

THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGING YOUR MIND

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“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” (Romans 12:2).

“Some people had rather cut off an arm than change their mind.” Perhaps this is a slight exaggeration, but it doesn’t change the fact that changing our minds is one of the most difficult things we can do. This is true because once you have a specific idea in your mind—whether it’s an idea about who someone is, the way someone should work or behave, the way something should or should not happen—it sticks in your mind. Our brains become attached to it and expect it to always be there. We develop a stubborn streak a mile-wide.

We hear talk all the time about changing minds; our minds or the mind of someone else. Our mind is set in one direction and it’s very difficult to redirect it to another direction. This declaration—changing minds—is one of the least examined and practiced phenomenon in human experience and behavior.

LIFE IS ABOUT CHANGING MINDS:

1. Starts in infancy as parents work on helping children change their minds.
2. In every direction we see efforts being exercised to change minds:
 - a. Education is based on changing minds.
 - b. At work the minds of colleagues are encouraged to change and try new idea.
 - c. Salespersons try to change minds.
 - d. Media spends billions trying to change consumers minds.
 - e. Preachers and church leaders try to change minds.
 - f. Counselors and coaches work to help people change their minds.
 - g. Spouses try to change each other’s minds.
 - h. Physicians try to change people’s minds
3. God is trying to change minds through His word (Matt. 28:18-20)

CHRISTIANITY IS ABOUT CHANGED MINDS:

1. **Repentance** is essential to eternal salvation. The Greek word translated into our English word *repentance* is: *Metanoeo*: “*Meta*”—*after, implying change*; “*Noeo*”—*to perceive*; “*Nous*”—*the mind, the seat of moral reflection*. *Metanoia*: “*And after thought, change of mind, have another mind*” (cf. Heb. 12:17; Lk. 13:3, 5; Acts 20:21; 26:20).
2. **Repentance** occurs in three steps: (1) “A turning in the mind, (2) A turning from sin or a thing, and (3) a turning to God (Acts 17:30, 31).
3. The RESULTS of true repentance is FRUIT: (Matt. 3:8; 7:16). Which means changed behavior (cf. Jer. 6:19).

WHY IS IT DIFFICULT, OR IMPOSSIBLE, FOR SOME PERSONS TO CHANGE THEIR MINDS:

1. They have had the mindset for most of their lives.

2. They have the mindset anchored in cement and will not change.
3. The mindset is attached to traditions (Mk. 7:7, 9).
4. There is an emotional feeling tied to the mindset.
5. They have a lack of reasoning ability or had rather not think.
6. They have not thought about the consequences.
7. They don't see the value of change.
8. They are stubborn and closed-minded.
9. They don't understand the benefits or reasons for changing.
10. They don't like the idea of being rejected by the "old gang" if they change.
11. There seems to be a natural resistance factor built into our DNA.
12. There is limited knowledge relative to the difference between ideas, theory, form, substance, concepts, rumors, stories, beliefs, and proven truths.
13. The mind is "too old to change" or "diseased."

SOME AREAS WE MAY NEED TO CHANGE OUR MINDS IN

1. The discipline of our thinking (Prov. 23:7).
2. Our behavior practices.
3. Our habit patterns.
4. Linguistic patterns (speech).
5. Knowledge bank.
6. Beliefs.
7. Relationship with others.
8. How we serve God.
9. Spiritual practices.
10. Attitudes.

BIBLE EXAMPLES OF CHANGED MINDS:

1. Three-thousand on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:37-47).
2. Saul (Paul) Acts 8 & 9.
3. The Eunuch (Acts 8:29-39).
4. The Jailer (Acts 16:25-40).
5. Cornelius (Acts 10:1-48).
6. The Thessalonians (1 Thess. 1:8-10).

THE PROCESS OF CHANGING OUR MINDS

1. Starts with an awareness of a present mindset; and an analysis of it: positive or negative.
2. Evaluate the reasons—pros and cons—for making the mind change.
3. A deliberate decision, commitment, and plan to change the mindset.
4. Continual prayer for strength and wisdom (Jas. 1:1-6; 1 Thess. 5:19).
5. Choose specific Scriptures that relate to the new mindset. External influence!

APPLICATION:

List a mindsets you need/want to change:

1. _____

