

The Battle for the Mind

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[0:00] Philippians 4, I'll read the first nine verses in your hearing. Philippians 4, I'll read the first nine verses in your hearing.

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Philippians 5, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things. Philippians 5, whatever you have learned or received or heard from me or seen in me, put it into practice and the God of peace will be with you.

Well, we have come to that part in our worship service where we turn our thoughts to that which God has to say to us. And He speaks to us in the Scriptures, and we're looking at the book of Philippians, written by the Apostle Paul, inspired by God the Spirit.

And as we come to chapter 4, we're immediately struck with a series of commandments, six commands at least. And they are just as binding upon us today as they were upon the Philippians who first received them.

[1:58] There's nothing here that's said to them that does not apply to us. Stand firm. And as I just review these, I want to ask you how you're doing with each one. You evaluate yourself and ask, oh yes, I remember that command.

We looked at that one and this one. See how it is with regard to your own life. Here are these commands that hit us. Stand firm in the Lord.

Constancy. Agree with each other in the Lord. Unity. Rejoice in the Lord. Always. Let your gentleness be evident to all.

Don't worry about anything, but pray about everything. And then we come this morning to the sixth command. And in many ways, your obedience to the other five depends on how it goes with this one.

It's a critical command. And it's set off by the word finally. Verse 8. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things.

[3:20] Interesting. Here's a command to think. Think about such things. So put your thinking caps on, kids, because we're going to think about thinking this morning.

Your mind is a marvelous thing. When we just consider the sheer volume of thoughts that pass through your mind each and every day.

From the moment you wake up in the morning to the moment you drift off into sleep. Your mind is busy thinking. Gathering information.

Observing. Evaluating. Coming to conclusions. Judging. Remembering. Recalling. It may be figuring out some difficult math problem.

Or it may be daydreaming. What you're going to do after school is out. But it's always thinking. This is something you do full time. Other things you do part time.

[4:26] This is your full time occupation. You're always thinking when you're awake. And what you are thinking is important to God.

Now that's our first observation from the text this morning. What you are thinking is important to God. Not only are we thinking all day long.

But all day long God is tracking our thoughts. He's observing what is passing through our minds. He's interested in that. Psalm 94 and verse 11 says, The Lord knows the thoughts of a man.

He alone knows. I have a number in my mind right now. And I'm thinking of it. It's between one and a hundred.

You don't know which one it is. But God knows. The Lord knows the thoughts of a man. Anthony Burgess said, The thoughts of man's heart.

[5:25] What millions are there of them in a day? The twinkling of an eye is not so sudden a thing as the twinkling of a thought. Yet those thousands and thousands of thoughts which pass from you that you cannot count, they are all known to God.

The psalmist says with wonder in Psalm 139.2, You perceive my thoughts from afar. Jeremiah, in the twelfth chapter and verse 3, You know me, O Lord.

You see me and you test my thoughts about you. You see, God is not only interested in what we are doing, our actions. He's also interested in what we're thinking, our thoughts.

And especially our thoughts about Him. What is she thinking about me now? Is He thinking about me?

The greatest commandment of all involves your thought life, doesn't it? For you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.

[6:39] With all your mind. Do you love God with your mind? Do you love Him with your mind? He's tracking that with great interest. And the day of judgment will be a surprising day to many when they come to realize that God judges them not only for all that they've ever done, but also for all that they have ever thought.

Therefore, judge nothing before the appointed time. Wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts.

1 Corinthians 4-5 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

It's all wide open to God. Our lustful thoughts, our proud, despising other thoughts, our jealous thoughts, our revengeful thoughts, our hateful thoughts, our self-pitying thoughts, our wrong thoughts about God, about His Christ, about ourselves, about sin, about His law.

We could go on and on. Nothing in all creation is hidden from His sight. He's taking note of all our thoughts.

[8:06] And is that not what we find when we turn to the Word of God itself? That it judges not only our actions, but our thoughts, as He says there in Hebrews 4, sharper than a double-edged sword.

It penetrates. And it judges the thoughts and attitudes of our hearts. Don't you feel that when you come to the Bible? The one who wrote this knows me.

