sup>This is my commandment, that you **love <25>** one another as I have **loved <25>** you. <sup>13</sup>Greater **love <26>** has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. <sup>14</sup>You are my friends if you do whatever I command you.*

This is the night before Jesus' crucifixion. "This is a commandment," he says, not my "idea." Jesus will show them what he means - sacrificial love - in a few hours. This is the kind of love that should be driving us.

**Cowardice/fear has plagued man from the beginning. Standing firm in benevolent love counters it:**

1 John 3:11-18: (NASB) <sup>11</sup>*For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should **love <25>** one another; <sup>12</sup>not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.*

We see a sense of evil and jealousy. Doing something in secret shows cowardice. Our command to love one another is based on the purified position of being "in Christ"- not based on evil like Cain.

We cannot get to the spirit of a sound mind unless we first have the spirit of God's power and the spirit of love driving that power.



<sup>13</sup>Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you. <sup>14</sup>We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we **love <25>** the brethren. He who does not **love <25>** abides in death.

*Do not be surprised if the world hates you - this is a hard statement. He does not say, "Do not be surprised if the world is not in full agreement with you." He uses the stronger word, hate. Satan is the prince of this world, so the world is his. He hates anything God-related. Those trying to become Christlike are Enemy #1.*

We can have the spirit of God's power, but without the spirit of love, it will not bring us very far.

<sup>15</sup>Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. <sup>16</sup>We know **love <26>** by this, that he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

He brings back that same example that Jesus provided. We ought to lay down our lives for our brethren, even if we have a personality clash with them or we do not agree with them. We have this command and an unmistakable model for this love...as well as an unmistakable consequence for NOT living this love.

But how do we combat cowardice? If we are a called-out Christian who has been given God's Spirit, we have that Spirit miraculously dwelling within us. But that power needs benevolent love as its primary source of direction.

<sup>17</sup>But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the **love <26>** of God abide in him? <sup>18</sup>Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

Benevolent love is not something we just talk about; it is something we do. It is proven not in words, but in action. God is our judge of those actions. This is the secret of how to deal with fear and cowardice.

Selfishness versus selfless love for others are so contrary. Our world is a "selfie" world. "I have become the god of my world." Selfless love is the exact opposite. If we want to fight the cowardice in our own heart, we must grab God's power within us, guided by benevolent love. Our love **MUST** be expressed by action - this is what Jesus did.

**1 John 4:18:** (NASB) *There is no fear in **love<26>**; but perfect **love<26>** casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in **love<26>**.*



With fear comes cowardice. You may have acted like a coward at some point in your life. My fear had punishment, because I was afraid to speak up. I was taken advantage of dramatically. I later thought, "What did I just let happen?" And then I let it happen again. When it happens, you shake and quiver from the inside but after a while, you say, "Enough! There is right and wrong, and this is wrong." It is grabbing ahold of the power of God's influence and saying, "Let me do the right thing in love." My response to the people trying to take advantage of me eventually became, "Shame on you for doing this. God is watching YOU."



We can only achieve

**The COMPLETENESS OF LOVE**

by first acknowledging the power of God's influence.

Love gives us a completeness in life, but it will not happen unless we have the power of God's influence as a foundation.

**What does it mean to have the spirit of a sound mind?  
Is it just thinking clearly, or is it more?**

For a Christian, the spirit of a sound mind is everything. We are commissioned with walking through our lives and always doing God's will as we follow Jesus. This would literally be an impossible task were it not for the "mind of Christ" we are to be listening to. *The key is listening to its direction.*

**Sound mind:** Strong's #4995 *sophronismos*; discipline, i.e. self-control

This is the discipline driven by the Spirit of God. We are now bound to act in accordance with godly righteousness. The miraculous power of God's influence helps us to stand up to our cowardice.

The spirit of love focuses us on how to approach the use of God's power and influence. The mind of Christ regulates the replacing of our cowardice with wisdom and responsibility. We need all three to fight fear.

