

Understanding Doubt and Unbelief

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Why would it be important to understand doubt and/or unbelief? It is because both of these concepts are considered **reasons from the Bible** why we as Christians **do not receive** the promises of God in our lives.

Doubt (pages 1-13)

Here are verses concerning doubt:

1) Romans 14:23 **But he who doubts is condemned** if he eats, because *he does not eat* from faith; for whatever **is not from faith is sin.**

2) James 1:6 But let him ask in faith, **with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.**

7 **For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;**

8 **he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.**

Doubt destroys, stops, prevents faith from being **established** in our hearts. Romans 14:23 further teaches that anything ***not of faith*** is sin. **Doubt** then is a **major issue** in restraining, defeating faith in our lives which according to

Hebrews 11:6 **But without faith it is impossible to please Him**, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Faith pleases God doubt does not.

We often ***interchange*** doubt and unbelief and they are closely related but I believe there is a ***distinct difference*** and in discovering that difference we may find our way through both to find a stronger faith.

As we consider the James passage above we'll note a ***definition of faith*** as opposed to doubt. Faith is single minded while doubt is double minded. Faith therefore is fixed on God's will and knows what God's will is concerning a matter. Doubt however, is double minded, tossed back and forth about what

God's will is. This is an important foundational point in order to operate in faith and please God.

When someone prays "*if it be Thy will*" or "*Thy will be done*" but doesn't know God's will on the matter that is **not** faith that is doubt. **We must be convinced of this truth about faith—that faith knows God's will and is acting on it.**

We cannot act *in God's faith* upon anything or any one of God's promises if we doubt. What this means is that our hearts and minds must be transformed by renewing them both to know God's will. We can't operate *in faith* if we don't know God's will—period. As strange as it might sound we can act in faith and unbelief at the same time. This is what makes it important to understand the difference between doubt and unbelief.

People have defined faith vaguely. For example the following has been put forth as faith: a belief in God; a generalized trust that God controls everything; that God will bring us through no matter what happens; a system of beliefs called Christian. Most of this type of thinking is not faith at all but a belief, surrounded by hope, with doubt mixed in.

The Bible's definition of faith—knows the answer and has a witness revealed in their heart about God's will. James teaches us let us ask for wisdom through faith. Later in his epistle he writes:

Jas 5:15 **And the prayer of faith will save the sick**, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

Issuing over Prayer in faith

The prayer of faith *does not doubt* but knows God's will to save the sick. This is very plain and straightforward but **many of us find a way to make it mean something else**. Someone might say, "Yes, the prayer of faith will save the sick; the problem is whether or not God's will is to save *this sick person*. If we have God's answer, as in a special dispensation of grace *for this person*, then we can pray in faith."

The explanation: "When some people get healed they or the ones praying for them have received a special grace *on their behalf* for faith to believe for their healing. When there are so many people who don't get healed when prayed for it becomes obvious that God does not will everyone to be healed."

When we embrace this type of explanation it **causes us to doubt** because we are *waiting for God* to move within our hearts about this one or that one or the lucky few. If someone gets healed then of course it was God's will; if someone does not get healed then it simply wasn't God's will. We remain in a **state of uncertainty** about God's will.

Then this leads to the question: "Is it God's will for you (everyone) to be healed?" *Integrated doubt* will respond: "We cannot know unless we receive a special revelation from God about our healing. In short, no one can know unless they receive special faith to be healed."

The whole responsibility **then rests upon God** to lead or direct or witness to each person if it is God's will for him/her to be healed. No individual can make God heal them or declare someone else to be healed. God is the author of our faith and we are completely under his will (**This kind of reasoning even within the scriptures can sound very spiritual**).

Continuing along this line of thinking, "Therefore, to pray 'if it be thy will, oh God, heal me' is proper. No one can know God's will about their healing until God reveals it to them."