He knows what I'm thinking. He's seen my fearful thoughts, my worrying thoughts. He addresses them. He brings them into the open. This is the God who gives attention to our thoughts.

So, the first thing we need to see is that your thoughts, what you're thinking, is of great importance to God. The second lesson is that your thoughts reveal the real you.

Your thoughts are telling things. They uncover who you really are. You know, your outward actions are not always true indicators of the real person.

[9:15] A man can pretend to be humble when he's really very proud. A man can act in a kind way when murder is in his heart.

We think of Judas kissing the Lord when less than affection was found in his heart. A man may pretend to be more generous than he really is.

We think of Ananias and Sapphira. No, our actions do not always reveal the real us. But as a man thinks in his heart, so is he.

That's the real you. What are you when you are alone with your thoughts? Your thoughts are like chickens that may roam all over the barnyard by day, but at night they come home to roost, don't they?

They come home. What's your home? What's the home that your thoughts all come back to? Yes, they've got to be out here because you're at school and you're in this class and you've got to be thinking about Spanish now.

[10:21] But when you're not and when your mind comes back home, what's home to you? You've got to be thinking about work, but what's the home of your thoughts? That's your treasure.

That's your priority in life. That's your God. That's your God. Your thoughts are telling things.

They reveal the real you. The third lesson, and perhaps the one that is emphasized by our text, or at least it's the assumption that's found on the face of the text, you are responsible to control your thoughts.

You're responsible to control your thoughts. You're not only here commanded to think, but you're also told what to think about. And the Bible is full of that kind of language.

Think about these things. Don't think about these things. Think this way. Don't think that way. Jesus said, do not think that I have come to abolish the law. Don't you even think that.

[11:25] You see, he's commanding us what not to think. In your hearts, do not think evil of each other. Zechariah 7.10 So, don't think this.

Don't think that. Now, here he's commanding us. Think about such things. Here are some things to think about. And he gives us the list of things that he's just said that we are to be occupying our minds with.

Notice them. Whatever is true. That's what's real, kids. That's what's genuine. Don't be thinking about what's false. What's a lie.

What's a mere appearance. No. Think about what is really true. Think about what's noble. Worthy of honor.

Respectable. Think about whatever is right. Right in God's sight. Right according to God's law. Think about what is pure.

[12:26] Pure. Morally clean. Not a mixture of evil. But what is pure. Think about what is lovely. Think about what is admirable.

Worthy of admiration. Now, these six are not meant to be an exhausted list. And if you can't find something to fit into one of those camps that you ought not to be thinking. He's not meaning to be suggestive or to be exhaustive here, but rather suggestive.

And he immediately then just kind of throws his arms around everything else when he says, and if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things. So there you have it.

The subject matter for your thoughts are commanded. Now, let's think about our mind for a minute. Let's think of the mind as a factory.

And it's turning out all these thoughts, you see, constantly, all day long. Manufacturing thoughts 16 hours a day. Well, now, you're the quality control person.

[13:31] And you're to maintain a very strict quality control of the thoughts that you are producing at your factory. And here they come down the conveyor belt of the mind.

And you are here as quality control man to see whether this is worthy of your factory. Not just any thoughts will do.

You have the list here in front of you. These qualities. So your thoughts are to be examined. And if they pass the test, they're kept. If not, they're scrapped. And here comes the thought.

Here it comes. I deserve better. I deserve better. Scrap it. It's not true.

It's a lie, isn't it? If you're outside of hell, it's mercy. You're not getting what you deserve. That's not a true thought. Don't let it stay.

[14:27] Get rid of it. Comes another thought. Thought of cheating. Reject it. It's neither noble nor right.

Here comes a lustful thought. No. It's not pure. Here comes a revengeful thought. It's not excellent or praiseworthy.

You've got the list here of what kinds of thoughts you are to be producing in your factory. And it's your job to see that you think upon these things. Nothing outside of these things.

Well, you see then that this command holds us accountable. We are responsible for the kinds of thoughts that our mind produces. You might feel like you don't have control over them.

