

“It Is Not Reasonable”

Reason is an appeal to the mind, describing the mind's apprehension and evaluation. It is egotism gone to seed that declares everything untrue that man does not comprehend. How foolish in our world filled with incredible things.

Reason does not establish right and wrong. A musical instrument in worship is not wrong because it is unreasonable. It is without scripture and thus unauthorized. And all we do or teach must be authorized (Col. 3:17). A fellow proclaims the demand for baptism to be unreasonable -- "I do not see any sense in water baptism." So what? It is commanded (Mk. 16:16, Acts 2:38). We do not look in our own mind (reason) for the answer to what is right; we look -- by revelation -- into the mind of God (1 Cor. 2:10-16).

There are also things that are true but entirely unthinkable. Just try grasping the speed of light -- 186,000 miles per second. Stretch your mind to envision the distance of a light year. Such thoughts defy the mind. While fact, they are absolutely too large to fit into our minds.

God is also several sizes larger than man's thinker. The finite mind will never fathom eternal existence -- though even the rankest skeptic must admit something has always been. Now add God's other characteristics -- omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent. Reasonable? Absolutely not! Small wonder man does not understand God; his thinker is far too small for infinite thoughts.

"It is not reasonable to believe in resurrection, instant healing; calming a raging storm, or opening a path through the sea. So I reject the Bible." Wait a minute! You have not considered all the facts. "Unreasonable" may be no more than "incomplete reasoning." You need one more fact before a conclusion -- God. With God and his power considered, the other things are quite reasonable.

Your neighbor abruptly quits his job of twenty years, forfeits his retirement, virtually gives away his possessions, leaves his friends and moves to the desert. Is that reasonable? Has he lost his mind? Now add this bit of information. The doctor advised him he would die in three months if he did not make that move. Ah, that is different! The unreasonable suddenly is perfectly sensible.

Consider another case: A family devotes most of their time to religious work. They go to church several times a week -- rain or shine. They constantly study and talk about the Bible. They have little time for recreation or hobbies. They spend much of their money on religion -- even sacrificing things they need to have more to give. Are these people unreasonable? Crazy? Consider: Man is appointed a judgment with consequences as grand as heaven and as horrible as hell. The time at stake is eternity. Jesus died to give the forgiveness and happiness. Many are unaware of this. This changes the picture. It transforms a "living sacrifice" into a "reasonable service" by a "renewed mind" (Rom. 12:1, 2).

- by Joe Fitch

The Importance of Thoughts

If you are concerned about your character, your conduct, your life and your destiny, then be concerned about your thoughts. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). The heart is the mind, and the mind is the center of thoughts. "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). A man may not be what he appears to be, but he is what he thinks.

What goes **into** your mind, then, is extremely important. Be careful about the interests you acquire, the tastes you cultivate, the desires you develop. They shape what goes into your mind. The conversations you listen to, the scenes you observe, the movies you view, the TV programs you tune into, the newspapers, magazines and books you read, the songs by which you are entertained, the jokes you laugh at, the things you are taught all have a part in feeding information into your mind.

You evaluate and monitor all that you hear and see. Your standard for evaluation and your conscience are vital and play their roles. You may seek out or receive what is vulgar or distorted, or you may reject and refuse it. You may pursue and embrace what is wholesome and true, or you may have no interest in it and neglect it. Be cautious, particular and selective about what

goes into your mind. If you allow garbage to go in, then garbage will come out in the form of words and deeds.

What goes on **in** your mind is also extremely important. Be careful about your thoughts, meditations, desires, ambitions, daydreams and fantasies. You determine what goes on in your mind. You are the master of it because you have control over it. It is your own little secret world -- except that God knows all about it, and will one day bring it to light when you have to answer for it in the judgment (Eccl. 12:14; Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 2:16; 2 Cor. 5:10). And sooner or later it will find expression in your life and make itself known.

We cannot be like God without thinking the thoughts of God. We cannot know the thoughts of God apart from the revelation of the things of God in the word of God (1 Cor. 2:11-13). We cannot have the thoughts of God in our hearts apart from reverent study of and meditation upon the word of God, coupled with a sincere desire to do the will of God (Jn. 7:17).

- by Bill Crews

Valuing Sparrows

Matthew records Jesus saying:

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father" (10:29).

But Luke's record has it this way:

"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?" (12:6).

Some have suggested that these two verses amount to a contradiction in the Scriptures. But there is a simpler explanation. In that day sparrows were caught, sold, and eaten - if you can imagine such a thing! But, then as now, sparrows were so common and numerous that they were of very little value. In fact, you could buy two of them for a farthing - about two cents. But, it appears that they were so cheap that if you bought as many as four then a fifth bird would be thrown in for free. Thus, two for a farthing, and five for two farthings!

What's the point in all of this? It was not intended as an economic lesson about the advantage of buying and selling in bulk quantities! It was, rather, an illustration used to emphasize the point that Jesus was making to His disciples, namely that God cares for and providentially protects his children. Or, as Jesus said, "Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows," and again, "the very hairs of your head are all numbered." (Matthew 10:30,31).

God cares for us - what a wonderful thought! This should comfort us in life's harder moments. And, "if God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).

- by Greg Gwin