

Pursue What is Pure

Sermon Text: Philippians 4:7-9

⁷ *And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

⁸ *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.*

1.) Why would Paul speak in such general ("whatever") terms? How does the word "is" and each descriptor provide "limits"? Where do we find suitable definitions of these adjectives?

2.) There's the old saying, "You are what you eat." Here Paul is points us to something of a spiritual corollary, "You are what you think." How does what we think and focus on influence our faith and Christian living? How can we change and influence such thought patterns?

3.) (Verse 7) *"And the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."* What is the special work of God's peace? Think of other examples from the Bible that remind us of God's presence.

First Lesson: Proverbs 2

¹ *My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you,*

² *turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding,*

³ *and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding,*

⁴ *and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure,*

⁵ *then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.*

⁶ *For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.*

⁷ *He holds victory in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless,*

⁸ *for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones.*

⁹ *Then you will understand what is right and just and fair—every good path.*

¹⁰ *For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.*

¹¹ *Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you.*

¹² *Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse,*

¹³ *who leave the straight paths to walk in dark ways,*

¹⁴ *who delight in doing wrong and rejoice in the perverseness of evil,*

¹⁵ *whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways.*

¹⁶ *It will save you also from the adulteress, from the wayward wife with her seductive words,*

¹⁷ *who has left the partner of her youth and ignored the covenant she made before God.*

¹⁸ *For her house leads down to death and her paths to the spirits of the dead.*

¹⁹ *None who go to her return or attain the paths of life.*

²⁰ *Thus you will walk in the ways of good men and keep to the paths of the righteous.*

²¹ *For the upright will live in the land, and the blameless will remain in it;*

²² *but the wicked will be cut off from the land, and the unfaithful will be torn from it.*

1.) What are the benefits/blessings of pursuing godly wisdom?

2.) When pondering proverbs it is important to note that such results are typical, not guaranteed in every case (e.g. the godly person typically lives a long life). What examples from Scripture encourage us and prove this chapter true?

3.) King Solomon was giving advice to a young man. (His son, Rehoboam, did not seem to listen.) Evaluate this conversation in comparison to parent/teen discussions these days.

Gospel: Matthew 6:22-23

²² "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!"

1.) According to Jesus why is it important to have the proper focus?

2.) We are so easily deceived! In context Jesus is speaking of the love of money. Give examples of some other "lights" that we go after that actually turn out to be darkness.