

A blue circle with a golden particle trail that extends from the top right and bottom left corners, creating a sense of motion or a comet's tail.

THE ART
of THINKING
LIKE GOD

SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE

KRIS VALLOTTON

FOREWORD BY DR. CAROLINE LEAF
author of the bestselling *Switch On Your Brain*

SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE

THE ART *of* THINKING LIKE GOD

KRIS VALLOTTON



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In keeping with biblical principles of creation stewardship, Baker Publishing Group advocates the responsible use of our natural resources. As a member of the Green Press Initiative, our company uses recycled paper when possible. The text paper of this book is composed in part of post-consumer waste.



I dedicate this book to all the His-story makers disguised as ordinary humans living normal lives, but who are actually sons and daughters of God who have the mind of Christ. You are the Lord's secret service, His ambassadors of heaven who walk in power, think like God and love the *hell* out of people. May He hide you everywhere, from the palaces of royalty to the streets of obscurity, and may you transform everything your heart has the opportunity to touch.

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Foreword

As a neuroscientist and clinician, I believe that God delights in partnering with humanity in bringing scientific breakthrough through divine insight. That's why Kris Vallotton's new book, *Spiritual Intelligence*, is a revolutionary work as he interweaves principles of science with biblical foundations. Throughout this book, Kris bridges the divide between Spirit and science—a chasm that was not created by our Creator.

Filled with practical strategies for partnering with the Holy Spirit, *Spiritual Intelligence* has the power to propel readers deep into the mind of Christ, expanding their spiritual capacity for brilliance. This book is a written record of why living with a renewed mind is not simply good theology; rather, it's one way God profoundly brings transformative health to our entire being (mind, body and spirit).

This book is for the visionaries and the pioneers, the scientists and the innovators, the mothers and the fathers, and the future generations who will have learned the art of thinking like God so that they might deliver supernatural solutions with His divine wisdom. To those of you who dare, prepare to be inspired!

Karen Garnaas, M.D., neurologist, Catalyst Neuromedical
Center PC, Redding, California

Acknowledgments

There are so many people who have poured into my life and helped me grow, but my grandfather (whose nickname was “Sparky”) was the only man ever to believe in me in my growing-up years. His intense love for me shaped my life, his hard work ethic molded my character, and his patience helped form my nature. I had the privilege of leading him to the Lord the year before he went home to heaven. He was a devout atheist most of his life, yet he had a radical conversion—including several powerful spiritual experiences and multiple angelic visitations! In light of the incredible revelation he received from the Lord in those few months before he passed, and in light of the amazing, ongoing impact it had on my personal life, I wanted to acknowledge him as the pioneer of spiritual intelligence in our family.

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Thinking Tri-Dimensionally

What does it mean to think like God, to have the mind of Christ? Sometimes we get lost in the theology of a profound truth and never really experience the reality of it. My journey into the mind of Christ began many years ago, when Bill Johnson became the senior pastor of our small Assembly of God church in Weaverville, California. In the first couple of years of his pastorate, Bill taught our congregation about the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He would teach from the Scriptures in the Sunday morning services, and Sunday evenings we would practice what we had learned by experimenting with the Holy Spirit on each other. Little did I know then that I was about to increase my spiritual horizon dramatically.

Let me explain. At that time, Kathy and I owned an automotive repair shop. One of our largest fleet customers was a timber company. They had about twenty trucks we took care of for them. This particular year, they had purchased several brand-new, identical Chevy pickups. Sadly, within a month, the first one died and came in behind a tow truck. These were the early years of computer-controlled vehicles, so there was not a lot of information about the technology available yet. I worked on that dang truck for three days,

but I could not get it started. I finally called this fleet customer back and asked to have the thing towed to the Chevy dealer in Redding, about 45 miles away. The manager said, “We have ten more brand-new trucks just like this one, so figure it out.”

After that conversation, I spent several more hours working on that truck. In fact, I even called the Chevy dealer. Their technician faxed me the wiring diagram and walked me through numerous tests over the phone, but nothing worked!

Finally, Sunday came around. That week, we were learning about *words of knowledge* in church. A word of knowledge is specific information we get from the Holy Spirit that is currently true about a person, place or thing, but that we could not have known, had the Lord not revealed it to us. All the words of knowledge we experienced in church were about people. During that evening’s practical exercise, I began wondering if the Spirit knew anything about trucks. When Monday rolled around, I decided I would again work on the Beast—the name I had given to that uncircumcised Chevy truck that was kicking my butt.

