

Paul opened chapter 4 by telling believers to stand fast.

In Rom 5 he said we glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

The outcome of our trials will be good when we're faithful.

Most of us have heard someone ask the question,

- if God is so loving, why do people suffer.

Rom 5:3

3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

God's ultimate purpose is for us to grow into the image of His son.

Rom 8:29

those He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son,

2 Cor 4:17

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

Paul says to "stand fast in the Lord."

Phil 4:6

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Paul said to stand fast, now he says, be anxious for nothing.

- God will give us peace even when
- our problems are not solved.

We can have a peace that surpasses all understanding.

Peace as used here metaphorically speaks of "peace of mind."

When a person becomes a believer, he has "peace WITH God."

- He's made peace with God.
- He now sees Jesus as his savior.

When he makes Jesus Lord of his life,

- then he has the peace of God

2

- because he is no longer at war with God.

When we stop fighting against God, the war is over.

When we give up the fight:

- It's then we begin to experience
- the peace of God!

Rom 5:1

1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Peace as seen in the OT is "Shalom,"

- it means more than the absence of hostility
- or an inner sense of well-being.

It means wholeness, harmony,

- flourishing, delight, fulfillment.

It's not surprise that God's peace surpasses all understanding

There are other gifts from the Lord that are not fully comprehensible to us. The gift of salvation is "indescribable, 2 Cor 9:15"

The complexity and wisdom of God's plan is mysterious:

Isa 55:8-9

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord.

9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Eph 3:19

the love of Christ surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Jesus made a distinction between His peace and the peace of the world.

John 14:27

27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Isa 26:3

3 You will keep him in perfect peace,
Whose mind is stayed on You,
Because he trusts in You.

Testimony of God's peace,

- the fiery furnace

Paul and Silas singing praises at midnight while in prison.

Or Peter peacefully resting in his cell.

What about Jesus, sleeping on a boat during a storm.

Phil 4:7

(God) will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Your heart refers to your emotions

- and your mind to your thoughts.

Our emotions and our minds can be all over the place,

- but God can guard that for us thru Jesus Christ.

Last week I mentioned two words, one from verse 6 the other from verse 7.

Verse 6, "anxious" the Greek word is "merimnáō" derivative of "merizo" meaning to tear, to divide into parts or to separate

Verse 7, "understanding" derived from "Noús" meaning the mind.

Paul says the peace of God surpasses all understanding.

So when you combine the two words, they mean to "divide the mind."

And we know that a double minded man is unstable in all his ways,

A double minded person can't praise God.

But the submissive mind of chapter 2

- can come to the Lord with supplication.

However, a proud person doesn't feel the need for God,

- so he doesn't rely on the Lord for his needs.

If we have the spiritual mind of chapter 3

- we'll show our appreciation to God.

However, a worldly person doesn't know

- that everything he has is from God,
- therefore, he can't appreciate what he has.

When we practice what Paul taught in chapters 1-3

- we can truly experience
- the secure mind spoken of in this chapter.

Learn to take all things to the Lord.

This doesn't mean we will not have trials in our life.

- In spite of our trials we can experience the peace of God.

Daniel had God's peace, he showed it thru his prayer.

Because he was faithful, he was thrown into a lions den.

Phil 4:8-9

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things. 9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

Paul uses two main verbs in these two verses, the first is in verse 8, “meditate” and the second is in verse 9, “do.”

So often in scripture

- our thoughts are what produce action.

At the last supper Jesus said to the disciples, if you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

He was teaching them to be humble and to serve others, not expecting to be served.

Matt 12:35

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

Romans is a good example of thinking and doing.

- Paul spent the first 11 chapters of Romans
- telling us what we should know about sin,
- about God, about the world etc.

Then in chapter 12 he said:

Rom 12:1

1 I beseech you therefore, (everything you've learned up to now) brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

Eph 4:1, Col 1:10 and 1 Thess 2:12

- all tell us to walk worthy,

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things.

Paul said in verse 7, the peace of God will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Now he says, meditate on these things:

Meditate: is derived from the Greek Word “Logozomai.” The word means to think logically.

In Rom 3 Paul was saying there is no room for boasting.

Then in verse 28 he said, Therefore we conclude (Logozomai, “to think logically”) that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

Isa 1:18,
come, let us reason together, though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow.

When we think logically,

- our thoughts will be pure.
- We'll have righteous thoughts.

2 Cor 10:5 says we are to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

It's not unreasonable for us to be immersed in the word of God.

