

Fellowship of Joy in Peace (Part 3)

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[0:00] Take your Bibles this morning and open them once again to Philippians chapter 4 and we have some unfinished business to do with verses 2 through 9.

! Philippians chapter 4 verses 2 through 9. This text is literally packed with good stuff. It takes a little while to preach through it. In fact, I could spend longer, but I don't want to weary you too much. And so we do need to move on, but a couple more things we need to look at.

I want to read the entire text again, verses 2 through 9. Philippians chapter 4 verses 2 through 9. I implore Iodina and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.

And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers whose names are in the book of life.

[1:17] Rejoice in the Lord always. And again I will say rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving. Let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy, meditate on these things.

The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do. And the God of peace will be with you.

Alright? Tremendous passage. Our subject is peace. Peace. Peace. So the fellowship of joy in peace.

[2:34] Peace. What a good subject. Something we all need. Something we all want. No doubt about that.

And the best part is something we all can have. Because it is promised to us. Not only here in this passage, but elsewhere in the Bible.

It is promised, peace is promised, to all true followers of Christ. And what is this peace? We looked at that a number of weeks ago.

We defined it as an unshakable tranquility. Further, defining it as an unconquerable confidence. Confidence in self?

Oh no. A confidence in the world? Absolutely not. But a confidence in God. An unconquerable confidence in Him. And in His Word.

[3:30] And in His love toward us. And His grace. And on and on we could go. And did go a few weeks ago. Sum it up. It is an abiding, calm.

A calm, even amid all the storms of life. Pretty good definition of peace. Sound like something you want? Yeah.

We all feel that way. And it's promised to us here. Paul said in verse 7, And the peace of God. That peace that only comes from God.

Which surpasses all understanding. Will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. That sounds like a promise. And Paul said it again.

Or stated it again in verse 9. And the God of peace will be with you. That's a promise, right? Pretty clear.

[4:31] And yet, hold on a minute. I need to remind you. Don't miss seeing the little conjunction. The little word and.

And on the front end of every time Paul states. The two times Paul states the promise. Don't miss that little word and. It's important there. Because it tells us that this promise.

As much as we wish it were different. The promise is conditional. It's conditional. As many of God's promises in His Word are. Conditional.

This promise is conditional. The promise of peace is conditional. And the word and. And the word and. That's a little redundant. But the word and tells us that. And.

It tells us that the precepts or the rules of behavior that Paul mentions before he gets to the promise. Tells us those precepts must be obeyed.

[5:29] In order to have the promise. And so though again we may wish it. To be different. You can't have the promise of peace. Without first obeying the precepts for peace.

Now if that's the case. And it's pretty clear from scripture that it is. Then what are these precepts. These rules of behavior. We need to know them. Now they're stated for us here. Very clearly in the form.

Most of them in the form of exhortations. If we can read them for ourselves. But let's consider. A little more in depth. What these precepts really are.

Now we already. We've already started that. We've looked at four of them. And so here they are by way of review. Precept number one. Be reconciled. Be reconciled.

Paul exhorts us in verse two. To be of the same mind in the Lord. Now that's pretty important. That we all be of the same mind. In the Lord. And the implication being.

[6:25] That the church there at Philippi. And the implication being further. That most churches. From time to time. Have people within those churches. That are at odds with one another.

Over some issue. Over something. Whatever it may be. And so. The admonition. The exhortation. The precept is. That we are to be of the same mind.

In the Lord. And why are God's people. Not to be at odds with one another. Well not only because that hinders. Any personal peace. That you may desire to have in your own life.

When you're at odds with someone else. But also. In the bigger picture. Considering the bigger picture. Considering the church as a whole. We as the church. Cannot hope to minister the gospel of peace.

While we're at war with one another. It's very clear. Precept number two. Be rejoicing. Be rejoicing. Paul said in verse four.

[7:22] That famous verse. Rejoice in the Lord always. And again. I will say to you. Rejoice. And that is. Always. Paul is saying. Always.

And this is something you must be determined to do. Always express. On the outside. What. Is true on the inside. Or what should be true. And if you're a born again believer.

It is true. On the inside. And that is joy. The joy of the Lord. Abiding in your hearts. Through your salvation. So always.

Express on the outside. What is true on the inside. The joy of the Lord. A joy. That you should never ever get over. A joy. That. Circumstances. Can never change.

