

The Mind of Christ

1 Corinthians 2:16



Good Hope
Baptist Church

Living Together In The Love Of God

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FOCAL Read Responsively 1 Corinthians 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

A **paraprosdokian** is a figure of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected, so much so that it causes the reader to carefully consider or reinterpret the first part of the sentence. Paraprosdokians are often used by comedians. Here's a few that I've heard:

- Never argue with an idiot. He will drag you down to his level and beat you with experience.
- I want to die peacefully in my sleep, like my grandfather. Not screaming and yelling like the passengers in his plane.
- (From the Evangelist **Billy Sunday**) Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
- The last thing I want to do is hurt you. But you need to know it's still on the list.
- If I agreed with you we'd both be wrong.
- The early bird might get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.
- Some people are like Slinkies ... not really good for anything, but you can't help smiling when you see one tumble down the stairs.
- Whenever I fill out an application, in the part that says "If an emergency, notify:" I put "DOCTOR".
- You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.
- Some cause happiness *wherever* they go. Others *whenever* they go.

- When tempted to fight fire with fire, remember that the Fire Department usually uses water.

and one of my favorites (though I don't do this, nor recommend that you do this):

- I asked God for a bike, but I know God doesn't work that way. So I stole a bike and asked for forgiveness.

If you noticed, **paraprosdokians** may not only change the meaning of an early phrase, but may also play on the double meaning of a particular word. What does this have to do with our text today? The Apostle Paul uses a wonderful paraprosdokian in our text today. He said:

For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him?

But we have the mind of Christ.

In the first part of the text Paul says **"Who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?"**

Who can know the mind of God? God is infinite in knowledge, wisdom, and power. He knows all things. The Scripture says:

Romans 11:33-36 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! (34) For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? (35) Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? (36) For of him, and through him, and to

him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

God knows all things. He knows everything. **Of Him, and to Him, and through Him are all things.** God knows everything - and we can't be God's counselor.

The Prophet Isaiah also wrote:

Isaiah 40:12-15 Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? (13) Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counselor hath taught him? (14) With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding? (15) Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

ILLUSTRATE Our God is infinite in knowledge, in power, in majesty, in glory. There is nothing you can tell God. **If you played chess with God He would always win, for He would know the move you were going to make before you ever set up the board. If you went fishing with God you would always catch a boatload, for He knows where the fish are and what they're biting on. If you play hide n' seek with God He'd always find you. You can't hide from God, nor hide your hearts from God. God knows both what you are**

thinking

1 Samuel 16:7 ... man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

and He knows where you are. The Lord knows. He knows what you're thinking, and knows what you're going to have for lunch today - or a thousand days from now. There is no mystery with God - He knows all! So when Paul asks "**Who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him?**" the answer to this question is "**No one! No one can tell God anything, nor counsel Him, for He knows all things from the beginning to the end, and from the end to the beginning. God alone is God.**"

The first part of the sentence clarifies the second part. God knows it all. He knows all things. He knows how everything fits together. And since that is true, the only path to sanity and the only path to life is to **have and hold the mind of Christ.**

1. What Is The "Mind of Christ"?

FOCAL 1 Corinthians 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

Word Study The Apostle said "**But WE have** (Present Active Indicative of the verb *εχω* ECHO {Pronounced ekh'-o}) **the mind of Christ**". Literally Paul said "**We keep on having and holding the mind of Christ**". We think as our Lord Jesus thought.

The Bible says

Proverbs 23:7 For as {a man} thinketh in his heart, so is he: ...

Thoughts precede actions. What you think determines what you do in every situation. What you think determines how you live. Thoughts direct your lives.

When our Lord Jesus Christ came to this earth, He was not a mere man being born of a mere woman. The Bible says that Jesus Christ is God the Son and the Son of God. He is *fully God* and *fully perfect Man*. We are told:

Colossians 1:14-15 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: (15) Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

Our Redeemer is also **the very image of the invisible God**. Jesus Christ is Creator God. He is God the Son. We read:

Colossians 1:16-17 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: (17) And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Jesus Christ not only created **all things**, He **holds all things together**. He is God. The Apostle John wrote:

John 1:1-3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (2) The same was in the beginning with God. (3) All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

The "**Word**", our Lord Jesus, "**was made flesh and dwelt among us**" (**John 1:14**). But never forget He was, is, and will ever be God, co-eternal and co-existent with God the Father and God the Spirit.

The Savior of the World is also the Creator of the world. The Redeemer of Adam's debt is also Adam's Creator. Jesus Christ is God. And yet He surrendered to God the Father. He came submitted to both Father and Spirit to do the work of redemption. **This is the mind of Christ!**

So many people arrogantly want to counsel God - but God the Son never counseled God the Father.

