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Leader Guide

Obedience and Peace

November 7, 2021

Main Passage: Philippians 4:8-9

Theological Theme

Followers of Jesus are called to take an active part in the sanctification process. A key component for believers of growing in Christlikeness is submitting their thoughts to the Lord to be transformed.

Introduction

- ? What makes the mind a battlefield?
- ? Why is capturing our thoughts so important to finding peace?

It is critical for Christians to understand the importance and learn the discipline of actively guarding and directing their minds to what will make them more like Christ and enjoy God's peace. Paul told the Philippians that they could learn to do this by imitating him. Christians today should recognize the importance of being disciples and discipling others for the benefit of individual Christians, the strength of the church, and the glory of God. This kind of living leads to a life characterized by an indomitable joy and a peace that passes understanding.

1. Growing in Christlikeness (Philippians 4:8)

In verse 8 Paul introduced his admonition with the word "finally," which indicates that he was wrapping up his letter to the Philippians. The command in verse 8 isn't the first or only one given in this letter. In fact, Paul had already delivered a treasure trove of practical instruction concerning the progressive sanctification of the Philippian believers, and all of it is beneficial and valuable for believers. However, we ought to take special notice of this final direction. If Paul saved this teaching for the end of his letter, it means that he believed it to be one of the more fundamental and critical aspects of the Christian life.

2. Dwell on These Things (Philippians 4:8)

Verse 8 describes the kind of thoughts a believer in Christ should have. As Christians, we should be filling our minds with what is pleasing to the Lord. The world bombards us with ungodly messages. We must be willing and able to filter these messages and keep them from our thoughts. To dwell means to meditate or chew on something. It's important to keep the broken ideas of the world from becoming what we dwell on. The things we think most about easily translate into our words and actions.

3. God's Tool for Sanctification (Philippians 4:9)

Discipleship was not only a part of Paul's cultural mindset but also the clear commission of Jesus to His disciples, which eventually included Paul (and all Christians today). We know Paul took seriously the task of making disciples because we see him practicing it and instructing others to do it. For example in 2 Timothy 2:2 he explicitly told Timothy to teach faithful men who would teach others. In Philippians 4:9 Paul gave a brief overview of the discipleship process.

Questions to Guide Your Group's Discussion

- ❓ What does this passage say?

- ❓ What did this passage mean to its original audience?

- ❓ What does this passage tell us about God?

- ❓ What does this passage tell us about man?

- ❓ What does this passage demand of me?

- ❓ How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (*How can you use this information this week at work or with friends and neighbors?*)

- ❓ How does this passage prompt me to pray to God?