**Think on These Things**

**The Word**

Read together Philippians 4:4-9

**The Big Idea**

This lesson is focused on v. 8 where Paul encourages us to fix our minds on things that are true, beautiful, and pure. Life with Jesus involves an intentional discipline of the mind to focus on encouraging and uplifting things whereby our hearts and minds become a home in which Christ is pleased to dwell.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. On Sunday we noted the word “whatever” in v. 8 which invites us to consider anything in life (“religious” and “non-religious”) that fits Paul’s list. How did that strike you and how did that square with your own view on the matter?

2. On Sunday we discussed the need to filter our sources of entertainment. Instead of the filter of liberty, we were encouraged to let love (the love of God and love of neighbor) be the filter for our viewing practices. Discuss your own entertainment practices and how Sunday’s message struck you in this regard?

3. Consider the idea of having a good offense (Point III.B. below). What was most helpful for you from that list? Which of those do you want to pursue most intentionally in the next month, and why?

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

I. Introduction

A. “Guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life” (Proverbs 4:23)

B. “The Lord is near” (Phil 4:5). This reality shapes all of the commands in v. 4-9.

II. Focusing on verse 8

 A. Think on these things

1. Paul is getting us to think about our thinking: what we fill our minds with throughout our days

2. Jesus discusses how what we focus on radically affects our lives (Mt 6:22-23)

3. The Christian life involves a battle for the mind (Ro 12:2, 2 Cor 10:5)

B. The list in v. 8 involves both things that are morally pure and upright as well as things that are uplifting and encouraging

C. Notice the world “whatever”

1. Paul is not divide the world into spiritual and non-spiritual things or, religious and non-religious, and suggesting we should only focus on the spiritual and religious.

2. Rather, he is encouraging to fix our thoughts on whatever is true, lovely, pure, etc., wherever we might find those in our daily lives

III. How to live out verse 8

 A. Having a good defense

1. This verse encourages to seriously and prayerfully consider our entertainment habits of tv viewing, movie watching, and internet streaming

2. The average American adult watches about 4 hours of tv/internet per day

3. We should limit the amount of time we spend watching and replace some of that time with more life-giving, soul refreshing activities

4. We should limit the kinds of things we watch. In the name of Christian liberty, many Christians watch things that are harmful to their spiritual lives.

5. Instead of using liberty as our filter, we should use love as our filter.

a. Love of God: Will watching this increase my love for God and give me a deeper hunger for him?

b. Love of neighbor: Will watching this turn me into someone who encourages people in their lives and faith in Jesus?

 B. Having a good offense

 1. Daily immersion in Scripture

 2. Uplifting Music

 3. Time in God’s creation

4. Viewing our circumstances by focusing on what in them is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, praiseworthy (see how Paul does this in his own circumstances in Philippians 1:12-18)

5. Viewing people through focusing on what in them is true, noble, right, praiseworthy

a. Our spouses

b. Our fellow believers

c. People out in the world (recognizing God’s common grace and the fact that they are made in God’s image)