

Series: Divine Joy

C.R. 5-20-18

“The Right Way to Think”

**Text:** Philippians 4: 8-9

**Intro:** Last week we preached on the Path to Peace and it dealt a lot with our actions. We ended the message talking about being anxious for nothing but praying about everything. In other words not worrying, but praying. Dr. Walter Cavert reported a survey on worry that indicated that only 8 percent of the things people worried about were legitimate matters of concern. The other 92percent either were imaginary, never happened, or involved matters over which the people had no control anyway.

John Phillips: A guarded thought life has to be accompanied by a guided thought life. God expects our active cooperation. We must take every thought captive. We must practice positive thinking. Not talking about the kind that these “psychology preachers” have blabbed, but we are talking about the kind of positive thinking that is only possible because Christ lives his life in us.

This is the kind of thinking that invites Christ to take over our minds “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (Isa. 26:3). Wrong thinking leads to wrong feeling, and before long the heart and mind are pulled apart and we are strangled by worry. We must realize that thoughts are real and powerful, even though they cannot be seen, weighed, or measured. We must bring “into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5). Let’s get our thinking right this morning

I am to think about....

**1) Whatever is True**

- a. Satan is the liar (John 8:44), and he wants to corrupt our minds with his lies (2 Cor. 11:3).
- b. Many think and teach that we need to be very familiar with the lies that are around us and we should spend a great deal of time studying them.
- c. Phillips: The simplest way to expose a crooked line is to place a straight edge alongside it.
- d. Illustrate with counterfeits. They study the real thing, so they can spot the wrong thing.
- e. If you want to know where someone truly stand, ask them where they stand on the person of Jesus Christ.
- f. God’s word is truth (John 17:17). Everything that is true comes from God.
- g. We must not spend time in the maze of the evil one but spend time in the truth of the Word of God.
- h. A ship was making its way through inshore islands and a lady asked the Captain, “Do you know where all the rocks and shoals are?” He replied, No ma’am, but I know where the all the deep water is.

**2) Whatever is Honest**

- a. This means worthy of respect and right. Honorable.

- b. We are saturated with things today that are dishonorable. That are disrespectful.
- c. T.V and social media is full of people airing it all out for the world to read and see.
- d. Things that once only doctors and ministers heard now the whole world hears.
- e. We are encouraged here to think on more honorable things. More noble things.

3) **Whatever is Just**

- a. The word here means righteous.
- b. Many things in this world are not right or just, and we can easily dwell on that especially when we have been wronged.
- c. Many have lost all their joy because they camp out here saying it is not fair.
- d. Paul had been in prison for a long time when he wrote these words.
- e. We cannot dwell live in the city of unfair. It will suck the life out of us.

4) **Whatever is Pure.**

- a. Wow, what a word for us today.
- b. In a day of free pornography, perversion, and all things impure.
- c. It is hard to find a book or a television show that is pure or that doesn't have a sexual agenda behind it.
- d. **John Phillips:** Once given a lodging, impure thoughts are virtually impossible to evict. They lurk in the hidden recesses of the mind and make their presence known at the most unexpected times. They may show up when we are trying to worship or when we are engaged in an innocent conversation with someone who has no idea that we are suddenly such thoughts. If a person once lets his thoughts wander down some impure path, hidden legions joyfully emerge and stampede, pushing the mind into all kinds of sin.
- e. Only the blood of Christ can cleanse the mind. We MUST thing on what is pure.

5) **Whatever is Lovely.**

- a. Means beautiful, attractive.

6) **Whatever is of Good Report**

- a. Means worth talking about or appealing.
- b. Having a conversation that means something. Not walking away from a conversation with regrets.
- c. For the most part we are mentally lazy and it is just easier for us to talk about bad stuff.

## 7) Whatever Possesses Virtue and Praise.

- a. **\*Wiersbe:** If it has virtue, it will motivate us to do better, and if it has praise, it is worth commending to others. No Christian can afford to waste mind power on thoughts that tear him down or that would tear others down if these thoughts were shared.
- b. Compare this list to David's description of the Word of God in Psalm 19:7–9, you will see a parallel. The Christian who fills his heart and mind with God's Word will have a built-in "radar" for detecting wrong thoughts. "Great peace have they which love thy law" (Ps. 119:165).
- c. It is vital that we spend time daily in the Word of God. It helps us think right.

Look at verse 9 now. Paul tells us that we need to not only think right but live right. Right living is a necessary condition for experiencing the peace of God.

-Paul's experience ought to be our experience. We must learn the Word, receive it, hear it, and do it. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22).

It is not enough to have facts in our head, we must flesh it out.

-"The peace of God" is one test of whether or not we are in the will of God. "Let the peace that Christ can give keep on acting as umpire in your hearts" (Col. 3:15 WMS). If we are walking with the Lord, then the peace of God and the God of peace exercise their influence over our hearts. Whenever we disobey, we lose that peace and we know we have done something wrong. God's peace is the "umpire" that calls us "out"!