

Being a Man of the Word (Not the World)

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Host: David Wheaton 00:08

Being a Man of the Word, Not the World. That is the topic we'll discuss today right here on The Christian Worldview Radio Program, where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host. The Christian Worldview is a nonprofit listener supported radio ministry. Thank you for your prayer, encouragement, and financial support. You can connect with us by visiting our website, The ChristianWorldview.org, calling toll free 1-888-646-2233, writing to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331, or you can follow us on our social media pages on Facebook or X.

Our guest this weekend, Brad Klassen, Professor of Bible Exposition at The Master's Seminary, and teacher of Grace Community Church's men's group called "Men of the Word," will explain how reclaiming Biblical manhood starts inside the mind and the heart. For when a man's mind is renewed. according to Scripture, (i.e. Romans chapter 12: 1-2) and when he is fueled by a love for God over himself and over the things of the world, God does a transforming work to make a man all that He designed him to be. Let's get straight to the interview with Brad Klassen. Brad, thank you for coming on The Christian Worldview Radio Program. Tell us briefly about your background, how and why you became a follower of Christ, and what your life is like now.

Guest: Brad Klassen 02:47

Thank you, David. It is a joy and privilege for me to join you on this program and spend some time talking about what matters most in our lives. Your question right off the bat is certainly what matters most to me, personally, and that is how the Lord saved me. I grew up in a wonderful Christian home on a farm in southern Manitoba. My parents, right from the very beginning, not only spoke to me the gospel, but they modeled it for me. The model of a transformed life. So I saw that. I was so very blessed to grow up in that context. I'll be forever grateful for my parents for what they provided to me. As I look at my early years, however, I don't think it was until the age of 15, when I was at a winter camp, and there the preacher at that camp spoke on the depravity of the human heart. It was there where I realized for the first time that all the things that I was doing as a young man were just external. And for the first time, I realized my own depravity. At a very, very deep and personal level, I recognized my need for a Savior, very profound need. It was there and through that message on my own depravity that the Lord gave to me the gift of faith and I believed and saw in the face of Jesus

Christ, the glory of God and embraced that wonderful promise of the gospel that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

That was at the age of 15. A lot of years have passed since that time. As I grow older and older, I continually see that He is a Savior who never disappoints, and I am certainly looking forward to that day when I will stand before our God and I will claim the promise of Jesus Christ and will express my confidence in Him and that He is a Savior, who holds me fast and saves me to the outermost.

Host: David Wheaton 04:49

Amen! Thank you for sharing that with us today. Brad Klassen is our guest here on The Christian Worldview. Brad, we're going to get into the class you teach at Grace Community Church, the weekly Men's Ministry there called, Men of the Word. We did a program several months ago on the war on men in western civilization. How would you describe that war on men in society broadly? And is it the same taking place within the church? If so, how do you see that taking place?

Guest: Brad Klassen 05:21

The challenge we have in ministry to present every man mature in Christ, but especially in our day, as we see this assault on men, this ministry demand is particularly important. There has always been a war on men, on women, on children. It goes back to the very beginning. We read in Genesis chapter 1, particularly verses 26 and 27, that God created male and female, men and women as image bearers of God. And that is to reflect in our own constitution, it is to reflect the glory of God. It is to point to God, His eternal power, His divine nature. Now, with the entrance of sin into the world through Satan through the serpent, the attack was made first and foremost on God's image bearers.

So from the very beginning, the enemy of our souls, the enemy of God, has had his sights on corrupting that image, which testifies to God's eternal power and divine nature. And he has had an all out assault on men, on women, on children, and all out assault on marriage, from the very beginning. We need to understand that, we need to expect that. That assault takes place in various ways. Of course, what we read in Genesis 1 and 2 is the institution of marriage. So Satan has been particularly focused on attacking that institution. We find that through the corruption of marriage. We find that with all kinds of efforts to redefine marriage, to remove the exclusivity of marriage, the lifelong nature of marriage, the monogamous nature of marriage, the heterosexual nature of marriage, all those things have been under attack from the enemy of God, from the enemy of our own souls.