So when someone prays with this frame of mind what we have in essence then is a double-minded mind prior to prayer. Doubt has secured its work because the person cannot know what God's will is concerning their healing unless God's grants special faith. This leaves the *majority unable* to decide what God's will is. **Not knowing then produces two ways of thinking even before prayer is offered.** One way of thinking is that it might be God's will to heal me; another way of thinking at the same time is that it might not be. **James tells us that a double-minded man will receive nothing from God.** Is it any wonder why most if not all do not receive healing? Is it any wonder why the church for the most part denies, ignores, or even rejects healing for today? **If no one is convinced that God's will is healing then everyone is in doubt!** Most prayers in this attitude don't even get off the ground because God cannot violate His word even if we are very sincere. Double-mindedness will not receive because it is not faith. In essence,

double mindedness does not believe God's Word without adjustments, compromise, and/or rationalizing it.

Doubt works this way. **Doubt prevents us from deciding and being convinced about God's will** because we are presented with more than one way to see God's will. No one can be *single minded* if they see more than one way or answer coming from God.

Like the waves of the seas being tossed back and forth so is anyone who is **not convinced about God's will**. If we can see that not knowing is the problem and the only way to know is to be single minded about it, then we can begin to address the doubt issue. **Removing doubt about God's will is crucial before one even begins to pray.**

Christians quite often simply do not know they are in doubt. They do not know they are in doubt thinking this way and that way about God's will. They have been taught to accept doubt as God's will. One of the more familiar sayings is this, "You'll never know!" **We will never know everything in this life but we ARE to know God's Word and His promises.** If we understand this then we need to grasp the fact that God no longer wants us **NOT KNOWING!**

Not knowing causes doubt; Doubt causes not knowing. Both have nothing positive to contribute or add to faith! In fact what the Bible calls darkness is not knowing, confusion, and doubt. What the Bible calls light is knowing!

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. **Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is**—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Eph 1:17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, **may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,**

Col 1:9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask **that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;**

Col. 2:3 ...in (Christ) whom are hidden **all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge**. (Christ is in you! Col. 1:27)

Col 3:16 **Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom**, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

At this moment the issue of faith concerning doubt and unbelief has pointed directly to another issue. **Does God want us to have wisdom, understanding, and knowledge of the Holy One?** Are we supposed to know God's will or not? There are those who cannot answer this question and point to scriptures that say we can't know God's will or ways—it is a mystery such as:

Isa. 55:8 **"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,"** says the LORD.

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are **My ways higher than your ways**, And My thoughts than your thoughts."

Romans 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable *are* His judgments and His ways **past finding out!**

From the Isaiah passage we can answer by simply remembering its context. Look at the verse prior to it:

7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and **the unrighteous man** his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

When verse eight and nine say His thoughts and ways are past finding out it is speaking about the **unrighteous and wicked man!**

Romans 11:33 however must be placed in *another context*. Paul is exclaiming the depth of God in worship and awe and we are to know that we will never *fully* grasp the wisdom and knowledge of God! This is absolutely true for all eternity God will always be beyond full or complete understanding. Yet let us keep this in proper perspective and in *tension* with other verses that say we are to know Christ, the wisdom and understanding of God, such as these verses:

Lu 8:10 And He said, "**To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God**, but to the rest *it is given* in parables, that 'Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.'

1Co 4:1 **Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.**

We cannot worship and know God or have an intimate relationship with Him if He cannot be known—*this is the fundamental problem with Islam*. We cannot reason with Him, converse, obey, and be sons and daughters of God without experiencing revelation knowledge and wisdom of who He is! Fundamental to our faith is this understanding that Christ is in us and we have been given the mind of Christ (Col. 1:27; I Cor. 2:16). With this mind we must fully grasp that God does want us to know Him and His will and not be like the mule that has no ability to understand (Ps. 32:9).

It is easy or convenient for us to relieve ourselves of responsibility by discounting our ability to know God's will for us or His wisdom. **In fact, it is a demonic deception to keep us in a state of not knowing so that we don't exercise faith.** Faith is what overcomes the world, not power, and not might, but faith that works through love by the Spirit of God (I John 5:4).

To address doubt then one must address God's plan for us to **know His will, understand His wisdom**, and be lead by God's Spirit.

