

Philippians 4:8–9

“Meditation upon and Application of the Word of the God of the Peace”

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⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. ⁹ The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Philippians chapter 4 are portion this evening this afternoon versus 8 and 9. Let's pray.

Lord. We bless your name for you, are the God who has made peace for us in. Jesus Christ. And you give to us to know that we have peace with you and Him and to rejoice in the hope of your glory even to rejoice in our sufferings, as you use them to turn our hearts towards you and against our sin.

We praise you who are the God of our peace and we come to you now and this portion of your word and which you give us instruction of another means by which you are with us, by which your peace guards, our hearts and minds, we pray for the help of your Holy Spirit that we might not only be able better to understand these words of yours that are before us.

But they would shape that internal conversation that we have in our minds and our hearts

And that we might live according to your word from having had minds that are renewed by means of your word. So we prayed not only that, we would understand and experience this in the future, but even now, as we are making use of your word that you would be doing that mind.

Renewing work of your spirit upon us and your word read in your word hurt and your word proclaims. We pray that you would help the servant to teaches and instructs and and proclaims that it would be your word, which is taught from which we're receiving instruction, which we hear proclaimed for we ask it in Jesus name.

Amen, Philippians 4 verses 8 and 9. These are God's word.

Finally, brethren whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are, just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are, lovely, whatever. Things are of good report. If there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy meditate on these things, the things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me these do and the God of peace will be with you.

So far God's inspired and inherent word as we heard last week with respect to prayer. If you believe in Jesus Christ, you already have peace with God, all of God's enmity against your sin, your guilt, and against you. For it has been taken by the Lord Jesus on the cross, and has actually been destroyed by the Lord Jesus.

He has killed the enmity between God and us, which is the means by which and matey between us and what another are killed. You remember that from Ephesians chapter 2 and yet our experience of the peace that we have with God and our experience of that peace ruling, our hearts is something in which we are still growing and one means by which he makes us to experience.

And enjoy the the piece of God taking up your member last week and the guarding your hearts, taking up that fortified position around our hearts and minds is prayer. Well another means by which another way in which the Lord makes you to know and experience the peace that you have with God and have it rule over your heart and your mind is through preaching and really the entire ministry of the word and how we respond to it.

There's a little important word that is missing at least in the English translation that we just read. And I think in many other ones that I have read and that is the word the in verse 9 and the God of the peace will be with you. He's still talking about the peace that he had described in verse seven as taking a fortified position around your heart.

And yet this time, he doesn't say that the piece of God is going to guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Now, he's saying the God of the peace God himself will be with you. Now, it's important that we know that God is already with us and for us in Jesus Christ.

If we belong to God, through faith in Jesus Christ. So, he's not saying if you meditate on the kinds of things that verse 8 is telling you about and if you do those things which are the same set of things that you learned and received and heard and saw in me the apostles speaking there to the Philippians.

So if you meditate on those things and if you do those things, then the God of peace will be with you or the God of the peace will be with, you know, not at all. He is with you for your meditating upon those things. He is you for your doing these things.

It's similar to when the Lord Jesus says to make disciples baptizing and teaching them to keep all that he is commanded and surely, he is with us, always even to the end of the age. So he is with us to help us meditate and to help us do. Now the the what the Lord has given his servants to teach and command and proclaim and to model is that which we find in his word and it is wonderful.

It is beautiful. So he doesn't just skip to verse 9 and say the things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me these do. And he doesn't even say the things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me meditate upon them and do them.

No, he overcomes our sluggishness toward his word by teaching us again just as in places. Like Psalm 19, the second app which we have sung together this afternoon and saw 119 that whole glorious song about the beauty. The goodness of what is in the word of God and he gives it to us in four pairs he gives us the beauty, the goodness of the word of God and four pairs.

The the first pair, is that God's word gives us. What is true and what is noble. And other words, it accurately describes reality and it teaches us, it's teaching is weighty and substantial and important. So if you want to have your mind, have that internal conversation in your mind and we should probably back up and talk about that word, meditate upon these things.