He has also had an effort, the enemy has, to attack male and female. Men and women in particular, because again, attacking men and women and their unique distinctions is a way of undermining the image that male and female bear. We see that especially in our culture today, it's not new, but it has reached a fevered pitch in our culture for a number of reasons as our culture turns increasingly post Christian and returns to paganism. We can expect that assault to continue with intensity, and it'll be focused particularly on the men. Why? God has created men to aspire. He has created men to lead. He has created men to influence.

So as the enemy seeks to corrupt that remaining image within mankind, his design is to completely corrupt and malign the image that men bear, their responsibilities, what God has created them to do. And as that attack is successful on man, it only speeds up the corruption that happens in the rest of society. Take down the men, corrupt their understanding of themselves, attack men and their role as men, and as that crumbles, the foundation begins to dissolve and societies decay speeds up and intensifies as that takes place.

Host: David Wheaton 09:02

That you brought it back to the very beginning, I think is important, because you can look at the institutions that God established early on, and you just mentioned a few of them. Marriage and male, female. If you want to understand what's going on today, you're just thinking we live in craziness and insanity, well everything is a fundamental attack on what God established early on. That was very wisely answered.

Now, you have done all sorts of series in this Men's Ministry class, and one of the series was called, The Christian Mind Series. There was a session that you did within that series called, Renewing Your Mind. You say this. "In what does conformity to this age, how does it manifest itself?" You put about five or six bullet points. You say, "It manifests itself being conformed to the world not the Word as affection for worldly things above heavenly ones. Admiration for worldly values above biblical ones. Prioritization of worldly goals above eternal ones. Satisfaction and worldly pleasures above spiritual ones.

Finally, a fixation on worldly relationships above the Divine One." As I read those as a man, those just came across to me as such common distractions and detours for men. Worldly things, values, goals, pleasures, relationships. Why are those things in that list I just read, why are they such common distractions for men?

Guest: Brad Klassen 11:02

Well, you and I as men were created, as I've already said, to aspire, to lead, to influence. We were not created to be sedated. We were not created to be numb, and so it's within our constitution to pursue. In the depravity of man that came as a result of Adam's sin, and that depravity that then spreads to all men, what happens with our aspirations and our desires is that they are corrupted. We were created to have powerful affections, to admire, to prioritize, to seek satisfaction, and to fixate. Now, with the corruption of sin, all of those things have been twisted and maligned. Either we do those things today, focused perhaps on the right objects, but for wrong motives, or even worse, is that we completely fixate and adore and prioritize the wrong objects, our motives and the objects of our pursuits are all corrupt.

The reason why men find these things as such common distractions is that they realize in themselves that they were created to have these affections and admirations and prioritizations. They're searching for things upon which to place this focus, this fixation. The problem is in our sin, we place it on the wrong things, or even if for some reason, we're convinced to place it on the right things, will have the wrong motivations in why we fixate on those things. Then it just becomes the distraction of our life, the great testimony to our sin. That's, first of all, why salvation is needed. Salvation is defined so much in terms of a giving of a new mind, of regeneration, the new life of illumination, being able to see afresh, anew and to think correctly.

Then as we grow in our Christian faith, progress in Christian growth is so often defined as a transformation or renewal in those very areas and it takes us right back to what you were alluding to there in Romans chapter 12, where Paul says in verses 1 and 2, *Therefore, I urge you brethren, by the mercies of God*, and that refers to chapters 1 through 11, and all those great doctrinal statements and instruction, he says, *I urge you by these things to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.*

Then verse two. *Do not be conformed to this world.* There's our propensity. That's what marked us in our unsaved lives, and that even remains a problem for the saved man, conformity to the world. Instead, *be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may prove what the will of God is—that which is good, and acceptable, and perfect.* Yeah. That's a very good question. What we find in both the Old and New Testaments is a series of synonyms in both the Hebrew language and the Greek language, synonyms that refer to the composition of man as a composite being. We're made up of both material and immaterial components. The material components we can measure, right? They're material, their concrete, we can weigh them and we can define them much easier. But the immaterial components of man really are difficult for us to define precisely. We find that often they're

used interchangeably in different contexts, where you have sometimes the mind being in some sense similar to the soul or the soul, similar to the heart. We have to be careful about delineated distinctions between these. There's a lot of overlap, and that's okay. We can keep it in that realm of tentative knowledge. Yet, at the same time, we do find some distinctions that are there. If we would look at some of the key terms that are used, we could define it this way. The heart is not the physical organ. Heart that's often used in both Old and New Testaments, is a reference to the innermost center of one's being. You could use the terminology of Mission Control Center. That's the heart. It's not like the heart in a Valentine's card or in all the romantic ideas of the heart. The heart is Mission Control Center. Proverbs 4:23 says, *It's out of the heart that flow the springs of life.* So in that sense, the heart is really the fundamental definition of a person.