Romans 8:14 **For as many as are led by the Spirit of God**, these are sons of God.

Gal. 5:22-25 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such there is no law. And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. **If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.**

We are building our Christian lives on something very vague **if we doubt God wants us to know His will**. We are supposed to build upon the rock of God's Words not some vague sense of sinking sands (Matt. 7:24). Our lives would tend to be

based upon a type of fatalism that says in our hearts, “Whatever happens must be God’s will and He will give me the grace to go through whatever it is.” If I were Satan that is exactly where I’d want every Christian to be; in a state of not knowing...Another common Christian statement is, “God is in control and I will rest in whatever comes.” Jesus then must have had it wrong when he taught the disciples to pray saying, “*Our Father, who art in heaven hallowed be thy name; **thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven...***” The fact remains that our world is fallen and cursed and **heaven is not**. God’s will is NOT being done on the earth therefore pray that it is. However, there is one problem with trying to pray that God’s will be done on the earth as it is in heaven, *if one doesn’t know* the will of God (or can know) or even know what heaven is like, it becomes nearly impossible.

If we don’t know God’s will or we are between opinions about God’s will we **ARE in doubt**. This doubt can source from ignorance, misguided teaching, or from a denial of God’s Word—unbelief. God’s Word reveals God’s Will. Jesus’ life is the very image of God in nature and focus. Studying God’s Word in light of the ministry, teaching, and revelation of Jesus reveals God’s will.

2Cor. 4:4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, **who is the image of God**, should shine on them.

Col. 1:15 **He is the image of the invisible God**, the firstborn over all creation.

Hebrews 1:3 who being the **brightness of His glory and the express image of His person...**”

If we want to know God’s will **study the life of Jesus**. Jesus is God’s will, action, nature, and revelation of God. Someone might say, “But that was Jesus and He is God; we, however, are not God.” This is true; yet, the very purpose of salvation is Jesus in us who is (himself) the light of world shining through us (John 8:12)!

1Cor. 15:49 And as we have borne the image of the *man* of dust, **we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man**.

Jesus said that God the Father did the works through Him and now in turn this very same Jesus and the very same Holy Spirit

dwells in us. It is God's will that we be conformed into the image of Christ doing the very same works.

John 14:12 "Most assuredly, I say to you, **he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do**, because I go to My Father.

Col. 1:27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: **which is Christ in you, the hope of glory**.

God's grace has been poured out to us through His Son. God's Spirit has been poured out upon His Church; we've been given His name and His authority and commissioned to do His work (Luke 10:19). **If we understand God's plan of Jesus living His life in and through us how can we doubt that it is God's will for us to KNOW GOD'S WILL?**

Gal. 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; **it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me**; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Doubt comes because we are between two or more opinions, confused about God's Word, or **being taught to separate God's will from our lives**. God wants us single minded upon His Word and Will—that is God's will. **For us to remain in between or in doubt is NOT GOD'S WILL.**

Faith comes from hearing God's Word taught with faith—someone who believes it (Rom. 10:17). Faith is our response to God's grace found in His Word and promises. Faith comes from being convinced and single minded about God's Word. For example:

1) **Faith knows it IS God's Will for us to be saved**. Faith knows because the Holy Spirit has confirmed and revealed to our hearts this truth. This truth comes from hearing many scriptures that share God's intent that none should perish but all come to repentance.

2Pe 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, **not**

willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Doubt comes into play when we hear that God has predestined those who don't accept the Lord to damnation. In other words, God decided before millions were born that they should not repent and be accepted in Christ (A teaching called Predestination). If we embrace the idea that some are saved because God's Will has determined it then we will be in doubt about any one we come in contact with. Doubt exists because there are two view points being embraced (Does God's Will mean some or all?).

2) **Faith embraces that it IS God's Will that we KNOW His will.** Doubt enters in when we are told and embrace that "We'll never know" or "God works in mysterious ways" creating another opinion.

3) **Faith knows that God IS!**

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, **for he who comes to God must believe that He is**, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

4) Faith knows that God provides!

