

THE PROCESS OF THINKING PURE THOUGHTS

INTRODUCTION: *Truehearted, wholehearted, faithful and loyal
King of our lives, by Thy grace we will be
Under the standard exalted and royal
Strong in Thy strength we will battle for Thee*

1. If you are what you eat, perhaps it is even more true that, you are what you think.
2. Virtually all of our actions begin with a thought.
3. Even our impulses are governed by our history of thinking.
4. One of the biggest challenges as a Christian is keeping pure thoughts in our minds and impure thoughts out.
5. Jesus gives us an example of how serious it is to allow impure thoughts to infiltrate our minds:
 - a) Matthew 5:27-28 He says that lust in the heart is as serious as adultery!
 - b) He says the same thing about murder in Matthew 5:21-22.
6. If one is filling his mind with thoughts that are contrary to Christ's teachings, it is impossible to pursue Christ with his heart.
7. How do we go about filling our minds with thoughts that are pure?

I. THOUGHTS COME FROM WHAT IS BEFORE US:

A. Thoughts begin with the eyes:

- 1) Jesus said, "**Your eye is the lamp of your body.**" (Luke 11:34-36)
- 2) James tells us that sin comes from our desires (lusts) (James 1:13-17).

B. So it seems that part of the solution to thinking pure thoughts is to put only pure things before our eyes.

1) "I will set nothing wicked before my eyes" (Psalms 101:3).

2) What are we showing our eyes?

3) Romans 12:1-2, "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

C. It is easy to say you can control these thoughts and just stop trying to rid yourself of them.

D. Even Paul felt the pressure to give up in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, but he gives us the answer as well.

1) We fix our eyes, our "lamps" on what is unseen, what is eternal.

II. WE HAVE THE TOOLS TO OVERCOME IMPURE THOUGHTS:

A. The tools we have at our disposal to overcome these thoughts are powerful.

1) Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 10:5 that we can take each thought we have and submit it to God for his control. "bring every thought into captivity"

2) How do you take your thoughts captive and submit it to God's control

though?

3) This isn't something you can turn off like a light switch.

4) A few suggestions.

- **Prayer:** Prayer is the way we come to know God better, and we are told to take everything to God in prayer (Ephesians 6:18, Philippians 4:6, Colossians 4:2). Jesus did it (Matthew 26:36), Paul did it (Acts 9:11) and Peter did it (Acts 10:9). Even when we are not sure exactly how to pray or what to pray for, Paul tells us in Romans 8:26
- *Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*
- Finally, be relentless in your prayers (Luke 18:1). Men always ought to pray and not lose heart.
- **Pray with friends:** James tells us in James 5:16 to pray with others.
- They can be friends, family, your spouse, etc.
- You can draw strength from people that present your needs to God in their unique way.
- Something they say in prayer can help you just as sitting down with someone to talk through an issue can shed light on an issue, only this is better.
- You've brought God into the conversation!
- **Study God's Word:** Jesus tells us in Matthew 7:24 that we are like a wise man that builds his house on the rocks when we read His word and put it into practice.
- If you read the sports section of the newspaper fifteen minutes a day, you will be filled with all sorts of statistics relating to sports, and your mind will turn to the thought of sports during the day.
- There is nothing wrong with that at all, but think if you spend those fifteen minutes studying God's word.
- Over time, your thoughts will turn to God throughout the day, and that is my goal - if my mind is filled with God and spiritual thoughts, it has no room for impure thoughts.

CONCLUSION:

Paul has the formula for creating pure thoughts in Phillipians 4:8-9 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.