



"The Battle For My Mind" (Philippians 4:8)

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v.8 Once again, Paul does what any typical preacher does. He said “finally” in 3:1, and he was only half way through with his message. Here, he is coming in for a landing, but he still has some pretty important things to cover. And I want to be very careful not to hurry over this final section.

THE POWER OF THE THOUGHT LIFE

* Modern psychology says that if you want to be stable, if you want to get your act together, if you want to be delivered from your schizophrenia, from your various neuroses and psychoses, if you want to be a calm, comfortable, stable person who has got it together, one of the things you need to do is look into your past, dredge up the scum of the past, dive into the trash bin of your past, find your old sins and your old hurts and the abuses and mistreatments and all of the chaos of your past, the garbage of your life. Stir it up, regurgitate it all. Some psychiatrists even go to the extreme of using primal-therapy techniques. They may have you lie down on the floor, stuff pillows around you, put you in a fetal position and try to get you to feel the pain of your pre-birth experience in the womb of your mother. Sadly, some of the psycho babble of the world has crept into parts of the church. Philippians 3:13b tells us to forget those things that are in the past, and here in v.8 we are told to think about things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, & praiseworthy.

* The verb translated to "think" is logizomai. It's an imperative which means it's a command. And it means not just to think in the simple one-dimensional sense; it means to evaluate, it means to ascertain. It means to develop thinking habits that involve these things.

* Did you know that we are products of our thinking?

* Prov.23: 7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he:

* Did you know that our thinking and our hearts are inseparably linked?

* Gen.6: 5 The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the **thoughts** of his **heart** was only evil all the time.

* Matthew 15: 19 For out of the **heart** come **evil thoughts**, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

* Matt.9: 4 Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain **evil thoughts** in your **hearts**?"

* Rom.1: 21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools.

* Eph.2: 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

* Col.1: 21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.

* See Philippians 3:18-19

THE NEED FOR A NEW MIND/HEART

* II Cor.4: 4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

* Titus 1: 15 To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted. 16 They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.

* This includes not only the outright pagan, but the religious person who has never been born again.

* Matthew 15: 8 "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

* There are lots of people who believe in God, who say they are Christians, but they have no real evidence of a new heart, a new mindset.

* Jer.31: 33 "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.

* I Cor.2: 16 "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

THE BATTLE FOR MY MIND

* As a Christian, old mind/heart vv. new mind/heart (See Rom.7: 21-25).

* II Cor.11: 3 But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

* Phil.2: 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus...

* II Peter 3:1 Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking.

* See Eph.4:17-24

HOW TO WIN THE BATTLE FOR MY MIND

1. Renew my mind (Eph.4:23; Rom.12:2)

- To hear something once for most of us is not enough. To briefly ponder something profound for most of us does not allow enough time to grasp and fully understand its significance. This proves to be most true with God's mind in Scripture. The idea of meditating sometimes lends itself to misunderstanding, so let me illustrate its meaning.... For me, the most vivid picture comes from a coffee percolator. The water goes up a small tube and drains down through the coffee grounds. After enough cycles, the flavor of the coffee beans has been transferred to the water which we then call coffee. So it is that we need to cycle our thoughts through the 'grounds' of God's Word until we start to think like God" ([Wheaton, Ill.: Victor, 1990], pp. 46-47). Renew your mind by regularly meditating on God's Word. Doing so will bring into your mind what is spiritually healthy and lead you away from what is harmful.

2. "Set" my mind (Rom.8:5; Col.3:2; I Peter 1:13)

- Phil.2:5 (**Let** this mind be in you); 5426. phroneo, fron-eh'-o; from G5424; **to exercise the mind**, i.e. entertain or have a sentiment or opinion; by implication, to be (mentally) disposed (more or less earnestly in a certain direction); intensively, to interest oneself in (with concern or obedience):--set the affection on, (be) care(-ful), (be like-, + be of one, + be of the same, + let this) mind(-ed), regard, savor, think.

- I control what I read, watch, listen to, etc. So I am to set (direct) my mind...

- Options for what I am to set my mind on (Phil.4:8); The Greek word translated "whatever" is plural, which suggests several things could be included under each heading.

