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# Words of Truth

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## Strife And Division Come With Our Way Of Thinking

By: Brian A. Yeager

Think about these statements: "I don't have a problem with it." "I think this is okay." "In my opinion this is a good way to do it." "My experience has taught me that we should do it this way." "I don't see anything wrong with this." "I don't know how we can do this, but we cannot do that." What do all of these statements have in common? They are all statements often used when people reason carnally. The standard of such statements is the person making the statement.

If you normally read the articles I write you should be well-schooled in the subject matter of authority. You should know and understand that we need authority from the Lord for all that we say and do (Matthew 28:20, Ephesians 5:10, and Colossians 3:17). If you are a Christian, you have agreed with the Lord to surrender your will and wholly follow His will (Matthew 16:24-27, Luke 14:25-33, Romans 6:13-18, and II Corinthians 5:14-15). As a Christian, you need to live by every word of God (Luke 4:4) rather than what you or I think is right or wrong. We should all understand that the Lord's way of thinking is different than carnal thinking (Isaiah 55:7-9).

God says: *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil... The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise... There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death... For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth"* (Proverbs 3:5-7, Proverbs 12:15, Proverbs 14:12, and II Corinthians 10:18)

I know for a fact that not all "brethren" reading this article understand and rightly apply the truths we have briefly covered. The fact is, in recent months HERE IN EL PASO, I have heard statements like those written in the first paragraph. The congregation here has a past of several divisions. We have obeyed the Lord (I Corinthians 1:10) in avoiding such for about nine or ten years. We have done that by only following the Scriptures in testing all things and holding only to those things which are right with God (I Thessalonians 5:21). However, if such carnal reasoning continues amongst us, we shall not avoid division for much longer, plus the loss of souls in the process. Carnal thinking leads to strife and division.

### Our Thoughts Will Eventually Cause Problems

Let's start this section of our study with some Scriptures to consider. Take note and think about the following inspired words: *"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among*

you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace" (James 3:13-18).

In the Scriptures you just read you can see the contrast of carnal wisdom and the wisdom that comes from the Lord. You also can see that the wisdom that is of this world is a source of problems. If you are thinking and reasoning outside of the Scriptures, you are thinking and reasoning from earthly wisdom. Think about that! What is the wisdom of this world in the sight of our Lord (I Corinthians 3:18-19)?

Now, let's consider something that the Lord had written through Paul to a congregation that was experiencing strife and division (I Corinthians 11:18). Note: *"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men"* (I Corinthians 3:1-3)?

Strife and division are works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21). Strife and division will not occur if we are all thinking spiritually (II Timothy 2:22). That sounds simple. Yet, it is something that many never experience. Even amongst us who have, it is only as lasting as long as we are determined to leave our way of thinking behind us.

### **Going Forward With Godly Thinking**

The renewed way of thinking that should be seen in all of us is a way of thinking that is from the Lord rather than from the world (Romans 12:1-3). This is not a new point for any of us. Yet, what about the application? Let me give you a thought. When the possibility of us meeting somewhere other than this building became an issue, what were your thoughts? If spiritual thinking is in you, the place we assemble in is not that important to you. If carnal thinking abounds, you would cling to the building we meet in as though it is somehow important. Our meeting place, if not sinful, means NOTHING to God. Our meeting place is NOT about God. It is about our conveniences, rather than His desires. Some have their faith tied to carnal locations. Those in the faith have their faith anchored in things above rather than things on this earth (Colossians 3:1-4, I Peter 1:1-16, II Peter 3:10-14, and I John 2:15-17). Yet, some have been troubled over possibly not meeting at the building anymore. That needs to stop!

### **Conclusion**

Our emotions, opinions, likes, etc.; are not the standard. We are to walk according to what is pleasing to God in all things (Colossians 1:10 and I Thessalonians 4:1). This is not "Brian's way of thinking". Read the Scriptures in this article. They will judge us (John 12:48).