The soul is another term that's used. The soul seems to be that life force that energizes us. In Genesis 2:7 God breathes into man, and Adam becomes a living being. God gives to Adam his soul, and he begins to exist. So the soul really has to do with the fundamentals of existence of consciousness. We can think of the mind this way. It is definitely distinct from the brain. Because as we know, when we die, the brain as an organ is going to decay. And yet, we who are in Christ will go to be with Christ, and we will be conscious. In that existence, we will have awareness and fellowship with Christ. And that very much involves the mind.

So the mind is far more than just the brain. We can define the mind theologically as that faculty of thinking, of how we comprehend truth, how we comprehend doctrine, how we comprehend and reason, how we believe. That's all connected with the mind. A lot of people connect belief with emotions. That's not at all how the New Testament handles it. Belief is connected to the mind, belief is connected to truth. It is, as you could say, the ability to have a worldview. To look at the world around us, and to make conclusions as to how that world relates to God, how it relates to us, how we relate to the world, and so forth.

Host: David Wheaton 14:17

In this same series, the Christian mind series, in a session called, *When Men Don't Think*, you say, "To begin with, it is incorrect to understand 'the mind,'" as you were just talking about in Romans chapter 12, "'the renewing of the mind' is simply a reference to the brain, the complex organ that is responsible for motor skills, memory, sensory perception, etc."

Moreover, you say, "the mind is not just a synonym for what we call IQ, or intelligence quotient. That number, that's assigned to individuals that expresses the apparent intelligence of a person. Instead," you say, "it is best to understand the mind as a disposition, a pattern of making judgments

about fundamental issues in life, of truth versus error, right versus wrong, beauty versus ugliness, and reality versus myth. The mind," you say, "is what we use to perceive and make sense of ourselves, the world around us and God. The mind is the domain of convictions, values, desires, judgments, attitudes, affections and faith." Last sentence, "The mind is fundamentally religious in nature. When a man worships, whether he worships the one true God, or a false god, it is the mind that worships. " So you're basically saying that the mind is a lot more than just that organ in our head that thinks thoughts. That sounds, Brad, a lot like what you're describing is one's worldview, a sort of all encompassing description of how someone thinks and decides and desires. Perhaps you could explain more about these elements of a human being. Like what the mind is, and how that compares to what the Bible frequently refers to as the heart, or the volitional part of ourselves, the will, which makes decisions, or the things we desire and have affection for.

Brad, you quote a man named Harry Blamires back in 1963 where he wrote, "The Christian mind has succumbed to the secular drift with a degree of weakness and nervelessness unmatched in Christian history. It is difficult to do justice in words to describe the complete loss of intellectual morale in the 20th century church. There is no longer a Christian mind. There is still, of course, a Christian ethic, Christian practice, Christian spirituality, but as a thinking being, the modern Christian has succumbed to secularism." That's a pretty strong quote there, Brad.

I'd like you to answer, how has the church influenced, specifically with men, because that's our topic today, how has the church today influenced the male Christian mind to be different now than let's say in past generations?

Guest: Brad Klassen 23:49

Harry Blamires was an Anglican and English Anglican theologian and literary critic. He was not as conservative and evangelical as we would be and had some very different views that we would strongly critique. Yet what he noticed back in the 1960s, was the decay of the Christian mind, and he had concerns for it and its consequences in some different ways than we would be concerned with it. Nonetheless, he put his finger on what was very important, and this was already taking place over half a century earlier. This is back in the 1960s. He was saying that what has happened among Christians, is that there is a Christian ethic.

