

## Philippians 4:8-23

### Verse 8:

--**Finally, brethren.** . . Here Paul gives his final exhortations, encouraging the Philippians to set their thoughts and dreams somewhere other than their worries! The question is not *if* we think but *what* we think. A large chunk of our lives is made up of thoughts and daydreams.

--God calls us to set our minds where He wants and not just where we want. You can control your thoughts! \*F.W. Boreham\*

--Rest your thoughts in these green pastures and beside these still waters:

1) **True:** Truth is God's. It is not opinion or discovery or discussion. Truth is revelation from The Person. ***I am the way, the truth, and the life (Jn. 14:7).*** God's truth is a part of our day- to-day armor (**Eph. 6:14**) and the very Spirit we live in (**Jn. 14:17; 15:26**). \*We must not love or live in lies.\*

2) **Noble:** The word could also be translated *honorable* and is used in the NT to describe faithful deacons, wives, and older men (**1 Tim. 3:8+11; Titus 2:2**). \*We spend a lot of time thinking on the frivolous or entertaining and not things that are honorable.\*

3) **Just:** Is most often translated *righteous* in the NT. Righteousness is what is "right" in God's estimation. \*Politics has taken over the realm of morality and skewed it. As if there isn't something "right" only equally valid political opinions.\*

4) **Pure:** The word is also translated *chaste* and is used for the character and conduct of a spouse (**2 Cor. 11:2; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:2**). It speaks of being untainted by evil—stainless.

**\*1 Timothy 5:22: Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure.\***

--Too often, we are okay thinking about something a little bit stained or impure. We are okay soiling our thoughts, but many of us wouldn't dare wear a stained shirt or dress in public!

5) **Lovely:** This is the only time in the NT this Greek word is used. It casts a very wide net that covers anything agreeable. God has made life wonderful in so many ways!

**\*Proverbs 30:18-19: There are three things which are too wonderful for me, yes, four which I do not understand: The way of an eagle in the air, the way of a serpent on a rock, the way of a ship in the midst of the sea, and the way of a man with a virgin.\***

6) **Good report:** This is another unique Greek word used only here in the NT. It speaks of something reputable or admirable. \*We are way too excited with evil reports or gossip!\*

7) **Virtue:** Speaks of *excellence* and is a word primarily used by Peter in the NT (**1 Pet. 2:9; 2 Pet. 1:3**) who calls all believers to ***add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge. . . (2 Pet. 1:5).*** If we focused on adding one virtue a year, we would be saints in no time!

8) **Praiseworthy:** Refers to anything laudable or commendable in God's eyes. There will be a day of ultimate praise!

**\*1 Corinthians 4:5: Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.\***

--Paul's command?—**meditate on these things!** You and I may be forced to endure or see evil to a certain measure, but we are never forced to meditate on false, dishonorable, wrong, impure, twisted, gruesome, evil, or wicked things.

--We must develop a habit of taking evil thoughts to Christ (**2 Cor. 10:5**) and inserting good thoughts in their place. The best way to deal with ungodly thoughts is to crowd them out with virtuous godly ones.

**\*Isaiah 55:7-9: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.\***

--Wash your thoughts in the cleansing water of God's Word and not what this present evil world has to offer! \*Calmly and confidently return wandering thoughts back to Him. He is waiting and not offended.\*

**\*Romans 12:2: And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.\***

#### **Verse 9:**

--Paul knows thinking is not enough. We must also do. **These do!** We do not live in a "thought world" but in a real world. \*Paralysis of analysis\*

\*Drummond (The Greatest Thing In The World): "No man has a right to postpone his life for the sake of his thoughts. Why? Because this is a real world, not a think world. Treat it as a real world—act. Think by all means, but think also of what is actual."\*

--Obedience in what is right will be a safe and paved road for our thoughts.

**\*Proverbs 16:3: Commit your works to the LORD, and your thoughts will be established.\***

--Paul was such an incredible teacher. After preaching the gospel, he combined a careful teaching ministry with a sincere life example—**the things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do.** . . . brings us back to the example or pattern of **3:17**.

--Here again, to this type of lifestyle in thought and deed, is the wonderful promise: **and the God of peace will be with you.** This is the personal witness of a man who knew.

#### **Verse 10:**

--Paul was thinking of something praiseworthy himself—the reflourishing of their care! Their love for him had sprouted another blossom. Their gift brought him such joy because it was another evidence of God's life in them and their fellowship in the gospel.

--Paul makes sure they know he isn't giving them a backhanded compliment. They had always cared they simply lacked opportunity.

**\*Galatians 6:10: *Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.*\***

### **Verses 11-13:**

--(11) ***Not that I speak in regard to need.*** . . Paul isn't just saying this because he is trying to manipulate them into giving him more. His joy was in their fellowship, not their funds. We never see Paul begging for money for his ministry!

