

Is It Well With Thee?

Bringing our Brokenness and our Bad Habits to Christ

IS IT WELL WITH YOUR SOUL? (THE MIND - PART 18)

This is part 33 of the Is It Well With Thee Sermon Series

SUMMARY

We live in a world of facades, false fronts, and covered realities. We want to be happy all the time and we want others to think that we are, but underneath the harsh reality is that the bad days, the difficult things, and the high level of stress are all weighing us down. Oftentimes, they leave us feeling discouraged, depressed, and like there is simply no hope, but **THAT ISN'T TRUE AT ALL**. While our enemy wants to use the realities of life against us, God wants us to bring our brokenness and our bad habits to Him so that in the midst of life's very real struggles we can still answer, "It is well."

REVIEW

For some time now, we've been focusing on the health and well-being of our soul by considering the condition of our mind. So far, we have considered...

- 1) The **DESIGNING** of the mind (**ENGAGE** this world and **ENJOY** a right relationship with God)
- 2) The **DARKENING** of the mind (Sin has **DECEIVED**, **DARKENED**, and **DISEASED** the mind through **NATURAL**, **WORLDLY**, and **DEMONIC** elements)
- 3) The **DISMANTLING** of the mind (The mind needs to go through a cleaning process where we get everything out of it that doesn't belong in it)

4) The **DEFENDING** of the mind (We need to keep out of our mind what doesn't belong in our mind because our adversary is going to work diligently to get the dirt that we get out right back in)

5) The **DEVELOPING** of the mind

The Devil does not want us to possess the mind of Christ, because he knows that he can't win against the mind of Christ. The reality is that there isn't anything that he can say, anything that he can offer, or anything that he can do to claim a victory, to clear a hurdle, or to gain any ground against the mind of Christ.

The **MIND OF CHRIST** produces a **MIGHTY** life that cannot be **MOVED**, that cannot be **MANIPULATED**, and that cannot be **MESSED UP** because it is a mind that is so focused on pleasing the Father that it will not allow, it cannot allow, anything in that will cause it to **DEVIATE** from or be **DISTRACTED** from that purpose.

When it comes to the Christian and the mind of Christ, there are two key things that we need to understand:

(1) The mind of Christ has been made available to every believer.

All of God's children have been given the opportunity to have the mind of Christ. It is an internal transformation that causes us to replace the thought "Does this or will that please me" to "does this or will that please my Heavenly Father." That is how Jesus lived everyday of His life and, in Christ, it is how we should live and how we can live everyday of our life.

(2) The mind of Christ must be developed in and by every believer.

While the mind of Christ is **AVAILABLE** to all believers, we need to understand that it isn't **AUTOMATIC** in believers. The reality is that the mind of Christ must be **ACTIVATED** in the life of each believer.

When we trust Christ as our Saviour, we go from being a **WRECK** to being a **WORK IN PROGRESS**. God wants to do a mighty work in the new us that gives us a far greater advantage over the old us so that He can be glorified through us.

And that's really where we pick back up.

MESSAGE

1 Thessalonians 5:14-24 says, *"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all*

things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

If you're in the habit of marking things in the word of God, I want to draw your attention back to verse 23 where the Bible says, *"And the very God of peace sanctify...your whole spirit..."*

For a few moments, I'd like to begin to consider this thought: **IS IT WELL WITH YOUR SOUL? (THE MIND – PART 18)**

Disclaimer - I am not a doctor, and I am not approaching these topics from the standpoint of one. I am simply attempting to help us gain an understanding of what the Bible has to say about our mental, emotional, and physical health.

- 1) The **DESIGNING** of the mind
- 2) The **DARKENING** of the mind
- 3) The **DISMANTLING** of the mind
- 4) The **DEFENDING** of the mind
- 5) The **DEVELOPING** of the mind

When it comes to the developing of the mind, we have to understand **WHAT** it is so that we can understand **HOW** it is accomplished. The **WHAT** is the development of the mind of Christ inside of us. In Philippians 2:13, Paul described it as the work of the Holy Spirit inside of us that creates within us a desire *"...both to will and to do of [God's] good pleasure."*

When we put those two Together, we find that it is a personal decision and determination to willingly, actively, and gladly incline oneself toward God and the things of God so that God can accomplish His great work efficiently and mightily both in and through us. I said it this way last week: *"You move towards what you set your mind on."*

Proverbs 23:7 says, *"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he..."*

The statement is clear – how we think determines who we are and how we live. So, God wants to do a work in our heart that impacts how we think so that we can look and live like Jesus.

Question – How many of you want a heart that is full of joy?

That's great! Why? Because not only is it possible for us to have a heart that is full of joy, but that's exactly what God wants for us. In John chapters 15 and 16, Jesus made it

clear that He wants to fill our heart with joy that no man can take away from us because it is the joy of Jesus (John 15:11)(John 16:22, 24).

