

YOUR RIGHTEOUS MIND

Philippians 4:7-9 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 8 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. 9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

I. Opening

A. Cruising the radio the other day

1. I came across some non-Christian stations

a) *I was struck by how many songs that I heard talked about dying – “we’re going to die on the dance floor”*

b) *This represents to me one glaring fact*

c) *This generation has lost hope*

(1) It’s not that they are just losing hope, it’s that they have lost it.

(2) Without hope there is nothing to look forward to.

(3) There is no reason to go on

d) *This is why they talk about death and dying*

e) *It’s not just young people though*

(1) I heard the other day that the Rolling Stones released a new song. The title was “Doom and Gloom”

2. We are facing a crisis in our culture

a) *It is not an economic crisis*

b) *It is not a military crisis*

c) *It is not an educational crisis*

(1) These things all exist, but the crisis that I am referring to is a thought crisis

(2) Simply put, people are thinking the wrong things

II. Peace that passes understanding

A. As Christians our thoughts need to be elevated above the rest of humanity

1. I did not say that we needed to be elevated but our thoughts need to be

B. We need a good dose of peace in the church

1. Peace that passes understanding

a) *That means that even when things are going wrong all around us, we still have the peace of God*

b) *When we can't find our way out, we still have the peace of God*

c) *When bad news comes our way, we still have the peace of God*

d) *When there are disagreements in the church – we still have the peace of God*

C. It is the peace of God which keeps our hearts and minds

1. When we do not allow the peace of God to reign in our hearts we get fearful and lustful

a) *Without peace – fear takes control*

(1) When fear takes control then we start believing the lies of the enemy and we are defeated

b) *Without peace – lust takes control*

(1) When you cannot be content with what you have been given – then covetousness sets in and you end up in sin

2. The first sign of starting to lose out with God is that you lose the peace of God

a) *I am not saying that you should be some sort of super saint that never worries or doubts*

(1) But when you allow those thoughts to drive out the peace of God – you are headed in the wrong direction

III. Adding to peace

A. Peace by itself is not enough

1. For once your mind and heart has been kept through peace – you still have to discipline your mind and heart away from evil

2. Pastor Cox – you can't stop the birds from flying overhead, but you can stop them from building a nest in your hair.

a) *Thoughts will come – but you don't have to dwell on them*

b) *It's when we allow a thought to take root in our mind and continue to dwell on it that we start toward the path of backsliding*

3. But more than just keeping us from backsliding – we need to train our thoughts after the path of Christ

B. True things

1. What is truth? – The word of God – fill your mind with the Bible

a) *Read it, study it, memorize it, quote it, and apply it!*

C. Honest things

1. What is honesty? – Without deception

a) *Think openly and rightly and you will Live openly and rightly*

D. Just things

1. What is just? – Fairness

a) *Dealing fairly with others – regardless of race, gender, etc.*

E. Pure things

1. What is pure? – Keeping yourself from impure things

a) *Be careful what you allow into your thoughts*

b) *Through media, entertainment, friends,*

F. Lovely things

1. What is lovely – compassion

a) *Not being selfish or self serving*

b) *But looking for ways to help others – thinking about ways to be a Good Samaritan*

G. Good report

1. What is a good report? – Faith

a) *Allowing faith to arise in your heart and life*

b) *Whose report will you believe?*

(1) His report says...

H. Virtue

1. What is virtue? – Looking for the best in others

a) *Instead of looking for faults – look for the strengths*

b) *Instead of repeating the gossip – give a good testimony*

about someone

I. Praise

1. What is praise? Giving God what He is worthy of

a) Let your mind dwell on all that He has done for you

(1) When I think about the Lord...

J. Think on these things

1. This is a command

a) It is not a suggestion

b) It is something that as Christians we should strive for

(1) Give no place to the devil

IV. Win the mind battle

A. If we can get a righteous mind we cannot be defeated

1. Guard your thoughts

a) Think on these things

2. And if you do think on these things, then the peace of God shall be with you

a) It's the cycle of right thinking – the peace of God causes us to think on right things – which gives us the peace of God.

3. It's when we lose the battle of the mind, that we don't live up to our potential in Christ

a) But more than that – when we lose the mind battle we end up in sin

(1) Sin doesn't happen overnight – it happens after a thought has come in and we let it take root in our mind

James 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

4. Win the battle of the mind, and you will defeat the devil every time!