Precept number three. Be reasonable. Be reasonable. He said in verse five. Let your gentleness. Or. Your. Gracious. Reasonableness.

[8:18] Be known. To all. Men. All. People. Not just those within the body of Christ. But even those outside the body of Christ. And why should we? Because the Lord is at hand.

The Lord is at hand. And that is. He is saying. He is admonishing us. To stop being self-centered people. To be self-seeking. To be self-serving people.

Always having to have our own way. Always having to have our own rights. It's kind of woven in the fabric of our American-ness.

To always have to have our rights. That's all we ever hear about these days. I know my rights. And so forth. But. Paul is saying. Stop that. That's what he's saying.

Stop it. Be gracious. To one another. Be gracious people. And let that kind of graciousness. That reasonableness about you. Be something that everybody knows about you.

[9:15] That is. You're just easy to get along with. Easy to work with. You're gracious. You're reasonable. Number four. Be reassured. Now this again is all review. This was the one we looked at last Sunday.

Be reassured. Verse six. Be anxious for nothing. Or in some translations. Don't worry about anything. Don't worry about anything.

Now let me repeat something that I said last week. There is. I really believe that there is nothing in the believer's life that epitomizes more accurately the opposite of peace than anxiety.

Or let's use the other word worry. Worry. Now not that we don't have reasons to worry. You know reasons to be upset or reason to be anxious.

We all have problems. Every one of us that we face. Most of them are small ones. Probably more smaller than we think. Some of them are big ones. Certainly so. But again.

[10:20] The real problem is what? It's worry. It's anxiety. And it's close cousin fear. In fact they're inseparable in your life.

From anxiety to fear. And these things dominate. Or this is dominating your thought life. Distorting the outlook you have on life. Dictating the things you do in life.

And also of course destroying the joy of life. And Paul says stop that. Instead be anxious for nothing.

See the real problem is the anxiety. Not the circumstance itself. Whatever it may be. And so Paul says be anxious for nothing. But in everything by prayer and supplication.

With thanksgiving. Let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God. Which surpasses all understanding. Will guard your heart and mind.

[11:19] Through Christ Jesus. Alright now we're ready to see the remaining two precepts. There are two more. And Paul introduces the last two.

These other two precepts. He introduces them with the word finally. Now don't be thrown by that. We've seen that word before already.

In this letter. In fact Paul used the word finally. Way back there in the first verse of chapter 3. If you will recall. And he still had half a letter to write. So he's not saying this is the last thing I want to say to you.

He's not wrapping it up here. And also we need to understand. That Paul is not introducing a new subject here either. This is not. Now we've talked about peace. Now we're going to talk about something else.

The subject is still peace. And not only that. The subject is still the precepts for peace. Alright so why did he use the word finally? Well it's just Paul's way of saying.

[12:15] I have a couple more things to say to you about this. Just simply that. Or he's saying. Let me exhort you on a couple more things.

Concerning peace. And how to have it. Two more things. And they are. Be right thinking.

That's precept number 5. And be responsive. I might even add actively responsive.

That's precept number 6. And he concludes it with these words. And verse 9. And the peace of God will be with you. There's the promise again.

The peace of God will be with you. Now you might recall. This is a wonderful promise. Wonderful promise. Not only. According to verse 7. Does the king of kings place his guards.

[13:12] Over your heart and mind. And those guards. They never sleep. They never slumber. They never leave. Not only will he place his guards. Over your heart and mind. But the king himself.

Will take up residence. In your castle. He will be with you. The God of peace will be with you. It's a wonderful promise. But what. Must we do. To have it.

Well these two things. Be right thinking. And be responsive. Alright. Let's begin with right thinking. Be right thinking. I heard about a man. Who bought a new piece.

Of exercise equipment. But you know. People like to buy those things. We have a couple of things like that. In our house. I'm thinking about a treadmill. That's sitting in our. Our. Our bedroom. By the way. Do any of you have a treadmill.

In your house. Do you use it. Okay. Anyway. This fellow went out. And he's. You know. Very physically conscious. And he wants to exercise. And so he buys this new fangled piece.

[14:08] Of exercise equipment. And he gets it home. And of course. It's in a box. And unassembled. And so he opens up the box. And he lays all the pieces out. And he's looking at those. And then he picks up.