In other words, a Christian way of behavior. There's Christian practice, there's Christian rituals, attending church services, there's even Christian hymnology and so on, but Christians, as he saw in his day had lost the ability to think Christianly. To actually interact with, engage with, and contend with the world around them intellectually with the mind, by arguing and reasoning and seeking to

persuade and explaining. He saw that what had happened in the English context was that this had just become tradition. Christians didn't know why they did certain things and couldn't respond to the challenges of the day, and had largely been influenced by the secular world around them and thought very secularly, though they had their Christian area of life.

He's put his finger on a really significant problem, and that's what we certainly still find today perhaps even in far greater degree than in the 1960s. I would say this, as it pertains to the Christian mind, especially men, is that we have this tendency to think that our minds are somehow neutral, that we have our Christian portion of life that might be Sunday mornings, or that might be another time during the week when maybe we attend a midweek study or when we're with other Christians, but our minds beyond those events, or those times in the week, our minds are neutral. They don't pertain to anything theological or anything directly related to God. So many men just think and have this mild disposition, that really succumbs to the world around them. So as they're driving in their vehicles, or as they're at work, and their minds are active, those minds are often no different than the unbelieving coworkers around them. They're thinking some of the same things, the same topics.

In our world today, because Christianity is seen so much as an emotional thing or as a traditional thing, the mind is just left to be at the mercy of whatever the circumstance and context is, and that's a travesty. That results in so many massive problems for Christian men. That is not what our minds were created to do. The highest calling of the Christian man is to think God's thoughts after Him. That is not something that just happens on a particular day of the week or a few hours of the day. That is to be our whole disposition of life. When we recognize that responsibility, and begin, as Paul said, back in Romans chapter 12, to be renewing our minds, that results then in the transformation of life. So often the problems that men face in life, are solved not by treating those problems as root causes, they're the symptoms. The problem, the root cause is actually the mind and the fact that so much throughout the week, throughout the day, it is just operating, not in submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Host: David Wheaton [27:52](#)

You have referenced this passage in Romans chapter 12, starting in verses 1 and 2. I'm going to read it again in light of the question. *Therefore, I urge you, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

Now, in one of your sessions in this series on the mind, you quote a man named Kelly Kopic. He says, "The goal of the Christian life is not external conformity, or mindless action, but a passionate love for God, informed by the mind and embraced by the will." So taking that passage in Romans 12: 1-2 with what that quote is, that the goal of the Christian life is not just external conformity, or just mindless action, kind of checking boxes, but we want to have a passionate love for God that's informed by a renewed mind, and that our will, our decision making follows that renewed mind. So what are some key focal points for men from this passage to renew their mind? How do we do that? Then, how is this passionate love for God developed as the motivational fuel to want to draw nearer into love and follow and worship and obey God?

Guest: Brad Klassen 29:43

Based on Romans chapter 12 and the beginning of verse 2, start there with the negative command, the prohibition, Do not be conformed. What we need to take from that is an acknowledgement of our propensity. There isn't neutrality. There isn't a demilitarized zone in the Christian life. We need to recognize that, apart from vigilance, apart from intentional effort, our minds will be naturally conformed to the environment around us. That's why Paul says in that prohibition, he says, Do not be conformed.

What we need to do is recognize from that. That's going to be what will naturally happen apart from the proper positive effort that begins there.

1) Recognize what you're prone to do, recognize where your mind is prone to wonder, how it's influenced by the secular culture around you. You can't resist that apart from intentional action. That leads to #2.

2) Embrace the responsibility. Paul doesn't just say, Don't be conformed. That's the negative. But he says, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. That is a responsibility that Christians have. Christians have the responsibility to engage in this activity. This is not just a suggestion. It's not just something that will lead you to a better life. This is a responsibility given to all Christians. Embrace that. Realize this is fundamental for understanding the Christian life. You are to be renewed. You are to renew your mind through the means that God has given. I'll get to that in just a moment.

3) Not only are we to acknowledge our propensity and embrace our duty, but appreciate the mercy. This is fundamental. You cannot understand the imperative of Romans 12 verse 2 apart from the foundation given back in verse 1 of the chapter where Paul says that he gives this exhortations by the mercies of God.