You might feel like, I just can't help but think about this. Well, that thought itself is not true. Reject it. God commands you to control your thoughts.

[15:30] Think about these things. The very command assumes that by His grace you have the ability to do this. God does not command His child to do something.

That He does not give the power to do it. In Colossians 3.2 He commands us, set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. Well, these commands assume that by His grace we're able to control our minds and to hold it within these God-appointed categories for our thoughts.

In other words, your mind is not to be let to roam free like a horse on the prairie. To go wherever it wants. No.

You're to keep a tight bridle on your horse, your mind, and you're to tell it where to go. You are to direct it into paths of righteousness, paths of what is true, of what is noble, of what is right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable, and on and on.

That's where you're to let the horse of your mind go. Indeed, you're to take captive every thought to make it obedient unto Jesus Christ. So that means we must discipline our minds.

[16:44] We must discipline our minds. Just like we must discipline our bodies to get it to do what we want to do. Some of you old guys signed up for the softball team and you told your body to do something that it hasn't done for a long time and it said, I'm not going to be able to do that.

Sorry. The same thing is true of your minds. They need to be disciplined to be able to do what God wants them to do. If you're to control them, they must be disciplined.

The Bible has a lot to say about the sluggard, the lazy person. One of the most common forms of laziness is mental laziness.

Flabby minds. Untrained minds. Undisciplined in its thought. The mind just roams wherever it pleases.

No, no, it must not be. We're to tell our minds what to think and what not to think to get them to obey us. Our mind is to be our slave, not our master.

[17:50] You're the one that's to call the shots. It's time to pray, mind. Not time to wonder. You pull your mind right back with the bridle to prayer, you see.

It's time to listen to God's Word being preached. You pull your mind right back. You're disciplined. Mind. Mind. Self-control is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, isn't it?

It's something that we can only do by the power of the Spirit. And the greater part of self-control is controlling your mind.

The mind's like the steering wheel and if you've got a hold of and controlling the steering wheel, you've got to control the whole car, don't you? And so it is with ourselves. If we're controlling our minds, we're controlling the whole self.

Young people, it's so important that very early on you learn to discipline your mind. We live in an undisciplined age and nothing is more undisciplined than the mind, this glorious faculty that God has given us.

[19:05] People are so mentally poor today that they're not able to pay attention to anything of any length. And so that's why we have snippets and sound bites on the news.

Presidential debates are not debates where substance is debated. It's sound bites thrown against each other for a minute or two. They used to debate issues for hours.

But we live in an undisciplined age and the mind is undisciplined. If you have the mental grit to sit through a 40 minute sermon and to think all the way through, it taxes their minds beyond what they're able to do.

Mindless entertainments are the rage of the day. You know them. It's what everybody at school is doing. It's all the games. It's all the piddling that's done.

It's TV itself that requires so little thinking. And then they wonder why they have trouble concentrating in the classroom or in the sanctuary because the mind's just been set in neutral and just staring at the idiot box, staring at the internet screen, staring at this and that, but not made to be disciplined.

[20:24] Few are reading today because it takes more mental discipline to read than it does just to watch images split across the screen. Young people, hear me.

You need to learn to discipline your minds. I'm not against entertainment. There's a time to let the mind unwind. There's a time and a place to let the mind rest. But that's not to be what your mind is taken up with.

Rest is to prepare it to work again. Right? Six days you shall labor and one you shall rest. The rest is meant to prepare you to get back to work.

And your mind was not given you just to be frittered away in mindless games. It was given you to love God with. With all your mind.

So you're studying math and you see the precision in His universe and you're loving God and you're looking at astronomy and you're seeing the power and wisdom of God. You're connecting it all to God.

[21:26] You're working as unto the Lord with your minds. Your minds. Precious gift of God. God. See to it that they are disciplined. Because an undisciplined mind will be hard to keep within the boundaries that God sets for it here.

A mind that's not used to being controlled will not suddenly jump and walk in step when God says think about this but don't think about that. That will take a disciplined mind.

So learn to control your mind. Take your studies seriously. I know you're out of school now. Some of you. Most of you. Do some reading over the summer. Memorize some Bible verses.