The Apostle **Philip** was listening to Jesus one day and said:

John 14:8 ... **Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.**

Notice how Jesus replied. He said:

John 14:9-10 **Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou**

then, Show us the Father? (10) Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Consider this: Jesus Christ is eternal God in human flesh. Yet Jesus *surrendered His will to the Father*. He did nothing of Himself, but allowed God the Father to work through Him.

To have the mind of Christ is to allow God to tell you right from wrong. To allow God to use you. To surrender yourselves fully to His Will - knowing that His way is best. God does not need - nor can He use - a Counselor. But God wants many believers who will **keep on having and holding the mind of Christ.**

Having the mind of Christ means to surrender yourself to God, just as our Lord Jesus Christ did. Jesus went on to tell His Apostles:

John 14:12-14 Verily, verily, I say unto you, **He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. (13) And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. (14) If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.**

The Christian and the Christian Church are God's method to reach the world. Jesus said that - if we would do as He did (**believe on Me**) then we would do **greater works than these**. Listen Beloved: As humans we do not

have the ability to foresee the future. We do not have the power to counsel nor control God. But we can surrender ourselves to God the Spirit just as the Lord Jesus Christ did - and then we will do great things for God. We read:

Philippians 2:5-8 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (6) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (7) But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: (8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Jesus Christ - eternal God in the flesh - **humbled Himself, and obeyed God the Father.** He went to the Cross, surrendering His very life for yours and for mine.

The power of the Christian - and the Church - lies in every member **having and holding the mind of Christ.**

2. What Will Happen If I Do Not Seek The "Mind Of Christ?"

ILLUSTRATE Jeff Foxworthy was talking about the *side effects* that various medicines have. He said "I remember when I was a kid, there were two medicines: aspirin and Campho-Phenique, that was it. But they advertise these prescriptions, and half the time, the side effects are 50 times worse than what the thing cures! It's like, "Try new Flor-A-Flor. For itchy, watery eyes, it's Flor-A-Flor. Side effects may include: nausea,

vomiting, water weight gain, lower back pain, receding hairline, eczema, seborrhea, psoriasis, itchy chafing clothing, liver spots, blood clots, ringworm, excessive body odor, uneven tire wear halitosis warped floors, cluttered drawers, hunchback, heart attack, low resale value on your home drowsiness, poor gas mileage, tooth decay, split ends chest pains, and clogged drains" I'm like, "I'll just have itchy, watery eyes!"

Just as there are side effects - often miserable side effects - in using prescription medications, there are side effects to *not developing the mind of Christ*. What are these side effects?

a When people came to Jesus, they were always directed upward toward God. The Mind of Christ loves God *first* and puts God *first*. The Corinthians, on the other hand, elevated man above God. By elevating man above God they brought disharmony into their "Church". Paul told them:

CONTEXT 1 Corinthians 1:10-13 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. (11) For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. (12) Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. (13) Is

Christ divided?

When God's people do not have the mind of Christ, they elevate *people* above the *person of our God*. They begin to worship mortals rather than he Who is immortal.

The sign that a Church has departed from the mind of Christ is that it is at war with itself. It elevates *personalities* rather than the *Person of God*. As a **house divided will not stand (Luke 11:17) a Church divided will surely fall!**

This is not God's way. God wants His people - people who He has loved and shed His Blood for - to move forward in one accord. When God's people have the mind of Christ then they move together in *one accord*. They are not fighting, nor setting themselves above the other members. Those with the mind of Christ work together with others of the same mind to glorify the Lord - to be a **city of God glorifying God on this earth**.

Most wars start in the Church over *personalities*. One day Jesus caught His disciples arguing about who was going to be the *greatest* in the Kingdom of God. The Bible says:

Mark 10:42-45 But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, **Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. (43) But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: (44) And whosoever of you will be the**

chiefest shall be servant of all. (45) For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Samuel Chadwick said “**The church that is man-managed instead of God-governed is doomed to failure**”. God has designed His Church to be a living organism, with each member submitting to one another in love and in the fear of the Lord.

What causes the Church to burn bright and give off the white cleaning light of the Gospel? It is a Church that is in love with God and in love with one another. This is the Church that is **the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. (Matthew 5:14)**.

The world watches the Church. If it works together to glorify the Lord Jesus while preaching the Gospel of Life and Light then those stranded in darkness are drawn toward that light. But if the Church is divisive, each member following his or her opinion or agenda, then the Church is disrupted.

I must not become the bushel basket that hides the light of the Gospel.

