

A Beautiful Mind ***Philippians 1:12-30***

Setting the Scene

Philippians 1:12

ad·ver·sity *n.*

1. a state of wretchedness; poverty and trouble; a disaster; calamity.
2. anything that hinders the mind of Christ in the believer.

Finding A Mindset That:

❶ Promotes Jesus, not self.

Philippians 1:12, Acts 5:41, 2 Corinthians 4:7-12

❷ Sees the advantage of adversity.

Philippians 1:13-14, James 1:2-4, James 5:10-11

❸ Does not take personal attacks personally.

Philippians 1:15-18, 1 Peter 4:12-19, Matthew 5:11-12

❹ Gets its confidence from prayer and the Holy Spirit.

Philippians 1:19, Ephesians 6:18, Psalm 91:14-15, John 14:15-18, Acts 1:8

❺ Is clear on both its purpose and eternity.

Philippians 1:20-26, Romans 8:5-11, Romans 14:7-9, Matthew 16:24-27, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

❻ Is focused on others.

Philippians 1:27-30, John 15:13, Philippians 2:3-4

Growth Group Homework

For the week of January 15, 2006

QUICK REVIEW: Was there one point from this week's sermon that particularly caught your attention, challenged you or confused you more than the others?

MY STORY

1. Pet peeves are those little things people do that drive you crazy. What are one or two for you? (example - blinker on but not turning, doors left open, certain types of messages on answering machines, etc.)
2. We all respond differently when someone makes an unjust personal attack on us. What's your initial response when this happens?
3. Prayer was an essential piece in Paul having a confident mindset. When praying, what setting do you find most comfortable? When do you find it most challenging or cumbersome?

DIGGING DEEPER

This week we saw, through the example of Paul, how a Christian's mindset is transformed by God's Spirit. This transformation is an ongoing process and can definitely be a challenge at times (Romans 7). This week, the Digging Deeper section takes a closer look at what Paul knew and what he did to gain these kind of perspectives.

1. Most of us would agree it's no small challenge to back down or not take personal attacks personally. Who does God say we are in Christ in the following verses and how might that help us respond to personal attacks as Paul did?

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! [NIV]

2 Corinthians 4:17-18

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. [18] So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. [NIV]

Romans 8:31-39

What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? [32] He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? [33] Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. [34] Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right

hand of God and is also interceding for us. [35] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? [36] As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."

[37] No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. [38] For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, [39] neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. [NIV]

Ephesians 1:3

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. [NIV]

2. Christians can sometimes get trapped in focusing on just eternity and miss the mindset of the privilege and opportunity they have of living their lives for Jesus. Paul's understanding of God's purpose for our lives significantly transformed the way he lived and the way he thought. The following verses give followers of Jesus a sense of purpose. As you read each one, jot down the sense of purpose, meaning, and opportunity it gives to those who follow Christ.

Matthew 28:19-20

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." [NIV]

Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." [NIV]

Ephesians 4:1-3

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. [2] Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. [3] Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. [NIV]

Have you ever become frustrated trying to gain or maintain the sense of purpose that comes from these verses? Have you ever seen this sense of purpose significantly grow? How is it now?

3. We saw this week that our confidence flows from prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit. How could praying Paul's instructions in Colossian 4:2-6 influence your mindset in the way you live for Jesus no matter what your circumstances are?

Colossians 4:2-6

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. [3] And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. [4] Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. [5] Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. [6] Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. [NIV]

What does Paul's prayer request suggest is important about his dependence on God?

How might Paul's instructions influence the way you walk through doors God opens for you?

TAKING IT HOME

1. God's Spirit provides us with opportunities to do ministry. Are there any doors you're sensing God might be opening for you to move toward?
2. Are there any co-workers, neighbors or friends that God might be calling you to not take their comments or actions so personally and show more grace to? (Please keep identities confidential.)
3. Is there one of the six characteristics of Christ's mindset listed from this week's sermon that you particularly would like prayer for?