

GROWING IN GOD PODCAST



GIG304 – The Mind vs. the Spirit

Hi, and welcome to the podcast. This is a special edition for our *Growing In God* podcast, as it is produced from a Zoom call that we at Hargrave Ministries have occasionally with our donors. When we have these times together and feel it is important for others to be a part of what we are discussing, we create the meeting into a podcast for release. So I hope that you will enjoy this podcast; and if you like being a part of these discussions, I would encourage you to go to our website at hargraveministries.org and join our Fellow Workers.

I want to talk a little bit about the Pentecost experience and what I personally have been feeling, maybe personally going through, and just see if that is a help for everybody else. One way I was thinking about it is that the Lord said you are going to hear about wars and rumors of wars; and I thought, one of the wars that we do not really think about or connect with in this way is just the internal war that goes on within us as believers between the Spirit and the mind. And there is a drive in my heart during this time of Pentecost to see the power of the Spirit overcome in us every resistance of our mind.

And so, I want to read some Scriptures that will tie into this. One thing I do not want to do is I do not want to put down the brain that we have. There is a difference between our brain and our mind, because to me the mind is the outworking or function of the brain. But God has given us a wonderful physical body that He has put together in such a way that He is able to fill it, and Christ is able to fill us, and the Spirit is able to fill us. And so it is not a matter of a put-down, but it is a matter of this process that maybe we just simply call our walk with God, and what we go through in the process of our walk with God.

But I think that there is this conflict, that certainly the Scripture recognizes, between the Spirit and the mind. One of the resources I was reading was going through this term in the Greek Scriptures that is used for *mind*. It is interesting that it seems like such a big deal, but it is only used four times in the Scriptures, where the context is always kind of this back and forth between the mind and the Spirit. But the true definition of the word out of the Greek into English would be “the facility of fixing one’s mind on something.” So again, it is not talking about our brain as an organ of the human body, it is talking about the function of that organ, because we are able to fix our mind, we are able to think. So this word in the Greek means “a way of thinking” or “a mindset.”

You can see that there is a distinction between the concept of our brain and what the Scripture is really trying to have us deal with, and that is the way the brain is thinking, the mindset that has been developed in, or by, the use of our mind as we are growing and maturing as human beings. So we see that this mind is something that develops; sometimes we call it awareness. There is still a great deal of discussion about, “Where does awareness really come from? What is the seat of it?” Because again, you cannot find an area of the brain that is called awareness. It is something that is derived through processes that are not clearly defined by science at this point, but I love the fact that areas of science are reaching for an understanding. Some of the areas of science that are reaching for this, like quantum physics, are seeing and propounding that maybe it is a mixture of the electrical function of the brain

along with things outside the brain itself, or outside the human body, so that part of the ability of the mind is to read what is outside of itself. I think we would agree with that, because again, when we talk about the Spirit, we know that the Spirit is able to speak to us, and yet the Spirit is not a physical body, just as God Himself is not a physical body. So somehow, vibrationally, through all that God is and all that the Spirit is, there is this ability.

We have learned about spirit, soul, and body from the very beginnings of our faith. And so we know that there has to come, at some point in our life as Christians, as believers, this ascendancy of the spirit, our spirit with the Holy Spirit, over the function of the brain or the thought process, the ways, the mindset of the brain. And I think we have all seen that that does create problems. And I think the Scripture itself is very clear that there are problems to deal with or that come into play when we are working with this idea of spirit and body.

I want to read first out of Galatians the fifth chapter, and I will start with verses 17-18. It says, "For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit [that is a capital S, Spirit], and the Spirit against the flesh [so it is not just the flesh setting its desire against the Spirit, but the Spirit setting its desire against the flesh]; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law." So again, it is very clear that the Scripture brings into play the fact that there is this conflict; and as I was saying, Christ said there are going to be wars and rumors of wars. For me, I think a lot of times my Armageddon is happening right here between my ears, because of this conflict between the flesh and the Spirit. If we are not careful, this mind is setting itself against the things of God.

Again, I do not want to paint a negative, black picture about the mind or the process of the mind, any more than I want to paint a negative picture of, say, the liver. Your liver is this physical thing in your body, but it has this function that is very important: it is constantly cleaning toxins out of your system. Thank God for that function of your liver; it does not just sit there as some physical piece of meat, it has a functionality. And so it is with the mind. The brain is kind of a piece of meat sitting there between our ears, and at the same time it has a functionality which is hugely important to our life as a human being. Part of the reality of our walk with God is coming to grips with the fact that we are spiritual beings having a human experience. So we are here in this humanity, and part of our maturing or growing in God is to learn how we put all of these things together and how they work together to come out with the reality of us walking with God according to His will.

I want to bring us to the Scripture in John the sixth chapter. There are a lot of verses in here and hopefully I can jump around, but let me give you the bookends of these verses. Look especially starting at verse 55 and going through verse 63. This is Yeshua talking about some really key elements, and it begins to tie into this way of thinking. Remember that the definition of the word *mind* in the Scriptures was talking about the fixing of a thought, or a way of thinking, or a mindset; and when we get into these verses, we see that Yeshua is dealing with, and He is actually bumping up against, the mindset of the people that are around Him.

He starts out in verse 55 with this idea of, "My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink." We all know enough about Judaism to know that is an explosive statement, because you do not eat human flesh, and you do not drink blood of any animal, much less human blood. These are all absolutely violating the Law as far as the mind is concerned and the mindset, the way of thinking, of the minds that He is talking to. He is confronting a huge aspect of mindset when He says these things. He goes on in

verse 56 to say, “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.” So He is just adding fuel to the fire, isn’t He, with these kinds of statements.

I will jump down to verse 59, because this is interesting. It says, “These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.” So He is not just sitting at the beach somewhere talking to the disciples, He is in the synagogue teaching this stuff. Verses 60-62, “Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this said, ‘This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?’ But Yeshua, conscious that His disciples grumbled at this, said to them, ‘Does this cause you to stumble? What then if you see the Son of Man ascending to where He was before?’”

Verse 63 is the key: “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.” This is really defining something here – we will never reach life through the mind; and humanity has tried for a long time. Especially in the generations that we all come out of, people have really been reaching for, “How do we live forever? How do we live a long life? How do we get rid of disease?” Science is using the mind as a way of trying to find life and find a way around death. We have gone so far as cryogenics, right? “Well, we will just freeze you. Maybe we will freeze your brain and then put it in somebody else later.” So man has been trying to use this mind issue to find life and to continue life on beyond our lifespan. And Christ is making it very clear here, “That is not going to work, folks.” He is saying, “It is the Spirit that gives life.” If we are going to find the function of resurrection life in this life, from life to life, then it is not going to come through the mind or something we find, or some medicine, or some way of thinking or meditation. It is going to come to us through the Spirit.

We actually see this in the Scriptures, at least I believe we do. Because I believe the ancients like Methuselah, who lived for hundreds of years, really knew the principle of drawing life from the Spirit. And this was before Christ’s resurrection. That life that they drew from the Spirit was keeping them alive and keeping them healthy, and that is part of what has been lost in these generations. So when we talk about the Day of Pentecost, when we talk about the outpouring of the Spirit, I do not think we are supposed to be just looking forward to speaking in tongues or performing a few miracles here and there. I think we are talking about the very life of Christ. This is what Christ was saying, “If you eat My flesh and drink My blood, if you can find a way to tune in to Me, if you can find a way to draw what I am into your body, then you will have life.” That is what brings life, and that is what we are looking for.