This is reminding us that we all have this internal conversation that is going on in our minds. Some of you may know, for instance, that in the old testament, when it talks about meditating, it's using a word for mutter and talking to yourself and even if you don't do it out loud because you don't want people to think that you are losing your marbles, or that you are an odd sort of fellow.

You are always talking to yourself and sometimes it slips out and sometimes you're not listening well enough to yourself and you talk out loud to help yourself. Listen better. And the the psalmist models that for us in Psalm 42 and Psalm 43 and scripture teaches us about that and models that and gives us examples of it and in many places and here it is commanded.

Now if you're having this conversation in your own heart and your own mind, you don't just want to kind of randomly speak to yourself off the cuff so that you're constantly telling yourself things that may or may not be true. And constantly be spending your thoughts on things that may or may not be important.

But if you are intentional with your self-conversation to have it shaped by the Bible, then you're telling yourself what's in the scripture and those things are true. And those things are weighty substantial important. The the word behind the what's translated noble in verse 8. And so this is telling us whatever, things are true.

Whatever things are noble. These are things that he's going to say in the next verse are the very things that when Paul was in Phillippi, he had taught them and they had learned, he had commanded them and they had received, he had proclaimed or preached to them and they had heard and he had modeled then and they had seen them in him.

So this entire ministry of the word in teaching and in commanding and in preaching and modeling very, similar isn't it to that ministry of the word that he talks about, to the Ephesians elders and acts chapter 20. And he, he reminds them all of all that. And then when he's leaving them, he says that he commends them to the word and to the grace of God.

So it's not just prayer. That is a means by which the Lord increases are experience of and enjoyment of God, being with us and his peace guarding, our hearts at vines but also the ministry of the word teaching and commanding and preaching. And this, this modeling of Christian authority that ministers and elders are are to be engaged in with the with the church.

Now the what the word tells us is the first of all in this first pair, true and noble. It is right accurate real and it is way too and substantial and meaningful and we want to have intentional internal conversations in our hearts and minds. One of the things that that has been lost and you know Dr.

Beeky is actually written a few books on Christian meditation but those are two Christian meditation, a family worship. Our two things that the Bible emphasizes a spiritual disciplines and that are puritan fathers, who who were steeped in the scriptures emphasized but have been lost for some generations. Now in the evangelical churches and even to some extent in the reformed churches.

So here we have this command to meditate upon particular things to take control and have intentional conversations in our minds. Just like I hope when you are with a brother or sister in Christ on any day that you are that you are trying to have intentional edifying, conversation letting your speech always be with grace seasoned with salt trying to edify the one who hears but especially on the Lord's day.

And so I know some of you are are trying to have intentional conversations with one another. On the Lord's day to build one another up. Well, God has given you his word and he's given you the ministry of the word elders who teach you and command you and preach to you and model.

For you, say that that word, which they minister will take control of your internal conversation, and you will not be conformed to the world but you'll be transformed by the renewing of your mind. So first pair, true and noble second point second pair, whatever is just that is righteous or right?

Just and whatever things are pure without blemish. So the first one just means according to the standard. Well what standard is that we can see in our culture, can't we what a mess, you get in. If you try to define the word justice according to what men say that they can agree on, no, we must define justice according to what God says in his word and so whatever things are according to God's standard and to the extent that God requires whatever things are pure God, will God gives us not only the standard for righteousness, but the extent to, which he is righteous and the extent of that righteousness, which he requires that, which has only been satisfied for you in Jesus, but also that, which he is producing in you by Jesus, by his spirit.

So, first pair is true and noble, second pair, Justin pure third thing, lovely pleasant to the eye and whatever things are of good report pleasant to the ear or right to hear about. And again, the eye and ear that you're especially thinking about here, it's God's eye and God's ear.

And to the extent that we are being transformed by him, the believers eyes, and believers ears, and to the extent that which God has left knowledge of his law. In the hearts of unbelievers, there is, there is some recognition of what is right and good and lovely, pleasant to the eye and of good report among unbelievers.

