



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: **Choosing Joy: With the Mind and Body**
Speaker: **Helen Kim Nowalk, Pastor of Small Groups & Community Life**
Scripture: **Philippians 4:8-9**

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. 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.

Philippians 4:8-9 (NIV)

Sermon Outline:

As we continue reading Philippians in Chapter 4, in this passage of scripture Paul gives us guidelines on what we are to behold and comes back to the theme of “thinking.”

Paul is telling us that we are not to be passive in using our minds. He is letting us know to follow Christ should not be passive but involve both our body and our mind. Paul conveys to us to the importance of his words - he wants us to not only consider his words but to also let the words soak into our minds. Paul is calling us to savor these things. Paul wants us to know that we become what we behold either by virtue or by vice.

We become what we behold. Paul encourages us to behold:

Whatever is true as opposed to something that is false or foolish. Savor the things that are true and sift through the things coming to your mind.

Whatever is noble or honorable as opposed to those things that are vulgar, profane or of low quality. Don't waste your mind on things that are not honorable.

Whatever is right or just, as opposed to those that are wrong or unjust. To fix our minds on what is just does not mean that we ignore the injustice we see around us. Rather we fix our minds on what is just so we have a clear picture of God's design for justice.

Whatever is pure or clean, not to think about that which is impure or polluted.

Whatever is lovely or beautiful, not to fill your mind with things that are repulsive, ugly or unattractive.

Whatever is admirable, which is tied to our speech, as opposed to using words that are bad or inferior.

Although we behold all kinds of things, God is always beholding us with eyes of love.

With so much content coming at us that is not lovely, admirable or pure, how are we supposed to fix our eyes on these things when we are surrounded by so much negativity?

The good news is that despite the tidal wave coming at us, Christianity at its core is a communal faith. We are not meant to be alone in this journey to follow Christ.

We can also see and hear the things that God is doing and saying. We are not left to seek true, noble and pure things by ourselves, we are to look around us at our spiritual mothers and fathers so that we can work out our faith together. Christianity is not passive and not meant to be worked out alone.

The mind itself is a gift. Paul is saying that although the world is full of content that can be ugly, negative and overwhelming, we are given the choice. We can choose what we behold and who we are becoming.

The God of peace will be with you. God himself will be with us - His peace will guard your heart and mind. If you want to be filled with the peace of God, notice the things that you can be grateful for. God has so many wonderful things in the world that we can be grateful about.

Despite the constant amount of the negativity which surrounds us, God calls us to train our minds on the things above. As we choose to behold God in all the things around us, we can be transformed.

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday Helen Kim Nowalk, Pastor of Small Groups & Community Life, continues our series through the book of Philippians. Today Pastor Helen talks about Paul instructions on how to engage both body and mind in following Christ with joy.

Sermon Questions:

1. How does this scripture connect for you the topic that was discussed today? What words resonate with you? Why?
2. In your family of origin, what did your family behold? How was information mostly consumed? Television, radio, internet, reading, word of mouth? How do you think that helped shape the way you formed opinions on things?
3. When looking at the six items Paul asks us to behold, which do you find to be easiest to fix your mind on and which ones are you struggling with?
4. When you think about the situations you worry about, are concerned about or angry about, what are you beholding in your soul? Where do you feel those concerns originate from? How do you feel when you hear the phrase "we become what we behold?"
5. This week how can you engage in your most difficult things to behold? Who has God placed in your life that you can seek this with and draw encouragement from? What might you have to turn away from to accomplish this?
6. God calls us to train our minds on the things above. Are you presently showing gratitude for what God has blessed you with? If not, why, are you able to begin doing so this week?