



A Meditation From the Book of Philippians

Philippians 4:8-9

I. The Importance of Our Minds

The Bible is clear about the fact that the eye is a gate to the mind and our minds are our souls or the real "us." We are therefore greatly impacted by what we read, see and think about. These things in turn influence our emotions and these determine our actions. Christians are thus exhorted to guard their minds (1 Peter 1:13) as, if they do not they will fail and bring the fair name of Jesus into disrepute. Many have walked this road and far too many still do!

It is important to know that the life and power of Jesus in us is released when we train our minds to agree with God's word. When we do this we "trigger" the power of Jesus in us and are transformed into His image (Romans 12:1-2). In the Book of Ephesians Paul urges us to have a change of mind so that God can clothe us with Christ's actions (Ephesians 4:17-24). Actually to repent means to have a change of mind! We should all live lives of repentance so that real Holy Spirit renewal can impact us and govern our behavior. This is an urgent need today. Thus the two verses before us from the Book of Philippians constitute a plea to Christians not to allow dishonorable and wicked things to fill their minds. We must:

A. Discern the pure and lovely things and think upon them

No doubt one of the greatest tools of the devil is the many screen images that entrap our minds! We should know this and have the discipline to control our many devices or simply put them off when wickedness and filth is projected through them. It also induces us to waste precious time as we find ourselves drawn into their many snares. The Internet is also becoming a very dangerous tool in the hands of the Devil as it is filled with all sorts of distasteful images that serve as bait to lure our carnal desires into danger. I have recently discovered that Christian people are watching pornography on the web and doing so in the belief that they can handle it! This is just nonsense and we have to have the determination to set in place boundaries as we use the net. An image is a very powerful thing and it can penetrate our minds, pollute us and control our actions. Don't think for one moment that this is not true of you. No one is immune to these dangers. Paul warns us that to be carnally minded will bring death to our spiritual lives:

Romans 8:6 (NKJV®)

"For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

B. Meditate on Scripture

The early church had no Bibles and therefore had to retain more of the Word of God by hearing and thinking. Meditation means "chewing the cud" spiritually. That is; going over a verse of scripture time and time again until its truth becomes real to you. This is a forgotten spiritual practice but it needs to be rediscovered. The Bible has much to say about meditating on God's Word (Psalm 5:1; Psalm 19:4; Psalm 104:34; Psalm 119:97; 1Timothy 4:15). All this means that we have to saturate our minds with the word of God.

C. Protect the presence of God in your life

The sweet Holy Spirit can be grieved by our wicked and sinful thoughts and actions (Ephesians 4:30). Feasting our minds on filth drives the peace of God from our lives and disempowers us. Don't do it! God is with those who in mind are with Him. This is Paul's exhortation to the Church at Philippi. So, we are to guard our spiritual lives and think and do those things that please God. The following verse of scripture should be an encouragement to all of us as it is a promise:

Isaiah 26:3 (NKJV®)

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

The abiding lesson in all of this is, "**See through your eyes and not with your eyes.**" When we "see through our eyes" we control that which enters our minds through this important "gate." By contrast, when we see with our eyes we take in everything, have dropped our guard and can be deceived, seduced and corrupted by wickedness. If we set our minds on the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God, then the God of peace will be with us and what could be better than this?

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