**POWER & LOVE & SOUND MIND**



This is a process: First, we must harness God's power within us. We then let love guide that power in all ways. Then the godly spirit of self-control regulates how to get the cowardice out of our lives with wisdom and responsibility.

We are called to be stewards. A steward is one who takes care of their master's goods as if they were their own. We represent Christ.

**This is an extraordinary responsibility requiring discipline:**

1 Corinthians 4:1-2: (KJV) <sup>1</sup>Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. <sup>2</sup>Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

The spirit of self-control is the kind of spirit required for a steward. We think of Joseph in the Old Testament. He showed loyalty and wisdom in his judgements and the master of the house confidently put him in charge.

**We are God's property, therefore responsible as stewards for ourselves:**

1 Corinthians 6:19-20: (KJV) <sup>19</sup>What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? <sup>20</sup>For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Courage will come from God's power and influence, guiding it with benevolent love and using the "un"common sense of spiritual thinking.



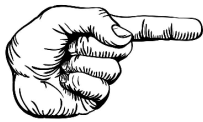


**The sunk cost fallacy, *The Art of Thinking Clearly*, Rolf Dobelli, Zurich Minds**

- I went with my wife to the movie theater. We had purchased the tickets before, and on the way it was a beautiful summer night, beautiful lush weather, and I was telling her, "Do you really want to go to the movies? Why don't we just sit on the lake and watch the sunset? Wouldn't that be nicer than sitting in a room - in a dark room - right now?" And she said, "Well, I'd love to do that, too, but we purchased those tickets already. They cost 20 dollars, and we're going to lose the 20 bucks if you do that." And that is a classic mistake we always fall into, and it's called the sunk cost fallacy. The 20 bucks have been spent already; they should not have any, any say in what decision we take now. It's a non-recoverable expense, so we should just take this moment and say, "Do I really want to go to the movie right now, or do I want to sit on the lake and watch the sunset?" The 20 bucks should not play a role at all, but we see this very often - that non-recoverable expenses, stuff we have already invested - somehow creep up to us.*

A CQ listener wrote to us with details of some hardships of life and about a relationship that was not good for her. She invested a lot of time and effort into it, but got to the point where she finally had the courage to walk away from it. As followers of Christ, we have to be careful that we do not say, "Well, I have already invested this much time..." with something earthly. A principle of a sound mind says, "I will look higher to a spiritual level." Obviously, we must fulfill certain responsibilities, but this is about making choices that are spiritually higher.

There are three opposites of responsibility and discipline - these things follow the pattern of our theme text:



**Excuses:** Excusing away our failure to make spiritual progress. If things go poorly, it is always something else, where we live, or the circumstances were not right, or we just cannot catch a break.

We can explain away not following through with that spirit of a sound mind.

**The Parable of the Pounds displayed the end result of spiritual excuses:**

Luke 19:20-21: (NASB) <sup>20</sup>Another came, saying, Master, here is your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; <sup>21</sup>for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down and reap what you did not sow.

We have to manage God's property with great care. Here the worker did nothing with the money for fear of losing it. But the master calls this the cowardly choice; the worker should have acted in some way. Excuses are dwelling in fear and not allowing God's power to address our circumstances.



**Blaming Others:** We blame others when we feel inferior, inadequate, fearful, jealous, doubtful and guilty. We blame our church, our elders, our family, our boss... or even the Lord.

It is easy to blame others for our lack of responsibility. The spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of discipline, means accepting responsibility when things are not right in our life.



**1 Samuel 15:20-21:** (NASB) <sup>20</sup>*Then Saul said to Samuel, I did obey the voice of the LORD, and went on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and have brought back Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. <sup>21</sup>But the people took some of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the choicest of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God at Gilgal.*

Saul blamed the people, but who was the king with the final word? Placing blame shows a desire for good appearance and is in opposition to the spirit of love. Excuses circumvent the power of God. Placing blame on others is in opposition to the spirit of love, because love would not deceive or mislead anyone.



