

Mother of God Community  
Sunday Night Prayer Meeting  
June 6, 2010  
**Renewal of the Mind**  
Bob Roche

The renewal of our mind is a broad subject, including:

- The un-renewed mind – not knowing much about God, Jesus Christ, & Holy Spirit, i.e. the soulish man (person) vs. the spiritual man
- Our cultural belief systems that we are affected by every day
- Our personal belief system
- Our own memories that may provide erroneous conclusions
- Memories that require deep healing from our past, including when we were an infant, or a small child

This talk is not going to cover the water front, so to speak. I am going to concentrate on our own un-renewed mind, including the impact of our culture, in other words, our own belief system.

I am leaving out for some one else to cover, the broad topic of healing of memories.

Also, I am addressing this to an audience that, for the most part, have been Baptized in the Holy Spirit, or are aware of what I am talking about, and understand the language I will be using; so, with a few exceptions, I will not be defining the terms I use. The few exceptions are short and simplistic, and are:

- Our soul: Simply - the life within us. We are alive and aware of our existence.
- Our mind: Acting through our soul, that capacity in us that makes us aware, that can project thought that gives us intellect; that allows us to comprehend ourselves and our Creator.
- The un-renewed mind: Dominated by our fallen nature, unaware of, or forgetful of, the depth of Gods love for us, we are controlled by soulish desires. As soulish people, we are influenced by our emotions, imagination, and intellect. The basic reality is that we act without any illumination by the Spirit. (Gal. 3:1-3)
- The renewed mind: Through water baptism, in which we receive the Holy Spirit, and in Baptism in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit reveals the mysteries and truths of God; but,

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we need to comply with them and allow them to change us. The greatest mystery is the saving grace by Christ's death on the cross, which has dealt with our fallen nature, and allows us to come to fully know Him. It is in being faithful to this knowledge that changes us, changes our desires, and puts to death the sin within our members, (St. Paul's words) through the power of faith, repentance and love for Christ. This takes a lifetime to accomplish. We never get done.

- (Repeat the last bullet)

There is one more definition I would like to use. That is rationalization. This is the capacity of our mind to justify actions we would like to make or follow, yet there is an obstacle that seems to say to us that this action is not right. We use our mind to find a basis to justify the action, and satisfy our desire. I know about rationalization, and I will give you an example from my own life shortly. Our society today uses rationalization to justify many ungodly things, including disbelief in God. Think of how Hitler used rationalization. We all do it to one extent or the other.

That's all for definitions!!

To start out, let's assume an un-renewed mind, or soulish mind is a 1 on a scale from 1 to 10, and a fully renewed mind, or spiritual mind, is a 10.

Where do we see ourselves on this scale?

- Some one, who does not know that Jesus died for us so that our sins may be forgiven, is clearly at a 1.
- On the other hand, a Mother Theresa, who is in the process of being elevated to the status of a Saint, is right up there close to a 10.
- I would guess we see ourselves as being somewhere between a 3 and a 6, maybe a 7.

That means we have a way to go, some of us a long way.

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So we can all agree we still have un-renewed minds and continue to think in ways that are not truly spiritual. We still, to some degree, rely on our own belief system. Do we agree? What would some of our fallen nature faults be?

- Pride
  - Do we judge people
  - Do we want to see ourselves as better than others
- Envy
  - Do we desire what others have
  - Do we say things to put others down
- Anger
  - Do we lose our temper
  - Do we hold a grudge
- Despair
  - Do we feel hopeless sometimes?
  - Are we afraid to ask God for help
  - Do we not even think to ask God for help

The following are some examples from Scripture of what I mean by an un-renewed belief system: When Jesus was in the towns and countryside, people who encountered Jesus would say:

- How could He be the son of David? He is a Nazarene, or
- Jesus is the son of Joseph, a carpenter - His disciples are all fishermen. Who are they to be telling us about the Kingdom of God?

In these two examples, the people of Judea had not come to know Jesus, that he was the Son of God, and understandably thought in an un-renewed way.

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Today, we live in a society that is now known as “post Christian”, and whose values are mostly against the commandments of God, with a dominant belief system that denies the existence of any God. We are affected by this belief system. We are immersed in it.

An example of my own: When I was young, my mother taught me that I should pray every day. When I was older and had a family of six (before Matthew), while I still believed in God, I had many questions about the Church, decided that God knew my needs and my mind, and it was a waste of time to pray. So I didn't. I rationalized a basis for not doing what my conscience was telling me to do. See how simple it is? Have you ever rationalized a justification for doing something that deep down you knew you shouldn't do? Do we see our children wanting to surrender to today's standards, imitate what they see on TV? I am sure we have.

After BHS, I realized how dumb I was. My mind was truly an un-renewed, soulish mind. God didn't need my prayers so much as I did. I realized I needed to be before God and express my needs, as well as acknowledge His Lordship over me. God desires my recognizing my neediness. (By the way, this is the secret to being successful in renewing our minds. More on this thought later.)

Some Scripture references to consider:

- Romans 12:1-2 *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.”* Footnote: (Go to Eph 4:23)
- Ephesians 4:22-24: *“You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires, to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”*
- Do you understand what it means to “put off your old self”? Maybe I see myself as selfish, or judgmental. In other words, as I go through my day, do I recognize when I am

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not acting or thinking in a righteous way? I know I do! To put off my old self, I have to stop and repent, ask the Lord to change my heart, to convict me every time I do the same thing, until I realize God has healed me, and I no longer do this wrong. Let's go back to Ephesians for more.

- Ephesians 4:25-32: *“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you.”*

How do we become a new creation? What is the process?

First, we have to make several decisions! Let's do this now!

- Can we think of one thing that we see we need to change, an old way of thinking that needs to change? (Mine is that I find I am getting angry when in a work environment, and speaking out in an angry way. This is a habit that I thought was behind me, but has come back.) Every one, raise your hand when you have one thing in mind. Now, let's decide we want to change – every one agree?
- Next- can we do this on our own power – say “I will change!” No, we deceive ourselves if we think we can do it using our own strength. We need the power of God. It is much easier.

We turn to the Lord, repent, and ask him to:

- Convict us every time we commit this sin
- Change our hearts
- Admit to Him we are powerless to change without his grace and the working of the Holy Spirit in our life. (If I were a priest, you would all have to be given a penance to do! Like – three Our Fathers and three Hail Marys.

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- The important thing is - we will see a change.

Let's go over this again:

- Think of a habit that comes from our fallen nature
- Decide we want to change – every one agree?
- Next- remember, we can not do this on our own power Don't deceive ourselves. We need the power of God. It is much easier.
- We will see a change.

We continue to turn to the Lord, repent, and ask him to:

- Convict us every time we commit this sin
- Change our hearts
- Admit to Him we are powerless to change without his grace and the working of the Holy Spirit in our life.

Conclusion:

- 2 Corinthians 5:17 *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old has gone, the new has come.”*

Remember our Goal:

- 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 *“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”*

Final admonishment:

We do not change ourselves. The Holy Spirit, through the grace of God, transforms us. We must always turn to the Lord, in repentance and neediness. He will change us.

Amen