

The Dragon of the Mind

2017 Men's Retreat

Philippians 4:7-9

I. Introduction

Today, we are going to look at our minds and thoughts! The brain is a powerful and complex organ. It has the ability to process and send information faster than any computer.

“No sin is more destructive to the conscience than the sin that takes place in the arena of the mind. Sins of the mind assault the conscience like no other sins, because the conscience is their only deterrent.” J. MacArthur

II. Thought-Sins

What are thought-sins? These are sins that are produced and pondered in the mind. Here are some thought-sins: being double-minded, reliving old

memories, scheming, desire,
imagination, and victumitis syndrome.

*“Evil thoughts thus underline and lay
groundwork for all other sins.”*

J. MacArthur

*“Evil deeds are the offspring and
children of evil thoughts, the branches
and fruit which grow out of this root.
Thoughts are the first-born of the soul;
words and actions are only younger
brothers. They are the oil that feeds and
maintains the wick which would
otherwise go out; life-sins receive their
juice and nourishment from thought-
sins.”* Ralph Venning

Our thoughts reveal our true character!
They reveal who we really are!

*“Sow a thought, reap an act, sow an act,
reap a habit, sow a habit, reap a
character, sow a character, reap a
destiny.”* J. McArthur

III. God's Remedy for Thought Sins

“Think” – logizomai – means to ponder, to give proper weight and value to, and to allow the resultant appraisal to influence the way life is to be lived.

“whatever is true” – speaking here of telling the truth

“whatever is honorable” – that which inspires awe or reverence

“whatever is just” – think on God's justice and righteousness. We are to exemplify this characteristic

“whatever is pure” – speaking here of purity involved with relationships

“whatever is lovely” – only time used in Bible and speaks of pleasing and attractive

“whatever is commendable” – speaking here of speaking well of something

“if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think of these things.” – the Apostle Paul does not

want to be exhaustive so he reinforces his statement with these last two clauses

“Each of Paul’s ingredients is explicitly positive. The true, the noble, the right, the pure, the lovely, the admirable all defy negative exposition. Each ingredient was, and is a matter of personal choice – and our choices make all the difference in the world. We all can choose a thought program which will produce a Christian mind.” Kent Hughes

IV. Cultivating a Pure Mind

First, Apply the Gospel!

Isaiah 55:7 – “let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.”

Romans 12:2 - Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God,

what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Matthew 22:37; Colossians 3:2

Second, Refuse yourself thought-sins!

Romans 8:7 (ESV) - For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.

“So we must lay down as fundamental to our Christianity this truth: a Christian mind demands conscious negation, a Christian mind is impossible without the discipline of refusal.” Kent Hughes

Third, Don't let your thought life go idle!

“Our thoughts are so active and restless that they will be doing something or other, and like unruly soldiers, if others do not employ them well, they will employ themselves ill.” Ralph Venning

Fourth, Mediate on God and His Word

Psalm 1:1-3 - *Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; [2] but his delight is in the law of the Lord and on his law he meditates day and night. [3] He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.*

Finally, Apply Philippians 4:8,9 Daily!