
THE MIND OF THE SPIRIT

Session IX: The Mind of Christ, Part II

I. Characteristics of a Christlike Mind

A. Joy

1. Philippians 4:4 (NIV) *"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"*
2. Joy is a distinctive characteristic of the Christian life.
 - a) The Mind of Christ produces joy in our lives.
 - b) Joy is part of the fruit of the Spirit. It flows out a Spirit-filled life.
 - c) We aren't expected to have somber attitudes in order to show our spiritual devotion.
3. It does not derive from external circumstances.
 - a) We can have joy in the face of opposition.
 - b) The church in Philippi was likely experiencing opposition.
 - (1) Paul is also writing this letter from prison.
 - (2) Christ's attitude in the midst of suffering for our sake give us insight in how to remain joyful during our own trials.
4. Rejoice in the Lord
 - a) Christians express joy by rejoicing in the Lord.
 - b) We express joy for who Jesus is, what he had done, and what he will do. Think of Paul and Silas in the Philippian jail praising God at midnight.
 - c) It is a continual act: "rejoice always."

B. Peace

1. Philippians 4:7 (NRSV) *"And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*
2. Basis for peace
 - a) The Lord is near (v.5).
 - (1) His presence is always near us.
 - (2) When problems arise your first thought should be faith, not fear.
 - (3) Unbelievers are anxious because they feel alone, but we are never alone.
 - b) We can connect with God through prayer (v. 6).
 - (1) God cares for our needs.
 - (2) God cares about the circumstances, both big and small.
 - (3) We give up control by trusting God to provide a way.
 - (a) We admit our dependence on Jesus.
 - (b) We are not responsible for fixing the situation.
 - c) Thanksgiving (v. 6)
 - (1) Gratitude paves the path for peace.
 - (2) It reminds us of past blessings which builds our faith to believe that God is at work.

(3) It replaces grumbling and anxious words. It's hard to speak fear at the same time you are thanking God.

3. Peace guards us

a) The peace that God gives transcends understanding (v. 9).

(1) The word "transcend" (υπερεβουσα) carries the idea of excelling or surpassing.

(2) God's peace excels above merely human comprehension.

(3) God's peace stands higher than anxiety. It covers the fear because it trusts in God.

b) God's peace guards the heart.

(1) It surrounds your inner life like a wall to block out anxiety attacks.

(2) This peace also guards and protects our minds.

II. Guiding Your Mind

A. Philippians 4:8 (NIV) *"Finally, brothers and sisters, 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."*

B. The verb "think" (λογιζεσθε) in this verse is the same word used numerous times in the New Testament, often translated as "to reckon" or to "consider."

1. Christians should consider things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable.

2. We should compare them to what we know about Jesus, and if they honor Jesus then they are thoughts or attitudes that we should keep.

3. The Mind of Christ is the gate that determines whether thoughts should enter our minds or be left out in the cold.

C. Paul encourages the Philippian Christians to put into practice or imitate what they saw in the life of Paul (v. 9).

1. The fellowship and friendship of strong Christians help us learn how to live out the Mind of Christ in our daily life.

2. We put into practice the teachings and examples we have seen in God's Word, Christian history, and our current churches

III. Thinking Like Christ

A. Philippians 2:5 (NIV) *"In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus."*

B. We should imitate Jesus' attitude of humility and obedience.

1. Humility

a) Jesus did not selfishly grasp for status, but willingly humbled himself.

b) Jesus became a servant and emptied himself into humanity and suffered a horrific death.

2. Obedience

a) Jesus was obedient to die even though he had done nothing to earn that suffering and death.

b) Jesus submitted his will to the will of God, the Father, in order to carry out the plan of saving us.

C. The result of Jesus' actions and attitudes was that he was exalted.

1. Philippians 2:9-11 (NIV) *“Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*
2. We do not need to grasp status for ourselves. Instead, we serve God’s will and trust God to place us where he desires.
 - a) This kind of thinking eliminates thoughts of comparison, whether focused on greater than or less than feelings.
 - b) Approaching the world with Christ’s mindset helps us to submit our desires to God’s will so we can accomplish his work.

IV. Application

- A. Having the Mind of Christ promotes thoughts of joy in the midst of any situation.
- B. Fear and worry are not characteristics of a victorious Christian life; instead, we should stay connected to God through prayer and trust God.
- C. A peaceful mind guards your heart from developing sinful attitudes and your mind from panic and fear.
- D. God’s peace stands above anxiety which cannot compare to the power of God’s peace.
- E. Jesus is the standard by which we compare all thoughts.