



“ Jesus answered, “*The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’*”

— Mark 12:29-30

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Diánoia is the Greek word translated here as “mind.” Interestingly, there is no Hebrew counterpart for *diánoia* in the Deuteronomy text, because the mind was considered to be a part of both *lēbāb* and *nephesh*. This Greek word corresponds fairly directly with the modern idea of mind: intellect, comprehension, understanding.

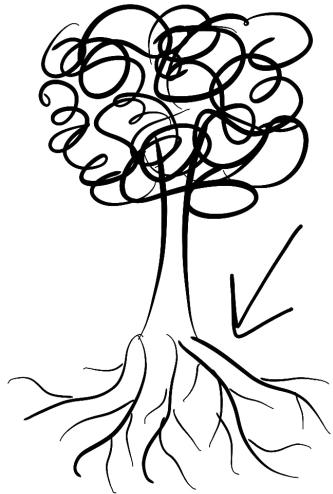
There are almost endless ways to love God with all our mind. Whether we delve into the millennia of Christian and Jewish theological writings, explore the science of nature or the human psyche, or even steep ourselves in secular leadership tomes, we have the opportunity to deepen our understanding of God, and of ourselves.

Kenneth McFayden, author of *Strategic Leadership for a Change*, says this about Christ-following leaders who engage in these intellectual pursuits in a healthy way:

“They believe that the behavioral sciences, leadership theories, and other secular resources contribute important perspectives for congregational leadership. Yet they assess these perspectives through the ‘eyes of faith,’ identify their contributions and limitation, and incorporate their best practices to strengthen ministry. Finally, they believe that leadership is learned. Whatever natural gifts they bring to ministry, they realize that there always is more to learn about leadership. They understand that learning to lead increases their capacity to serve.”¹³

Understanding your spiritual gifts is an important part of loving God with all your *diánoia*. Scripture tells us that the Holy Spirit gives specific gifts to each

Christ-follower. These gifts are to be used with great joy for the common good of the people. Check out passages such as 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, Romans 12:6-8, 1 Peter 4:10-11, and Ephesians 4:11-16.



If *kardía* is the root of who we are, and *psyché* how the health of those roots is reflected in our interactions with the world, then *diánoia* is using our intellectual capacity to push those roots ever deeper, ever wider.

It is easy to see how these three words describing how we are to love God — *kardía*, *psyché*, and *diánoia* — complement and support each other. Together they create a virtuous cycle: learning more about who God is and our part in God's creation, which in turn leads to a deeper understanding in our core of God's love, which then results in our reaching out into the world out of the overflow of God's love.

QUESTION:

What intellectual pursuits are of interest to you? How are you engaging your mind in understanding God more deeply? What resources are available to you in your church or community?

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