Christ said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6) How are we going to get there? because He is the way, and He can lead us. What does it say? When the Holy Spirit comes into us, He will teach us of Christ. He will teach us the things of Christ. The Holy Spirit coming was not given to us by Christ, it was given to us by the Father. What Christ did opened the door so that the Father could bring the Spirit, but it was the power of God being released into us. And we have been looking recently at those Scriptures that say, “We are a temple of God, and the Spirit of God, or the Holy Spirit, dwells in us.” And I like to say Holy Spirit, not the Holy Spirit, because Holy Spirit is not a thing. When we talk of Holy Spirit moving with us, coming into us, it should be on that first-name basis. We do not say that we are believing for the Yeshua, or the Jesus, or the God to come and fill us; we believe for God to be in us. We believe for Holy Spirit to be in us. He is a life. He is the Spirit of God, and He dwells in us and moves through us. And it is that life that comes, that door that was opened up by what Christ did on the cross and what the Father did in resurrecting Christ after the cross, that opened the door for life to come in a real way.

For goodness’ sake, if the ancients could find the way and the walk with God to draw the life of God into themselves where they were living hundreds of years, I think there is an importance to it. Personally, I do not care how many years I live, but I do want to live with strength and health; and if we can move

into resurrection life because it is available, much the better. I think that for the sake of the earth, it is important that man be able to live out his years because of the wisdom that is gained. You look at Moses, you look at Joshua, they were not even commissioned until they were eighty. Well, you look around, we have this mindset, and again, we are coming against mindset this morning; but this mindset that if you are eighty, you are doing research on what home you are going to. At eighty you are not thinking about starting your life and the fact that the days of your greatest ministry are just before you. But the reason is because that life is drained out, and I think we have to see that life come back. And I think Christ was confronting the problem right here when He was talking to these guys, because it says that He was aware they were grumbling at Him because of what He said about being the bread of life and them drinking His blood.

It says in verse 58, "This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever." There is a way to draw life; and what He was confronting and talking about is here in verse 60, where the disciples are saying, "This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?" And in verse 61, Yeshua was conscious of the fact that they were grumbling over what He said. So what was happening here? He said, "My words are spirit and they are life," but their mindset was coming directly against those words of spirit and life. And that is how this thing works – there is the mindset. And again, I said I do not want to paint a negative picture of our brain, and I do not want to paint a negative picture of our mind and how our mind works, because our mind is programmed to protect us. We have to understand that. Your mind is programmed to protect you, and what it has learned through the days of your life is to guard you against things that are going to be hurtful. Therefore, very early on as a child you learn not to put your hand on the stove, because the stove is going to burn you; and your brain is not trying to be negative, it is just trying to protect you.

Our brain has all these safety stops, and I was thinking about it this week; it is like a car. The newer cars have more and more gadgets that are supposed to protect us when we are driving the car, you know? We went from nothing to seat belts; and then we went from seat belts to airbags that come out of the dashboard. Then you came to airbags that come out of the side of the car and the roof of the car. We have the way that the metal crumbles when it hits something. Your car is just created to keep you alive. But the problem is, your car is never going to keep you safe. What keeps you safe is you driving the car; you being in charge of the steering wheel, the accelerator, the brakes, that is what makes the car safe. You can take all those gadgets, and you can run that car into a brick wall at one hundred miles per hour and believe me, you are going to be dead meat. What does the change is us being in control.

I believe that there is a change of mindset, and this is what Yeshua was trying to do. He was trying to change their mindset; and we see ultimately the mindset crucified Him, right? The mindset crucified Him because the mindset was screaming, "He is blaspheming God! What He is saying is blasphemy. What He is doing is blasphemy. Therefore, there is only one answer for blasphemy, and that is stoning, death." It was the mindset, the way of thinking of those people, even though they were expecting the Messiah, even though they were knowing that the Messiah would come. It is still true today that one of the thirteen pillars of Judaism is faith in Messiah coming. Yet what they believed about it, the mindsets they had in place, were blocking the moving of the Spirit.