There's a lot of memory packs that didn't get picked up this time. Pick one up if you don't have one. Memorize. Train your minds to stick on one verse and then meditate on it and think how does this apply to me?

You see just as a man who seeks to exercise his body and pumps iron we need to be exercising our minds lifting weighty thoughts.

[22:35] Are you thinking of weighty thoughts or is it all just this little froth? Weighty thoughts. God's thoughts. Exercise. Discipline. The mind.

And be very careful what you give your mind to. What books and magazines you read. What shows you watch. What teachers you sit under. What friends you chat with. Think of it this way.

You're handing them your mind for an hour or two or four and you're letting them lead you and lead your mind down paths that they have chosen and you're following.

So be very careful about who you hand your mind to for an hour. Number four.

Right living grows out of right thinking. Right living grows out of right thinking. Romans 12.2 says do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

[23:37] So our lives are to be obviously different from the world. We're not to be conformed.

We're not to look in the same shape and form as the world leans life. Our life is to be very different.

Well how does that happen? It happens by mental renewal. The mind is renewed Paul says. Why does it need to be renewed? Because the old mind that we have is not worth thinking with.

We were born with a sinful nature and we followed its desires and thoughts. Ephesians 2 and verse 3. So we followed our sinful mind. Whatever it said we followed it.

Now we're saved and we're given a new mind. We need to renew our minds. We need to think differently about everything. We need to think God's way. You see God says your thoughts are not my thoughts.

That's the problem with us God says. We've got a problem because you're not thinking my thoughts as high as the heavens are above the earth so are my thoughts and my ways above your ways and thoughts. So now you're Christian you are called upon to reject your thoughts and to think my thoughts.

[24:47] Think about life my way. We come to Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. We come to have him wash us. We come to have him make us new. We come to have him teach us how to think.

Lord I need to learn how to think. I've been thinking all wrong. Now teach me how to think. And where do we find how God thinks? If it's not his own word.

This is the revelation of God's mind. He's telling us how he thinks and what he thinks. And so we are to renew our minds by reading and memorizing and meditating and hearing preached and saturating our minds with God's own thoughts until they more and more become my thoughts.

So that I can't think about my job without thinking of it the way God thinks of it. I can't think about my wife without thinking of her the way God thinks of her.

I can't think about my speech without thinking of it the way God thinks of it. then you see the whole mental grid the whole operating system for my thoughts becomes God's own thoughts.

[25:56] And that's a process. And it's a discipline process. And it doesn't happen watching TV. It happens as you day and night meditate on my law.

Psalms 1 Give me understanding according to your word. That's the cry of the psalmist in 119, 169. Give me understanding according to your word.

I want to understand all of life according to your word. According to your thoughts. Sinful failures in life stem from sinful thinking.

Get yourself thinking right if you would begin living right. As goes the battle for the mind so goes the battle for Christian living.

That's the context of this passage. Verse 8 Where do we find it? Paul's just been giving these loving commands hasn't he? And he's telling us to stand firm to agree with each other to rejoice always to be gentle to not worry and so on.

[27:04] But these things will only be done if you control your thought life. You try to not worry if you don't have a control on your thoughts.

You just go ahead and try it. What happens? Your mind just keeps spinning that problem round and round. You've been there a hundred times and it'll bring it around a hundred and one times won't it? And again and again you can't escape it.

You need to be able to control your thoughts if you are to not worry about anything. And that means you've got to be able to control your thoughts and to say I'm going to quit worrying about this problem I'm going to start thanking God for how he's helped me in the past and who he is and what he's promised me.

You see you're telling your mind what it's going to think and you begin doing that and then the peace of God that passes all understanding guards you your heart and mind gives you that peace that transcends understanding.

But you can't do it without controlling your mind. Rejoice in the Lord always. Go ahead. Go on. Rejoice in the Lord always without any control of your thought life. Well when something bad happens to me my joy is gone.

[28:12] Circumstances are gloomy. There's no way I can rejoice in the Lord. Not unless I call to mind that there is in Jesus Christ always and ever enough to make me joyful.