- "Whatever" is true = 227. alethes, al-ay-thace'; from G1 (as a negative particle) and G2990; true (as not concealing):--true, truly, truth.

- Can be a person who is "true." See John 7:18; Matt.22:16; Heb.12:2-3; "Looking unto & consider" = 872. aphorao, af-or-ah'-o; from G575 and G3708; to consider attentively:--look. & 357. analogizomai, an-al-og-id'-zom-ahee; mid. from G356; to estimate, i.e. (fig.) contemplate:--consider. Heb.3:1 Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess; 2657. katanoeo, kat-an-o-eh'-o; from G2596 and G3539; to observe fully:--behold, consider, discover, perceive.

- John 17: 17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth (225. aletheia, al-ay'-thi-a; from G227; truth:--true, X truly, truth, verity.
 - It's no problem for me to suggest that the top two "whatever" I should think about are Jesus and the Word of God.
 - Noble (KJV = honest); 4586. semnos, sem-nos'; from G4576; venerable, i.e. honorable:--grave, honest. See I Tim.3:8, 11; Titus 2:11
 - Right (KJV = just); 1342. dikaios, dik'-ah-yos; from G1349; equitable (in character or act); by implication, innocent, holy (absolutely or relatively):--just, meet, right(-eous). In conformity to God's standards. This takes me back to the Word of God, seeking what God says is right and what God says is wrong.
 - Pure = 53. hagnos, hag-nos'; from the same as G40; properly clean, i.e. (figuratively) innocent, modest, perfect:--chaste, clean, pure.
 - I John 3: 3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.
 - I Tim.5: 22 Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.
 - Concentrate on relationships that promote moral purity.
 - Lovely = 4375. prosphiles, pros-fee-lace'; from a presumed compound of G4314 and G5368; friendly towards, i.e. acceptable:--lovely. Think about what promotes peace rather than conflict.
 - Pslm 84:1 For the director of music. According to gittith. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm. How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD Almighty! 2 My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.
 - Admirable (KJV = of good report); 2163. euphemos, yoo'-fay-mos; from G2095 and G5345; well spoken of, i.e. reputable:--of good report.
- Among other possibilities, this involves focusing my attention on people who heaven speaks well of...all the godly characters in the Bible (Heb.11, and all the godly characters of history...
- Gen.1: 31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. (6 times before this, as God is creating the world we know, He said that it was good).
 - Psalm 8: 3 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, 4 what is man that you are mindful of him...
 - Psalm 144: 3 O LORD, what is man that you care for him, the son of man that you think of him? 4 Man is like a breath; his days are like a fleeting shadow.

- Isaiah 55: 8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. 9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. Context?

- Excellent (KJV = virtue); 703. arete, ar-et'-ay; from the same as G730; properly, manliness (valor), i.e. excellence (intrinsic or attributed):--praise, virtue; II Peter 1: 5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue (NIV = goodness); and to virtue knowledge;

- Praiseworthy = 1868. epainos, ep'-ahee-nos; from G1909 and the base of G134; laudation; concretely, a commendable thing:--praise.

- Summary: My thought life needs to be filled with Jesus, the Word of God, leaders and mature believers in the church who heaven considers worthy of respect, things in life that conform to God's standard of righteousness, relationships that promote moral purity, things that promote peace rather than conflict, godly characters in the Bible that God calls admirable, and daily contemplation of the God of all creation.

3. Take captive every thought

- As I "set" my mind on the things previously mentioned, there are other thoughts that battle for my attention. And so there is a third necessary element to having a victorious thought life. See II Cor.10:5.

- I must grab the thought before the thought grabs me; Refer back to Rom.1:21-22. My thinking becomes futile when I do not incorporate God and the things of God in my thinking...

- Tammy Pageant, the picture

- Facebook

- TV, movies, pornography, music, etc. all have an effect on my thinking...garbage in, garbage out.

CONCLUSION

* Psalm 19: 14 May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

* Need some heavenly brain/heart surgery today?

* Christian, are you renewing your mind with truth? Setting your mind? Taking captive every thought?