--Paul never begged for money because he ***learned in whatever state I am, to be content.*** Paul was not indifferent to needs or circumstances, he was simply independent of them because of his secret pool of resources in Christ Jesus.

--(12) Paul knew how to handle all the highs and lows of life. Some can handle riches and not poverty, or some can handle hunger but not indulgence, and vice versa.

--Paul had ***learned*** contentment. The secret of his contentment was not the self-sufficiency of his own strength, forethought, or discipline. Not self-sufficiency but Christ-sufficiency.

**\*2 Corinthians 9:8: *And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.*\***

--What had Paul learned in his own salvation? In the life he counted as loss and rubbish? In revival? In prison? In the supernatural? In the thorn in his flesh? In growing churches and false teachers? In the hospitality of believers like these Philippians and in the chains of Rome?

--Is there enough resource in Christ? Then there is enough for me.

**\*1 Timothy 6:6: *Now godliness with contentment is great gain.*\***

--Discontent is the very air that our current culture breathes. Our world is designed to create a gnawing and continuous discontent in every aspect of our lives. Discontent even conquered Eve in Eden!

--Only in Christ will we learn something different—satisfaction.

\*Tozer (The Crucified Life): *“Another reason why Christians know Christ and God so little is that we want things instead of God. We are more interested in the gift than the giver. God wants to give us Himself. God wants to impart Himself with His gift. Separated from God, the gift is dangerous.”\**

--Own nothing but Christ as your own. To have all things in One will set you free. To possess something, someone, or some condition will make you a slave. Hold all things with an open hand, allowing God to give and take as He pleases.

--(13) Having personally learned the sufficiency of Christ in all life circumstances, Paul can now say: ***I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.***

--What thought brings you contentment? What is our great hope in this life? Where I find my need, I will also find the sufficiency of Christ Jesus. This is the secret of Christian contentment. Am I content? Is Christ sufficient?

### Verses 14-16:

--(14) Paul commends the Philippian church saying, ***you shared in my distress***. . . meaning they considered his affliction their own and responded accordingly.

--(15) Grateful, he also rehearses their history of giving. This particular church had graciously shared with him unlike other fellowships.

--(16) They gave again and again. Paul wants them to know he appreciates, not just the present gift, but their faithful character as givers.

### Verses 17-20:

--(17) ***Not that I seek the gift***. . . Again, Paul wants to make clear his desire was their eternal blessing and not just their material goods. They had a three-way friendship—Paul, Philippi, Christ. If that fellowship was healthy, Paul knew it would produce ***fruit that abounds to your account***.

--This was all part of Paul's earlier prayer for them in **1:11: *being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God***.

--(18) ***Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you***. . . Paul wants them to know that he is full and abounding in their gift. It was quite sufficient for him, and, more importantly, pleasing to God.

--Paul says their gift was ***a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God***. Each part of the threefold cord is blessed. There is something of Christ in the gift.

***\*Ephesians 5:2: And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.\****

--(19) ***And my God shall supply all your need***. . . Here is Paul, this heroic apostle, in prison with nothing material to show to his name. He is being supported by this church and has nothing to return in kind. Even so, he is fully confident in his God.

--They filled him to the full in Christ and now his God will fill them to the full by Christ. Paul trusts in the goodness of God.

***\*Luke 15:17: But when he came to himself, he said, "How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough to spare, and I perish with hunger!"\****

--Paul trusts that his Heavenly Father will supply their need ***according to***—not merely *out of*—***His riches in glory by Christ Jesus***.

--Paul speaks often of Christ's riches. Riches like none other can offer. Unsearchable riches of: ***goodness, forbearance, longsuffering, glory, wisdom, knowledge, grace, kindness, etc. (Rom. 2:4; 9:23; 11:33; Eph. 1:7, 18; 2:7; 3:8, 16; Col. 1:27; 2:2)***.

--Part of our contentment is based in our confidence that God has resources beyond what we see, know, or understand.

--At least, that is what Paul is a witness of. ***My God***. . . what of your God?

--(20) The idea of God the Father sharing His riches to supply our needs through Jesus Christ drives Paul to praise. When God gives us grace, it is proper for us to give Him gratitude and glory. **Amen.**

**Verses 21-23:**

--(21) **Greet every saint in Christ Jesus.** . . Don't leave anyone out! Greet those who are with you in this mysterious and awesome process we call life. How different would your life be without them? Without the family of God?

--(22) **Especially those who are of Caesar's household.** . . was a reminder of God's work. There were saints even in that evil and dangerous household!

--(23) **The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.** . . not a single one left out.