

“Thinking God’s Thoughts After Him” **©Richard L. Smith, PhD**

The great 17th century scientist, mathematician, and Protestant Johannes Kepler wrote this phrase with reference to his work in astronomy (the title above). He wrote: “The geometrical things have provided the Creator with the model for decorating the whole world.” Arguably, Kepler sought to love God with his mind and wanted to “think God’s thoughts after Him.” He attempted to reason from the biblical worldview. He acknowledged God’s sovereignty over all life and learning. He affirmed that the Lord governs how, why, and what we think. In this way, he sought to understand natural phenomena as a part of God’s creation and governed by his law. He desired to serve mankind and promote human flourishing.



The expression “thinking God’s thoughts after Him” is similar to what the psalmist wrote: “For with you is the fountain of life; *in your light do we see light*” (36:9). Similarly, C. S. Lewis said: “I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because *by it I see everything else*.” The biblical worldview is something we reason *from*. It is the “glasses” we wear to see clearly. It is the foundation on which we build or affirm anything at all.

As creatures made in his image, we were designed to view the world from God’s point of view (subject to the limitation of our finitude). We should “honor him as God and give thanks to him,” because “his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made” (Rom 1:20-21).

History shows, however, that thinking in accord with the Scriptures is sometimes provocative and confrontational. Sometimes, reasoning along with God affirms a settled opinion and argues against radical change. Sometimes it challenges the status quo and leads us in an entirely new direction.

Perhaps today more than ever, we need to view reality like the psalmist: “In your light do we see light.” We need to love God with our minds (Mark 12:30) and “think God’s thoughts after Him.”

Clearly, we should seek to be “salt and light” in the world of ideas. As an example, Daryl McCarthy described the early Irish monks who evangelized Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire in an article titled: “Hearts and Minds Aflame for Christ”:

Scores of Irish monks between 600 and 800 AD left their homeland and spread out across Europe, teaching Scripture and the arts and sciences to kings and peasants alike and establishing centers of education and culture. These monastic centers promoted a full-orbed Christian worldview especially in education and the arts and dramatically transformed the spiritual, cultural and intellectual contours of a decaying Europe. This fascinating chapter in history reminds Christians today that by focusing on the good, the true and the beautiful, we can model how Christ truly makes all things new for both individuals and cultures.

Does this vision attract you? Do you want to develop the skills and knowledge to honor God and serve mankind with the capacities he has given you? If so, please contact me:
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