And this is something a man usually doesn't do. But he picks up the instructions. And he reads those things. And rereads the instructions. And he cannot. No matter how hard he tries. Cannot figure out.

How to put the thing together. And so he goes next door. He has an elderly man. That lives next door. And he's a bit of a handyman. And so he asks his neighbor. To come over. And help him. With this piece of exercise equipment.

And so he comes over. And he doesn't even look at the instructions. And he looks at all the pieces. And he picks up every piece. And examines each piece. And then he begins to put it together. And he puts it all together.

In a relatively short period of time. And this young man. He's just dumbfounded. He says. I don't understand that. He said. You didn't even look at the instructions. To which the older man replied. [15:06] He says. The fact is. I can't read. And he said. When a fellow can't read. He's got to think. Got to think. You see.

We need to think. I think we've forgotten how to think. We want everything. You know. Spoon fed to us. Or we want the answers given to us.

And we don't want to think. We need to use our brains. A little bit. And we've forgotten how to do that. We've forgotten the fact is.

That we can control our thoughts. And we can control this process. We can. In a very determined way. Use our brains to think about things.

I heard about a man. Who was driving down the street one day. And he noticed this. Lady standing outside of her car. And because she had kind of a look of distress on her face.

[16:03] He decided he'd pull over. And get out. And ask her. Or if he could help her. And so he did. And first thing he asked was. What's the problem? To which the lady responded. I don't know.

I was just driving down the street. And it just quit. My car just quit. I don't know what happened. And so. The man. You know. Popped up the hood. And he tinkered a little bit inside.

Under the hood. And then he got in the car. He turned the key on. And off. And on. And off. And then he looked at the dash. And he got out of the car. And he said. Lady. Your car is out of gas. That's the problem. And she said very.

Very seriously. She said. Oh. Can I drive it home like that? She wasn't thinking.

Was she? I'm sorry ladies. Let me. Let me give you. Let me give you one for the guys. It seems there was this guy. This young man. Who had a car. And he wanted to sell it.

[16:59] And he went to his uncle. And he said. Uncle. I need some advice. I've got a car. It has a hundred thousand miles on. I need to sell it. His uncle said. Well you know. You're going to have a pretty hard time. Selling it.

If it has a hundred thousand miles on it. He said. And so. The boy said. He said. What do I do? Give me some advice. He said. And his uncle replied. He said. And half jokingly. He said. Well you know. Some people do. Get in there.

And turn the odometer back. So that the car looks like. It has less miles than it really does. And his nephew thought about that. He said. Well I think I'll do that. A few weeks later.

The uncle saw the nephew. And he said. Hey by the way. Did you sell your car? And he said. Sell the car. Why should I? It only has two thousand miles on it. I'm telling these jokes this morning. Because Wes LaRue is not here. And somebody's got to take up the slack. You know. On that. Now of course. You know. The whole idea here.

[17:56] Is. To think. Use our brains. To use those mental processes. That God has created us with.

We need to learn to think. We need to use our brains. And that. In a very remote way. These illustrate. These illustrate.

What Paul is talking about. About thinking. And so Paul is telling us. To those of us who are believers. Followers of Christ. And we desire to have peace in our lives.

He's saying. This is what you need to do. You need to master the way you think. Be very determined about that. Don't just let your brain think whatever it wants to think.

And don't just let it go amok. But be in charge of it. Think. Spend some time thinking. And think the right way. In fact.

[18:53] He says at the close of verse 8. After he's already listed a number of things. And we're going to look at those things this morning by the way. But he says at the close of this in verse 8. Meditate on these things.

Meditate on them. And the word meditate by the way comes from a Greek word. Logizomai is the word. But it means to think. That's why some translations use that English word.

Think. To think. But it's more than just simply thinking thoughts. You know. Just simply the biological process of thinking thoughts.

I mean we think thoughts all the time. We can't help ourselves. I mean you're thinking right now. You may not be thinking about what I'm saying. But you're thinking about something. Maybe you're thinking about those two jokes I just told.

And you're trying to remember them. So you can tell them to somebody else. I don't know. But let's think about what Paul is saying. And he's saying this is more than just. Don't just simply think thoughts. The word logizomai by the way means to carefully consider things.

[19:57] It means to very seriously think. Seriously evaluate. Seriously consider.

Logizomai literally means this. If I can put it all together. And give you a full blown definition of this word. And especially as Paul uses it. It means this.