In business I deal with lots of different people, and sometimes things do not go perfectly or I make a mistake. The best way to handle it is to immediately a) look for a solution, and b) confront the individual. When I make a mistake, I say, "This is what I did and it was my fault. I apologize and this is what I am doing to fix it." The response is always gracious. Own up to it. Do not blame others.

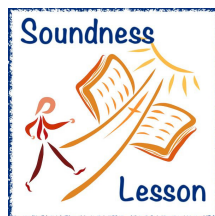


Focusing on the problem rather than the solution:

Do we talk about and dwell on the problem, or are we busy solving it?

**1 Kings 18:21:** (NASB) *Elijah came near to all the people and said, How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him. But the people did not answer him a word.*

Elijah is against 450 prophets of Baal. Elijah brings the circumstance to the core point: If God is God, follow Him. If Baal is god, follow him. Make a choice. The people were scared and cowardly and nobody said a word. Elijah did what God wanted and destroyed all of the evil in front of them. They were focusing on the problem, not the solution. There is no soundness, discipline or success in going round and round on the issues. Get to work solving the problem!



**Embrace the mind of Christ as your primary guide.  
To follow it is to walk the path of the faithful.**

**God's power, benevolent love and a Christlike discipline  
define a sound Christian mind. What else is left?**

The only thing left is to finish the story that we started with. We cannot simply leave the Apostle Peter out there as an example of cowardice! Jesus had many other plans for him, and Peter rose to the occasion and lived his life as an exemplary model of one who had a sound Christian mind. This does not mean that Peter never made mistakes, but it DOES mean he was faithful even until death. He led and others followed because he was sound in his spiritual thinking.



He embraced the power of God within him. He lived his life in absolute love for others and had the ability to rise to the point of being wise spiritually.

With a spirit of a sound mind, we learn from our mistakes. Peter learned. It is about what happens AFTER we make mistakes. The spirit of a sound mind helps us to cope with the embarrassment and humiliation, allowing us to rise up and get going again.

 **Motivation crowding, *The Art of Thinking Clearly*, Rolf Dobelli, Zurich Minds**

- *A friend of mine moved from Frankfurt to Zurich, and he knows that I'm in Frankfurt a lot by car. So he called me up and said, "Would you mind dropping by my mother and taking this vase, it's a beautiful Murano hand-blown vase, and bring it to Zurich since you're driving this way anyway? I said, "Sure, no problem." So I went there, I picked up the vase at his mother's place in Frankfurt, drove it to Zurich, gave it to him - it didn't break - gave it to him and he said, "Thank you so much." He pulled out the wallet and gave me a hundred euros and said, "Thank you." I'm like, "A hundred euros? For what?" He said, "Well that's for the delivery." And a woman probably would not have done this, and that's called motivation crowding. If you bring in monetary incentives into a system that is driven by internal motivation or social motivation, it changes the whole game. It actually devalued our friendship, and it took quite a lot of weeks to get it back on to the same level that it was before.*

What he is saying is, "I took the money but I shouldn't have. I was making the trip anyway and he is my friend. This was not about being paid, but about helping my friend." The friend crowded the motivation with something else.

In many Christian ministries, there is a motivation crowding going on because these ministers get paid really well for what they do. Is the ministry about dollars and cents or about giving spirituality to others? You can see how things can get confused when you throw in those other kinds of motivations. The gospel is not "pay for service." It is meant to be freely given.

Back to Peter's story...

**Jesus appears after his resurrection. The apostles all came to shore and gather around him:**

John 21:15: (NASB) *So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these? He said to him, Yes, Lord; You know that I love you. He said to him, Tend my lambs.*

Jesus asks: Do you "agape" (benevolent) love me?

Peter answers: You know that I "phileo" (brotherly) love you.



The mission: Feed my lambs (the young, the beginners, the lambs who need the *milk of the word*, the new and excited Christians who want to be a part of it. They need special attention.)

Jesus gives this mission specifically to Peter to be the example.



This is a mission given only to one who is trusted. Peter would soon rely on the miraculous power of God's influence, learning how to funnel that power to manage the mission.