Our effort here has to be founded in what God has done for us. What is essential in this process, particularly of fulfilling the responsibility of renewing our minds, is that this is all gospel driven. Chapters 1 through 11 of Romans speak over and over and over again of what God has done for us, and as Paul thinks of the word that would define the contents of those 11 chapters, he comes up with the term, mercy. The mercies of God. He urges us by the mercies of God, those things which we do not deserve. That benevolence poured upon those who deserve the opposite. This is what fuels that passion, especially. It's a reminder of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ, through Jesus Christ, all of his action on our behalf. That's the fundamental motivation. Number 4) I would say this. Recognize the right means. Paul does say, renew your minds. That renewal is going to lead to transformation.

Host: David Wheaton 33:14

Okay, Brad. What are the things that cultivate this passion for the Lord, that leads us to want to renew our minds?

Guest: Brad Klassen 33:24

First of all, it's time in the Word. You can't expect your mind to be renewed apart from intentional, attentive exposure to the Word of God. You've got to be in the Word. You've got to have that regular intake of God's Word into your life. That's going to happen through both private means, as well as through public means as you are part of a local church and you're hearing the preaching of the Word in the ministries of the local church. That's fundamental. The second means that I would say would be through fellowship. Through Christian accountability. Not just getting together with other Christians to talk about sports or politics or what have you, but actually talking about doctrine, talking about biblical things, filling the discussion with conversation about Jesus Christ, what He's done, about Christ's likeness. That is a very important means. The means of Christian fellowship.

A fourth means is obviously through prayer. We can't enact this by ourselves. This is something that is done to us and in us through God's power. We need to be beseeching Him privately, as well as corporately. That God would transform us. I'd also add to that, the singing of hymns. There's something that God has created about music that makes it so powerful, both for negative influence as we look at the music of the world, but also for positive influence. Having wonderfully profound, biblically accurate lyrics connected to music in a unique way, helps our minds focus on that which is most important. So I would say as part of this, incorporate into your life, the singing and listening to spiritual songs, to hymns, to those songs not that just make you feel good, those aren't biblical hymns. Sometimes biblical hymns make us as sinners feel horrible. But then it turns us to the

wonderful benevolence, the grace, the love of God. We need hymns like that that are going to fill our minds with these tunes, these melodies, which exalt our Savior and remind us that it's He who is the One to be adored, and It's He who has saved us.

Host: David Wheaton 35:48

Well, I was just resonating so much with all you are saying there, especially the last points about what we can practically do. To have a renewed mind is just excellent biblical suggestions and I hope the men listening and really everyone listening because it does apply to either sex. Were listening closely to that answer.

Brad, in our remaining time with you, I want to go to another series that you taught to Men of the Word in this men's class at Grace Community Church. This was called, Searching for Significance. This is a big thing for everyone, but again, particularly for men as we're focusing on today. As a reminder for folks listening, we have these series linked at our website, TheChristianWorldview.org will link right over to these sessions. They have audio and video and PowerPoint slides that go with them. This would be a perfect thing for you to listen to individually, with your family, your small group, whatever. It's right there for you. So take advantage of that.

This series on Searching for Significance, I think every man wants to feel like they have significance in their life and they have a purpose. This life isn't just aimless or nihilistic, there's no meaning. You reference so much in this particular series with many sessions. You're mainly in the book of Ecclesiastes that Solomon wrote; the wisest man who ever lived. He wrote in Ecclesiastes chapter 1:13-14. *It is a grievous task which God has given to the sons of men to be afflicted with. I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all his vanity and striving after wind.*

That's looking very hopeless. Like this is a purposeless life. That's what it's about. There's nothing here. You say in this session, Committed to finding a solution to the problem of life's brevity, like life is short and then you die, Solomon recounts how he experimented with various approaches. Here's what he did you say. Including intellectual inquiry. He tried to build his mind up and be curious about things. The all out pursuit of pleasure, and the exercise of creativity and hard work. So he tried all those things. Then you say, he learns that all these things fail miserably to account for life's brevity. Since they all were employed with Solomon serving as the starting point to his own endeavor. In other words, he did all these things to satisfy himself.

