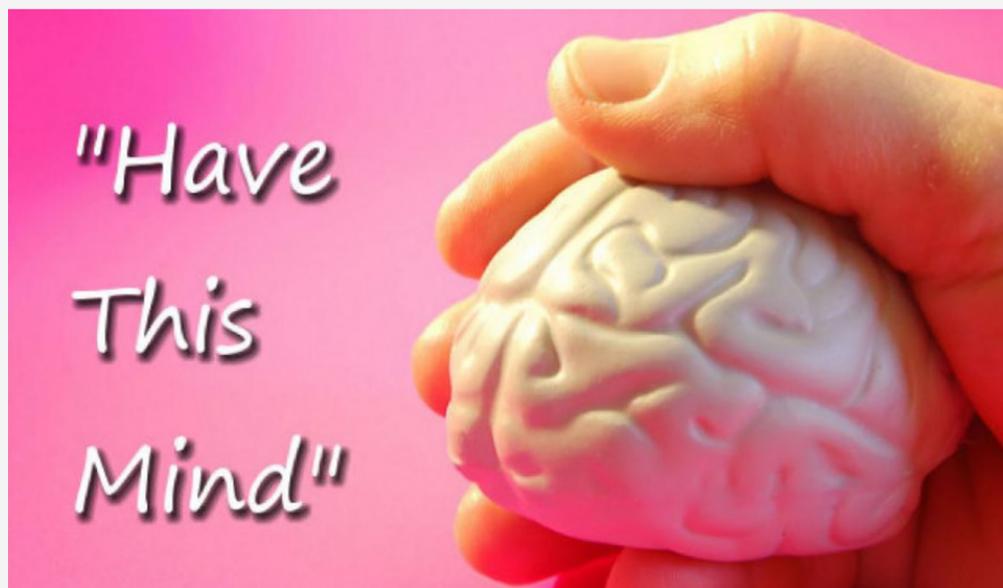


HAVE THIS MIND



by Grant Hawley

There's a concept that is repeated often in Philippians but that is easy to miss. Paul keeps telling his readers to have "one mind" (1:27; see also 2:2, 20; 3:16; 4:2) but not just any mind; a specific one, have "this mind" (2:5; 3:15). One-mindedness isn't always a good thing. If we're united in thinking Justin Bieber is the greatest thing to hit the world of entertainment since Johnny Carson, not only are we confused, but if the internet is to be believed, we also have Chuck Norris's world-ending roundhouse kicks to worry about. And sometimes being united with some necessarily divides us from others (see politics, for example). That isn't always wrong, but it isn't what Paul means in Philippians either.

But it is precisely because of the nature of the mind we are called to have that we can be truly like-minded in at least some ways with everyone in the Body of Christ, as far as our part is concerned.

In Phil 2:5 Paul says, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." What he goes on to explain is that while Christ is by right equal with God, He became obedient. Though He had the right to be served, He became the Servant. Though He was worthy of honor, He took on the shame of a criminal's cross. Though He Himself is life (John 14:6), He died for us.

Are you beautiful and smart and capable? Whatever your answer, one thing is certain; you are not equal with God. So, whatever dignity you might give up in order to become a servant of all, He gave up more.

And maybe the best thing about all of this is that while Christ humbled Himself-because Christ humbled Himself, "...God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name" (Phil 2:9). This is a promise we have in Scripture too, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up" (Jas 4:10), and "...humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time" (1 Pet 5:6). Glory-seeking is a great burden that we can stop carrying. It always leads to disappointment anyway because, as the rappers all like to say, "haters gonna hate."

So, instead of trying to grasp at the smoke of the praise of men, we can lay all that aside and "in lowliness of mind... each esteem others better than [ourselves]" (Phil 2:3). That's how we can really all have the "one mind" we are called to and enjoy the unity of true fellowship with the saints.

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