

FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

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I. INTRODUCTION

In Lesson 4 we saw how God instantaneously changes a man on the inside when he is born again. When a man accepts Jesus as his Savior and Lord, he is born out of darkness into light. He is delivered from Satan's authority and translated into the Kingdom of God. This is not a process of gradual development from darkness to light, or from death to life. It is an instantaneous change within; God recreates him, and he becomes a "new creature" in Christ.

However, there is a growth and development which takes place in the Christian life. Peter tells us to "*grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior . . .*" (II Peter 3:18). The new birth does not mean that those who are born again are instantly mature. There is a process which must begin to take place within the life of every believer. Paul calls this process a "transformation"; we are outwardly changed (our actions and walk) into the image of the new creature which God has made us to be on the inside (II Corinthians 3:18). "*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind*" (Romans 12:2). When a Christian is transformed by the renewing of his mind, he "*grows up in all aspects into Him*" (Ephesians 4:15).

II. MAN — A THREE PART BEING

Before proceeding any further in our study of this transformation, we would do well to investigate the three-fold nature of man. Man is made up of three parts: spirit, soul, and body. The spirit and soul of a man are distinct from his body. This can be understood from simple observation. What is not quite so obvious is that the spirit and the soul of a man are also distinct entities.

There are instances where the scriptures use the word "soul" collectively of both spirit and soul. When it is thus used, "soul" refers to that part of man which is unseen and eternal (read Matthew 10:28 & Acts 2:27). But, the spirit and the soul of a man are *not* one and the same. "*Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (I Thessalonians 5:23).

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity.
II Peter 3:18

But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.
II Corinthians 3:18

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.
Romans 12:2

But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ.
Ephesians 4:15

And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.
Matthew 10:28

Because Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades, nor allow Thy Holy One to undergo decay.
Acts 2:27

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
I Thessalonians 5:23

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“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit” (Hebrews 4:12). These scriptures make a clear distinction between spirit and soul. Equating the two will only lead to confusion.

A. MAN IS A SPIRIT

God is a spirit (John 4:24), and when He created man in His own image, He created him a spirit. So man also is a spirit. Although we see with our eyes a man's body, yet the real man is on the inside. Peter calls this the *“hidden man of the heart”* (I Peter 3:4). Paul calls it the *“inner man”* (II Corinthians 4:16). These expressions (hidden man, inner man) refer to the same thing; they refer to a man's spirit.

When Adam sinned and fell from the glory of God, it was his spirit that died. *“But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die”* (Genesis 2:17). The death that God was speaking of was *spiritual* death.

This is the condition that is radically changed by the new birth. When a man is born again, he becomes a totally new creature. The man on the inside, the hidden man of the heart, becomes new. All the old things which kept a man separated from God and in bondage passed away (II Corinthians 5:17).

The new birth takes place in the heart — the inner man. That new man is made in the likeness of God *“in all righteousness and holiness”* (Ephesians 4:24). Since God is a spirit, it is a man's spirit which is in contact and communion with the Father. *“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God”* (Romans 8:16). It is through our spirits that we have fellowship with God and are guided and directed by Him. So this was the part of man that was totally recreated.

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12

“God is spirit; and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

John 4:24

But let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.

I Peter 3:4

Therefore we do not lose heart, though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

II Corinthians 4:16

But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.

Genesis 2:17

Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

II Corinthians 5:17

And put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Ephesians 4:24

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

Romans 8:16

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B. MAN HAS A SOUL

The word "soul" (when used in distinction from spirit) refers to a man's mind (intellect) and his emotions. The effect of the fall upon man's mind and emotions was one of corruption. It caused men to think and to feel in a way that was contrary to the way God thinks. *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways; declares the Lord"* (Isaiah 55:8).

Before a man is born again, his mind and emotions are controlled largely by his unregenerate spirit. Thus, they are programmed according to the standards of the world. Worldly ideals are natural to this kind of mind, because that is the way it has been trained.