The proper solution, you go on to say to life's brevity, eventually does come to Solomon in chapter 2, but only once he abandons himself as the starting point and orients his life wholly,

wholly, under God. Explain, Brad, how Solomon's quest for significance, for purpose, for satisfaction is really common for men today. That's a good thing, actually. And how to get away from the vain roads that are centered around ourselves, and under the only road that will lead to an eternal significance, which is a life under God.

Guest: Brad Klassen 41:42

Yes, the book of Ecclesiastes is so appropriate for men, especially in our context today. The topic you're referring to, the text that you quoted, comes in that earlier portion of Ecclesiastes, where Solomon takes his readers through some of his failed efforts, his failed attempts. And he includes that to explain to his readers where he went wrong and how that was rectified. It all builds, until you finally get to the end of the book where he lays down the most fundamental finding, and the most important conclusion that you can draw from his search for significance. But in the text that you quoted from chapter 1, if you look at chapter 1:12-18, what is very interesting there in Ecclesiastes is to circle or underline all the places where you have the pronouns I, my, or myself, referenced in verses 12 through 18. There's an abundance of references. Solomon says over and over, I, my myself, and he combines that with things like my mind, I sought to seek, I sought to realize, I sought to know. And what it testifies to at this point in Solomon's stumbling was that he gave himself to autonomous thinking.

Now, we've said already in this broadcast that the mind is so very important to the Christian. It cannot be neglected. It is central to growth and development in the Christian life. We have to use our minds, our minds must be renewed. Now, Solomon was very much using his mind. He testifies to that especially in chapter 1. But here was the problem. For a time, he had delved into what we call autonomous thinking, reasoning from the self as the starting point, and that is completely contradictory to what Solomon had said earlier in his life, when he says, for example, in Proverbs 1:7 that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

It's contrary to what he's going to say at the end of Ecclesiastes in chapter 12:13, where he says, This is the end of the matter, fear God. For a time in Solomon's life with all the wisdom that he had been given, he began to think with himself as the judge, as the starting point. He became the arbiter in that period of time of what is true and right and good and pleasing. That's what led him to all the problems that we read about particularly in 1 Corinthians 11. All the problems, all the failures, all the pain and sorrow that Solomon experienced, he failed to think according to the fear of the Lord. He failed to think with the fear of the Lord as the foundation to the use of the mind in the proper sense.

Host: David Wheaton 44:49

I sometimes wonder, as you reference there the last sentence of Ecclesiastes where Solomon says, the conclusion after he goes through the whole book, when all has been heard, and it says in Ecclesiastes 12 is, here's the conclusion, Fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil. How did Solomon go from writing all this wisdom in Proverbs and even in Ecclesiastes as well and concluding that way, too later in his life, living a life that was really apart from God and not ending well. How does that happen and how can that be avoided?

Guest: Brad Klassen 45:37

Yes, that's often the dilemma that we face in a book like Ecclesiastes. How could someone like Solomon, who had such a wonderful beginning, who is considered to be the wisest man who ever lived, and who is in numerous places in Scripture described in positive terms, how could he fall so far? There's a couple things to remember. And these are reminders for us, even in our own lives. Solomon is not the hero of the Old Testament. He's a reminder that even as good as things can be, we are broken and imperfect, fallible vessels. Solomon's life is a very dramatic testimony to that. You will not find a human being, an ordinary fallen human being who's the hero. His father David had some pretty significant falls. Solomon did as well. Secondly, there is a reference to Solomon's own recognition that he's not the hero, that he's not the standard as wise as he was. That's found in chapter 12, right before that section which you just quoted. It's in verse 11. Solomon says, "*The words of wise men are like goads, and masters of these collections are like well driven nails.*" But then he says this, "*They are given by one Shepherd.*"

Solomon makes a very fascinating reference to God. He says, "*Even my best words, even all the wisdom that I gave, that other wise men have given, do not arise out of man himself, not even out of wise men. All those wise sayings are given by one Shepherd.*" A reminder that the source of truth is only One. The source of wisdom is only One. And it's God. I'd say one more thing here that explains why we read of Solomon's departure and his fall and what we see in Ecclesiastes as his restoration that comes at the end of his life, is that we must remember that our greatest need is not wisdom itself. Now we need wisdom. We certainly do. Wisdom is the right use of the mind. That is certainly an essential ingredient for growth. It's essential to our lives as children of God, disciples of Jesus Christ, but it's not the ultimate.

