The Mind

As individuals, "…we have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16), because we have "the Spirit of Christ" (1 Peter 1:11). And God can unite the minds of any number of people, if that's what they want. "…the hand of God was on the people to give them unity of mind…" (2 Chronicles 30:12).

What a travesty, then, to be given the mind of Christ and then to ignore it, choosing rather to think egocentrically and, consequently, divisively!

It seems to me that as Head of the Body, Christ should always be in charge and in full control of the Church. But the only way to realize like-mindedness and unity in the Body of Christ is for his thinking to prevail in the hearts of all concerned. Unity is possible. Unity is desirable. Unity is indispensable. Jesus prayed,"…that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (John 17:21-23). The world would find it a lot easier to believe the Gospel if Christians adopted the mind of Christ and acted in full harmony.

The earliest church had unity: "All the believers were one in heart and mind" (Acts 4:32).

Jesus said: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37). This is the right starting place in the pursuit of unity!

And here is an example of how the Holy Spirit reveals the mind of Christ to his people: "In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off" (Acts 13). Key words: w*orship, fasting, prayer!*

In Luke 24:45, we read: "Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scripture." And Christ's Spirit can open our minds to understand him!

Romans 12:2."Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will."

In the fourth chapter of his letter to the Ephesians, Paul admonishes the Christians: "…be made new in the attitude of your minds…"

Apostle Paul writes in the first chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians "I appeal to you…in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought." Now, would Paul say this if it were not possible? There is only one way we can be of one mind, and that is for all of us to recognize and release Christ's mind, perception and viewpoint.

And to the Philippians, in chapter two, he writes:"…make my joy complete by being likeminded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose." We can be one in

spirit and purpose but only if each one of us exercises the mentality and the heart of Christ. Realistically, this happens when we arrive at *a Holy Spirit-directed and Christ-centered consensus*. But, a word of caution: just because a consensus is reached doesn't mean it's necessarily of the Lord. It could be that everyone just happened to be thinking alike, but carnally. In other words, it's not enough to have one mind; it has to be the mind of Christ. (Beware of Christian politics.)

Apostle Paul encourages the Philippians in chapter 4, "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." God himself should be the one who guards our thinking processes, because our minds are his property.

I quote Romans 8:5 & 6: "Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace." We act in agreement with the Holy Spirit when we determine to co-think with Christ.

Christ will not <u>force</u> us to mentally conform to him but he will <u>help</u> us do it; <u>we</u> need to take the initiative.

2 Corinthians 10:5: "… we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

In Hebrews 3:1 we are instructed to fix or fasten our minds, our thoughts on Jesus.

In Ephesians 4:3 & 13, Paul encourages believers to "Make every <u>effort</u> to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace…until we all reach <u>unity</u> in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."

And, finally, in Romans 15:5 Apostle Paul expresses a prayerful wish: "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement, give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus…" ◊◊◊