To use your thought processes that God has given you. To. In a very determined way. To evaluate. The truth and value of a thing.

For purposes of coming to the right conclusion. So that. You can take action. That's the whole process of logizomai.

From thinking the thought. From the initial thinking of the thought. To. In a very determined way. Evaluating. Considering. The truth of it.

[20:56] The value of it. For purposes of coming to the right conclusion. The right conclusion. The one and only. Right conclusion. So that you can act it out.

You can take action. You see. Listen. The way. You use. Your brain. The way. You. Think.

Is important. Isn't it? It's important. The way. You. Think. About. Things. Is crucial. Let me.

Give you. A series. Of axioms. Those are abiding truths. Truths. Things that are true. All the time. A series of axioms. All right. Get. Get these down. These are not original with me.

So you ought to write it down. Number one. Here's axiom. Number one. Watch your thoughts.

Because they become words. That's axiom. Number one.

[21:52] Watch your thoughts. Because they become words. Second. Watch your words. Because they become actions. Third. Watch your actions.

Because they become habits. And fourth. Watch your habits. Because they become character. And finally. Watch your character.

Because it becomes your destiny. That's pretty true. Mark Twain. Mark Twain. Rather. Once wrote. A person's real life.

Is led. In the head. The brain. The thoughts. What you think. The. The issues. And.

And such. That you entertain. In your brain. Comes before. Everything else. And. Dictates. May dictate. If you allow it to. Dictate.

[22:46] Whether for positive. Or for negative. Will dictate. The way you live. The things you do. Because what you think. Always comes out in. Your actions.

Jonathan Edwards. Put it this way. I think I would prefer. Jonathan Edwards. Thoughts on things. And Mark Twain's. But here's what. Jonathan Edwards. Said. He said.

The ideas. And images. In. Men's. Minds. Are the. Invisible. Powers. That. Constantly. Control. Them. And that is so true.

Now. If that's right. And it is. Then. It is absolutely. Crucial. For each of us. To bring our. Thought life. Into submission. To the Lord.

Jesus Christ. So that. And we do that. By learning. To think. Biblically. About every aspect. Of life.

[23:43] To think. Biblically. That's what Paul's talking. Or as someone has put it. Let the mind. Of your master. Be the master. Of your mind. This is Paul's.

Point. To think. Biblically. And he provides. For us. The ways. To do that. The particular.

Areas. Of our thought life. That should. Be. Biblically. Controlled. In fact. All of your. Thought processes.

Should be. Biblically. Controlled. In fact. That's what Paul is doing. He's. He's really giving us. An all conclusive. Statement. On this. And he gives us. Six characteristics. Of biblical thinking.

Now you might. Count down. Through verse eight. And you'll think. They're not six. There are actually. Eight. But. He gives us. Six. And then he gives us. A couple of. Summary statements. About thinking. Just in case.

[24:39] He forgot something. And so kind of. Two things. That encompass. The whole. But he gives us. Six. Specific. Characteristics. Of biblical. Thinking. That we could.

Quite frankly. Spend a great deal. Of time on. Each one. But let's go through. These rather quickly. Paul says. Meditate on these things.

That is. Keep on thinking. This way. In what way. Number one. Whatever things. Are true. Now that. Seems simple enough.

Right. That is. That. We ought to use. Our brains. For thinking. Things that are true. Right. Okay. Anything profound. About that. Any problem. With that. Literally. We're to be. Thinking. Things. That are. Truthful.

[25 : 37] Things that are. Right. Things that are true. To fact. Things that. Correspond. To reality. You say.

Don't we do that all the time. Most of the time. We don't. Now folks. If we're going to. Have this. As a characteristic. Of our thinking. We think. Only those things. That are true. True to fact. The only way. To do that. Is. With God's word.

The only. Reliable. Standard. Is God's word. That's crucial. Isn't it? Here's the truth.

You say. Well. This is just a book. Well. It's. God's word. It's the reliable. Standard. And so. With that in mind. The kind of thinking.

[26 : 35] That Paul is talking about here. This kind of thinking. Means. That we ought to resist. Evaluating. Truth. Based upon. A number of things. And let me give those to you.

Remember. When he talks about. Thinking. Or. Meditating. He's not just talking about. Thinking. Thoughts. He's talking about. Consider. Seriously. Considering. Truth.