We must always remember that what is still even greater than wisdom is what Solomon identifies as the foundation and the end of the matter. And that's the fear of the Lord. What does it mean to fear God? Charles Bridges has a wonderful definition. He said, "is that affectionate adoration by which

the child of God humbly bows before his maker." That fear is essentially the Old Testament synonym for the word faith. It is a recognition that He is God, I am not. That I need Him, and that He alone has the words of life. That's the fear of God. It's a kind of fear that doesn't drive us away. It's a kind of fear that compels us to Him as having the only solution to our lives, the only salvation, the only way of life, and that is ultimate. Wisdom only is secondary to that.

What happened in Solomon's life was that he forgot the foundation, he forgot the end of the matter for a time. And he was obsessed with his own wisdom. That wisdom, as good as it is, if it is detached from the fear of the Lord, it will not lead you in the right direction. Solomon's testimony in Ecclesiastes comes back to that over and over again as he says, Look, wisdom is not sufficient for the ultimate need that you have. And that ultimate need is the Shepherd. The ultimate need that you have his faith in Him. That is the foundation, that is the end, wisdom is secondary to that.

Host: David Wheaton 49:49

We need to be right with our Creator through repenting and believing in the gospel of Jesus Christ and then the acquiring of wisdom, it's really beyond that. It's the day by day progressive sanctification that comes from the things that you mentioned in your previous answer. Being in the Word and under the preaching of the Word and Christian Fellowship. That is the exhortation that men can take away from all you said today, Brad. Again, I'll encourage them to go and listen to these series you've done for men. It would be such an excellent and profitable thing to do. We thank you so much for all the time and thought and prayer and study that went into these sessions. Thank you for coming on The Christian Worldview Radio Program today and helping us to understand how to be a man of the Word, not the world. All of God's best and grace to you, Brad.

Guest: Brad Klassen 50:37

Thank you, David. This has been a wonderful joy. Appreciate the privilege.

Host: David Wheaton 50:41

I hope you gained from that interview with Brad Klassen. And just a brief review of some of the important things he said. I think first and foremost, to be a man of the Word you must first be born again as Jesus said. You must be born again, you must be spiritually regenerated. Otherwise, you're still going to have an unregenerate mind that is impotent and won't even desire to want the things of the Lord. When one is saved by repenting and believing in the gospel, God not only forgives our sin, but He gives us His Holy Spirit to empower us to start living the Christian life and to be progressively sanctified. What he said about the growth in the inner man, he said four things.

That we must read and take in the Word of God, both privately and also corporately in the local church. Fellowship he mentioned. Intentional discussions on biblical things with other believers. If you have people over to your home, direct the conversations. Otherwise, it's just a lot of little conversations about very shallow things that can take place in a room. He also talked about the importance of prayer. Asking God to transform us. He also emphasized the singing of hymns and spiritual songs as being important to growth in the inner man.

These things he mentioned must be the top priority for a man or for any believer. This is day by day growth. I like to think of it this way. Sometimes I tell my son when I'm going to read the Bible to him, this is the most important thing either of us is going to do today. So let's concentrate and focus on the most important thing. Let's conclude with this exhortation that Paul writes to the Corinthians in chapter 16 of his first letter. He says to them, "Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, not like children, and be strong." And then here's the motivation. Verse 14, "Let all that you do be done in love."

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Upcoming TCW Event: Overcomer Course

David Wheaton here, host of The Christian Worldview to tell you about the Overcomer Course for young adults being held June 21st and 22nd at beautiful Stone House Farm in Jordan, Minnesota. Aged 18 to 25 is a highly transitional time. The convictions developed and the decisions made during this crucial stage sets ones course for years to come.

In eight sessions over two days, addressing life's most important issues, such as God and the gospel, right thinking and living, relationships and marriage, vocation, the local church and more, the Overcomer Course is designed to help young adults gain clarity and conviction on God's plan and their purpose in it. There will be plenty of time for interaction and discussion as well. You can find out

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Host: David Wheaton 37:47

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