

Series: Striving Together For the Faith

# THINK ON THESE THINGS

## PHILIPPIANS 4:8

Text: Philippians 4:8

### ***Philippians 4:8***

<sup>8</sup> *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

Introduction:

The thought life is one of the great battlegrounds of the Christian life.

The battle for the mind is not just because it is the most complex mechanism in the world, but because it is the most influential organ of your body.

Whatever we think about is what we become and do. It is as Solomon said in Proverbs 23:7:

### ***Proverbs 23:7***

<sup>7</sup> *For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.*

Whatever we dwell on in our minds will eventually be displayed in our life.

Attitudes become actions.

There is nothing any of us has ever done that the decision was not first made in our minds.

What we do in life is the sum total of our thoughts.

The feeding of the mind produces the fruit of the life.

Note what we read in Genesis 6:5:

**Genesis 6:5**

<sup>5</sup> *And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that **every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.***

They displayed in their life what they dwelt on in the mind.

Note again in 2 Corinthians 10:5:

**2 Corinthians 10:5**

<sup>5</sup> ***Casting down imaginations,*** and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and ***bringing into captivity every thought*** to the obedience of Christ;

The mind must be guarded. Our thought-life must be controlled.

Note Solomon's instructions:

**Proverbs 4:23-27**

*<sup>23</sup> Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. <sup>24</sup> Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. <sup>25</sup> Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. <sup>26</sup> Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. <sup>27</sup> Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.*

There is a battle going on for the mind. Our battles with temptation are won or lost in the mind; therefore it is important what we think about.

Notice:

## **1. THE BIBLICAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR OUR THOUGHT LIFE**

**Philippians 4:8**

*<sup>8</sup> Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; **if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.***

It is important to understand that these words are not a suggestion but a command. There is a way we are to think. We are commanded to think on certain things.

Notice that Paul speaks of:

#### A. A Thought Life That Is Proper

Our thought life is to consist of that which is virtuous and worthy of praise. The word "virtue" speaks of that which is excellent in contrast to that which is cheap. The word "praise" speaks of that which is praiseworthy. He is describing a proper thought life.

A good way to judge what we think about is to ask:

- Is what I am thinking about marked by excellence or is it something cheap and worth thinking about
  
- Is what I am thinking about something that is praiseworthy or condemned? Is it something that is positive and beneficial?

Note:

#### ***Job 31:1***

*<sup>1</sup> I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?*

Job linked what he saw to what he thought. He declares that he had made a covenant with his eyes so that his thoughts would be pure and proper.

The Christian should desire and develop a proper thought life. We should think reflect on good things and refrain from bad things. It was this attitude we see in the Psalmist

***Psalm 119:11***

*<sup>11</sup> Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

Note not only does Paul speak of “A Thought Life That Is Proper” but also:

B. A Thought Life That Is Practical

The word "think" speaks of careful reflection.

It speaks of taking account of things with a view of committing yourself to the things considered.

We are to turn what we think about into practical deeds.

It is to turn our thoughts into actions, our sentiments into commitments, and our words into deeds.

Illustration:

One little boy said the Bible begins with Genesis and ends with Revolutions.

In my opinion that is a good description of the Bible.

What we read in the Bible should revolutionize our life.

Note not only “The Biblical Instructions for Our Thought Life” but also:

## **2. THE BENEFICIAL ITEMS FOR OUR THOUGHT LIFE**

Paul not only tells us how to think but gives us a list of items that we ought to think about.

He is saying that instead of thinking about the wrong things, there are certain good things we should think about.

As we look at the text we see a list of things he gives us to think about.

We read in verse 8:

## **Philippians 4:8**

*<sup>8</sup> Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

Notice the list that he gives. First we see:

### A. Things That Guard Our Personal Life

The first three things that Paul mentions seem to be personal and involve one's inner character. These are things that if one thinks about it will guard the inner life and serve as a protector from one's personal character being defiled.

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These are things that if one thinks about it will guard the inner life and serve as a protector from one's personal character being defiled.

- He tells us to think on things that are "**true.**" These are things that are true in character, things that are real in contrast to that which is phony.

- He tells us to think on things that are "**honest.**" These are things that are worthy and respectable.
- We are to think on things that "**just.**" These are things that are righteous and godly.

What we think about influences our life.

As we think on things that are true, honest, and just, it will influence us to be true, honest, and just.

Thinking on such things develops inner character. If we think on things that are set in contrast to these things, we will find ourselves behaving in a dishonest and unjust way.

Note there are not only the things that guard our personal life, but also the:

## B. The Things That Guard Our Public Life

The next three things that Paul mentions seem to apply to our public life and how our life relates to others.

- We are told to think on things that are "pure."

This speaks of not only a purity from sin but of motives as well.



What we do is important, but equally important is why we do it.

- We are to think on things that are "lovely."

The word speaks of that which excites loves, that which promotes brotherly love and creates agreement.

- We are to think on things that are of a "good report."

This speaks of that which is winsome and attractive.

All these things involve our relationship with others and thinking on these things develops our relationship with others. If one is always thinking in terms of revenge, getting even, they will behave that way toward people. But if we think pure thoughts, lovely thoughts, and thoughts of good report, we will act differently toward people.

If we discipline ourselves to think this way it will be revealed in our private character and in our public conduct.

Close:

Someone asked Isaac Newton how he discovered the law of gravity. He replied, "By thinking about it all the time." If a Christian will think about good things all the time it will result in a good life, one that pleases God. So I ask, 'WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?'