

The Christian Arsenal

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Are you a compartmentalized Christian???

Last year during the Presidential campaign, Al Gore was making a speech trying to appeal to as many people as he could. He was speaking on the subject of conservation and the environment. He began to transition to the subject to religion and morality. He began this particular part of the speech in this manner, "I now call upon the Christian part of myself....." It occurred to me at that point in time that this was echoing something that has become prevalent. We define ourselves as a compartmentalized being when it comes to religion and to our relationship to God. While it is true that humans have a material and a non-material part, (Body, Soul, and Spirit) they cannot have a Christian and non-Christian part.

We have many different roles that we fulfill, being a Christian is not one of those roles. For example, just in one day a person can be found in the role of a parent, a co-worker, a supervisor, a friend, a child, a cousin, a patient, a client, a student, and a spouse. You cannot add Christian to this list? Why? If you are a Christian and Jesus Christ is the Lord of your life as defined by the Word of God, then in all of the above mentioned roles you find yourself in, you are first and foremost a Christian. The Bible does not recognize being a Christian only part of the time or when it is convenient. There is no "I'll be Christian when I am a spouse, parent, and child, but I'll just be the average person in all of the rest."

For most Christians, the above paragraph is something that that they are aware of whether they practice it or not. Many realize that we cannot and should not do this, however there is another division that is just as damaging if not more so that has crept into Evangelicalism. There are seven scripture passages listed below that deal with this problem. Most Christians understand that you need to be a consistent Christian in all facets of your life. These are external relationships to ourselves. These are important and the Bible does deal with each one of these type of relationships and gives guidance for them, still these are secondary to the most important relationship and that is man's relationship with God.

This is where many Christians begin to have problems in their walk with God. They try to give God "His part" and keep their part separate. Just like the **BIG LIE** the ACLU and other liberals are trying to push over on the American public. "The separation of Church and State" ring loud and long in the media today and people are numbly accepting that our Constitution teaches that we are to totally separate God and religion from day to day life. I would suggest that those who believe this read "America's God and Country" by William J. Federer by Fame Publishing. Now to the point of this article, you can not divide yourself and give God what you think He deserves. If this is your attitude I would challenge you to examine your Salvation.

OS Guinness recently wrote a book entitled "Fit Bodies Fat Minds ... Why Evangelicals Don't Think and What to do about it." He states "Anti-intellectualism has become the scandal of evangelicalism. Over the course of 200 years, it has gradually become part and parcel of our evangelical identity. Yet today the failure to love God with our minds as well as our hearts is not only a sin – it's a crippling cultural handicap in an age when ideas have greater consequences than ever."

In our country we hear of the dumbing down of America due the problems of the educational system. Even more so the dumbing down of evangelicalism through popular culture has had a crippling effect in our churches and for the cause of Christ today. Christians are portrayed in the media as ignorant hate mongers and a throw back to the dark ages. We have failed to worship God with our minds like we have our hearts, feelings and emotions.

Look at the following verses. God demands our minds as he does our hearts. He wants our thoughts as well as our feelings. The present trend of feelings, emotions, experience and entertainment in the Church has done much to stunt the healthy growth of Christianity. A human

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is a multi-faceted being. We were created with emotions, feelings, thoughts and a mind. God wants “all of us.” By not giving ourselves wholly to God we destine ourselves to not live in the fullest blessings that God would have us to possess. In the same manner, we also limit our usefulness to our family, our church, our community and to God. The heart and love are essential in the service of God according to Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:13. It is where you must begin and end. This verse however does not say, as the popular Beatles song from the 60’s says, “All You Need is Love.” It says that in all you do Love must be there! (I will take my Theology from St. Paul instead of the Beatles.)

It is clear that God is a relational God. John 3:16 speaks of His great love for us. Look at Isaiah 1:18. “Come now, and **let us reason together**, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” One of the beginning points of a relationship with God is when He invites us to begin to reason things out. Reasoning is a function of the mind. Our emotional, mental and physical being is called into our relationship with God. Many try to avoid this by attributing everything to “the heart”. This makes for a very unbalanced and weak Christian.

In Romans 12:1 & 2, Paul tells us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. Notice in the next verse, he calls for the mind to be 100% engaged in this transformation. Then he gives the reasoning why. We must use our minds to “**prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God**.” Notice the Bible does not say that you may **feel** what the will of God is. It is possible to know the will of God for your life because here the Bible tells us it is. In order to do that, you must refuse to be conformed to and through the world but instead to have your mind renewed through Christ. If you do not pray daily diligently seeking God and study the Bible your mind will not be in that state of renewal and the world will take it’s toll on you. (2 Timothy 2:15 and 3:16)

- **Matthew 22:36.**“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” 37. Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with **all your mind**. 38.This is the **first and greatest commandment**.”

Notice here that Jesus sees a human as a being made up of different parts. Here he defines the expectation of the relationship that God wants from us. Total commitment of all we are is the standard set for us. There seems to be a trend today to ignore the mind as a part of the Christian.

- **Romans 12:1.** “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, that ye may **prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God**.”

In our daily lives we do many things in the different rolls we occupy. God has given us protection by giving us guidance in His word on how we should handle matters and approach things. To do this we must know what he said about a situations and relationships. (Just as a side note of interest, the Bible covers over 20,000 topics and subtopics combined. God has a lot to say and it is important!)

- **1 Peter 1:13.**“Therefore, **prepare your minds for action**; be self-controlled; set your

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hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

Remember that we have a great commission from Jesus to “make disciples of all nations”. We are to be witnesses and teachers. To do this, preparation is necessary. The heart and mind must be submitted to Jesus.

- **2 Corinthians 10: 5.** “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.”

The Christian mind is an active and busy mind. It seeks to know and serve God and is constantly on guard to keep the influences of the world out.

- **1 Peter 3:15.** “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. **Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.** But do this with gentleness and respect.”

This verse is a beautiful illustration of the heart and the mind working together to produce the **results that God wants from us**. Notice that here a prepared mind and a loving heart is what is requested. Anything short of this is unacceptable. It takes both to be what God wants for us.

- **Colossians 3:2.** “**Set your minds on things above**, not on earthly things.”

C. S. Lewis once said, “Aim at heaven and you get earth thrown in. Aim at earth and you get neither.” Keeping your priorities straight and your mind focused where it needs to be is essential. Here is the best advice on how to do that.

- **2 Corinthians 5: 20.** “Now then we are **ambassadors for Christ**, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.”

As a final thought, notice that we are given the job and title of ambassador. We are authorized and expected to speak on behalf of the kingdom of God. Imagine this. A person is selected to be an ambassador to go to a foreign country to represent the United States. When he arrives the people of that country ask him asked about international policies, what kind of relationship your country is trying to develop with us, what is your country's stand on different issues are, and what can your country do to help us with our problems. He looks at them and says, “I am a US ambassador but I really don't know any of that stuff. All of those treaties take so long to read. I am just really excited about it and feel great about being here. I will go and write my congressman a letter and I will have him call you about that. Maybe you could also ask the Canadian or British ambassador, they might have a better idea of what we are all about than that than I do.” Wouldn't that be simply appalling to the American public and the President?

We are Ambassadors for Christ. Madame Ambassador, Mr. Ambassador how well can and do you represent the Kingdom of God?