

Think on These Things, Pt. 2

Having a Peace that Prevails

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Review — Last week we compared Acts 16:25-31 and Philippians 4:4-9. While in jail, Paul wrote in the book of Philippians what He had experienced while imprisoned in Philippi ten years earlier.

- **Rejoice in the Lord**
- **Relax in His Presence**
- **Request His Assistance**
- **Rehearse His Truth**
- **Realize His Peace**

Today —our focus is on Philippians 4:8

- **Philippians 4:4-9**
Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 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.

Prayer

- Open our spiritual eyes, ears, and mind to Your glorious, life-transforming truth!

Declare

- What we think about, and what we do with our thoughts, is a radically important part of our spiritual life! How we receive, process, and cling to God's truth determines our spiritual growth, maturity, and destiny.

Warning

- Circumstances, attacks of all kinds, can cause past truths to be current questions! John Baptist, no greater man born among women, preacher, baptizer, eyewitness to Jesus — went from Truth to Questioner. Your belief in yesterday's truth does not exempt you from today's questions.

Start with an amazingly simple yet powerful scripture...

- **Proverbs 23:7**
For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he.
 - Thinks — to calculate, to estimate value, to be a **Gatekeeper**...only time this word *thinks* is translated this way in whole Old Testament!
 - As the gatekeeper of your mind, you must calculate and estimate the truthful, holy, eternal value of the thoughts you're thinking...**Because**...

- What you do with the thoughts you have determines who you are and the actions you do... “so is he” ...beloved, our thoughts are that important!

FACT – as the gatekeeper of your mind, if you embrace godly thoughts, leading to godly actions, it produces a godly, peaceful life!

FACT – as the gatekeeper of your mind, if you embrace ungodly thoughts, leading to ungodly actions, it produces an ungodly, tormented life!

Sow a thought,
 reap an action,
 sow an action,
 reap a habit,
 sow a habit,
 reap a character,
 sow a character,
 and reap a destiny...

Good or bad — we reap based on what we do — with the thoughts we think!
Destinies are the result of thoughts embraced.

Must... be intentional about what you do with the thoughts you think.
 You can't let them run wild, unchecked, played with, fantasized over, etc.
They determine who you are and what you do!

Listen... you can't completely control the thoughts you think,
 you **CAN** control what you **DO** with them!
Be a Gatekeeper...we are called and equipped to do that... that's good news!

8 Plank Gate — Gatekeeper

Philippians 4:8 — Finally, brethren if there is anything...

- **True** — Jesus is ultimate expression of truth, He is The Truth, His Word is truth, anything not in line with His truth is not The Truth, i.e. “my truth” is nothing but your broken opinion.
- **Noble** — honorable, venerated, revered.
- **Just** — righteous, equitable, fair.
- **Pure** — innocent, modest, chaste.
- **Lovely** — pleasing, winsome, friendly toward.
- **Good report** — reputable, well-spoken of.
- **Virtue** — manliness, valor, mental and moral excellence, although rare word, Peter emphasizes in 2 Peter 1:3,5.
- **Praiseworthy** — commendable, laudable, to be exalted.

Mind-Renewer

FACT — as you start to be a Gatekeeper with your 8 Plank Gate, your mind starts to get renewed, and you become a Mind-Renewer.

- **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.
- **Conformed** — fashioned after, shaped by this world's values, ways, and means.
- **Transformed** — “metamorphose” changed into something new...**by**...
- **Renewing of your mind** — the degree of real spiritual change in your life is directly related to the degree of your mind's renewal!
- **Renewed mind= transformed life= proving**, knowing and experiencing the will of God... renewed mind allows you to really know and experience how good God's will is.

Stronghold Destroyer

- As you become Gatekeeper and Mind-Renewer, you'll become a **Stronghold Destroyer**
- **2 Corinthians 10:4-5**
For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.
- weapons warfare (we're in a war) not carnal/natural, mighty in God, spiritual!
- pulling down — violent, intentional, destroying to extinction
- strongholds — fortifications, fortress, castles, seats of demonic authority
- **strongholds** — *(definition) a satanic lie, a generational mindset or a human wounding that you have listened to long enough, believed strong enough, and owned deep enough that it has become part of your identity, it has fortified itself in you and dictates your thoughts, beliefs, actions and reactions. It is an unholy filter through which all thoughts pass.*
- Guilt, Shame, Unworthy, Unlovely, Undeserving, Unbelief...Unforgiving, Bitter, Negative...Rejection, Depression, Addiction...Pride, Stubbornness... Sexual Brokenness, etc.

FACT — these strongholds and others like them can and should be pulled down. Remember, our weapons are mighty in God to do just that!

How?

- **2 Corinthians 10:5** — casting down arguments
 - Casting down — pulling and casting down is violent, intentional, and thorough!
 - Arguments — imaginations, **delusional reasonings** from carnal, corrupt, darkened, and debased places in the mind.

- Verse 5 cont'd... and every high thing...elevated places, barriers — seems impossible to overcome.
- Verse 5 cont'd... that exalts itself against the knowledge of God — inflates itself AGAINST the knowledge and truth of God — **it exalts itself, you cast it down!**
- Verse 5 cont'd...bringing every thought into captivity — after you have beaten down those unholy thoughts, taken them captive, imprisoned them, rendered them powerless, useless, inoperative, non-threatening.
- Verse 5 cont'd...to the obedience of Christ — you bring that thought before the truth of Christ and make it submissively bow the knee in obedience to Jesus!

FACT — if we'll start treating our thoughts and strongholds like the scripture instructs us to, a renewed mind, peace, and freedom will be ours!

Discussion Questions

1. If someone like John Baptist questioned the truth he knew to be true, why do we think we will never waver in our beliefs?
2. In Proverbs 23:7, what does the word “thinks” translated as “gatekeeper” mean?
3. Discuss: you can't control the thoughts that come into your mind, but you can control what you do with those thoughts.
4. What can you say to someone who says that “their truth” is “true for them.”
5. Are there any particular *strongholds* that you can identify in your own life?
6. What weapons can you use to pull down that *stronghold*?