

RESILIENT



RETHINKING THINGS

September 12/13, 2020

Philippians 4:8 – 9

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MESSAGE NOTES

Finally, brothers and sisters, 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. 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! — Philippians 4:8–9

*The ultimate freedom we have as individuals is the power to select what we will allow or require our minds to dwell upon and think about. By think we mean all the ways in which we are aware of things, including our memories, perceptions, and beliefs. The focus of your thoughts significantly affects everything else that happens in your life and evokes the feelings that frame your world and motivate your actions. We cannot evoke thoughts by feeling a certain way. But we can evoke — and to some degree — control our feelings by directing our thoughts. —Dallas Willard, *Life Without Lack**

Those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. — Romans 8:5 – 6

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. — Romans 12:2

How do we change our minds?

1. Pay attention to what's getting your attention.

Turn my eyes away from worthless things; — Psalm 119:37

When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, LORD, and my prayer rose to you, ... Those who cling to worthless idols turn away from God's love for them. — Jonah 2:7 – 8

Attention determines direction.

The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. — Romans 8:6

My son, pay attention to what I say; turn your ear to my words. Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; for they are life to those who find them and health to one's whole body. Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it ... Give careful thought to the paths for your feet and be steadfast in all your ways. — Proverbs 4:20 – 26

The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness! — Matthew 6:22 – 23

Attention determines direction.

2. Interrogate the value of what you're thinking about.



When self-talk is negative, you are creating a toxic environment for yourself. What's more, you will carry this internal environment with you, regardless of your physical location ... How a person reacts to a particular stress is very much related to that person's own self talk. To the exact same circumstance, one person will react with depression (It's hopeless, I'll never succeed), another with anger and blame (It's all their fault), and a third with optimism (You can't win them all. I'll do better next time). — Pamela Butler, Talking To Yourself

3. Decide to take steps in the direction you want to go.

Attention determines direction — and decision determines destiny.

As a single footstep will not make a path on the earth, so a single thought will not make a pathway in the mind. To make a deep physical path, we walk again and again. To make a deep mental path, we must think over and over the kind of thoughts we wish to dominate our lives. — Henry David Thoreau

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is one insight you gained from last weekend's sermon?
- Consider for a moment, what is on your mind a lot these days in particular?
- How much of an impact do you believe our thoughts have on our lives?
- Read back over Paul's list of things to think about in Philippians 4:8. Can you come up with one real life example for each of those? For instance, what is one thing that's absolutely true? What is something noble? Etc.
- As you think about your own thoughts in the course of a day, how do they compare with Paul's list? What thoughts seem out of line?
- How do you think the media we ingest informs and impacts our thoughts?
- Reflect on what you know of the life of Christ. Can you give a few examples of how His thinking matched up with Paul's list?
- Do you think people are generally careful and intentional with their thoughts?
- How do you think we practically carry out Romans 12:2?
- What had the Philippian believers learned, received, heard and seen in Paul? (Think about what happened to Paul in Philippi and how he responded).
- Practically, what steps could you take this week to center your thoughts on all that is life-giving and good?