The new birth gives to man a completely new heart, one that is aligned with God and desires to do His will. As we have said, this is an instantaneous happening. But, man's mind and emotions (his soul) must be renewed through the Word of God, by the power of the Holy Spirit. This renewing of the mind is the *process of maturing* in which a believer's mind and emotions are trained to come into line with God and into fellowship with his recreated spirit.

C. MAN LIVES IN A BODY

While our spirits *have been* reborn and our minds *are being* renewed, the fact remains that we still live in mortal bodies and will do so until Jesus returns. At the return of Jesus, all those who are still alive will be *"changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet"* (I Corinthians 15:51-53). But, this putting off of mortality for immortality will not occur *until* the second coming of Jesus.

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Neither are your ways My ways," declares the Lord.

Isaiah 55:8

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

I Corinthians 15:51-53

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For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

II Corinthians 5:1

We are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

II Corinthians 5:8

And I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.

II Peter 1:13,14

But I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.

I Corinthians 9:27

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

II Corinthians 5:10

He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face, he was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Isaiah 53:3,4

In order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "He Himself took our infirmities, and carried away our diseases."

Matthew 8:17

The body is the tent, the dwelling place of the spirit and the soul of man. The apostles Paul and Peter both clearly expressed this conviction in their epistles. "*For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens . . . We are of good courage. I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord*" (II Corinthians 5:1,8). "*And I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent*" (II Peter 1:13,14).

In both these passages, it is plain that the apostles saw their bodies as simply the abodes of their spirits. The real "person" was not their physical body, but the spirit and soul within that body.

While he was still alive and present in his body, Paul said that he did something with his body. "*But I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified*" (I Corinthians 9:27). Every Christian has a responsibility to control the appetites of his body and make his body his slave. A Christian who spends his entire life on the earth ruled and dominated by his body will be disqualified from the prize. *The prize here is not eternal life.* Eternal life is received at the new birth. The prize is the reward that every believer will receive from God for the deeds done while in the body (II Corinthians 5:10). This will be discussed in greater detail in a subsequent lesson.

Just as man is three-fold in nature, his redemption is three-fold also. A man's *spirit* is totally and completely redeemed when he accepts Jesus as his Savior and Lord. That work happens **instantaneously**. A man's *mind and emotions* must be renewed by the Word of God. This is the **process of Christian maturity**. A man's *body will not be redeemed from mortality (inevitable physical death) until the second coming* (when Jesus returns to catch His church away). (*Mortality* means that this present body must die. It does **NOT** mean that this body must suffer with sickness while we live in it. Isaiah 53:3,4 and Matthew 8:17 explicitly state that freedom from sickness is part of the atoning work of Christ. While a Christian lives out his life in this mortal body, he has a *covenant right* to do so **free from sickness!**)

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III. WHY YOU NEED TO HAVE YOUR MIND RENEWED

In Lesson 4 we saw how the new birth results in a new creature, made in the likeness of God. That new creature is infused with the divine nature of God (II Peter 1:4), and has been made the righteousness of God (II Corinthians 5:21). If you are born again, you **ARE** a new creature. God's power has been manifested on your behalf and has recreated you on the inside.

But, there is still a transformation which must take place in the life of every believer. That transformation is a *process* (unlike the new birth, which happens the moment we believe). It happens as a believer begins to have his mind and emotions renewed to the reality of who he is in Christ, and all that Christ has done for him.

"As he reckons in his soul, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7/marginal reading). The way a man thinks of himself will largely determine the state in which he will live. If his mind and emotions see only defeat and misery, then that is what he will experience. A renewal has to take place in which the believer begins to see himself as God sees him. Then the state in which he lives will be in accordance to the Word and will of God.

A. THE CORRUPTION OF THE SOUL

A believer's mind and emotions need to undergo a transformation because they were corrupted. This corruption happened because the soul was dominated by an unregenerate spirit, alien to God. Before being born again, a man's mind and emotions are programmed to think, feel, and respond in a way that is contrary to God and His Word. His soul learned how to sin. It learned how to be depressed and feel sorry for itself. In other words, it learned the ways of this world and was programmed according to its dictates.