In this situation on this day in this trouble there is in Jesus Christ enough to keep me rejoicing. So I've got to think about my Savior.

And I've got to tell myself you quit thinking for the moment about the circumstances and the problems and you start thinking about your Savior and then see your circumstances in light of your Savior who He is what He said.

you can't rejoice always without controlling your mind. We fight for joy by fixing the mind on the Lord and finding in Him sufficiency to rejoice.

Yet this I call to mind Jeremiah says and therefore I have hope. Did you hear that? I call this to mind and therefore I have hope. Without calling to mind certain things Jeremiah would not have hope.

[29:29] You know what Jeremiah saw with his eyes? He saw Jerusalem full of dead bodies. He saw tender women eating their own children.

So fierce was the famine. He saw death everywhere. He saw no hope. This I call to mind therefore I have hope.

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness. I say to myself self the Lord is your portion therefore I will wait for Him.

If you can control your mind you can find hope hope in any situation. Hope that expectation of future good you can have that in every situation.

Jeremiah found it in Jerusalem when she was besieged and there was no earthly hope. So right living grows out of right thinking.

[30:40] We must lay hold of our minds if we would live a right transformed lives come from renewed minds. Fifth how do we get rid of unworthy sinful thoughts?

you all have them. What do you do with them? Those unworthy thoughts that come down the conveyor belt of your mind.

Well the answer is twofold. You reject and replace them. You first reject them. You reject those thoughts. You take them off the conveyor belt and you throw them in the heat pile.

You say this is not worthy to be thought on. Another second. I'm not going to give it the time of day. And you reject it. You renounce it. You repudiate it.

And a whole lot of our holiness, a whole lot of the Christian life is involved with discarding and rejecting unworthy thoughts.

[31:40] Isn't it? Or is that just me? That you've got to do a lot of rejecting of thoughts in a day's time. Think of the thousands of thoughts that are pouring through your mind each day.

They're not all pure. They're not all lovely. They're not all true and right. Well then that means there's a lot to reject, to repudiate. And how do you do that?

Well you bring the thought to your Savior and you say, Lord, that was a proud thought that I just had. I was seeking my advancement. I was hoping she would think better of me because of what I said or did.

it is not right. It's wrong. It's sin. Wash me and cleanse me. Thank you Jesus that you are humble and you have forgiveness for me.

Teach me your humility. You bring the thought, the ugly thing, and you name it for what it is in the presence of Christ and you discard it. Like you discard worthless cards in your hand.

[32:42] You get rid of it. It's not worth thinking of. Turn my eyes away from worthless things. Turn my mind toward your ways, not toward these things that are worthless. If you're not rejecting a lot of

thoughts, I want to tell you this morning you're losing the battle for the mind.

Reject is the first way to treat our unworthy thoughts. Secondly, replace them with good thoughts.

We put off the old and we put on the new is the way the Bible teaches us.

So what's the good thought? What is the right thought to replace my proud thought? Well, there's a lot of them. The Bible is rich with right thoughts.

Here's one. Who makes you different, John, from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

1 Corinthians 4-7. That'll throw a lot of thoughts off the conveyor belt. They're just plain proud. And so I must bring my mind, John, what do you have that hasn't been given you?

[33:51] Who made you different than that person that you're despising and looking down? Well, if you have nothing but what I've given you, then why do you boast? I've got to replace the proud thought with a thought that is true, that is humble.

Push out wrong thoughts with right thoughts. Pride cannot live in their presence. whenever you reject an impure thought, replace it with one that is pure. Replace a lying thought with true ones. Think of the mind as a hotel with many rooms. And you're the manager of this grand hotel. You get a call from one of the guests and they say, room 229 is making a racket and we can't get any sleep. All the rooms around are calling in about this room. Got a bad guest. Noisy guest. So you go and evict him.

You tell him he must leave. But if the room is left empty and available, someone just as bad as him or worse might come and stay in that room. So what is the answer?

[35:04] The answer is to fill the room with good guests. make sure the rooms are all full with quiet guests. And hang out the sign, no vacancy, so none of these noisy travelers will stop in at your hotel.