Gal. 3:5 **Therefore He who supplies the Spirit** to you and works miracles among you, *does He do it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Phil. 4:19 **And my God shall supply all your need** according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

3John 1:2 Beloved, **I pray that you may prosper in all things** and be in health, just as your soul prospers.

These examples are taking the Word of God at face value and applying it straightforward. Remembering the Apostle Paul's encouragement:

2Cor. 1:20 **For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen**, to the glory of God through us.

Faith overcomes doubt

It is through faith in God's grace already provided for us that we find rest, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. When we know that God forgives us; know that God loves us; this revelation knowledge comes when we believe God single mindedly about His Word and the Holy Spirit confirms it in our hearts. We will **NOT**

receive anything from the Lord if we doubt His Word or His promises by believing something else along with it.

When we study, meditate, ponder, and deliberate over God's Word being drawn to single minded conclusions faith rises in our hearts and our doubts are eliminated. When we realize that God's **grace has already been poured** out upon our lives (which includes all that Jesus is and all that the Holy Spirit is), how can we doubt that God will give it to us if He already has? We must be convinced about our salvation before we can call out for Christ with our whole heart! What happened is that God already decided to save us and fulfilled His promise to us 2,000 years ago in Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. We hear the gospel and respond to what God has already done. Our faith manifests because we believe and act upon it calling out for salvation. We receive what God has already given...so it is with everything in God's promises.

God's Spirit doesn't want us doubting. Jesus lived a life of intimacy full of the Holy Spirit and what characterized his ministry more than anything else was His knowing. He knew God's will and taught, spoke, acted in authority of that Will. Jesus was secure in God's Will not from a doubting point of view where he guessed and gave himself up to whatever will be; but from a knowing point of view fully resting in the revelation knowledge of the Spirit. Jesus lived in and through faith! The just shall live by faith (Rom. 1:17). We often live by doubt and call it faith—that is twisting things around. We are not supposed to take life circumstances and make the word agree with it. We are supposed to take the Word of God and let it rule. We are to let the Spirit of Christ rule in our lives and the by-product of this relationship is knowing God's will.

Eliminating Doubt

How do we eliminate doubt? We eliminate doubt by knowing God's Word, being full of the Holy Spirit, **and by deciding** to believe God's Word despite what circumstances or others say. If we will examine our faith right now we can recognize this kind of faith that knows. If we are born again and know salvation in Christ we have already experienced the knowing

kind of biblical faith. No one can get saved without being convinced of four things: God loves us; we are sinners separated from God and cannot save ourselves; Jesus Christ died to save sinners from their sins; we must individually repent and ask God to save us in Jesus. There is no alternative that will result in a personal relationship with God in Christ. Any doubt about Jesus being the only way to God, God loving us, that we could possibly save ourselves—that we need a savior, or needing to repent and surrender, will not suffice.

Deut. 4:29 “But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and **you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart** and with all your soul.

Those who have opened up *their whole heart* to God and received their salvation know they are saved. This growing knowing is the greatest benefit of being a child of God. Doubt about God’s intentions, will, desires, or willingness prevents us from responding with our whole heart!

Romans 8:16 The Spirit Himself **bears witness with our spirit** that we are children of God,

This is saving faith that has responded to the conviction that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except by me.” (John 14:6). This is the same kind of faith that God requires for everything else we will receive from Him.

Col. 2:6 **As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,**

Doubts that come to us have to do with NOT being convinced about God’s will concerning anything that pertains to life and godliness. We are *not* convinced and doubts remain that God cares, has provided, and wills to heal, direct, guide, lead, or give us wisdom. We are *not* convinced that God wants to fill us with His Spirit, forgive our sins, and use us like he does others, that God has given us faith to move mountains, deliver or cast out demons in His name, the list goes on.

What will remove our doubts?