Considering. Facts. So that. You can come to a right. Conclusion. And then. Act those things out. And so. If that's the case. Then we ought to evaluate. Rather. We ought to resist.

Evaluating. Truth. Based upon. These two things. Number one. Emotionalism. Now. This is a huge trap. For.

For most of us. That we evaluate. The rightness of a thing. Or the truth of a thing. Based upon how we feel about it. And you hear people say it.

[27 : 31] In that way. All the time. Well. I feel like. You know. Thus and such. Well. I feel. You know. Someone will be asked. What do you think about. What this person said.

Or the truth of this. And they'll say. Well. I feel like. It's. It's evaluating. A truth. Based upon. Emotionalism. Here's a.

A. You know. Very famous line. If it feels good. Do it. Or. The implication being. If it feels good.

It's the right thing to do. And so do it. Because it makes me feel good. Or. Or it must be right.

Because. It makes me happy. Makes my life happy.

And that's just simply. A pure. Emotional. Approach. To. The considering. Of facts. The evaluation. Of.

[28 : 25] Certain facts. As to the rightness. Or the wrongness. Of them. And you can see. Very quickly. That if your evaluation. Is based upon. Emotionalism. Ultimately. When it works.

Itself. Out. In the things. You do. Then there's going to be. Some problem. There most likely. So. Don't base. Your. Evaluation. Of. Fact.

On. Emotional. Second. Spiritualism. Spiritualism. Listen. There are. Literally. Hundreds. I would say.

Even. Thousands. Of. Religious. Faiths. And. Practices. Out there. Because. Someone. Had. A. So. Called. Spiritual. Experience. And.

So. That's. Why. You know. We. Hear. A lot. About. Spiritual. Things. People. People. Thinking.

About. Spiritual. Things. They. Are. Very. Spiritual. People. Or. They. Had. A. Spiritual.

[29 : 21] Experience. And. Many. Of. Those. Spiritual. Quote. Spiritual. Experiences. Become. The. Foundation. For. And. Even. The. Framework. For. A.

Set. Of. Beliefs. And. Faith. Can. Practice. But. They're. Not. Based. Upon. Truth. It's. Spiritualism. And.

So. If. You. Press. A. Person. On. It. They'll. Say. Well. Yeah. It's. Not. In. The. Bible. But. It.

Happened. To. Me. Now. I. Can't. Prove. That. In. Scripture. But.

That. Doesn't. Matter. Because. I. Experienced. It. It. Happened. To. Me. There's. No. Denying.

That. I. Remember. Talking. To. A. Lady. Several. Years. Ago. I. Was. Preaching.

A. Or. Teaching. Rather. The. January. Bible. Study. Up. In. Wyoming. At. A. Church. That. Had. Loads. Of. Problems. And. I.

[30 : 13] Was. Staying. In. The. Home. Of. This. Couple. In. The. Church. And. This. Wife. In. The. Home. Was. Kind. Of. Given. To.

Quote. Visions. And. She. Evaluated. Things. Based. Upon. Quote. Visions. Ever. Know. Anybody. Like. That. I.

Remember. Her. Telling. Me. That. She. Was. At. A. Potluck. Dinner. At. Her. Church. And. There. Was. A. Certain. Lady. In. The. Church. That. She. Had. Questions. About.

Questions. About. Her. Her. True. Spiritual. Condition. And. She. Was. Just. Not. Sure. Very. Uncomfortable. Around. Her. She. Couldn't. Explain. It. And. Then. One. Day. At. A. Potluck. Dinner. She. Noticed.

That. This. Crocodile. Tail. Dropped. Down. Out. Of. Her. From. The. Bottom. Of. Her. Skirt. She. Said.

[31:07] She. Said. To. She. Said. Preacher. I. Saw. That. Crocodile. Tail. And. Then. I. Knew. That. She. Was. A. Wicked. Woman. And.

Matter. What. I. Said. About. Well. Where. Where. Is. That. In. The. In. The. Bible. Well.

It. It. It. It. It. But. I. Saw. It. That. A. Form. Of. Spiritualism. And. Goes. Much. Deeper. Than. All. right.

So. Here. Don't. Or. rather. Resist. Evaluating. The. Truth. Based. Upon. Emotionalism. Spiritualism. Here's. One. Relativism. Relativism.

