

WorshipLife Session 2: **What's On Your Mind?** Philippians 4:6-8

If there are three central aims for every person at their deepest level of existence, they would be: 1) the desire to be loved and valued, 2) the need for physical sustenance, and 3) a quest to have inner peace. As Joshua Liebman states, "Analyze the prayers of troubled, overborne mankind of all creeds, in every age—and their petitions come down to the irreducible common denominators of daily bread and inward peace." There is no battle in our lives or our souls that don't truly begin on the battlegrounds of our minds. Our fears, anger, and disappointment as well as our vision, hope, and faith are all rooted in our psyche long before they are present in our hearts, homes, churches and jobs. Therefore, if we are to have lives that are truly at peace, we must make a conscious effort to secure it at a mental level. This study is designed to guide us to a place where we can shift our thoughts to a place of holy peace that is found in a relationship with God through Jesus Christ (read John 14:27).

The Word Made Plain...(read Philippians 4:6-8)

In our scriptural text, we are reading a letter from the Apostle Paul to the Macedonian church at Philippi. This letter is primarily an acknowledgement and appreciation note for the financial gifts that were received to support the Missionary work. However, in this fourth chapter, Paul takes a moment to discuss how to move from a troubled to a peaceful mind through Christian disciplines. He teaches three core principles:

1. **Give areas of worry to the Lord** (v.6) – Paul reminds us that our lives, as Christians, won't be without situations that cause anxiety and worry. However, we are not to allow worry to gain permanent residence in our minds. What we cannot fix, we shouldn't continue to hold on to. Through prayer, we can place the situation into the hands of God so that He can resolve it.
2. **When you give the situation to the Lord, He gives you His peace of mind** – As you release the situation, you will receive the dynamic peace of God. Like the soldiers that were stationed to protect the city of Philippi from danger, God's peace will protect your heart and mind from toxic satanic impulses that would disrupt your peace. As Jesus reminds us, God will keep your mind in peace as it trusts in the Lord (John 16:33).
3. **Once you receive peace of mind position yourself to not lose it** (v.8) – Though God may give your mind peace, you have to actively pursue thoughts that will lead to a peaceful and godly life (read Psalm 34:14). You have to be selective about the inventory of thoughts that you allow into your mind. Spend your energy adding those thoughts that will produce worshipful actions and eliminating thoughts that don't.

Like clearing out an email account, you should constantly filter your mind so that you are only housing healthy thoughts that encourage you to live and love in a way that reflects the heart of Christ in this world. Make sure that if the Lord were to ask you, "What's on your mind?", you could answer, "Your peace."

Reflection on the Word (discussion)...

1. Have you ever allowed something that was mentally troubling to linger in your mind? How did it affect your life?
2. Did you eventually give it to the Lord in prayer? What was the outcome? How would life have been different if you had given it to the Lord sooner?
3. Paul gives us a list of things in verse 8 that should characterize the thoughts in our minds. Review this list. How many of these areas need to be reestablished in your mind?

Strategic Plan for Upgrading Your Worship Life

Based on Philippians 4:6-8, what will you do to make sure that your mind is clear from troubling thoughts and at a place of “perfect peace?”

Benefit Package for Keeping Your Mind Godly and Free from Anxiety

- It produces moral excellence (Philippians 4:8)
- The mercy of God will be extended to your life (Isaiah 55:7)
- You life will experience in perfect peace (Isaiah 26:3-4)

Closing prayer

Heavenly Father, we live in a world that causes our minds to be bombarded with millions of images and hundreds of thoughts per day. Grant me the grace to effectively guide my thoughts in a way that will produce and house those things that will bring health and peace to my life. In Jesus’ name I ask this. AMEN