Answering the questions of our heart **from God’s Word *thoroughly*** will remove **all doubts**. First we must recognize we

are in doubt because we do not know God's will for sure. Then we must address the areas or questions that are keeping us from knowing God's will (Any question not fully answered will just keep coming back). **We must realize that God is not pleased** with our doubts because at the root of them **is a lack of faith in God's Word**. We believe someone or something else first. We believe the scientists, doctors, professors, media, politicians, teachers, friends, parents, circumstances, what we see with our eyes, or hear with our ears as more important, valuable, or trustworthy. **The bottom line must be that God's Word is Lord** not what the world thinks, teaches, or believes. Until we are established in God's Word no matter what others think we will remain in doubt.

This points to the real **condition of our heart** we have let the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust for other things keep God's Word from becoming fruitful in our lives (Mark 4 Parable of the *Sower and the Seed*). We cannot love the world and our lives more than loving, serving, and pleasing God (I John 2:15). We cannot value other things more than prizing His word. This is only a short list but certainly a powerful list of reasons why doubt remains because our hearts are hardened towards him. We cannot remain carnal in our attitudes and behavior and receive the faith to believe God in any or all situations (Cor. 2:14). What we apply our focus to we will become sensitive to and what we ignore we will become hardened to. The whole area of a hardened heart must be addressed to understand why doubts have become entrenched in our lives.

Why then do Christians doubt?

1) Ignorance of God's Word because we do not consider it with great value to our lives. We pay attention to other advice, worldly methods, wisdom, and human authorities more. We've allow other things to have our hearts such as entertainment, sports, the market, friends & family, money and things, the pleasures of this world. We spend hours focusing on the things we want, desire, or entertain us.

2) Misguided or erroneous teaching that is often based first from experience and circumstances rather than the Word of God. We justify, rationalize, and excuse ourselves from the realities of missing God. We see what the word says but our lives don't reflect it so we begin to create doctrines and teachings that make a square peg fit in a round hole and call it a mystery. We'd rather embrace that our Christian walk is completely under God's control, that everything that happens is God's will for us, than face the disappointing truth that we are missing God. Most Christians are happy and content living a self centered carnal life with Christ as the icing on the cake rather than him being the cake. We seem to desperately want to avoid anything in life being our fault when it is bad and turn around and want all the credit when things are good. One major way of avoiding responsibility is by not accepting it. And another way to justify not accepting the responsibility for our lives is by saying God is in control and we can't know God's will anyway. Sometimes we'll be so confused that we will actually attribute to God what the curse and sin has wrought. Some have actually taught that God wants us sick, cursed, to teach us humility and character for example. God's will is stamped on everything that happens especially if we've prayed, "Thy will be done." Even disasters in our world such as volcanoes, tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, earthquakes are considered acts of God. How do these things get turned around? It is because we are interpreting the Word of God from our experience and vantage point instead of the other way. Sometimes the answer is so simple we miss it. If Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," then think what heaven is like. Is there sickness, sin, evil, violence, whether disasters in heaven? **Doubt comes from hearing from unbelief, confusion, rationalizations, justifications, excuses, compromises, and almost everything else except God's Word.**

Doubt is often the result of not being thoroughly honest about what is going on. If God's word says one thing but my experience is something else God is not missing it we are. If God's word promises blessings but our life doesn't reflect those blessings it isn't because God didn't give them **it is because we're not in a position to receive them.** Doubt is not going to receive listen again to:

James 1:6 But let him ask in faith, **with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.**

7 **For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;**

8 **he is a double-minded man**, unstable in all his ways.

Remember to be in a position to receive the full grace of God we must realize that the natural man receives nothing of the Spirit and that becomes a major stumbling block along side doubt:

I Cor. 2:14 But **the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God**, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

3) A Hardened Heart that is cold, disinterested, unwilling, and unyielding to the things of the Holy Spirit. Our normal way of life is *carnal* being supplied, driven, and influenced by what we see, hear, smell, taste, or feel. Our *carnal* way of being thinks like **a natural man**. It is almost as if the Spirit realm and the realities of the eternal truths mean very little. We, in our fleshly mind, do not consider, deliberate, meditate, pay attention to spiritual truths but trust, respond and react to the world and what is natural first. Our natural tendencies feed on worldly voices, wisdom, processes, placing higher value on them rather than on God's Word.