That. Is. That. Truth. The. Rightness. Of. A. Thing. Or. Truth. Itself. Facts. Are. Relative. To. The. Situation. And.

[32:08] So. Then. Truth. Changes. Based. Upon. The. Given. Situation. You've. Heard. The. Term. Situational. Ethics. You. know. And. So. It's.

Wrong. To. Lie. But. It's. Right. To. Lie. In. Given. Situation. But. It's. More. Pervasive.

Kind. Of. Philosophy. In. Our. Our. Culture. Than. That. You. know. So. Relativism. Or. Basing. On. Situation. Or. Basing. Truth. On. Cultural. Norms.

Well. This. Is. A. Big. One. That's. Why. We. If. We'll. Just. Think. About. It. We'll. See. That. That. The. Rightness. Of. A. Thing. Has. Changed.

Over. The. Years. And. Some. Of. Us. Who. Are. A. Little. Older. Than. Others. In. The. Congregation. Might. Remember. Back. 25. Years. Or. 30. Years. Or. Forty. Maybe. Some. Of. You. Fifty. Or. Sixty. And.

[33:01] You. Can. Remember. When. A. Thing. Was. Wrong. And. Now. It's. Right. In. fact. We've. Kind. Of. Grown. Into. That. Where. We. Don't. Even. Question. Some. Things. Now. Well. You. Know. How.

Silly. It. Was. Of. Us. To. Think. That. This. Was. Wrong. You. Know. Now. That. I. See. It. Given. You. Know. In. Light. Of. Our. Culture. But.

Truth. Does. Not. Change. Or. It's. Not. Truth. Truth. Is. Not. Relative. A. Thing.

Is. True. Always. If. It's. True. Right. Is. Right. And. Wrong. Is. Wrong. Always. It. Doesn't. Change. Based. Upon. A. Given. Situation.

Or. Circumstances. Or. The. Change. And. Shift. Into. Culture. I. Assure. You. That. Our. Culture. Has. Changed. But. The. Truth. Is. Not. That's. Why. It. Must.

[33:54] Be. Based. Upon. The. Reliable. Standard. Is. God's. Word. Why. Do. You. Think. The. Devil. Is. Working. So. Hard. To. Destroy. This. Book. Because.

When. We. Get. Away. From. This. Book. Then. Anything. Can. Become. True. So. You. Don't. Base. It. On. Emotionalism. Or.

Spiritualism. Or. Relativism. And. Or. How. About. Pluralism. Pluralism. They. Say. What. Is. That. Well.

It. Kind. Of. Express. In. This. Way. You. Know. You. Have. Your. Truth. And. I. Have. Mine. This. Is. My. Truth. This. Have.

My. Truth. You. Have. Your. Truth. And. Who. Is. To. Say. That. You. Are. Right. And. I. Wrong. And. So. Both. Truths. Coexist. Together. It. A. Pluralistic.

[34:47] And. We. Live. In. That. Kind. Of. A. Culture. Pluralistic. Now. I. Believe. In. The. Freedom. Of. Religion. A. Person. Can. Believe. What. That. Person. Wants. To. And. Ought. To. To. To. Believe. It. But.

That. Doesn't. Make. It. True. And. Me. Give. You. One. More. Here's. A. Big. One. Pragmatism. You. Don't. Evaluate. The. Truth. Of. The. Thing. Based. Upon. Pragmatism.

What. Is. That. Well. It. It. Expressed. This. Way. If. It. Works. It. Must. Be. Right. Or.

If. It. Helps. Me. Achieve. My. Objective. My. Goal. My. Desire. Then. For. Me. It. Is. True. That's. Politics. 101. By.

The. Way. Isn't. It. Truth. Is. Truth. Right. Is. Right. Wrong. Is. Wrong.

[35:41] Always. And. The. Standard. Is. God's. Word. And. So. Paul. Is. Saying. Whatever. Things. Are. True. This. This. Is. What. You. Ought. To. To. Think. On. This. Is. This. This. What.

You. Ought. To. Spend. Time. Thinking. On. And. Evaluating. And. Considering. Seriously. For. Purposes. Of. Coming. To.

A. Right. Conclusion. So. That. You. Can. Act. These. Things. Out. All. Right. I spent too much time on that one. Here's the second one. Whatever things are noble.

Whatever things are noble. There are various translations of that word. It really means to think with dignity. Literally. Dignity.

Or. We could put it this way. To be serious minded. Now. Now. I think it's all right to joke around sometimes. And. Be. See things in a humorous way.

[36:34] And. I mean. I did tell a few jokes here in my sermon. So. It's all right. To. Have a little humor in your life. But when it comes to the pattern of your life. The overall pattern of your thinking.

We need to think with dignity. We need to think. Serious. With. A serious mind. About life. Again. That. Too. Is informed. By God's word.

You know. Our culture has. Not only become. Extremely casual. In the way we dress. Which is all right. I'm not. I'm not. Against that. I know. I've got a suit.

Tie on. But. But. No denying. Our culture. Has become very casual. In the way we dress. But not only that. But our culture. Has become very casual. In the way we think. About things.

That we don't pay a lot of attention. To. Our thought processes. And so. We don't think seriously. About.

[37:32] How we look. Necessarily. And. Sadly. We don't. Think seriously. About how we live. We just kind of let. Things happen. But.

But. Listen. That's what Paul. Is talking about. In 1st Timothy 2. 2. By the way. Where he says. Lead a quiet. And reasonable. Life. In all godliness. That tells you.

What kind of life. You ought to live. And reverence. He said. And that's the same word. Here. It means. Indignity. In.

Gravity. That's an old word. Means. Place weight. On things. Place. Weight. In the way you think. That means. That Christians. Of all people.

Should take life. Seriously. And be sober minded. About things. Not always. Flipping about it. And joking about it. We ought to use our brains.

[38:24] To think. Very serious thoughts. Is what Paul is saying. Third. Whatever things are just. Whatever things are just. Now that may sound a lot like.

What he said about true. True. Just. Aren't those the same thing? Well not exactly the same thing. The word. The word is. Dikaos. And it means.

Righteous. Means righteous. Literally. And it's an adjective. So. He's saying. The idea here is. To. To. To have righteous thinking. Righteous thinking.

And it means. That. Your thought processes. The way you use your brain. Should always. You ought to desire it. Always. To be in harmony. With. God's character.

And God's nature. And God's purposes. Keep it. In line. With. The very nature. Of God. That's not going to come naturally.

[39:20] That's why. These are things. That Paul is saying. You are to do. You're to be determined about. God. And so. Control your thinking. That you ought to think. Those things. That are.

Righteous. In. Light of God. Remember. Every. Sinful act. Begins where? In the brain. In the mind. In your thought process. Fourth. Whatever things are pure. Whatever things are pure. Now. Paul's talking here about. Moral purity. In.

In your thinking. Proverbs 6. 16. Disturbing. Versus scripture. But. But. Very important. Very significant.

The Bible. List. Seven things. The Lord. Hates. Did you know. That God hates. Some things. Well. Here's seven of them. In fact. He uses.

[40:15] An even stronger word. He says. These are things. That are an abomination. To him. Seven of them. And so. If the Bible. Is going to be. Very explicit. And list. Seven things. That God hates.

Seven of them. And so. If the Bible. Is going to be. Very explicit. And list. Seven things. That God hates.

I think. We ought to find out. What they are. Pretty. Pretty important. But fourth. On the list. Is this. A heart. That devises. Wicked.

Imaginations. Wow. Have you. Considered. The power. Of the human mind. The power.

The human imagination. It is. An extremely. Powerful thing. The things. That you can picture. In your brain. And act out.

In your mind. I mean. You can act out. Things in your mind. That you would never. Dream of doing. With your body. And yet. Here. Here is the.

[41:08] Here. Here's the lie. As long as you think it. Did not do it. You're okay. But thinking.

Ultimately. Comes out. In. The things you do. But think about. The imagination. You can be sitting. In.

A worship service. Just like this. And be. Thinking. Imagining. Some of the most. Sinful. Acts. It's a good thing.

We can't read. People's mind. But God can. Imagination. This is why. Paul said. In. Second. Corinthians. Chapter 10.

Verse 5. Cast down. Imagination. And every. High. Thing. That exalts. Itself. Above. Or against. The knowledge. Of God. And bring.

[42:04] Into. Captivity. Every. Thought. To. The obedience. Of Christ. Fourth.

Or fifth. Rather. Whatsoever. Things. Whatever. Things. Are. Lovely. Whatever. Things. Are. Lovely. Now. This is a. Very. Unique. Word.