Yeshua said, "The words that I am speaking to you, they are spirit and they are life." The flesh is death. The mindset of the flesh is death. The mindset of the Spirit is life. And I think we are still facing that as believers, that there are built-in things... and again, like I said, I do not want to see my mind as negative. I do not want to blame it for doing its job. It is programmed to save me, and it does that; on a daily basis, our mind can save us from many things. But the problem with it is, or the limitation of it is, in order to

do that, the mind is always reaching back. It reaches back into its history, because the brain only learns from experience, and it only learns from what has come into it to program it. Like they say, up until age twelve, basically a child's brain is not matured to the place where it is a thinking brain and it can think logically about what it is encountering in its atmosphere. Therefore, everything that is coming to it and that it has experienced is training it in its way of thinking. So what we are stuck with when we become thinking adults is that we still have a mindset that is ready and willing to literally fight the Holy Spirit and the thoughts of God, because all it can do is draw from the past. That is why there is such a conflict between the mind and its thought process, and Holy Spirit, Yeshua and God, just like here in this story in John. The Spirit is trying to tell us something new and wonderful – we are going to have life, the Spirit is going to give us life, and out of the Spirit comes life. But it is being battled because the flesh profits nothing out of that and it is coming against it.

Let's read some other Scriptures that will help us with this. Second Corinthians, and I will just jump around here because the verses are not organized in the way I have them written down. Second Corinthians 10:5, "We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ." See, that is us driving the car of our mind. We are in charge. We are able to take captive all of those thoughts into the obedience of Christ and His thinking, and that is what we must do.

We find this thing about the negative thoughts again in 1 Corinthians 2, and I will start with verse 8. "The wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; but just as it is written...." So we see that the spirit world, including satan himself, is limited in this thought process, this way of thinking, this pattern of thinking that it cannot get out of.

In verses 9-10 it says, "Just as it is written, 'Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him.' For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God." Now I want you just to grasp this one, because when your mindset hears these words, it literally goes into convulsions. The last thing your mind can allow you to be thinking is things which your mind has not seen or heard and which have never entered into your mind, what God is trying to tell you. Because what is God trying to do? He is trying to take us completely out of the past. He is trying to take us into something new, these new things. He says, "Behold, I will bring new things. Will you be aware?" Well, no, you cannot be aware, because your brain cannot process new things; it can only relate to the old things. Anything that is this new, that eye has not seen, ear has not heard, your brain is going, "Stay away from that. Stay away from that!" I mean, it sounds like a pastor trying to tell the congregation, "Don't read that book. You are going to see things that are not good for you to be studying, so you better stay away from that. Just stick with the old-time religion, you know, it is good enough for me. It is all the things we have heard. It is all the things we know. Those things work." So the congregation comes in and sits in the pews, and everybody is peaceful, the pastor can talk away and take up the offering, and everybody can go home and keep living their life.

The mind freaks over what it cannot grasp. And we see that, and God bless us; let's go back and read the Gospels again, because we see it time and time and time again where Christ was relating to people. Their mindsets could not grasp what He was saying, until literally He became an enemy. He became a heretic. He became that which had to be crucified and done away with, because He was challenging everything that to them was the truth, and everything that was tradition. So we see this conflict, this

war that is happening in our own hearts and minds. And this is what I am believing, that there is a power in Pentecost that can come; and I will tell you why I believe this. Because when I look at what happened to the disciples, and I am talking about not just the apostles, I am talking about the one hundred twenty that were there. I am talking about the thousands that listened to Peter speak afterwards. There was a power that came.

Remember, Yeshua told them, He said, "Go back to Jerusalem and wait until you receive power from on high." The power of Holy Spirit was the power to break and disintegrate the mindset that had held them in bondage. I mean, let's face it, the disciples were in bondage. They were locked in to what they knew about Christ. Look at Peter, look at what Peter did when Christ spoke; Peter said, "Oh, don't! No, don't talk like that. What do You mean, You are going to go to Jerusalem to die? Lord, stop, stop, stop." His mind, it didn't just not get it. Let's be honest. He didn't just not get or understand what Yeshua was telling him; he was literally refusing it, rejecting it, and fighting Christ saying it. And so, that is the mindset. But again, it is just that the mind is conditioned because when it put its hand on the stove back at a young age, it got burned, and it is just trying to have you not get burned again.