Well, there's your mind. What do you do when you see a worrying thought? It doesn't belong there. It's making too much noise.

It's stealing your peace. Well, you evict it. You get rid of it. But you must right away fill it. Keep your mind full of thoughts that are true and right and noble and lovely and admirable and excellent and praiseworthy.

And oh, how much we have to use to do this. You know, we have a lot more than the Philippians had. When Paul told them, you think about things that are true and noble and so forth, they had some Old Testament, but not everybody had one in the house.

it was kept at the synagogue. They had perhaps portions of the Gospels, but look, we've got 66 books of things that are true, things that are noble, things that are right, things that are pure, right here.

[36:22] Lots more than the Philippians had. These are the sorts of pastures for your mind to graze in. Keep your belly filled, keep your mind filled with good thoughts.

And that shows us the value of reading our Bibles the first thing in the morning. Fill your mind up, keep it full all day long. Am I the only one that needs to remind myself in the morning why I made it through the night?

Why I'm alive another day? I don't just automatically get out of bed and live to the glory of God. I've got to talk to myself a moment. John, okay, you've got to do this and this and this today.

And all these thoughts start pressing in. Now wait, time out. Who am I? I'm a child of the living God. This is His day. He's made this day.

And this world that I live in is His. And He has hand picked every single event in my life this day according to what is best for me and most glorifying to Him.

[37:24] I'm ready to put my feet on the ground now. But I needed to remind myself of that. And where do you remind yourself of that? You come to this book. Who are you? You're blood-bought child of God.

You're adopted son. You have the Holy Spirit in you. You have resources. You are in Christ. All the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him and you are complete in Him.

And you fill your mind with these thoughts early that you might go into the day with a mind full of God. God. And then you end your day with thoughts of God.

David says, On my bed I remember you. I think of you through the watches of the night. Even when I wake up in the middle of the night, I find myself awake and thinking.

Thou my best thought by day or by night. That's how we fill our minds with God's thoughts. God complains in Jeremiah 4 and verse 14, How long will you harbor wicked thoughts?

[38 : 33] How long will you harbor wicked thoughts? There's the harbor, the protected area, your mind, and here's all the slips where all the boats are at. And they're all full of wicked thoughts. How long will you harbor wicked thoughts?

How long will you give them shelter, a place to dwell, a place to stay overnight? Rather, expel them. Fill those slips with good ships, good thoughts, so that when that evil thought comes, there's no room here.

You have to go back out to sea. How long will you harbor evil thoughts? Oh, may God help us to keep our harbors full of good thoughts.

So set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. And Hebrews 3, 1 says, fix your thoughts on Jesus. I like that. That's what I need, isn't it?

Fix. Fix it. Okay. Mind, you're going to go with me now. And we're going to fix on Jesus. We're going to think about the Lord Jesus Christ.

[39 : 37] Fix your eyes on Jesus. He's the personification of all these traits, isn't he? What is true? I am the truth. He is noble.

He is right. He is pure. He is lovely. He's admirable. He's excellent. He's worthy of praise. So fix your eyes on Jesus.

Keep your mind full of thoughts of him. And then sixthly, you are to be more than a thinker. You are to be more than a thinker. These eight things that were listed are not things just to be thought about.

They are also things to be done. It's think in order to do. And Paul doesn't just let us go off daydreaming and thinking about these things. He pulls our feet right back to reality and says, now the reason we think about these things is to put them into practice.

Verse nine, whatever you have learned. You see, he's just said whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is excellent, praise, word. Now he says, and whatever you have learned or received or heard from me or seen in me, all these things that are true and admirable and noble, you've seen them, you've heard of them from me, but whatever it is, put them into practice.

[40 : 56] Do them. keep these things in mind, reflect on them, that they might shape your conduct.

In other words, there's to be no tadpole Christians. You've seen a tadpole recently? Got a huge head and a tiny little body. Some Christians are like that. They like to sit around and theorize and theologize and philosophize and think and think and think and think.

They're all head. They never get around to putting it into practice. Those big thoughts never come down and touch the ground the way they deal with their children, their parents, their wives, their husbands, their fellow church member, their neighbor across the fence.

