



The Good News

August 6th, 2017

Volume 17, Issue 32

Having a mind to do...

By Michael McCleary

Some of us may have been told as children that if we set our mind to do something, we can do it. The opposite of this is that if we tell ourselves we can't do something, we probably won't be able to do it. We can note example after example of the effect that our mind, and more specifically our attitudes, can have on our ability to accomplish something. This is as true spiritually as it is physically. Paul makes the statement in Phil. 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Paul had the attitude that he could overcome anything, including physical discomfort, in his effort to be obedient to God. As Christians, what can we learn from the Bible about having the proper mind and attitude?

Having a mind to cease from sin – In **1 Pet. 4**, Peter brings to our remembrance Jesus and His attitude. He tells us to "*arm yourselves with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,*" As Peter is writing to saints who will be enduring various trials of their faith by means of physical persecution, he is encouraging them to focus on ceasing from sin. If they armed themselves with the mind that Jesus had, they would be victorious. Even though we do not endure this kind of persecution today the attitude is still to be the same...have the attitude that you will not sin. It's true that we may fall or falter at some point. But if we concede that in our minds before we ever start fighting a temptation we will surely lose. Our attitude should always be to cease from sin to not let it "reign" in our "mortal bodies" (Rom. 6).

Having a mind to stand for truth – In **Eph. 6:14** we learn that part of the "armor" of the Christian is "*having girded your waist with truth*". A girdle to the soldier of yesteryear provided a support to the back while blocking and attacking with his sword. It is easily seen how this applies to the Christian...truth provides a foundation to defend against attacks and provides us the support to attack back. Without truth

the Christian is nothing. However, as with all the pieces of armor mentioned in Eph. 6, it is up to the Christians to "equip" it. We can note numerous examples in the NT of people standing for truth, regardless of the consequences: Stephen before the Jews (Acts 7), John the Baptizer before Herod (Mark 6:18), Paul before the Jews (Acts 22). Jesus says in Matt. 10:33, "Whoever denies Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father who is in heaven." We must have a mind to stand for truth, which will require us to stand against that which is false and sinful.

Having a mind to be an example – In **Matt. 5:13-16**, Jesus says "*You are the salt of the earth...*" and "*You are the light of the world...*" and "*Let your light so shine before men...*". Notice that Jesus does not say "Try to be the salt of the earth..." or "Try to let your light shine...". We are the salt and we are the light, and we are to let our light so shine before men "*that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*" In order to be "salt that retains its flavor" and to be a "light that so shines", we must have the mind to be an example that is befitting a true Christian.

Setting our mind on doing these things on a daily basis will help us to be the kind of Christians that God wants us to be. We cannot let ourselves become distracted from our task but rather focused on being strong and obedient believers of His. Are you focused on Him today?