

The Mind of Christ in Philippians

Joy is a prominent topic in the book of Philippians. This is readily apparent. But the book of Philippians also unfolds for us a virtual handbook of Christian mental attitudes, a blueprint of a Biblical mindset, healthy patterns thinking that should characterize every believer. Christ is the supreme example of a Biblical mindset in chapter two, demonstrated by His emptying himself, His humility, His sacrificial service and devotion to God and others.

To the degree that the patterns of Biblical thinking in Philippians are regularly practiced, joy and fruitful service will flourish in the life of every believer. This is the standard--the goal to which every Christian must strive to attain, with prayerful dependence and the exercise of spiritual discipline.

This book lends itself well to a course of study on establishing Biblical thinking patterns. Here are some principles to get you started. You may be able to refine this list and add discover some additional items. May God bless you as you "think on these things."

CHAPTER ONE

- 1:2 Peace comes only from a heavenly source: God (Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.)
- 1:3-4 Prayer with thankfulness and joy
- 1:6 Confidence in our secure hope
- 1:8 Great love for other believers
- 1:18 Joy whenever Christ is preached, even if by people who are not part of our specific group
- 1:20 Complete Christ-centeredness. Being totally consumed by God's glory and little affected or concerned with our own comforts.
- 1:23 Be assured that your service to Christ will result in great reward when you die
- 1:27 Live in a manner that is worthy of the gospel
- 1:29 Regard suffering and persecution as a privilege granted by an all-wise God

CHAPTER TWO

- 2:2 Have a strong sense of unity, in love and in our thinking
- 2:3 Do nothing out of selfish or prideful motives
- 2:3 Don't be self-centered. Esteem others better than yourself.
- 2:4 Look out for the interests of others
- 2:5-8 Use Christ's humility, self-less service, and suffering as the model pattern
- 2:12 Carefully manage and direct your spiritual life so that you are obeying Christ even though you do not yet see him directly
- 2:14 Steadfastly resist complaining or arguing
- 2:15 Live in a blameless and harmless way
- 2:15 Shine your light brightly. Do not conform to the world; shine in utter contrast to its darkness.

- 2:16 Hold fast the word of life. Give the Word of God its rightful place as the one, true, and only guide for our lives. Give Scripture top priority in our lives by reading it daily, memorizing it, meditating on it, and applying it.
- 2:25-30 Example of Epaphroditus: as a faithful servant, one who meets needs, and one who has great love for the brethren
- 2:29 Hold Christian workers in high esteem

CHAPTER THREE

- 3:1 Rejoice in the Lord as a conscious habitual decision
- 3:7-8 Count all worldly honors and achievements (including religious "achievements") as a loss when compared to our relationship to Christ
- 3:9 Regard Christ's righteousness, gained by faith, as our only true righteousness
- 3:13 Make a conscious decision to forget those things which are behind: the sins, missed opportunities, wasted years, etc.
- 3:20 Eagerly await the return of Jesus Christ and rejoice in the fact of our certain glorious transformation of our bodies

CHAPTER FOUR

- 4:1 Stand fast in the Lord. Take steps to ensure spiritual stability, don't waver, don't be lukewarm in faith or love for God
- 4:5 Earn a reputation of being gentle, yielding, kind, courteous
- 4:6 Don't worry or be overly concerned about anything, cast all your cares upon the Lord in prayer
- 4:8 Restrict your thought life to things that are wholesome, lovely, virtuous, and true. Filter out other kinds of thoughts. Practice self-control of the thought life
- 4:9 Follow the examples of godly Christians, past and present
- 4:11 Learn to be content with what you have; realize that God supplies power to endure any situation

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