Col. 3:2 **Set your mind on** things above, not on things on the earth.

2Cor. 4:18 "while we do not look at the things **which are seen, but at the things which are not seen**. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal."

Luke 16:13 "**No servant can serve two masters**; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

We are living as *mere men* rather than sons and daughters of the Most High. If the supernatural life of faith, the movement of the Holy Spirit, the signs, wonders, and miracles of God, seem far fetched, out of touch, shocking, difficult to grasp or believe, that is the result of a hardened heart or insensitivity towards God. Our

expectations are formed by what we are sensitive to, yielding our heart to, focusing our life on.

4) An Unsanctified Imagination that has no discipline or controls will run away with images of belief, faith, doubt, and unbelief all within a matter of seconds or minutes. The imagination of our mind is working all the time. It is a function of our mind's eye. We don't do anything without imagining it first. What we see and believe we can do is what directs, limits, or fuels our life. **Out of our heart our mind imagines.** Not everything we imagine is godly, righteous, or true. Yet, out of our imagination we operate daily. We see ourselves doing this or that; we imagine this possibility or that one and from this screen we live and move and have our being. Our desires imagine things and our heart decides whether or not it is possible. We decide what we will do and what effort we'll make depending upon our imagination. **Our fears and worries are spawned and maintained in our imagination.** We see in our mind's eye this or that happening and if it is good we feel good but if it is unwanted we fear and worry. What we haven't grasped is that our imagination is God's gift to us to bless us. We however as sinners, feeding on a worldly diet of unbelief, fear, worry, bad images, and reasoning, have given our imagination to another. Nightmares or bad dreams come from our imagination that has been strongly influenced by worldly images and affairs. We imagine what has happened to others might happen to us—especially if it is a bad thing.

God gave us our imagination but then **instructed us to guard and keep it.**

II Cor. 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, **we do not war according to the flesh.**

4 For the weapons of our warfare **are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,**

5 **casting down arguments (imagination) and every high thing that exalts itself** against the knowledge of God, **bringing every thought into captivity** to the obedience of Christ,

Pr 4:23 **Keep your heart with all diligence,** for out of it *spring* the issues of life.

1Co 2:16 For "who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?" **But we have the mind of Christ.**

These verses speak to the need to realize our imagination is to be guarded, exercised in a godly way, to use for good and righteous things. We have been given the mind of Christ so that our **imagination becomes God's ground for communication with us**. Many of us may recognize that bad images, nightmares, worries, and fears are not of God and the source is the world and/or the demonic. **We are to cast down arguments and/or imaginations that come into our mind to defeat the Word of God.** We must realize that we have this authority and have been given the controller to change channels if we don't like what we see. Doubt arises in our mind's eye, we imagine other things happening contrary to God's Word, or we see things happening in our mind that are according to what we believe but not according to God's promise, what do we do with such things? We are to garden and weed out of our mind contrary imaginations and doubts!

Some have used this power and called it *mind over matter*. Many books have been written running with this theme and made it out to be the *answer to everything* in life. They are exclaiming, "Mind power will save, make you rich, and change your life for the better..." and so on. There is truth in this teaching but most of it is based upon human effort. ***With God in control of our hearts and we bringing our imaginations under His rule, doubts and unbelief are addressed*** and our willingness to be obedient, bold, and confident in the Lord leaps forward. Our faith will soar as we correct our ways when we understand that our unsanctified imagination is hindering our walk with God. We have more to do with our faith, doubts, belief and unbelief than we realized. That is why Jesus from time to time in scripture said,

Mt. 9:29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, "**According to your faith** let it be to you."

Mark 5:34 And He said to her, "Daughter, **your faith has made you well**. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction."

Luke 7:50 Then He said to the woman, "**Your faith has saved you**. Go in peace."

