



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

STAND FIRM WITH YOUR MIND, Part 2- PHILIPPIANS 4:8

WYOMING

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Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 11:3, "But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ." Back in Genesis 3 we have the first sin recorded for us. There Satan waged war against God and the human race He had created. The conflict takes place with Eve and the battle is for her mind! Who would she believe, Satan or God? In the end, Eve exchanged the truth of God for Satan's lie and from that point forward, all creation was corrupted with sin. Paul is concerned that we would fall prey to Satan's temptations and our minds would be corrupted with lies instead of God's truth and we would lose our devotion to the Lord. Philippians 4 emphasizes the same concerns. Paul exhorts us to stand firm by thinking on "these things". What will keep us from falling? What will enable us to stand firm in the war Satan wages for our minds? Only as we are focused intently on God, His Word and His ways!

I. THINK ON THESE THINGS+ PHILIPPIANS 4:8

"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Philippians 4:8

Paul introduces practical exhortations regarding what he has previously taught. He exhorts believers to stand firm by having minds that are continuously and repeatedly captivated by God and His Word. In Philippians 4:8, Paul commands us to "think on these things". It is critical that we understand the battle is waged in our minds and in our hearts! We are called to repeatedly, constantly and daily; study, think, ponder, and consider with fervent thought-- our God and what He says about Himself in His Word. Only in this way will we remain purely devoted to our Lord and be able to stand firm and not be deceived, falter or fall. Let's take a closer look and examine "these things" Paul commands us to think on!

A. "WHATEVER IS TRUE"-- PHILIPPIANS 4:8

"true" Greek word "*alethes*," means purity from all error or falsehood, truth, true, sincere, just, upright.

Paul calls us to think on what is true, the truth. Our Lord prayed in John 17:17, "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth." If there was any question about what was true, Jesus Christ clarifies that unmistakably. Truth is God's Word and it is through His Word that God will mature and sanctify us for His work. John 14:6 says, "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth and the life; no man comes to the Father but through Me.'" Jesus Christ Himself is the truth and all reality finds its focus in Him. We can know the Truth, Jesus Christ, and

be set free from sin by believing in Him alone for salvation. Our Lord says in John 8:32, "you will know the truth and the truth will make you free." This "knowing" is not merely having knowledge in terms of facts, but rather a knowledge that leads to understanding which leads to a changed life and an obedient follower of Jesus Christ. It is a genuine faith in what and Who is true and therefore completely reliable. Paul calls us to "think on" what is true. We are called to dwell, think and camp on God and His Word.

Remember, the Greek word for "think or dwell" is an imperative and thus a command for us. It is not an option in order to stand firm! Not only is it a command, but the word is a present imperative, meaning it involves continuous and repeated action. We are to read, meditate, think, analyze, consider, and even calculate on God's Word continually throughout each day of our lives. It's not just once or twice a day, but repeatedly throughout our day. We need our minds to be saturated with God and His Word, thinking on what is true because temptation and deception are at every turn.

Therefore, let's take some time to refresh our minds on the sufficiency of Scripture. Turn to Psalm 19. It was written by King David. He was not immune to hardship, sin, or trials. Where could he go for help when all was against him? Where did he turn when he fell into sin: What could be sufficient to lead him through heartache, pain and temptation? Psalm 19 records for us how David finds the ultimate answers and provision for his life in Scripture. So too will we find our sufficiency in God and His Word.

