



September 2010 - *Using Your Head*

For many years, there has been a bias against the mind in the Evangelical world. It has often been considered unspiritual to make use of the mind in matters of faith. But failing to use our minds to fullest capacity, however well-intended, is both unbiblical and unspiritual. And it has contributed significantly to the marginalization of biblical thinking in American public life.

C.S. Lewis, who is often said to have made the greatest impact for Christ in the twentieth century, did so precisely because he used his mind fully in reliance upon the Holy Spirit. His comments on prudence and the proper use of the mind are a much needed corrective for believers today:

Prudence means practical common sense, taking the trouble to think out what you are doing and what is likely to come of it. Nowadays most people hardly think of Prudence as one of the 'virtues'. In fact, because Christ said we could only get into His world by being like children, many Christians have the idea that, provided you are 'good', it does not matter being a fool. But that is a misunderstanding. In the first place, most children show plenty of 'prudence' about doing the things they are really interested in, and think them out quite sensibly. In the second place, as St. Paul points out, Christ never meant that we were to remain children in *intelligence*: on the contrary. He told us to be not only 'as harmless as doves', but also 'as wise as serpents'. He wants a child's heart, but a grown-up's head. He wants us to be simple, single-minded, affectionate, and teachable, as good children are; but He also wants every bit of intelligence we have to be alert at its job, and in first-class fighting trim. The fact that you are giving money to a charity does not mean that you need not try to find out whether that charity is a fraud or not. The fact that what you are thinking about is God Himself (for example, when you are praying) does not mean that you can be content with the same babyish ideas which you had when you were a five-year-old. It is, of course, quite true that God will not love you any the less, or have less use for you, if you happen to have been born with a very second-rate brain. He has room for people with very little sense, but He wants every one to use what sense they have.

If ever there was a time when believers needed to use their minds fully in matters ranging from daily living to our understanding of God, the Bible, the church, and our proper response to the great issues of the day, that time is now.

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C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, (New York: Touchstone, 1996), pp 74-75.