I ate dinner and went back to work after the shop closed, praying for God’s help. I suddenly had an idea that was kind of freaky. In my mind’s eye, I envisioned myself laying hands on the truck in the same way that I did with people. *Okay*, I thought, *what do I have to lose? No one will see me*. So I put my hands on the fender of the Beast and prayed a sort of “help me, Jesus” prayer. Suddenly, a picture emerged in my imagination of a broken wire under the right front fender well. Then I heard a Voice in my mind say, *There is a wire broken on a diode under the right front fender*.

The problem was, I had worked on this thing for four days and there was nothing in the manual about a diode under the fender well, or anywhere else for that matter. *What the heck*, I thought, *what do I have to lose?* So I put the Beast on the rack and took it up in the air. I got my trusty flashlight out and searched the fender well like a miner looking for gold. The well was covered in undercoating,

so it was hard to see, but sure enough there was a wire broken off a component. I carefully soldered the wire back on, and the Beast came to life!

This experience opened the door to a whole new dynamic in my life. From that point on, I began to grow progressively in my connection to the Holy Spirit's transcendent thinking. Over the next couple of decades, I solved numerous difficult situations in our business and life with information the Holy Spirit provided.

Google Smart

Now, let's fast-forward about forty years, to March 2018. A team from Bethel School of Technology gathered with about two hundred Google employees at Google headquarters in Silicon Valley for a *Talks at Google* session with the topic of "Furthering the Narrative around Christianity's Impact in the Tech Space." Google webcast the session live on the company's closed network so all their employees had access to it. (Many of these Google talks are also published on YouTube for everyone, although not this particular session.)

Some of the brightest minds in the world were in attendance, including several Google team members who worked in the artificial intelligence (AI) division. The talk also incorporated a Q&A panel where our team addressed live questions posed by the attendees. The results were stunning! The attendees all understood IQ, EQ and even AI, but none of them had ever even heard of SQ (meaning spiritual intelligence quotient).

I led the teaching portion of the session with this introduction: "The brightest minds in the world today are still essentially relegated to IQ and EQ, virtually ignoring the deeper dimensions of our spiritual capacity for brilliance."

I went on to explain to the Google employees how this dynamic has relegated higher education to training only our finite intellect, while disregarding the infinite nature of our redeemed spirit-man.

Journey into the New World of SQ

The silver lining of this spiritual *inexperience* presents believers with a fantastic opportunity to explore the nature of this whole new world. Like the famous astronaut Neil Armstrong, the first man ever to step foot on the moon, or like Jacques Cousteau, the great undersea explorer who searched the depths of the ocean, we are embarking on a journey to uncover the mysteries of the Divine Mind. Yet unlike Armstrong, we are not the first explorers to step foot on this firmament. Numerous ancient pioneers have forged this path, braved ridicule and uncovered many of the mysteries of God's Celestial Intellect.

One of the most famous ancient explorers in this regard was the great first-century apostle Paul. Although he was not the first human ever to experience the ability to think transcendentally, he was one of the first ever to articulate his experience with a level of understanding that inspired many other explorers to join the journey.

The apostle Paul inspired this expedition when he exhorted us as believers to “be renewed in the *spirit of your mind*” (Ephesians 4:23 NKJV, emphasis added). On the surface, this seems like a simple exhortation to learn to think well, but upon deeper examination, the ramifications of Paul's insight are stunning. Notice that Paul instructs us to renew not the lower dimensions of thinking, represented in modern times by IQ and/or EQ, but the “spirit of your mind.”

I realize the terms *intelligence quotient* and *emotional quotient* were not used in Paul's day, yet despite the terms, the great apostle was intimately familiar with higher education. At the age of thirteen, young Saul was sent to Palestine to learn from a rabbi named Gamaliel. (Saul's name was later changed to Paul.) Under Gamaliel, Saul mastered Jewish history, the psalms and the works of the prophets. His education would continue for the next five or six years, as he learned such things as dissecting Scripture. Saul then went on to become a lawyer and was no doubt looking to becoming a member

of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Supreme Court of 71 men who ruled over Jewish life and religion. Thus, Paul's exhortation to be renewed in the "spirit" of our minds was not a slip of the tongue or a figure of speech. No! He was intentionally instructing us to give attention to a *specific* dimension of thinking.