ILLUSTRATE There is an inherent danger in relying on *personalities and people* rather than the *Person of God*. There was an old gentleman who loved to play golf, but he had a problem: his eyesight was pretty bad. Whenever he played golf he'd always have a friend go with him so his friend could watch the ball and tell him where it

went. One day he went to the golf course and his golfing buddy didn't show up. Another older gentleman saw him sitting in the clubhouse and asked him what was wrong. He said "I was really looking forward to playing golf today. But I can't see very well, and it's useless to go out without someone who can help me watch my ball". The second man said, "Hey, that's no problem. I have great eyesight, and I'd love to play golf with you!" So they both went out to the first tee, and the old man hit the ball right down the center. "Did you see my ball?" he asked his partner. "Of course I did - I saw it all the way to where it stopped rolling". "Well, where is it?" The second man paused for a moment, then said "I forgot".

Our abilities as humans is very limited - but God's abilities are unlimited. Trust God. Rely on Him. Have the mind of Christ, and you'll have the right mind!

CONTEXT 1 Corinthians 3:6-7 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. (7) So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

b When people came to Jesus, they were always directed upward *by love*. The Mind of Christ loves people and wants to see them saved through the glorious Gospel of Christ.

When you have a judgmental negative attitude, you do not have the mind of Christ. The only people Jesus ever judged were the *self righteous*.

The Apostle Paul told the Corinthians:

CONTEXT 1 Corinthians 4:3-4 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. (4) For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

"He that judgeth me is the Lord". None of us is perfect - absolutely none! Those who have the mind of Christ spend their time *loving and encouraging* others. The Bible tells us to do three things as Christ's Church:

Hebrews 10:23-25 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) (24) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: (25) Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

We are to hold fast the profession of our faith without waivering. The enemy would have us compromise Christ and His Gospel. The enemy would have us say "Why yes, there are many ways to God. Buddha is as good as is the Hindoo, and Muhammad is as viable as is the Angel Moroni of the Mormons." But the mind of Christ has said "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: No man cometh unto the Father BUT BY ME" (John 14:6). Hold fast! Though the waves of unbelief rock the Great Ship of Zion, stay on board. Hold fast, and preach Christ and Christ alone!

We are to provoke one another to *love and good works*. We are not to go about judging one another, or mouthing off and provoking fights. Some within Christianity should register their tongues as a deadly weapon!

Provoke to love and good works. Do as Jesus did. Jesus met several rough fishermen, and told them "**Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men**". He met Matthew and Zacchaeus, both tax collectors and thieves, and led them to the Way of salvation. One of the women who follow Christ was **Mary Magdalene**, a woman who many suppose had at one time been a prostitute. Over and over again we see in the ministry of Christ love for God and love for others perfectly modeled. This is the Mind we must have if God will change the world through us!

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together. We are to gather as Christians and *practice loving one another*. Love is learned, and we are to learn to love.

G When people came to Jesus, they were always directed away from sin *because of love*. The Mind of Christ loves people and does not want to see them crippled and bound by sin.

The Apostle Paul told the Corinthians:

CONTEXT 1 Corinthians 5:1-2 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among

the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. (2) And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.

A young man was committing sexual sin with his stepmother - his father's wife - and the local Church at Corinth not only knew about it but was *proud of the fact*. Dear friends, Jesus Christ did not die for our sins so that we could wallow in our sins. The Corinthians should have been mourning and sad because of this terrible state, but they weren't. Paul admonished them, and commanded that that young man be rebuked before all. Paul went on to say that:

CONTEXT 1 Corinthians 5:11-13 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. (13) But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

ILLUSTRATE Once in my ministry a dear couple walked the aisle of the Church, and told me that they wanted to join our Church as Christians. They had both been previously saved, and would be joining our Church by letter from another Baptist Church. We rejoiced to receive them! It is always a great blessing when God adds to His Church.

The following week this couple came by my office, and began to share something I didn't know. They had the

same last name, but were not married. They were married at one time, but divorced, and then later came back together - but never renewed their vows. The Lord had been speaking to their hearts. What should be done? I told them that, as the Pastor of the Church, that we would not be able to receive them as members until they were remarried. I went on to tell them that - as the Pastor - I would be willing to perform the wedding ceremony, and even pay for the license. But I could not look the other way when the mind of Christ said otherwise. **God is not the Author of confusion, but of peace (1 Corinthians 14:33).**

Two surprising things happened.

First, the couple agreed to be remarried. We moved forward as a Church and, with all love and diligence, with Scriptural integrity, saw this couple bound together in holy matrimony. It was a beautiful wedding. Sherry and I became fast and best friends with this couple. In fact, they told me later that the reason they wanted to join our Church more than ever after that discussion in my office was the *love and care* that was shown to them, as well as our adherence to the mind of Christ.

The second surprising thing was this. I had a woman call me up and literally bless me out for holding up the transfer of this couple's membership. This woman - rarely in Church at best - felt that since they were married in the past, even though they were now divorced *it was fine in the eyes of God*. She felt that, since we are all sinners, I should have just looked the other way. This woman never came back and sat under my preaching for the rest of my ministry at this Church.

Praise be unto God for His unspeakable gift!

Yes, we are all sinners. But having the mind of Christ means that we *reject sin - Biblical sin - from our lives and from our midst*. We are never self righteous. But when sin rears its ugly head we - loving the sinner - address the sin according to the will of God.

Jesus never condoned sin in any of those He ministered to. Jesus said "**Go and sin no more**" to the **woman taken in adultery (John 8:11)**, and to the **cripple at Bethesda** Jesus said "**sin no more, lest a worst thing come upon you**" (John 5:14). The Bible says that the angel told Joseph:

Matthew 1:21 ... thou shalt call his name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins.

We are saved FROM our sins. God's Church cannot be the conscience of the State nor the light of the world if it is defiled with sin. Light and Dark cannot abide in the same place.

3. The Mind of Christ Will Carry Me Through Many Tough Times

FOCAL 1 Corinthians 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

You develop the mind of Christ by reading God's Word and by *doing what He tells you to do when He*

tells you to do it. You must **hear and do the Word of God.**

The mind of Christ is not developed overnight. Salvation is by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and occurs at the moment you call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus. But the mind of Christ is developed by learning to surrender yourselves to the Word of God.

Pastor William Barclay said "It is the spirit which can bear things, not simply with resignation, but with blazing hope; it is not the spirit which sits statically enduring in one place, but the spirit which bears all things because it knows that these things are leading to a goal of glory; it is not the patience which grimly waits for the end, but the patience which radiantly hopes for the dawn. It is the virtue which can transmute the hardest trial into glory because beyond the pain it sees the goal." (New Testament Words, pp.144,145)

A part time Christian will only develop a part time faith. God wants you to develop the mind of Christ! Only then will you do great things for God!

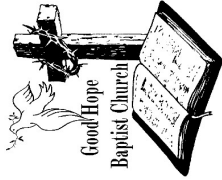
The mind of Christ looks beyond what is happening *now* and, trusting God, surrenders to His Will. One final illustration and I will close.

ILLUSTRATE Corrie Ten Boom watched her entire family die in the German concentration camps of World War II. In her book *The Hiding Place* Corrie told about her sister Betsy, and the great faith she had. Betsy told

Corrie that she needed to thank God for *everything*. One day Corrie and Betsy were worshiping the Lord in their barracks, and Betsy interrupted Corrie at the end of her prayer. **"The bedbugs, Corrie. Remember to thank God for the bedbugs"**. Corrie though her sister was crazy, but she thanked God for the lice anyway. Corrie and Betsy started a Bible study in their barracks, and the guards never disturbed them. They always wondered why. Corrie later found out that it was because of the lice - the guards were afraid of catching the lice!

Only God could use lice to protect His people, Bless His Name!

May God touch your hearts with His Word!



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Living Together In The Love Of God

FOCAL Read Responsively 1 Corinthians 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? **But we have the mind of Christ.**

paraprosdokian _____

Romans 11:33-36; Isaiah 40:12-15; 1 Samuel 16:7

1. What Is The "Mind of Christ"?

Word Study The Apostle said "But WE have (Present Active Indicative of the verb $\epsilon\chi\omega$ ECHO {Pronounced ekh'-o}) the mind of Christ". _____

Proverbs 23:7; Colossians 1:14-15; Colossians 1:16-17; John 1:1-3; John 1:14; John 14:8; John 14:9-10; John 14:12-14; Philippians 2:5-8

The power of the Christian - and the Church - lies in every member **having and holding the mind of Christ.**

2. What Will Happen If I Do Not Seek The "Mind Of Christ?"

a When people came to Jesus, they were always directed *upward toward God*. The Mind of Christ

loves God *first* and puts God *first*.

1 Corinthians 1:10-13; Luke 11:17; Mark 10:42-45; Matthew 5:14; 1 Corinthians 3:6-7

I must not become the bushel basket that hides the light of the Gospel.

b When people came to Jesus, they were always directed *upward by love*.

1 Corinthians 4:3-4; Hebrews 10:23-25; John 14:6

c When people came to Jesus, they were always directed *away from sin because of love*.

1 Corinthians 5:1-2; 1 Corinthians 5:11-13; Matthew 1:21 _____

3. The Mind of Christ Will Carry Me Through Many Tough Times

A part time Christian will only develop a part time faith. God wants you to develop the mind of Christ! Only then will you do great things for God!