But the, this standard here is again that which please is the Lord that which pleases the Lord and where do you find what? Pleases the Lord? Again what the apostle had taught them and commanded them and proclaimed to them. And modeled for them, what they had learned and received and heard and seen in him.

And the last pair is the catch everything. The catch everything pair if there is any virtue and if there is anything phrase worthy, so not only those things that the Bible specifically mentions. But those things that by good and necessary, consequence are described by the Bible. So God has given you his in his word, the way to interpret his world.

But he's also filled his world with good things that which is is lovely and praiseworthy, and right, and pure and true and noble. And so, he says, meditate of these things, let your internal fault life be filled, be intentional and that internal conversation that you carry on in your hearts and in your minds.

And this is a means by which the God of the peace is with you, and he is with you to help you in maintaining that internal conversation. But it's not just a conversation, is it? Because when he switches from the things which you learn and received and heard, and saw on me, same set of things in.

As in verse 8, these he says do, right? So that which that, which he has given us to meditate upon to control or inner thoughts were supposed to be acting upon those things. It should be changing our behavior. And so the way that you come to offer your body as a living sacrifice is by the renewing of your mind, which is what happens when the Lord takes hold by his word of your inner conversations.

So some things that you will want to be doing children. One of those things is to be paying attention. When your elders teach or preach or instruct you also, your parents are bringing you up. If they are obeying the Lord trust, they're to a great extent, by God's grace, they are or teaching you what the Bible says.

And commanding you to do with the Bible says and they are proclaiming to you, the good news of Jesus Christ that he is been perfect in your place. And that he who has earned, your heaven is making you to be fit for that heaven. He's making you, holy like himself and so they announce these things to you and you hear them.

And even they model them for you. Sometimes they're modeling that which is good. And right. And praise God. You see what they do and how they act and you say that's the kind of thing, they tell me to do. And sometimes they model to you asking for forgiveness because parents are not perfect just like elders or not perfect.

Sometimes they model for you as well, asking for forgiveness and repentance and perceiving, rebukes,

and those sorts of things. So, that's one thing, pay attention. When you're taught in the church, when you're taught in home and when you're commanded, when you hear preaching, when you see it modeled, another thing is, you want to store up your mind with Bible, you want to be memorizing verses of scripture, you want to be learning passages and thinking about them after the Lord's day thinking about the passages that you heard open after a family worship, thinking about the passages that daddy, or if daddy isn't there, mommy has has taught you thinking about the passage, is that you read?

And perhaps, if you're having trouble with thoughts, that are filling your mind instead of the Bible and you have learned to read. And this is a good reason to want to learn to read you, pull your Bible down and you read in your Bibles. Something that you have heard recently in worship and the church or in family worship and you put it back into your mind because it's slipped out of your mind and you take back control of that internal conversation.

And if you're having a hard time controlling it you say Lord you are the God of peace. You have promised to be with me. I'm having a hard time working on my own thoughts and taking care of my internal conversation. Help me, grant that your spirit. Give me your holy spirit to take your work and control the.

The thoughts that I am having so that, so that I can meditate on the things that are through and noble and just and pure and lovely. And of good report and virtuous and praiseworthy. And the Lord will help you because he is given Christ for you. And he is the one who's begun the work in you and he will bring it to completion.

Let's pray.

Our father in heaven, we pray that you would store our hearts and minds up with your word and that you would transform us by the renewing of our minds that we would know your favorite towards us and Jesus Christ. And that by your mercies, then we would all for our bodies as living sacrifices to you.

And so help us. We pray and the discipline of Christian meditation and help us. We pray in putting into action what we think of. And what we think about from your word, that we might see the loveliness. The goodness, the truth, the waitingness, the rightness, the perfection, the blemishlessness of what you say in your word and that we would be moved to think upon it and that we wouldn't be moved to live by it.

Thank you for giving us Jesus through whom. We may always come to you knowing that he has done this perfectly and thank you for the promise in your word. That when we see him, we shall be like him and see him as he is. It's a grant to us to purify ourselves, even as he is pure grant to us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling knowing that it is, you who works it into us, we ask it in Christ's name.

Amen.