

The Map Maker's Guide

Map 3 - Renewing the Mind

Spiritual Exercise

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations... teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you... Matthew 28:19-20

And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 2Timothy 2:2

As we turn to the Lord, consider again that His ways are the best ways. He has invited us to participate in His Father's story as disciples that make disciples. Our "teaching them to observe" is more than "instructing them to obey". Teaching must include demonstrating. Observe means "to attend to carefully, take care of, to guard". Disciples that make disciples are stewards of Christ's commandments, committing them to faithful men and women. This is the church's Great Commission. It is a high calling. We need His mercy and grace.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, in Christ Name, and by Your Spirit, we commit ourselves to be disciples that you can use to make disciples. We believe that Your word will make us free, and transform our communities for Your Name's sake. Have mercy on us, Father God. We need your help. Amen.

Introduction

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. John 14:12

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:20-21

These and many verses like them speak of the greater-than life that God has made possible for His children. So, where are the "greater works"? What must we do to walk in them? Is there a key that opens the door that leads to the life Christ promised in John 14:12?

In this module we will explore such a key: The Renewing of the Mind. As we search out this matter, God will give us revelation and understanding for the role reckoning plays in bridging the gap between hearing the word of God and walking in His good works.

Definition

Reckon (*logizomai*): To reckon, count, compute, calculate, count over, to take into account, to make an account of; metaph. to pass to one's account, to impute; a thing is reckoned as or to be something,

i.e. as availing for or equivalent to something, as having the like force and weight; to number among, reckon with; to reckon inward, count up or weigh the reasons, to deliberate; to consider, take into account, weigh, meditate on; to suppose, deem, judge; to determine, purpose, decide.

Special Footnote: This word deals with reality. If I reckon (logizomai) that my bank book has \$25 in it, it has \$25 in it. Otherwise I am deceiving myself. This word refers more to fact than supposition or opinion.

Outline of Biblical Usage, www.BlueLetterBible.org

Searching Out the Matter

(All Scripture references, but those noted, are NKJV; Thomas Nelson, Inc.; footnotes and headings excluded)

Faithful Stewards of the Mysteries

*It is the glory of God to conceal a matter,
But the glory of kings is to search out a matter. Proverbs 25:2*

And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. Matthew 13:10-11

In both the Old and New Testament, God made it clear that He had concealed matters that His disciples should be searching out. Why? Because He is a father; and like all fathers, He has treasures that are only for His children. He pleasures in the joy we express in the seeking and the finding (think Easter egg hunt, or treasure in the field).

We are not only invited to search out the mysteries, we are required to be faithful stewards of them.

*Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.
Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. 1Corinthians 4:1-2*

It is important to consider what it means to be a faithful steward. It is not enough that the steward knows there is a fertile field. He must plow and plant it. And once the crop has come up, he must harvest and sell it. In other words, he must do something with what has been given him to steward.

What are these great mysteries of Scripture? Which come to mind for you? Is it abiding in Christ? Or, being crucified with Him? How about "greater is He that is in me"? Casting out demons? Raising the dead? These and many more are the mysteries of God - promised and commanded by Christ.

There is a power associated with the mysteries of God that we have read and heard about, but few have experienced. Our Heavenly Father wants much, much more for His children! He has given us a Word that is powerful and purposeful. The faithful steward is God's agent and vessel for powerful manifestations of that Word. This is, indeed, a high calling and responsibility.

Regrettably, we have been more hearers than doers.

Doers of the Work

There is no lack of good preaching and teaching in the American church. Information overload has come to the church. What little time we allocate to spiritual matters is primarily invested in hearing and reading. Is it any wonder that we have forgotten who we are in Christ and the great exploits He intends for us to do?

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. James 1:21-25

However we come around to it, we must begin to be doers of the truths we hear. Otherwise, we will continue to be deceived and forgetful of who we are. This is a death spiral for our souls! Deception begets deception; and forgetfulness begets forgetfulness.

James follows this warning with a more sobering one.

What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. James 2:14-26 (select verses)

The penalty of dead faith is devastating to the individual that carries it around. To God, it is a terrible stench (think road kill). Thankfully, God has given us all we need for godliness and abundant living. We don't have to live our lives in deception, forgetfulness and dead faith. God has made a way!

Bridging the Gap

God has given us a way out of this devastating predicament. He has given us a key that bridges the gap from hearing to doing; from the hearing of faith to the work of faith; and from deception and forgetfulness to prosperous work. The Holy Spirit called it *logizomai*, and used it 41 times in the New Testament. Here are a few examples:

Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:11

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Romans 8:18

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 1Corinthians 13:11

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. Philippians 4:8

Reckon is an accounting term, meaning to record something in a journal. Spiritual reckoning is the process of making true for me what God says is true - balancing my mind with His. It is laying hold of (or accessing) the mind of Christ.

Before we go on, it should be noted that reckoning is not a positive reinforcement technique. It is more than the power of positive thinking... because the power is not in our thinking, but in the thing we are thinking about: The word of God.

The Power of the Word

The mysteries of God are found in the word of God, both in the written form we call The Holy Bible and in the spoken form that comes to us in our intimate relationship with God. This word is a great and mighty treasure, a catalyst for the work of God.