Psalm 19:7-11 says,

"The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul;"

God's Word is His special revelation to man whereby He discloses Himself so we can know Him intimately. It is His law and has come from Him and belongs to Him. The source of God's written Word is from God. Therefore, this is the testimony of God Himself regarding the sufficiency of His Word. It is whole and complete in contrast to man's wisdom. Scripture covers everything and leaves out nothing. God's Word possesses everything needed to convert and save a soul. Scripture is so complete that if followed, it can transform a person's life. Amazing! God's meticulous teachings; His law, His Word; is complete, sufficient, and provides absolute instruction for our everyday lives. It's not only complete and sufficient in providing instruction, but God's Word transforms a soul from the inside out! (See also 2 Timothy 3:15-17)

"The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;"

BIBLE STUDIES

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Stand Firm With Your Mind, Part 2, Philippians 4:8

God's Divine Witness; His Word, is unwavering and you can build a solid foundation on it. Scripture reveals Who God is and what He requires. The Word of the living God is a sure and reliable foundation upon which our life can be built! (2 Peter 1:19) God's Word transforms a simple, undiscerning person who is ignorant of truth and discernment, enabling them to be skilled in the art of godly, practical living.

"The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;"

God's Divine principles for life are right and true. They guide us in the proper way towards understanding. We are not left to wander in a fog of human opinions. We are given a map and compass which results in following the true path that is satisfying and brings true joy to the heart. Living obediently to God's principles, which are the true and right path for life, brings true joy. All real joy and pleasure comes from following the Word of God not selfishly seeking our own desires. (1 John 1:4)

"The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;"

God's Divine Decrees are not optional or mere suggestions, but rather divine orders for our life. God's Word is authoritative and represents what He requires. They are clear and pure, easy to understand and see. They are not confusing. God's commands produce purity in our lives and illuminate the darkness bringing light and understanding of right from wrong to know God's will. Is God's Word so incomplete that we have to turn to the world for answers to life? No, God's Word is sufficient for clear understanding of things not easily understood. (Proverbs 6:23, Psalm 119:105, Hebrews 5:14)

"The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;"

God's Word brings about a reverence and respect for God which results in worship of Him. His Word is clean; without impurity, error or corruption. What God says is absolutely pure. The truth conveyed is clean and pure! Does God's Word have shortcomings and need to be corrected? The Word of God can clean the heart and purge the sin. This stands in contrast to man's word which you can't trust. But God's Word, because it is without error and absolutely true, it endures forever. You can follow it forever and base all of your life on it. It is truthful all the time and it never changes. It is without flaw, sin or error. It never needs to be updated for the next generation. It needs no refining for it is perfect and His Word endures forever. (Psalm 12:6)

"The judgments of the Lord are true, they are righteous altogether."

God's Divine Judgments are those which come from the Judge Who reigns over all the earth. The gavel falls from His Divine bench and His rule determines the eternal destiny of all men. His rulings are true and relevant for all time. The Word of God is truth and that's critical in a day and age where there is no truth, no absolutes. But God's Word is totally right and our complete source of truth. Look no where else. (Deuteronomy 4:2)

"They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold;"

God's Word should be our greatest possession and greatest treasure sought after.

"Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb."

God's Word brings the sweetest joy, delight, contentment and satisfaction.

"Moreover, by them Your servant is warned;"

It provides for us a defense and security as we heed its admonitions.

"In keeping them there is great reward."

Obedience to God's Word brings about the greatest reward, an eternal reward.

Is there any doubt as to why Paul would begin with *"whatever is true"*, think on these things? God's Word is true and sufficient for all of life. In His Word, God discloses Himself for us to know personally and intimately. God reveals His sufficiency for salvation, for living, for joy and satisfaction, for clear understanding, and for all that is necessary in purifying the soul.

There is no lack in God's Word. The testimony of God Himself is that His Word is sufficient for all of life. Are you struggling? You can turn to God's Word for guidance, encouragement and strength. Do you feel inadequate? Go to Scripture! God's Word makes us adequate for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17) It is trustworthy and sufficient, the source of all we need.

Think on God and His Word. Let your mind dwell constantly and repeatedly on Scripture. This is a command from Paul because he knows God and His Word alone is sufficient for our life. Only by dwelling on God and His Word will we be able to stand firm! This is where it all starts! Can you say with David in Psalm 119:162, *"I rejoice at Your word, as one who finds great spoil."* If you can, then you will also be able to say, *"But as for me, the nearness of God is my good; I have made the Lord God my refuge that I may tell of all Your works."* Psalm 73:28