But what we have to see and believe is that because of the way God created our brain, the way He made this mind function, there is another way. And I believe the answer, and what that way is, because Christ said, "I am the way"; to me, when I hear those words, this is what I think about: there is a way that our mindset can be bypassed and our minds can begin to think the thoughts of Holy Spirit. Our minds can begin to hear and process the voice of the Lord. Christ said, "If any man hears My voice"; there is a hearing of the voice. See, I believe there is a change. I believe that change happened on the Day of Pentecost for all of those who were there, because they went from being disciples to being the witnesses in all nations. They began to be the ones that were not watching the miracles, they were releasing the miracles. Everything changed for them, and it is so important for us to recognize this and believe it.

Going back to Galatians the fifth chapter, verse 17, "For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit." See, that is Peter. Peter wasn't just not getting it, there was actually a force behind this. And I think there is a force in me, in my mindsets, that is coming against what the Spirit is trying to tell me. Just like Yeshua saying, "If you drink My blood, if you eat My flesh, you will have life in you," and the mind hears that and cannot handle it because it is out of the scope of anything it knows. It is just going, "Oh my God, that is going to be poison if you eat that! And not only that, it is against the Torah, and so God Himself is going to kill you." So we have this mind war going on.

Romans the eighth chapter. We all love Romans the eighth, don't we? Romans the eighth chapter, verse 6, "For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace." Now, that tells me two things. One, it is possible for the mind to be set on the Spirit; which up to this point, again, we keep painting this negative picture about the mind and our brain and how it works, and that is what I do not want to do. I believe there is a transformation, the transforming of our mind that the Scriptures talk about. (Romans 12:2) And what comes at the transforming of the minds? That is when we are transformed into life. And so this Scripture to me is a key giveaway of something that I am reaching for. The mind set on the flesh is death, I get that; not only that, I am good at it. But the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. Because the mind set on the flesh is hostile towards God.

All these things God has for us. "I have given you all things pertaining to life, to godliness, the blessings, all the good things." But our flesh is hostile towards that, because of these negative mindsets that it has been trained into. "For it does not subject itself to the Law of God, for it is not even able to do that."

So don't wait for your mind to save you. Our mind is not going to save us; we are going to take control over our mind. Let's keep reading this.

Romans 8, verses 8-14,

And those who are in the flesh cannot please God. However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive [spirit, small "s"; your spirit is now alive because Christ is in you] because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead... [the Spirit of God raised Yeshua from the dead]. If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies [how does it come? where does it come from?] through His Spirit who dwells in you. So then, brethren, we are under obligation [I love that], not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

I love this, because there are so many nuances in there when you are reading it that are screaming to me, at least, "It is possible for the mind to be conformed to the Spirit, instead of being conformed to an old way of thinking that is battling against the Spirit and what the Spirit is bringing." And it actually says that. In 2 Corinthians 10:5, "We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ." We are able to bring every thought captive to obedience to Christ.

So this is what we have available to us, and I think that we can do this. I am believing that this Day of Pentecost we can reach into this. But I think that we have to know it is there, we have to believe in it, and then we have to set our minds to say that there is going to be a transforming of the mind that takes place in this time of Pentecost. This war that we have been in comes to an end. We declare it is over, and God wins; and actually, our human mind wins too, because it comes into conformity.

Remember what the Scripture says? "But we have the mind of Christ." (1 Corinthians 2:16) I believe that: we have the mind of Christ. And if we have the mind of Christ, then we are filled with the life of Christ, and we know His ways, and we are going to move as the Christ in the earth. We are going to move as He did, because from the moment Christ received Holy Spirit, it says He was driven, He was led about by that Spirit. And that is the way we are going to live our lives – not rejecting, not pushing back against the Spirit, but instead being led about. It says He was led about in the wilderness by the Holy Spirit, by Holy Spirit.

So anyway, those are my thoughts for the Feast of Pentecost and where we are going. I hope this is a blessing to you, and I believe God that we are all going to be able to walk in it. I know that certainly I am striving with all my heart and with all faith to be able to walk in these things that God is making available to us.

So we bless it, in the name of the Lord.

Amen.