What enters your mind when you think of

- things that are true and noble,
- and just and pure and lovely.
- These are all quality virtues.

The Psalmist said,

Ps 19:7-9

7 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;
The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;

8 The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;
 The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;
 9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;
 The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

Let's take a look at these one at a time. Paul says, "whatever things are true or truthful"

Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life.

We live in a culture today that has abandoned truth.

A person can say there is no truth,
 • but is that a true statement?

Truth is not what makes people feel good.
 • "oh, just follow your heart."

When someone says that if makes them feel good
 • because they're focusing on self.

A truth is not simply what is believed,
 • a lie can be believed as well.

Listen, those who cook up stories usually find themselves in hot water.

Truth is not truth because the majority agrees. 51% can still be wrong.

Truth isn't truth because something works, lies can appear to work and still be a lie.

Someone once said that a whispered lie is just as bad as one published.

John 8:44 tells us that Satan is a liar.

2 Cor 11:3 Satan wants to corrupt our mind with lies.

2 Cor 11:3

3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

People have the attitude that it may be true for you but not for me.

A day is coming 2 Thes 2:11, when God will send them strong delusion, (Paul was speaking of the great apostasy, the falling away) that they should believe the lie,

The delusion Paul is speaking of

- is when people do not believe
- that God is God.

then Paul says in verse 12 of 2 Thess, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

This is a scary place for those who do not believe.

Unfortunately, many people will not believe without physical proof.

Paul warned in Romans that there is a time when God

- will give them over to their lies.

We're told in Gen 6 that God's spirit will not always strive with man.

So Paul says, whatever things are true,

Websters defines truth as the body of real things, events, and facts: actuality.

The Greek word for truth is "Aletheia."

- It literally means to unhide or to hide nothing.

The Hebrew word for truth is "emeth" meaning

- "firmness, constancy and duration."

When Jesus claimed to be the way the truth and the life,

- could He make that statement
- if He were merely a man?

No, and Paul said in Romans 1:4 that

- Jesus claimed to be the Son of God
- which speaks of His deity.

Jesus' claim was validated

- when He rose from the dead, same verse, Rom 1:4.

Paul continued in verse 8, whatever things are noble.

- That is, whatever things are
- worthy, honored or esteemed.

In 1 Tim 3:8 & 11 Paul used the same Greek word for Noble

- when he wrote of the characteristics deacons and their wives should possess.

8 They must be well respected and have integrity. They must not be heavy drinkers or dishonest with money.

In verse 11 he said the wives must not slander others and must exercise self-control and be faithful in everything they do.

Paul was essentially saying that

- our minds should be on
- things that are respectable.

As believers, we're constantly having to train our minds

- to think on the things which are noble.

Prov 23:7

For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.

If you take garbage in, you'll put garbage out.

- If you take the word of God in,
- you'll put the word of God out.

Whatever things are just: meaning right or righteous.

God's word helps us to live a righteous life.

David said in Psa 119:105,

Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

Whatever things are pure: David asked a question in the same Psalm 119,

He asked, how can a young person stay pure? Then he answered the question, by obeying your word.

The Greek word Paul uses in verse 8 for pure is "hagnós."

- It not only means to remain chaste, but also virginal.

Paul said in 1 Tim 5 not to share in another person's sins

- but keep yourself pure.

John Bunyon, the writer of Pilgrims Progress wrote in the fly leaf of his bible,

- "either this book will keep you from sin,
- or sin will keep you from this book."

None are perfect,

- but when the Lord sees His people,
- those covered by His blood,
- He sees us as perfect.

In fact, the word pure as defined in the Greek

- not only means to remain chaste or virginal,
- it also means to be innocent or blameless.

When we're obeying the word, we will be blameless.

Phil 4:9

9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

Again, two verbs. One in verse 8 and the other in verse 9, meditate and do.

Meditate can have several different meanings

- In this case, it means simply, "to think."

What a person thinks on most, that's what he's going to do.

So Paul encourages believers to follow his example.

- In 1 Cor 4 Paul writes to the church as his dear children.
- There he urges them to imitate him.

Again in 1 Cor 11 he says to imitate him as he imitated Christ.

In 3 John we're told, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good.

Most people,

- teach their children good moral standards
- even if they're not believers.

Programs such as AA, teen challenge, counseling sites, private rehab centers, homeless shelters etc, are designed to help people get back on track.

Paul says, I have the answers.

- It's in the book, the bible!

In fact, he says at the end of verse 9 "the God of peace will be with you."

So not only do we make peace with God,

- we experience the peace of God
- but ultimately the God of Peace is with us!