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Hebrews 4:12

*So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;
It shall not return to Me void,
But it shall accomplish what I please,
And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it. Isaiah 55:11*

These verses remind us that the power for reckoning is not limited by mental ability or the strength of will. It is not limited by age, nor even by spiritual maturity. No, the word of God has all the power it needs - within itself - to accomplish the reckoning.

Reckoning's Purpose in the Process of Faith

To understand the purpose and power of reckoning, let's take a walk through the process of faith and see how the great empowering mysteries of God can be worked out in our lives.

Before there is faith, there must be the hearing of the word of God.

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Romans 10:17

Hearing is predicated on our willingness to surrender our hearts to what God says (i.e., His will).

For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Romans 10:10

For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Mark 11:23

As we can see in these verses, faith is a function of the heart. Therefore, we can say that the word of God finds its resting place in the heart of the believer. But how does it get from the heart to the mind, and from there out to our hands, feet and mouth - the instruments of the good work we are to walk in? Consider this:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. Romans 12:1-3

To prove (or complete)... the will of God, we must first allow God's will (i.e., what He has said) to renew our minds. This is where reckoning comes in. In reckoning the word that has been heard and believed, the mind is renewed - by that word and the measure of faith that comes with it.

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 by the Spirit of the Lord. 2Corinthians 3:18

The transformation that comes by the renewing of the mind is into the very same image as the glory of the Lord. That image is none other than the One that only does what the Father is doing - the very thing that is His will; the will that was heard in His word. We must do the same in response to the word of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Philippians 2:12-16

It is important to note that the willing and doing is God's work. Rather than waste energy trying to do His work, we should focus our attention on the responsibility we have been given: Making sure our hearts are surrendered, exercising the measure of faith we have been given, reckoning what He says to be true, and walking in the work He is doing.

If we will work out our salvation with fear and trembling, He will do His part to bring the supernatural life of Christ out of us; and we will be a blessing to Him and to the world around us. We will experience the "greater than" life.

He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. John 7:38

A Word about Repentance

As the mysteries of God are reckoned in our mind, the Holy Spirit uses them to expose thoughts and ways that are contrary to the higher ways and thoughts of God. Our first response should be confession and repentance from our old and carnal way of thinking, to the way and/or thought given by the Lord. This is a simple, yet powerful, step in the process of transformation.

Conclusion

Spiritual reckoning is the process of making true for me what God says is true - balancing my journal with His. Reckoning also means to “meditate on”, “to deliberate” and “to consider”. It is a process for laying hold of that for which Christ Jesus laid hold of me (Philippians 3:12). Reckoning is a means of applying a word of faith to the renewing of our minds. This renewal is necessary for the work that ultimately perfects that faith (James 2:22). Therefore, reckoning is a bridge from hearing to doing the greater than things that have been promised.

Application

Consider the “greater than” verses (e.g., John 14:12, Matthew 5:16, Ephesians 3:20). For the Leader in the Workplace, these are an encouragement that what we hear from God is actually possible, through us and through those within our spheres of influence. The word of God becomes powerful when we reckon it to be so and respond by walking in the work He has given us to accomplish for His kingdom. It becomes a spiritual, motivational, and physical force that the violent will use to take the kingdom.

Reckoning

The truth will make me and others free (John 8:32).

Assignment

1. On a 3x5 card, write three or four truths God would have you reckon for this season of your life. This must be done prayerfully, so you will hear the specific truths that He has for you. See the following devotion for the ones God has given me. You will likely have a different set than I, but make no mistake about it: The truths that God has given you to reckon are His grace to empower your unique journey in this adventure.
2. Share your reckonings with someone that will encourage you in them, for the days ahead.
3. Be a disciple maker by helping someone else understand and discover the truths God has for their reckoning.

Devotion

Excerpt from Marketplace Challenges - The Adventure Awaits

From Rob Streetman, The inLight Adventure Blog

Commitment and Reckoning

Every soldier - everyone drafted into the King’s army - must determine who they will serve. It will either be the evil alliance - yourself, the world, and Satan - or it will be the King of kings. You simply cannot serve both sides with any success. Double agents are inevitably confused about their allegiance and traitors are quickly exposed. Conversely, commitment to the King brings the hope of victory, faith in the resources of the Kingdom, and the love of the King and His followers.

As you prepare for the days ahead, I encourage you to reckon the truths of the Kingdom into your life. Reckoning is an accounting term, meaning to record something in a journal. Reckoning then is the process of making true for me what God says is true - balancing my journal with His. It is laying hold of that for which Christ Jesus laid hold of me (Philippians 3:12).

Try this simple exercise. On a 3x5 card, write three or four things God would have you reckon to be true about you, for this season of your life. This must be done prayerfully, so you will hear the specific truths that He has for you. You will likely have a different set than I, but let me share them with you as an example and to make the point of their importance:

1. I am a bondservant and steward. I volunteered for this assignment and I will be found faithful to it.
2. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live but Christ Who lives in me. I am a dead man. The only life others should see is His. I have no rights, but those He assigns for me.
3. Greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world. There is nothing for me to fear (except the One Who is Greater). I am a fearless overcomer and Kingdom taker.

Let me encourage you again to seek the Lord for your reckonings. Whatever they are, reckon them every morning. Keep them close to you - some place where you will be reminded of them throughout the day. They will keep your mind on the things of Heaven. They will renew your mind. In a supernatural way, they will make you into faithful, obedient followers of the King... violent Kingdom takers.