

To Rule or to Serve? To Get or to Give?



How To Find God's Plan For Your Life (Day 8)
by Derek Prince

The second mark of a renewed mind is that it is not proud or self- seeking. Paul said in that verse we've already quoted in Romans 12:3 that we are not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. I'd like to give you there some words of Jesus to His disciples in Matthew 20:25–28:

> "But Jesus called them to Himself, and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

That's another distinctive mark of the renewed mind. It's not looking for opportunities to rule but to serve. It's not looking for opportunities to get but to give. It patterns life on the example of Jesus who did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life.

Today, in our modern culture, the idea of being a servant is pretty unpopular. Everybody wants to be his own boss. Everybody wants his own rights. Everybody wants to steer his own course and look after his own interests. But that's not the renewed mind. The renewed mind doesn't say, "What can I get?" It says, "What can I give?" It doesn't seek to exalt itself but to humble itself. The great evangelist Moody said this about himself. "When I was a young man, I used to think that God had His gifts arranged out on shelves and that the best gifts were on the top shelf. But," he said, "now I've learned it's the opposite. The best gifts are on the bottom shelves. You don't reach up for them, you stoop down for them."

The third mark of a renewed mind is that it's sober and realistic. Paul says again in Romans 12:3 we are to think so as to have sound judgment. Another translation uses the word "sober." I like that word "sober." The renewed mind is sober and realistic. It avoids two extremes. On the one hand, fantasy and wishful thinking and the other hand self-depreciation and depression.

Those of us who have or have had teen-aged children will quickly recognize that one of the problems of the teenage mind is that it easily indulges in fantasy, daydreaming, wishful thinking. It's hard for a teenager to stay in touch with reality, to face the objective facts of life, even objective facts about his or her own person. Now we understand that in teenagers. God, I trust, gives us grace to be patient with them. But we have to recognize that nevertheless ,it's not a mark of maturity. A mature mind does not indulge in fantasy and wishful thinking and the process of daydreaming and imagining things.

On the other hand, another common feature of a teenage mind is that it tends to get easily depressed and often a teenager will isolate himself or herself or shut himself or herself off, sit in a room alone, and go lower and lower in his estimate of himself as a person. And often, there's a kind of moodiness and a depression that results from this. Again, these are not consistent with the renewed mind.

Many, many years I struggled with a problem of depression in my own life and eventually God showed me, amongst other things, that I was in charge of my own mind. I didn't have to give way to negative thoughts. He showed me that I'd have to re-discipline my own mind and change many of my patterns of thinking. And as I did this, I was delivered from that awful problem of depression. So that's the third mark of the renewed mind: sober, realistic.

Devotional

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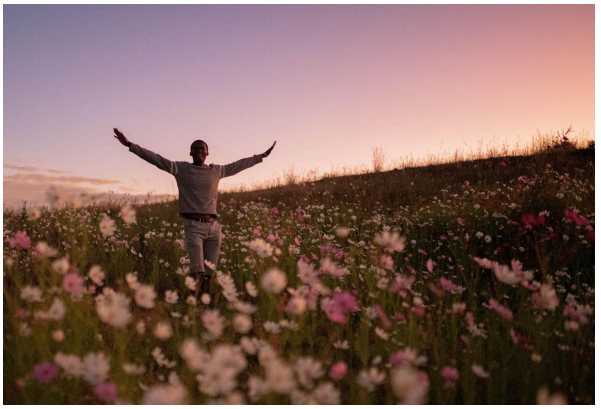

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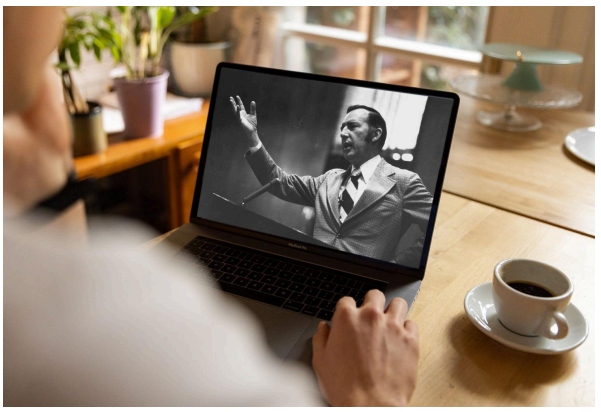

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