That. Is. Translated. Lovely. In. In. The New. King James. Anyway. Unique. Word. Because. It only. Appears. This. One. Time. In. All. The. New. Testament. And.

We. Could. Translate. It. Sweet. Sweet. Thinking. I mean. Really. In fact. It. Causes. Me. To. Remember. A. Sermon.

I. Heard. A. A. Number. Years. A. A. A. A. And. and it was entitled, Getting Rid of Stinking Thinking. I've even borrowed that title.

[42:59] I like that. Get Rid of Stinking Thinking. That's kind of what Paul's talking about. What if your thoughts could be read by others? Think about that.

At any given moment, what if right now your neighbor could read your thoughts? Or worse, what if your thoughts always became realities as what you're thinking comes to pass?

Now it doesn't, thankfully. And think about that the next time you're in Tulsa driving on a very busy highway and somebody cuts in front of you and nearly takes your bumper off and you're thinking, what?

Now I'm not suggesting that you're thinking murder, but I would imagine that more murders take place on the highways in the thought life than any other place.

What if your thoughts became realities? It's a good thing they don't. But here's what Paul is saying. Order your thoughts. Bring them under submission to Christ.

[44:12] And think sweet things. Lovely things. Those things are lovely. Sixth, whatever things are of good report. Good report.

Has anyone ever asked you, what are you thinking about? My wife asked me that once in a while. She said, what are you thinking about? And my answer is, I don't remember. And it's true.

I don't know what I was thinking about. Have you ever had that happen? But, you know, sometimes maybe you want somebody to know what you're thinking. Maybe you don't. Maybe you don't.

You know, a penny for your thoughts. Sometimes it will take a whole lot more than a penny for you to, you know, dislodge what you're thinking and divulge it. What are you thinking?

Is it something you'd want to share with somebody? Something you would like to express verbally and you would be unashamed? That's what he's getting at here. More specifically, the idea behind the word good report really means to think positively.

[45:15] Very similar to thinking lovely, sweetly. But thinking positively in this sense. To think thoughts that edify, that build up rather than tear down.

Whether those thoughts are about yourself, in your life, or anything about you, need to order your thoughts to think positively.

This isn't peelism. It isn't, you know, positive mental attitude or anything like that. You know, just think positively. Make miracles happen.

That kind of mentality. No, I'm not talking about that. Paul's not either. He's talking about thinking thoughts that are productive. That edify rather than tear down.

And whether it's about self, or whether it is your thoughts about others, or your church, or your community, or your country, or whatever.

[46 : 17] See, he really does stretch us here and touch every area of our thought life. And it's so incredibly important.

Then Paul sums it all up essentially by saying, in case I've missed anything, if there's anything of virtue, if anything, praiseworthy, and what are we to do?

Meditate on these things. Order your thought life toward these goals. And the peace of God will be with you. There's the promise.

So be right thinking. And one more very quickly and we'll be finished. Be responsive. Be responsive. Be responsive. That's a pretty important thing to say at the close of the sermon. Be responsive. Now respond. Here's what God's Word says. Now, go and do it. Be responsive. This is what Paul is saying.

[47 : 25] Verse 9. I heard about a gray-haired old gentleman who was a long-time member of the church and as he was going out after the service one day, one Sunday morning, he shook the hands of the pastor and he said, that was a wonderful sermon.

Just wonderful sermon. And everything you said applies to someone I know. I know you would never think that way.

What did Paul say in verse 9? Verse 9. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me these do.

Do. And the peace of God will be with you. Now, very quickly, note the progression. From head to heart to hands.

Head, heart, hands. And that's the way of it. And this is how Paul words is. He said, the things you learned. That's head.

[48 : 39] We need to learn things. This is the cognitive. The brain. Your fund of knowledge. The things that you heard, learn them.

You learn. You learn them. That's the head. Heart. The things you received. So it starts with the head.

You learned it. And you received it. And the idea there is you bought into it. It's true. You received it. It goes into your heart. Heart. And then the hands. The things you heard and saw in me, these do. Do. Head.

Heart. Hands. Now, the problem is it works that way every time even if what you bring into the head is the wrong thing.

[49 : 41] It's the way God has designed it. You see how important it is that we bring the right things into the head. That we think the right way and learn then the right way and do then the right way.

And the promise of peace is yours to enjoy. This is what Paul is saying. And the God of peace will be with you.

Thank you.