

Discerning Your Thoughts 2020-04-05

Romans 8:1-4

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit,

Palm Sunday.....possibly live stream Maunday Thursday (do communion) or Easter

In times like this Gospel-centered thinking can produce peace/hope.

- Sinful and unbiblical thoughts produce emotional turmoil (worry, fear, anxiety, etc) and eventually sin.....must be taken captive (last week).
 - Sinful thoughts: easy to discern....if acted upon would clearly be sinful.
 - Bible defines what is sin....not society or our heart.
 - un-Biblical thoughts more difficult to discern.
 - Not everything sound “godly” is Holy Spirit Matthew 24:11, 4:5-7, Acts 16:16-18
 - Line up with Bible and in proper context...not just IN bible.

Message: How to discern if thoughts are unbiblical....not if God's direction....i.e., be missionary.

1. Is fruit of thought condemnation or conviction?

- Condemn: find fault with, to judge against.
- Conviction: tell a fault, rebuke, convince.
- Unbiblical thought has condemnation directed at you or others and is usually stated GENERALLY with the intent of discouragement.
 - You're a lousy Christian, nothing good happening, nobody cares, give up
 - Feeling focused: EVERYTHING wrong but can't ID ANYTHING
 - Condemnation toward others is displayed in a judgmental spirit toward them....they not “holy” enough. Luke 6:37, Romans 2:1, 14:4, Philippians 2:3

Romans 8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

John 16:8 *When he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment:*

- Gospel-centered thought produces conviction (tell a fault) that is directed only at you, is SPECIFIC and intended to lead you to repentance. Hebrews 12:10-11
 - Those words hurtful to _____. Repent and ask for forgiveness
 - Conviction: surgeon's knife precise with goal to heal through repentance
 - Condemnation: Attacker's knife randomly slashes to destroy/hurt

2. Does thought base God's favor on your works or God's grace?

- Unbiblical: God's favor is based on your works/performance...do certain things
 - Uses law against you and often times reminds you of past failure.
 - Still _____, must do _____ to get God's favor back.
 - Works/Law: "If I obey, I'm accepted."
 - Grace/gospel: "I'm accepted through Jesus Christ, therefore I obey."

Romans 8:2-4 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

- Gospel-centered thought: grace centered and leads to repentance that produces joyful obedience.
 - Thought focuses on God's grace/favor toward us because of Jesus' performance for us not our performance.
 - "Repent and forget your past!" your sin is forgiven and put away.
 - Grace does not undercut obedience or encourage apathy.
 - Calls us to trust/rely on Jesus' willingness and power to save/keep, grow and mature you.
 - Obey not to earn God's favor but because already have it.
 - Jesus does not drive us by law but draws us with love.

3. Does thought direct you toward less or greater fellowship with Jesus and His body?

Unbiblical: desire to drive you away from fellowship with Lord/Christians/church.

- Like wolf: separate lamb from shepherd & flock and then destroy it.
- Thought would separate you from fellowship with Shepherd Jesus by impugning God's character which can cause fear/disillusionment not faith.
 - "God angry judge, unkind, unloving, unforgiving, disapproving Father, an unreasonable tyrant."

Genesis 3:1-5 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'" 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" 4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

- Unbiblical thought tries to separate you from fellowship with Christians and church by condemning you or legalistic/judgmental spirit toward others.

- Stop fellowshiping because you/they/church too sinful/not spiritual
 - You ___ again and not strong like these Christians so leave church.
 - Choose to only watch church online, listen to podcasts.
 - Isolates, you then feel lonely, hurt, rejected by others and angry.
- Gospel-centered thought encourages fellowship with Jesus & Christians especially when struggle.

Hebrews 4:15-16 *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

Matthew 11:28-29 *Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

Luke 15:20-22 *And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. 21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.'*

- Gospel-centered thought removes fear with Biblical view of Father and understanding of beauty of Jesus Christ.
 - It gives hope, reassurance of Father's UNCONDITIONAL love, COMPLETE forgiveness.
- Holy Spirit convicts/disciplines yet accepts, approves and loves us.
 - Directs us into Father's presence to receive grace/mercy when we sin.
- Encourages deep fellowship with Christians and vital connection to church
 - Means through which God sanctifies us and uses us for His glory.

Hebrews 10:24-25 *let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*

With all the stress, worries about present issues and extra time to think about it all it's easy to fall into unbiblical thinking.

- Start feeling condemned or that God's favor is based on your performance which can then lead you away from fellowship with Jesus and eventually Christians.
 - Repent of this type of thinking and ask God to renew your mind.
- Gospel-centered thought may be convicting but they will reassure you that you have God's favor because of His grace and will lead you into fellowship with Jesus and other Christians.
 - Fruit of this type of gospel-centered thinking will give you peace and hope especially in uncertain times like we're in today.