Mind—Your Business

Let's take a deeper look into the insights of this first-century explorer. Writing to a Greek church in the city of Corinth, Paul seeks to contrast the difference between the natural dimensions of wisdom and the divine wisdom available exclusively to believers. He explains it this way:

When I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

1 Corinthians 2:1–5

Paul makes it clear to this Greek congregation that he is proactively restricting himself from accessing the wisdom of man so that he can demonstrate the superior benefits of God's divine power and wisdom. Paul goes on to teach them how to access the mind of Christ so that they can think like God. He writes:

Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory; the wisdom

which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; but just as it is written,

*“Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard,
And which have not entered the heart of man,
All that God has prepared for those who love Him.”*

For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. *For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he will instruct Him?* But we have the mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:6–16

Paul begins his insights with the fact that we have access to a dimension of wisdom that is otherworldly and inaccessible to those who don't know God. He makes three observations about this divine wisdom:

1. *It's a mystery*, which is the Greek word *musterion*,* meaning “secret doctrine.” In fact, Paul goes on to tell the Corinthians, “Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of

* The definitions I provide of Greek and Hebrew words throughout are all taken from *Strong's Concordance*, which is readily available at various Bible study sites online.

Christ and *stewards* of the *mysteries* of God” (1 Corinthians 4:1, emphasis added). We are actually stewards of the intellectual properties of God!

2. *It's hidden from unbelievers, but available for believers.*

Solomon put it this way: “It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter” (Proverbs 25:2).

3. *It displays our glory.* In the days of King Solomon, God’s infinite wisdom was put on display for the queen of Sheba, leaving her stunned and breathless. Likewise, the wisdom of God’s Holy Spirit is to be demonstrated through His people to the world around us. This divine demonstration not only brings glory to God; it also glorifies His people. It is probably important to mention here that Jesus prayed, “The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one” (John 17:22). God shares His glory with His sons and daughters.

To understand Paul’s extraordinary teaching, it is important to note that the *italicized* verses in the 1 Corinthians 2 passage are quotes from the Old Testament prophet Isaiah. They provide a beautiful contrast between believers who lived before the cross and believers who live through the power of the cross, who are “born again” and live as “new creations.” This divine disparity is also evident in those who today have not yet accepted Christ and therefore have not experienced the transforming power of the cross in their lives. This relegates them to drawing only from the wisdom of man and excludes them from the mind of Christ. (By the way, if you are reading this book and you don’t know Jesus, this is a great time just to *stop* and ask Him into your life!)

In the passage, the prophet Isaiah makes a strong statement about the fact that no one knows the will of God. He proclaims that *eye has not seen and ear has not heard* the things God wants to do for

His people. Yet Paul answers the prophet of old by making it clear that those things they did not know back then, we know now because we have *God's Spirit* within us. His Spirit gives us access to His mind and thoughts. Isaiah the prophet goes on to ask a profound question: *Who has known the mind of the LORD, that he will instruct Him?*

Paul answers in effect, "We know! We have the mind of Christ."

"How do we actually have access to God's mind?" you ask. Paul says that the Holy Spirit knows the thoughts of God, and that the Holy Spirit lives in us. Consequently, we have access to God's Spirit, and having that access essentially gives us the ability to think like God! You heard me right: If you are a follower of Jesus, you can and should think like God. This is true spiritual intelligence.

Divine Smartphone

Let me clarify with a modern-day parable how spiritual intelligence works. Our smartphone is a great illustration of the way IQ, EQ and even SQ all work. Like a smartphone that has a finite amount of information stored in its memory, IQ and EQ are limited to the storage capacity of our human brains. We can increase our smartphone's memory, yet ultimately, its capacity is still relatively limited by the size of the phone. Likewise, we can increase what is stored in our own memory through education, experience, etc., but our brain's storage capacity is still finite.

On the other hand, when our smartphone connects to cellular data or Wi-Fi, suddenly we have the ability to access the Internet, which has billions of times more information than could ever be stored on a smartphone's memory. In the same way, when we connect to the Holy Spirit, we access the mind of Christ, and we tap into the Infinite One who knows *everything!* In fact, spiritual intelligence transcends IQ and EQ in the same way that the Internet has a billion times more information than the memory on our smartphone. Again, SQ is not just accessing your own spirit or brain. Instead, it

is connecting with God's Spirit, who is eternal, has all knowledge and wisdom, and knows the future.

Furthermore, the Holy Spirit has unfathomable experience with humankind and knows the heart of every person on the planet. The Spirit is the Genius of geniuses, the Scientist of scientists, the Doctor of doctors, the Engineer of engineers . . . you get the idea. He is the real definition of true brilliance. Think about it like this: The mind of Christ gives us access to the Internet of divine wisdom, which is the ultimate spiritual intelligence. Intrigued? Stay tuned, because the best is yet to come!