

The Greatest Power (and failure) of the Human Mind

“The greatest power of the human mind is the ability to justify self.” Here’s why this is so...

The human mind, in its teenage form, can decide it knows more about life and what’s right than those who have lived much longer. The human mind, in its young adult form, can decide it knows more about the world and how to run it than the cumulative wisdom of past generations. The human mind, in its new parent form, can decide it knows more about raising children than parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. The human mind, in its middle age form, can decide it knows more about what priorities should take precedence in life than those older or younger. The human mind, in its older age form, can decide that it knows more about life than anyone else living.

But the real power of the human mind, at any age, is demonstrated through its ability to decide it knows more about anything and everything pertaining to life than God. Through this “ability,” which is really a “failure,” **we find ways to justify ourselves in just about any situation or circumstance.**

Through this powerful ability/failure, we: decide we know more about the formation of relationships than God in our teenage years; decide we know more about how the world was formed and should operate than God in our young adult years; decide we know more about how to properly raise children than God in our new parent years; decide we know more about how to prioritize and spend the productive years of our lives than God in our middle aged years, and decide we know more about “life” and how it should be lived than God in our later years.

In all of these times, and in all of these ways (and many more that could be listed), we think we “see” more clearly than others, sadly including God. So....

In our teenage years, we often rebel against godly parents who are trying to *bring us up “in the discipline and instruction of the Lord,”* Ephesians 6:4. Such rebellion is also against God who commands *obedience and honor* be given to the parents by their children, Ephesians 6:1-3.

In our young adult years, we often rebel against past generations and whatever they believed and practiced as guiding principles of life for whatever is “new,” thinking that “new” is always better than “old.” Thus, the tried and true is rejected for what is thought to be new and improved. After several generations of repeating this process, we now routinely abort babies for convenience, celebrate immoral sexual choices (hetero and homosexually), and can no longer even decide how to properly label restrooms. The proverbial warning against *removing the ancient boundaries* seems apropos, Proverbs 22:28!

In our new parent years, we often rebel against even biblically ordained principles for child rearing for what the latest scientific study has revealed, or the latest self-help book has ordained. Do we not see that over-indulgence and over-emphasis on self-esteem has produced selfish and entitled generations that are completely lacking in self-discipline, self-motivation, and personal accountability? If we love our children, we must *discipline them diligently* so that they learn to discipline themselves, cf. Proverbs 13:24; 19:18; 22:6.

In our middle age years, we often rebel against God and His will through our priority choices- such as putting our work, or the recreation abilities afforded through the fruits of our labors, before Him. Then too, as we become perhaps more “family-oriented,” time spent with family away from busy work schedules leaves little room for spiritual devotions and pursuits. Serving God becomes a matter of convenience- when we “have time” and are not “too busy” with work, family, and recreation. Yet, somehow, we convince ourselves that such doesn’t actually violate Matthew 6:33. But it does.

In our later years, we often rebel against God in more subtle, yet equally destructive ways. We decide that it’s too late to change now. That we either can’t reform after all these years of living contrary to God’s will, or that He wouldn’t accept us if we did- neither are true! Or, we may even decide that since we’ve lived all our lives using our ability to justify ourselves, surely God will have to just accept us for who and what we are without us actually changing our minds or lives- but He won’t, Acts 17:30-31!

And yet in lifetimes filled with rebellion against God, we “see” ourselves as justified. Herein lies the great power, and failure, of the human mind. There is none so blind as he who will not see, cf. Matthew 13:13-15. (Philip C. Strong; Southside Church of Christ; 602 Henderson St. {mail to P.O.B. 1448}, Jacksonville, TX; online at southsidechurchofchrist.net; on youtube and facebook @ southsidecoctx; email to mrpcstrong@hotmail.com)