

Pressing On

- » Prayer overcoming anxiety (Philippians 4:4-7)
- » 2 Affirmations: God is near; the peace of God will guard our hearts
- » Today we continue on with Paul's exhortation

1. Patterns of Thought: Celebrating God's Goodness

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Philippians 4:8

'Think about these things'

Paul uses a favourite word 'think about' – reflect, examine evaluate, ponder (40x in N.T.)

To think about good things – fill your mind with good things – the opposite of our news cycle

Eight Qualities

- 1. True (truthful)
- 2. Honorable (things that lift the mind up)
- 3. Just (with God and neighbour, giving to the other their due)

- 4. Pure (purity in motives and action)
- 5. Pleasing (once in N.T.- lovely, amiable, attractive, winsome)
- 6. Commendable (once in N.T.of good report, gracious kindly)

7. Excellence (excellent qualities in any sphere of activity - music, art, athletics, etc.)

8. Worthy of praise (universal human experience, deemed worthy of praise)

How are you going to celebrate the goodness of the creator if you feed your mind only on the places in the world which humans have made ugly? How are you going to take steps to fill your mind instead with all the things that God has given us to be legitimately pleased with, and to enjoy and celebrate?

Tom Wright

» Our thought patterns lead us to peace or not

2. Our Practice in Living Life

Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Philippians 4:9

1. Focus Now on Doing

» Literally 'keep on practicing these things'

» What you have learned, received, heard, seen in me

Not Egotistical Boasting
 This speaks to the days before the compilation of the New Testament – days where the traditions came down from the Apostles
 Thus Paul is speaking about what he has received from Christ and how he models what he has learned

3. Such Doing/Practicing Leads Us in the Way of Peace

- » We will know the God of peace
- » Verses 7 & 9 go together 'the peace of God' comes from 'the God of peace'
- » We enter into the calm of God

3. Power Through Christ I can do all things through him who strengthens me. Philippians 4:10-14

We learn to be content over time

- » Paul experiences much and little (v11-12)
- » Through it all Paul learns to be content (v11)

'Content'

- » Used once in N. T.
- A word from the Stoics a description of Socrates – balanced in all situations
- » The Invictus games injured war vets displaying discipline, resolution (2017 in Toronto)

'I have learned the secret' (v12)

- » Used once in N. T.
- » A word from the mystery cults of Paul's day – speaks to an initiation rite
- » Paul says he has learned a secret!

The Secret

- » The secret is that our empowerment to be content is found in Abba/Christ (v13)
- » The source is not found in ourselves but God
- » He is the one who strengthens/ empowers us

He is defined neither by wealth nor poverty but by a contentment that transcends both, and by a power in Christ which enables him to live in any circumstance.

Fred B. Craddock

God's Triune Power in Us

- » A power which is found for all in Jesus Christ
- » Available to us all, in whatever situations we face
- » Whether in humiliation or in abundance God is present to us (v 12)

Experienced in Community

- Paul experiences this power in community – not a Lone Ranger perspective
- » Paul is in jail (Ephesus)
 - » He is encouraged by the love gift from the Philippian church (v10,14)

- » The financial gift is described by Paul as a 'fragrant offering pleasing to God' (v18)
- » Even so our tithes/offerings are received by God as pleasing offerings
- » The community is brought together through practical service and love

- Paul reminds the Philippian church that even as they sacrifice God will supply their needs (v19)
- » Giving and receiving
- » Allows us to be both the giver and thanksgiver
- » Such action mirrors the goodness of God to us

Summary

- Paul is concerned with our 'patterns of thought
- 2. Practice in daily living
- 3. Power received through Christ
- » All of which leads to the experience of knowing God's peace and empowerment