

Mark 2:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

Analysis

Jesus' immediate perception of the scribes' thoughts (ἐπιγινούσ...τῷ πνεύματι, epignous...tō pneumati, 'knowing in His spirit') demonstrates His divine omniscience and supernatural knowledge of human hearts. The phrase 'in his spirit' may refer to Jesus' human spirit supernaturally illuminated by the Holy Spirit, or to His divine nature's inherent knowledge. Either interpretation affirms His deity—only God searches hearts (1 Chronicles 28:9; Jeremiah 17:10; Revelation 2:23). Jesus doesn't merely react to external criticism but addresses unspoken objections, demonstrating authority over human thoughts. His public confrontation ('Why reason ye these things?') exposes hidden sin, preventing private unbelief from festering. Reformed theology emphasizes Christ's role as heart-searching judge who will expose all secrets (Romans 2:16; 1 Corinthians 4:5).

Historical Context

Jewish rabbis taught that God alone knows hearts, making Jesus' claim to read thoughts a veiled assertion of deity. The public exposure of private thoughts would have shocked the audience—honor-shame cultures carefully maintained social facades. Jesus' willingness to confront religious authorities publicly marked a radical departure from typical rabbinic deference. This confrontation pattern escalates throughout Mark's Gospel, culminating in the temple cleansing (11:15-18) and passion narrative.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does knowing that Jesus perceives your unspoken thoughts affect your prayer life and inner attitudes?
2. What hidden objections or doubts do you harbor while maintaining outward religious conformity?
3. How should Christ's omniscience shape your daily walk and secret thought life?

Interlinear Text

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|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| καὶ | εὐθέως | ἐπιγνοὺς | ὁ | Ἰησοῦς | τῷ | πνεύματι | αὐτοῖς |
| And | immediately | perceived | G3588 | when Jesus | G3588 | spirit | unto them |
| G2532 | G2112 | G1921 | | G2424 | | G4151 | G846 |
| ὅτι | οὕτως | διαλογίζεσθε | ἐν | ἐαυτοῖς | εἶπεν | αὐτοῖς | Τί |
| that | they so | reason ye | in | themselves | he said | unto them | Why |
| G3754 | G3779 | G1260 | G1722 | G1438 | G2036 | G846 | G5101 |
| ταῦτα | διαλογίζεσθε | ἐν | ταῖς | καρδίαις | ὑμῶν | | |
| these things | reason ye | in | G3588 | hearts | your | | |
| G5023 | G1260 | G1722 | | G2588 | G5216 | | |

Additional Cross-References

Acts 5:3 (Spirit): But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

Acts 8:22 (Parallel theme): Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

Psalms 139:2 (Parallel theme): Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

Matthew 9:4 (References Jesus): And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

John 6:64 (References Jesus): But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

Luke 6:8 (Parallel theme): But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.

Luke 5:22 (References Jesus): But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?

Luke 24:38 (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

Ezekiel 38:10 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the Lord GOD; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: