



Sermon Text: Philippians 4:8-9

Sermon Date: May 21, 2017

In our passage, Paul concludes the section he started in 4:1 by telling us the final priorities we must pursue as we stand firm in the Lord. This week we saw the importance of the mind. It is easy to overlook the importance of our minds, but any real reform in our lives begins with our minds. A renewed mind enables a transformed life (Rom. 12:2).

THINK THE RIGHT KIND OF THOUGHTS

In verse 8, Paul challenges us to think the right kind of thoughts. He is both broad and detailed. We are to fix our mind upon **WHATEVER** is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and commendable. We are to search to see **IF THERE IS ANYTHING** excellent or praise-worthy.

We can imagine the impact focusing upon these qualities would have on our jobs, our marriages, and our church, but how do we do it? It is important to remember that the thoughts that come out of our mind are primarily the result of the thoughts that go into it.

1. **Fill your mind with these things – The Scriptures.** First, we must fill up our minds with these qualities, and that requires our minds to be saturated with the Scriptures. We will not make any substantial growth in godliness—most especially in our thought life—if we are absent from God’s Word.
2. **Starve your mind of the opposite of these things.** We must guard what we are allowing to fill our minds. How much of what you are filling your mind with is false (instead of true), base (instead of honorable), wrong (instead of right), etc.?

If what you think about shapes how you live, and the thoughts you allow to fill your mind influence the thoughts that will flow out of it, then it is critically important to fill your mind with Scripture and starve your mind of what is contrary to Paul’s list.

PRACTICE THE RIGHT KIND OF ACTIONS

In verse 9, Paul calls the church to practice what they received from him by his teaching and example. We’ve covered the importance of examples throughout this letter, so Pastor Justin didn’t spend much time here.

CASE STUDY: ANXIETY

Instead, we examined Matthew 6:25-34 and the sin of anxiety to show how Jesus equated faith primarily with thinking. We are to watch nature, observe, deduce, and apply. Martyn Lloyd-Jones defined faith as this: “It is a man insisting upon thinking when everything seems determined to bludgeon and knock him down in an intellectual sense.” John MacArthur says, “If you worry, it’s because you’re not thinking; you’re being bludgeoned by your circumstances. If you rise above them and think about your God and think about his purposes and think about his promises and think about his plans, you won’t worry.” But here is the challenge: How can you recall truths about God, his purposes and promises if you don’t already know them? You can’t! To avoid anxiety (and bitterness, anger, lust, and a whole host of other thought-related sins) we must *first* hide God’s Word in our hearts.

Our minds matter! Our minds shape our lives. And if we ever hope to live a gospel-shaped life, we must first allow the gospel to shape our minds.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you from the sermon and the biblical text from this Sunday?
2. While this text is easy to understand, why is it so difficult to apply consistently?
3. Are you saturating your mind with God’s Word? What are some practical steps you can take to increase your intake of Scripture?