We have a part to play and a responsibility to believe God. The enemy wants to keep us in doubt and unbelief so that we do not become effective for God's kingdom. What we are doing is removing the obstacles and hindrances for us being able to respond to what God has already done for us. We aren't sanctifying our imagination to make God approve of us or love us better; we are sanctifying our imagination so that God's grace, love, and Spirit has full reign. We are weeding out the doubts that so easily beset us so that our hearts will be *single minded toward our Lord*. In a sense we have been committing adultery with our imaginations entertaining false, foreign, fearful, worldly pictures instead of being faithful to meditate on God's images.

This brings us to an exciting yet little recognized truth that God speaks and communicates to us through our imagination too. In fact, He gave us our imagination for Himself, but we've been using it for ourselves and letting another run freely in it—Satan. God speaks to us through the desires of our hearts if we have committed our life to him and are delighting ourselves in him.

Psalm 37:4 Delight **yourself also in the LORD**, And **He shall give you the desires of your heart**.

5 Commit **your way to the LORD**, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring *it* to pass.

6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday.

God will give us visions (imagination) and dreams which are images in our mind's eye to encourage, direct, show us things to come if we will believe, trust, and exercise our faith to act upon them.

Ac 2:17 '**And it shall come to pass in the last days**, says God, **That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh**; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, **Your young men shall see visions**, **Your old men shall dream dreams**.

2Co 12:1 It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. **I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord**:

We have been living our daily lives responding to the imaginations of our heart and mind. We don't do anything first without seeing it within us. God also promised to speak to us through the Holy Spirit and show us (imagination) things to come:

John 16:13 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and **He will tell you things to come**.

God speaks to us through His Word foremost (Ps. 1:1), through the witness of the Holy Spirit in confirmation (Rom. 8:16), through the still small voice (I Kings 19:12), through the purging of our conscience from sin and it being a true guide (Rom. 9:1; Heb. 10:22), through godly advice and counsel of others (Pr 1:5; Pr. 15:22), through open doors and circumstances that agree with His leading (I Cor. 16:9; Col. 4:3), word, and peace, and God leads us by His peace (Phil. 4:7; Col. 3:15). God also communicates to us regularly through our thought life as we remember scripture and rehearse the victories of God's grace in our lives (John 14:26). God speaks to us through promptings, impressions, and our imaginations that are fully committed to Him. **None of these leadings will ever violate, contradict, or go against the revealed word of God.** All of our leading from the Holy Spirit is subject to God's Word and the confirmation of others in the body of Christ (Matt. 18:19). **I remind us of these things so that we do not run with our imagination beyond what is written.** We must remain steadfast in God, meditating upon His word, desiring His will and kingdom, delighting ourselves in His presence *to trust the imaginations that God sends to us*. Godly imaginations spawn from a deep love of God and passion for the lost (Mark 16:15).

In Conclusion about Doubt

I have spent considerable time addressing doubt in our lives. For purposes of clarity **doubt prevents us from being single minded** about God's Word and Will. We must remove all doubt in **order to be in a position of receiving God's grace** in our lives. **We must know God's will on any matter found in scripture** concerning our need. **We must be convinced having answered all our questions of doubt** so that we approach the throne of grace according to His Will. Remember this passage?

I John 5:14 **Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.**

15 And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

This passage is all **about true biblical faith**—a faith that knows God’s will on any matter. We don’t know God hears us if we are praying in doubt wondering what is God’s will. In fact, the Holy Spirit has been given to pray through us to overcome our weakness according to God’s will. What is our weakness? Our weakness is NOT KNOWING GOD’S WILL!

Romans 8: 26 **Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought**, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit *is*, because He makes intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*.

28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

This scripture tells that we ought to know but when we don’t pray in the Spirit! When we Pray in the Spirit it builds up our most holy faith (Jude 20), speaking mysteries to God (I Cor. 14:1-6), praying on our behalf overcoming our weaknesses. These weaknesses have come to us as a result from the fall and being separated from God through sin. God’s will has never been that we should not know His Will or be in doubt about anything concerning Him.

Joh 15:15 "No longer do I call you servants, for a servant **does not know** what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, **for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.**