



Daily Devotionals

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PHILIPPIANS 4:8-9 ADVICE FOR LIVING

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⁸ Finally, brothers, 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. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

What a witness the Church would be to the nature and will of God if somehow at baptism verse eight could be tattooed on the inside of the eyelids of every member. Try to think of what it would mean in your life if under all circumstances you only thought of things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent or praiseworthy. Would such an outlook leave room for controversy, manipulation, depression, bitterness, malice, hurt feelings or gossip? And without those experiences we would truly be living in the peace of God.

Like so much else in life, such an attitude change is a matter of personal choice. No one can make us have this outlook and as sinful human beings we know that it does not come naturally or easily. The transformation will take disciplined training as we unlearn our negative habits and replace them with those that are positive and life-giving. Children can be disciplined by having to write verse eight multiple times when they are guilty of saying something unkind or doing something against another person. Perhaps we would all benefit from the self-discipline of doing likewise when we find ourselves to have maligned another or even if we discern a negative attitude toward another in ourselves. It will take persistence and prayer, but it is God's will and with the help of the Holy Spirit it is possible to make significant progress in being healed of our addiction to negative and self-serving attitudes.

Lord Jesus, I want to live as you would have me live and as a positive witness to your love and mercy. I confess, Lord, that I seldom love my neighbor when there is nothing in it for me, but rather find fault with those around me and freely criticize them. Through your Spirit change my heart so that I will think the best of my neighbors and demonstrate your love for them. Amen.

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