For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

II Peter 1:4

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

II Corinthians 5:21

For as he thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, "Eat and drink!" but his heart is not with you.

Proverbs 23:7

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But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

I Corinthians 2:14

To the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

Ephesians 1:6

But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.

Romans 8:37

“No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper; and every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their vindication is from Me,” declares the Lord.

Isaiah 54:17

“Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’”

John 3:7

1. Walking by sight

One of the ways in which the soul of man is trained is in **walking by sight**. Most men’s minds are very well trained to believe only what they can see or experience through the physical senses. To the unrenewed mind, what is seen constitutes reality. There is no reality other than what can be seen. Thus, the unrenewed mind (the “natural man”) is unable to comprehend the things of God because they appear to be foolish and unreal (I Corinthians 2:14).

2. Living by emotions

The unrenewed mind has also been trained to live by emotions. People often equate their identity with how they are feeling at that particular moment. If they feel unloved, they assume that they are unloved. If they feel rejected and alienated, they believe that rejection and alienation are realities. Generally, they are using their emotional state as their reference point to determine who they are and what they have.

We can see how the emotions of a man and the *truth* of God’s Word are not always in agreement. The Bible says that we are accepted in the beloved (Ephesians 1:6), that we are more than conquerors (Romans 8:37), that no weapon formed against us shall prosper (Isaiah 54:17). But, many believers don’t “feel” like they are accepted by God, or that they are conquerors. They often “feel” rejected and defeated.

The unrenewed mind, when given the choice between believing what is seen (i.e. physically experienced) and believing the Word of God, will always choose to believe what is seen.

B. YOUR MIND DOESN’T GET “BORN AGAIN”

Jesus said, “*You must be born again*” (John 3:7). The experience to which He referred takes place in the *spirit* of a man. A man’s spirit is translated from darkness to light, and from death unto life. This change takes place in a moment, the instant a man receives Jesus as his Lord.

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The same *cannot* be said of a man's mind and emotions. The mind and emotions of a man do not get born again. They must be renewed by the Word of God. There is often an emotional response to the new birth within a person. But, this cannot be equated with a renewed mind. Even after the spirit has been recreated, many old thought patterns still remain. The process of erasing old thought patterns is called "renewing the mind."

IV. TRANSFORMED INTO THE SAME IMAGE

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2). Paul said to **believers (new creatures)**, *"Don't be conformed to this world."* It is possible for a person who is a new creature to be outwardly conformed to the former manner of life and thinking. This conformity is an ongoing process of moving *away* from God and His life.

There is no such thing as a stationary spiritual condition for a believer. **One is either moving toward God, in conformity to him, or away from God, in conformity with the world.** We live in a world in which there is a current that goes the opposite direction from God. If a believer chooses to "relax," he'll be swept along by the current, being gradually conformed to this world and its standards. There is no standing still in God. One is either being transformed by the renewing of the mind, or he is being conformed to this world.

But, as a person's thinking is changed into God's way of thinking (i.e. as his mind is renewed), an outward transformation begins to take place. This transformation is also an ongoing process, in which the inward work of the new birth begins to be **outwardly manifested** in a believer's life-style. In this process a believer's thoughts and actions (i.e. his outward walk) *change*, becoming more and more Christ-like. The righteous inner man can be seen by others when he is allowed to manifest himself through a person's character and personality.

Read II Corinthians 3:18 and James 1:22-24

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:2

But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

II Corinthians 3:18

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.

James 1:22-24

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But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

II Corinthians 3:18

For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light.

Ephesians 5:8

A. THE TRUE REFLECTION

If you are born again, your thoughts and emotions are not always a true guide or reflection of who you are on the inside. Sometimes Christians become discouraged because they feel that their contrary emotions and thoughts are a reflection of who they really are. But, there is only *one* true reflection of who a believer is, and that reflection doesn't come from a person's emotions. It comes from the Word of God.