No, no. Think in order to do, to put into practice. Are you putting into practice God's thoughts? Just found here at the opening verses of chapter four?

Or are you just admiring? Oh, that's a wonderful concept to rejoice in the Lord always, to not have any worries. Wow, that'd be something. Or are you putting it into practice and doing it as well as thinking it?

[42 : 10] Lastly, we have a promise given for such who think and live this way, that the God of peace will be with you. The God of peace with you.

already in verse seven, we've been promised the peace of God as a guard over your heart and mind. Now, this is even better.

Not only do we have the peace of God, we have the God of peace. Not only the gift itself, but the giver himself. The very fountain of every blessing.

There's nothing higher than God himself with you. The peace of God will garrison your hearts and minds. Now the promise is the God of peace with you. He will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast because they trust in him.

Suppose we have the technology to put electrodes in your mind and to wire them to two 24 inch full color monitors. We put one on your front and one on your back.

[43 : 15] Who would volunteer for one week to live with a monitor of all your thoughts projected onto the screen? Who would be willing to do it for a day?

Even the wards day? Surely this day of all days. No. We'd rather be tortured than to let the world see what passes through our minds in the course of a day or a week.

week. We sin more against God with our minds than we do with our mouths, our hands, our feet, the rest of our body put together.

I wonder, do we confess our sins of thought more than we confess our sins of deed? May the Lord help us then as we have seen something of our responsibility, something of our failures, to come and confess them?

You know, there is one who could wear the monitor, not for a day or a week, but for 33 years. He lived in the same world that you do, and the same temptations you do, and the father was watching every thought, and he never saw one wrong thought in his son.

[44 : 38] He was perfectly pleasing to the father in all he thought. When that man started ripping his beard out, God saw his thought toward that man, and it was nothing of revenge.

When Judas kissed him to betray him, there wasn't the despising of that Judas, with hatred in his heart.

Friend, do what you have come for. Now, here is the beauty of this lesson. Jesus Christ, then, lived the 33 years never a worrisome thought, never a proud thought, never a lustful thought, perfectly pleasing to God.

It really enhances in my own mind the righteousness of Jesus. It's not just that he didn't put his feet down anywhere but where God had commanded, it's that he didn't even let a thought go through his head and think a thought that was wrong before God.

What a Savior. And here's the beauty, he's got this straight A report card. We've got our F's and our failures. And the beauty is he's willing to make a trade with us, to give us his straight A's if we will give him our F's.

[46 : 01] To give us his righteousness if we will give him our sins. Now that's the gospel. That's grace. Now if you come and offer your own righteousness and say, well Lord, here's my sins and here's my good deeds and you think your good deeds have some weight in heaven, he'll not make the trade with you, my friend.

He only makes the trade for those who trust in him. And that means you repudiate all trust in yourself. There's nothing to offer before God for which I can take credit and say, this is something worthy of God's reward of eternal life.

No, that will disqualify you and he will not give you his righteousness. But if you're willing to come as a sinner with nothing good to say for yourself, but God have mercy on me for Jesus' sake, Jesus will give you his righteousness and take all of your sins.

As far as the east is from the west, so far will he remove them from you. The Lord Jesus invites you to come to him.

let's do it now as we pray and I'll conclude. You talk to the Lord. Oh Lord, our thought life is a whole other world and so often we're only concerned with what other people see.

[47 : 23] We forget that you're watching the monitor all day long. Do forgive us for our sins of thoughts. search me, oh God, know me, try me, test me, and see if there be any anxious thought and purge it and lead me in the way everlasting.

Thank you for such a gracious Savior that even though he knows our thoughts about him that are so unworthy and some here today that are thinking thoughts that oh he's not worthy of my life.

He's not worthy of denying myself sinful pleasures to have him. Lord, come and rebuke those thoughts. Come and change the mind. Come and write your laws upon the heart.

Thank you for your willingness to take our sins and things that we would be embarrassed to have others know about and to cast them into the sea of forgetfulness because of the blood of Jesus.

We rejoice in him. We love you for giving us your son. We pray in his name. Amen.