When we consider joy, we find that the joy of the Lord provides us with **STRENGTH**, with **STABILITY**, and with a **SONG**.

Nehemiah 8:10 tells us that *"...the joy of the LORD is your strength."*

Isaiah 61:3 tells us that God can give us *"...the oil of joy for mourning..."*

1 Peter 1:8 that because of Who Jesus is, because of what Jesus has done, and because of what Jesus is going to do we can *"...rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."*

Jesus wants you and I to have the same kind of joy in this life that He had in this life. In John 17:13, Jesus' prayer was that we might have His joy fulfilled in us.

John 17:13 says, *"And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves."*

Now, what does joy have to do with the development of our mind? And the answer is everything. You see, when we think of joy, we often think of it as a feeling, and, while there is absolutely an emotional component to joy, we need to understand that joy is the fruit of our thought-life.

Please don't miss this statement: when we begin to **THINK** like Jesus, we will then begin to **LIVE** like Jesus. Jesus' life was one of joy, not because His life was easy, but because His thoughts were right. Let me connect some verses that prove that.

In Hebrews 12:2, we find that God the Father offered a certain level of joy to Jesus. I think that we can call it fullness of joy.

Hebrews 12:2-3 says, *"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."*

The fullness of joy that was set before Jesus was connected to the obedience of Jesus to the will of His Father. The writer of Hebrews connected that joy of Jesus to the cross. As Jesus pursued the will of God in His life, that joy became a reality in His life. And that is what Jesus wants for us.

In John 15:11, Jesus said, *"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."*

And so, we have the joy of Jesus connected to the will of God for His life (the cross), but look at what Philippians says:

Philippians 2:5-8 says, *“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”*

Here we find that the **JOY** that Jesus **ENJOYED** is connected to the **THOUGHTS** that Jesus **EMPLOYED**. What thoughts? Here I see thoughts that were **HOLY** (vs. 6), thoughts that were **HONORABLE** (a desire to please God the Father by surrender and through obedience), and thoughts that were **HUMBLE** (vs. 8).

Let me remind you that Paul began this section with this statement: *“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”*

The phrase, *“Let this mind be in you...”* means “to **ENGAGE PERSONALLY**, to **EMBRACE WHOLE-HEARTEDLY**, and to **EXERCISE CONSISTENTLY**. The idea here is that there is something that we need to do **PERSONALLY, PASSIONATELY**, and **PERSISTENTLY**. What is it? We need to learn to control how we think and what we think.

Romans 12:2 says, *“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”*

The question tonight is how. How do we take a mind that is **DESPERATELY WICKED**, that is **DECEIVED**, that has been **DARKENED**, that is **DISEASED**, and that is constantly needing to be **DEFENDED FROM ATTACK** and **DEVELOP** it into a mind that is under control and pleasing to the Lord.

1) We develop our mind by learning to **FOCUS ON ONE THING** – pleasing our Father

Philippians 2:5-11 says, *“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

Jesus’ joy was the result of His single-mindedness. Wherever Jesus was and whatever Jesus was doing there was one thing that filled His heart and His mind – pleasing God. Never once did Jesus let anything or anyone impact that thought and that desire.

Let me ask a couple of questions here: (1) how many of us struggle with staying focused and how many of us struggle with distractions? The truth of the matter is that we can be just as distractable in our spiritual life and growth as we are in this physical world.

Jesus said, in Matthew 6:24, *"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."*

Paul said, in 1 Corinthians 10:21, *"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."*

James said, in James 1:8, *"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."*

What we focus on is important because what we give our time and attention to, we grant access to both our heart (feelings) and our mind (thoughts), and those things will either take us in a direction that honors the Lord or in a direction that ultimately leads to our hurt and shame.

1) We develop our mind by learning to **FOLLOW THE RIGHT RULES FOR LIVING**

Philippians 3:8-16 says, *"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."*

The Apostle Paul often compared the Christian life to a race, and there were a couple of things that Paul did not want to happen: (1) he did not want to take himself out of the race and (2) he did not want to be disqualified from the race.

1 John 2:3-6 says, *"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."*

3) We develop our mind by learning the **IMPORTANCE OF FELLOWSHIP**

Philippians 4:1-7 says, "Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life. Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

I cannot live like I should in this life without fellowshiping with the **FAMILY** and without fellowshiping with the **FAMILY OF GOD**. We need both. I'll even go as far as saying that if we don't have both consistently in our life then we won't be as fruitful for the Lord as we could be and should be.

4) We develop our mind by learning to **INSTALL THE RIGHT FILTERS**

Philippians 4:8-9 says, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."

We use filters to keep things out that don't belong. When it comes to our mind, we need to do the same. If my thoughts don't fit within this list, then I need to take those thoughts to Christ, confess them, and by His grace and through His power gain control over them.