1. The mirror of the Word

"But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord the Spirit" (II Corinthians 3:18). When a person looks into a mirror, he sees himself. But, this scripture says that we behold **the glory of God** as in a mirror. The reason is that this mirror reflects the glory of God **within us**. We see there the glory of the new creation which God has made us to be.

The mirror is the Word of God. God's Word gives us a clear picture of who we are in Jesus Christ and all the things that belong to us in Him. As we gaze into that mirror and contemplate the hidden man of the heart, a transformation begins to take place. We begin to become like the image that we are beholding. Our outward walk begins to conform to what we see in the Word of God.

2. Power to act

"For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8). The power to walk as a child of the light will come as the believer settles in his mind and heart that he IS a child of the light. The settled assurance that one is a new creature can only come from looking steadfastly into God's Word. Without the mirror of the Word, we would be the slaves of ignorance. The only reflection we would have of ourselves would be one of mere outward appearance.

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3. Simple facts

Here are some simple Bible facts concerning who you are in Christ and all the things that you have in Him.

- You are a *new creature in Christ* (II Corinthians 5:17).
- You are a *partaker of God's divine nature* (II Peter 1:4).
- You have been given *everything pertaining to life and godliness* (II Peter 1:3).
- You are *free from the power of sin* (Romans 6:6).
- You are *redeemed from the curse of poverty and sickness* (Philippians 4:19; Matthew 8:17).
- You are *more than a conqueror in Jesus* (Romans 8:37).
- You are filled with *God's love* (Romans 5:5).

Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

II Corinthians 5:17

For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

II Peter 1:4

Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

II Peter 1:3

Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.

Romans 6:6

And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:19

In order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "He Himself took our infirmities, and carried away our diseases."

Matthew 8:17

But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.

Romans 8:37

And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Romans 5:5

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And raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus.
Ephesians 2:6

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.
Ephesians 1:3

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.
James 1:22-24

- You have been *seated with Christ in heavenly places* (Ephesians 2:6).
- You have been *blessed with all spiritual blessings* (Ephesians 1:3).

[See "The Mirror of God's Word" at the end of this lesson.]

These statements about us from the Word of God are a *true reflection* of who we really are. They show us the way in which God Himself sees us, because they are a commentary on the work that He accomplished on Calvary. These scriptures actually mirror to us the hidden man of the heart, the spirit on the inside that was recreated when we were born again.

4. Unchanging reality

Even though a person's emotions and thoughts about himself can change from day to day, yet the Word of God never changes. And so, the reflection of the hidden man of the heart will always be the same, no matter what a believer may *feel* like. Whether a believer *feels* accepted or rejected, the Word always says that he is accepted in the beloved. Whether he *feels* like a loser or a conqueror, the Word always says that he is more than a conqueror.

God's Word is consistent; it never changes. So, too, is the inner man; he doesn't change from day to day, but is always the same. He is always free, redeemed, healed, filled with God's love, blessed, and more than a conqueror.

B. GAZE INTENTLY INTO THE MIRROR

In James 1:22-24 we again find the allegory of the mirror. Here also, the mirror is the Word of God in which a man sees his reflection. But in this passage of scripture, there are two men described. One is a man who hears the word, but does not act upon it (the forgetful hearer); the other is a man who hears the word and does act upon it (the effectual doer).

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1. The forgetful hearer

This man looks at himself in the mirror and then goes his way, immediately forgetting what manner of man he was. *Casual and intermittent reading of the Word of God* has had little lasting effect upon that man, and he's forgotten what he heard. Many believers are like this man. They read the Word of God (that mirror which reflects who they really are), but quickly forget the image that they saw there. They are "forgetful hearers." They are very easily swayed from their conviction by contrary emotions or thoughts, because they look into the mirror of God's Word only casually and intermittently. Thus, they rarely act in a way which reflects that new man, because they have quickly forgotten what he looks like.