John 21:16: (NASB) *He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love me? He said to him, Yes, Lord; You know that I love you. He said to him, Shepherd my sheep.*

The question again: Do you "agape" (benevolent) love me?

The answer again: You know that I "phileo" (brotherly) love you.

The mission is a little different: Tend my sheep (the more mature sheep who need guidance and direction but who were ready for the more advanced *meat of the word*.) Peter had to lead all different types of Christians and fulfill their different needs. This is an entirely new responsibility and level of difficulty.

This was a mission only to be given to one who is trusted; one who has learned to love in the highest way, through experience and failure. This was a necessary ingredient to tenderly care for Jesus' own flock.

Peter learned by his previous failures. He would now be caring for those who would fail like that. What an experience so that he could have that tender care for others! Peter would be the perfect example to take them by the hand and say, "I know, I know. Now let's leave that behind and move forward."

John 21:17: (NASB) *He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love me? Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, Do you love me? And he said to him, Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you. Jesus said to him, Tend My sheep.*

The final question: Do you "phileo" (brotherly) love me?

The final answer: You know everything; you know that I "phileo" love you.

Jesus to Peter: "I am going to require a lot of you. I know what you said, but I need it to be what you DO."

The mission: Feed my sheep (the weak sheep, weak in faith who are to be fed and cared for). Some of our brethren have physical or emotional needs. We need to be able to lift them spiritually higher.

This was a mission that could be given only to one who would understand weakness and with wisdom and godliness give what was necessary to overcome it.

Use your godly mind, and do the work set before you. Engage God's power to focus and direct your energy, do all with selfless love as your core motivation, and live in the discipline and soundness of your spiritual mind.

Ecclesiastes 9:10: (NASB) *Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might; for there is no activity or planning or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol where you are going.*

Whatever God gives us to do spiritually, do it well.

1 Corinthians 9:16: (NASB) *For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.*



The Apostle Paul's attitude was that he HAD to preach the gospel, because it was the driving force in his life. He had no choice. This is the spirit of a sound mind that is thoroughly engaged. His spiritual discipline got the job done.

Philippians 1:6: (NASB) *For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*

God will finish what He started unless we stand in His way.

Final question for homework: If I have been given the spirit of power, love and discipline in Christ, who around me can observe it at work? Can people see there is something different in our lives?

We have a wonderful opportunity in Christ!

*So, do I have a sound Christian mind?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*



Join us next week for our podcast on April 15, 2019:  
Ep. #1069: What Happened at the Last Supper?

### Bonus Material!

***Next to sound judgment, diamonds and pearls are the rarest things in the world.***

*— Jean de la Bruyere*

**Some examples of what using the spirit of a sound mind looks like:**

1 Corinthians 9:19-27: (NRSV) <sup>19</sup>For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. <sup>20</sup>To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. <sup>21</sup>To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. <sup>22</sup>To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. <sup>23</sup>I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings. <sup>24</sup>Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. <sup>25</sup>Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one. <sup>26</sup>So I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; <sup>27</sup>but I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified.





**Acts 6:7-15: (NRSV)** <sup>7</sup>The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith. <sup>8</sup>Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. <sup>9</sup>Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those from Cilicia and Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen. <sup>10</sup>But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. <sup>11</sup>Then they secretly instigated some men to say, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God. <sup>12</sup>They stirred up the people as well as the elders and the scribes; then they suddenly confronted him, seized him, and brought him before the council. <sup>13</sup>They set up false witnesses who said, This man never stops saying things against this holy place and the law; <sup>14</sup>for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses handed on to us. <sup>15</sup>And all who sat in the council looked intently at him, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

**Romans 12:5-19: (NRSV)** <sup>5</sup>So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. <sup>6</sup>We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; <sup>7</sup>ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; <sup>8</sup>the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness. <sup>9</sup>Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; <sup>10</sup>love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. <sup>11</sup>Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. <sup>13</sup>Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. <sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony (KJV - be like minded - #5426) with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. <sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. <sup>19</sup>Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.

