

"A good man out of the good treasure
of his heart brings forth good things,
and an evil man out of the evil
treasure brings forth evil things."

Matthew 12:35 NKJV



Marietta church of Christ

8150 Driggers St.
Jacksonville, FL 32220

Times of Worship

Sunday:

9 am - Bible Classes / 10 am - Worship / 5 pm - Worship

Wednesday:

7 pm - Bible Study/Worship

Evangelist: Devin Barber

www.mariettacoc.com



Food for the Heart

(Philippians 4.8-9)

"A man's life are what his thoughts make of it," proclaimed Marcus Aurelius, a stoic Roman philosopher of the second century. This simply stated, yet profound, truth has been expressed in many ways throughout the ages. Shakespeare wrote, " 'Tis the mind that makes the body rich." Emerson said, "A man is what he thinks about all day long." An 18th century writer, James A. Allen, put it this way: "Thought and character are one." Earl Nightingale, in his best-selling famous record, "The Strangest Secret," said, "We become what we think about." Finally, William James, who has been called the father of modern psychology, asserted, "The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind."

It is interesting that all of these secular writers and thinkers reaffirm a basic Bible concept penned by the ancient wise man 1,000 years before Christ in Proverbs 23.7. "As he thinketh in his heart so he is." Indeed, the kind of person I have become is the direct result of the food I have been feeding my heart and mind. For my life to be full, rich, and joy-filled, it must begin with a heart right with God. Thus, it is vitally important that we feed our hearts with the proper spiritual food which will sustain and nourish us.

Paul's Appeal

Realizing the importance of filling our minds and hearts with spiritually enriching food, Paul appeals for the committed Christian to think on the right kinds of things in Philippians 4.8. Real joy begins here.

Character development begins here. Also, the road to spiritual success begins here. And so, Paul appeals for you and me to think on things that are...

1. True. Truth is opposed to falsehood. Truth builds and untruth tears down. Untruth comes from the devil, while truth comes from God and is revealed in the word of God. Meditate on truth.

2. Honorable. Various versions render this word honest, venerable, worthy, and reverend. Barclay says the word is difficult to translate, but that it "really describes that which has the dignity of holiness upon it." Then he makes this important comment: "There are things in this world which are flippant and cheap, things which are attractive to the light minded; but it is on the things which are grave, serious and dignified that the Christian will set his mind."

3. Just. Life is filled with many injustices. Joy-filled Christians need to concentrate their minds on those things which are fair and right both to God and men.

4. Pure. Literally, this word means "clean." It is that which is fit to be brought before God. Unlike those in the world who see something dirty, degrading and depraved in every word and action, the committed, joyful Christian elevates his thoughts to things high and holy and heavenly.

5. Lovely. Attractive, amiable, and winsome all describe the idea behind this word. The character of loveliness begins with such thoughts, while thoughts of vengeance, rebuke and hyper-criticism produce resentment, bitterness and unlovely heart and life.

6. Good Report. Some folks love to hear and spread bad news. Bad things do happen, but the joy-filled disciple of Christ needs to think on things that are well-sounding, appealing, gracious, whatever has a good name.

7. Excellent and praiseworthy. In summary, Paul appeals to thinking on anything that is worthwhile for saints to ponder. Nothing is excluded that is a matter of moral excellence.

Practical Application

The point of the passage should find a practical application in our lives. In it, the committed life finds real joy. As we learn and see and hear what God wants, He expects us to practice it. Not only do our thoughts determine our character, but they also precede our actions. The wise man also said, "The thoughts of the righteous are right, but the counsels of the wicked are deceit" (Proverbs 12.5). People work righteousness because they think right thoughts. What are you thinking? What are you becoming? What are you doing?

We need to "take captive every thought and make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 12.5) by filling our minds and feeding our hearts with food that will sustain us as we journey to the land of promise. What are you watching on T.V.? What kind of books are you reading? Where and by whom are you being entertained? Does it meet the standard of Philippians 4.8?

James A. Allen once wrote, "Man is made or unmade by himself. In the armory of thought he forges the weapons by which he destroys himself. He also fashions the tools which which he builds for himself heavenly mansions of joy and strength and peace. By right choice and true application of thought, man ascends to divine perfection. By the abuse and wrong application of thought, he descends below the level of the beast. Between these two are all the grades of character, and man is their maker and master. Of all the beautiful truths pertaining to the soul, none is more gladdening or fruitful than this — that man is the master of thought, the molder of character, and the maker, shaper of condition, environment and destiny."

Written by Ken Weliever

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