2. The effectual doer

This man looks intently into the perfect law of liberty. His gaze is not diverted by other thoughts and emotions, but he abides in the Word. Because he continues to look into that mirror, there seeing more and more clearly who he is in Christ, he doesn't become a forgetful hearer. He is a doer of what he sees.

This man is able to act like the man that he sees on the inside. One cannot be an effectual doer until he is an intent gazer. When a person has been consistently looking in the mirror and meditating on what is seen there, he'll find it easy to act like the man that he is observing. He'll find it natural to believe like the new creature that he really is.

3. Looking and acting

We saw in II Corinthians 3:18 that as we behold in the mirror (i.e. the Word of God) the glory which God has placed in us, then we are changed (outwardly) into that glorious image. One must have a clear picture of who that new creature is before he can begin to act like him. But as that picture begins to come into focus, there is a time for the believer to ACT. All the gazing in the world is useless unless a person makes a quality decision to behave like the new creature that he sees.

But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.
II Corinthians 3:18

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Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

John 8:31,32

He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.

Titus 3:5

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God.

I Corinthians 2:12

But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

II Corinthians 3:18

Many believers get the cart before the horse. They try to act like a new creature *before* they know that they are one. You cannot act like a new creature in order to *become* one. That is impossible. The only thing that will enable a person to walk like a new creature is to *know* that God has made him one already. Then again, some Christians get the horse and cart in the correct order, but fail to put the horse in motion. As the image of the inner man is getting clearer and clearer (and it will come into focus more and more *with time*), there comes a *responsibility* to act. The believer must put faith in the fact that what the Word says about him is true and **ACT** on it.

C. THE TRUTH WILL MAKE YOU FREE

"If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31,32). There is liberty and freedom from bondage in knowing the truth about yourself. If we abide in God's Word (that mirror which reflects our new inner nature), then we'll know the truth of who we are in Christ Jesus. And, that knowledge will have an effect upon us. It will set us free to act like new creatures.

The knowledge that comes through abiding in the Word is knowledge that will renew your mind. It will change the way you think, from the world's thought patterns to God's thought patterns. When God said, "*For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,*" He didn't mean that He wanted it to continue that way. **God's desire is that our thinking come into line with His thinking, so that our ways will come into line with His ways.**

D. BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We do have a part to play in this transformation, since we are *responsible* to look intently into the mirror (Word) and then act according to what we see there. But, we must never lose sight of the fact that the actual transformation taking place is a **work of the Holy Spirit** (Titus 3:5). The Holy Spirit is the One who renews our minds by showing us what the Word really promises us (I Corinthians 2:12). The Holy Spirit is the one who transforms us into the new creation image reflected in the Word. We are "*... transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord the Spirit*" (II Corinthians 3:18).

FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

Lesson SIX THE RENEWED MIND — TRANSFORMED BY THE WORD OF GOD

V. SUMMARY — THE MIND OF CHRIST

The unrenewed mind is one that believes only what is seen. It walks by sight, and not by faith. Thus, it is contrary to God and His ways (Isaiah 55:8). While the mind is in fellowship with an unregenerate spirit, it learns to think in ways which are not God's ways. It is trained to deny the power of God; it is trained to fear and to doubt.

When a man is born again, his spirit is recreated, but his mind remains largely the same as it was before. So a process must take place in which that unrenewed mind is renewed to the principles of God's Word. As the new believer meditates in the scriptures and fills his mind with God's thoughts, his unrenewed mind will begin to change. It will begin to think in line with God, in line with faith and hope and love; it will begin to think like the mind of Christ.

As the believer's mind is renewed, his actions and his outward walk will also begin to change. He will begin to act more and more like Jesus, because he has been made in that image. As he sees clearly that righteous new creation, as it's reflected in the mirror of the Word, he'll find it easy to act in accordance with the image he's steadfastly beholding.

**"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," declares the Lord.
*Isaiah 55:8***