

What's Good

Going on road trips, it's fun to listen to the radio. You get to hear the sounds change from region to region: from country music to mariachi to local, public radio. And when it goes static, or you hear some coarse language you'd rather avoid, you scan for a new station. You tune into something good.

And like the racket on the radio we don't want to hear, it's easy to dwell on discouraging thoughts. But when the darkness gets noisy, we need to change the channel and tune into "*whatever is true ... honorable ... just ... pure ... lovely*" and "*commendable*." Scripture says, "*if there is anything worthy of praise*" to "*think about these things*" (Phil. 4:8).

Big Idea: The Lord doesn't just want us to do good things (Phil. 4:9) — he also wants us to think about good things (Phil. 4:8)!

Careful Attention

"Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life." (Prov. 4:23).

Of course, tuning our thoughts isn't as easy as pushing a button on a console. It takes careful attention (Prov. 4:23; Eph. 5:14-15). We're filtering and seeking out everything positive around us — "whatever" is good, "if there is anything" positive around us. We're constantly engaged in a "fill-in-the-blank" exercise, where our attention and imagination are the only limitations!

Like a wild field becomes a garden when tended, we can sow "*pure ... lovely ... commendable*" thoughts and cultivate new thinking habits.

The Path to Peace

"And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ... What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you." (Phil. 4:7, 9).

Paul paints a portrait of a mature Christian mind throughout Philippians, culminating in Phil. 4:4-13, where he shows us how to know the "*peace of God*" and the "*God of peace*" (Phil. 4:7, 9). Our key verse (Phil. 4:8) falls between those two phrases, showing us the path to maturity and peace.

When we spend time thinking about and talking about the good things God has poured into his world (James 1:17), we become more grateful, committed servants. And as we meditate on his excellent virtues (2 Peter 1:3-8), we learn to treasure what he treasures.

Fight the Darkness

"Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. Therefore be careful lest the light in you be darkness. If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light" (Luke 11:34-36).

The light within you comes from what you take in through your eyes. You can be dark or you can be light, depending on what you're looking at and how healthy the lens of your eye is. So how's the lens through which you see the world? Is it bringing in light or darkness? Do we have a heart receiving the light of Christ or is it just a bunch of darkness?

May we recognize God's abundant grace and light through which we will overcome the darkness (2 Cor. 4:6,16).

Conclusion

Has the noise of the world drowned out the good things of God in your heart?