

## Lesson 86

**TEXT** Romans 8:5-9; Philippians 2:3; 4:4-9

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES** 1 Chronicles 28:9; Luke 12:29; Acts 17:11; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Hebrews 10:16

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to explain why it is important to yield their minds and thoughts to Christ.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee. Isaiah 26:3

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he. Proverbs 23:7

**ANSWER  
TITLE:** **A Great Change**  
**SEARCH  
TITLE:** **Mind**

### Reference Information

The object of the Philippians text is to show that the Gospel of Christ requires all who profess to be Christians to have the mind that was in Christ. Christians are to walk as Christ walked. They cannot pick and choose which virtues they will carry out, but must bring honor to God in all they do.

God's peace is felt by all who have given their hearts to Him, but it can be explained by none; it truly passes all understanding. We only know that Christ keeps that heart in peace in which He dwells and rules.

Proverbs 23:7 tells us that as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he—a powerful statement. A man's reasoning powers and memory are the works of his mind but the condition of his heart prompts his thinking. How vital it is then that we have a heart that is right with God. The Bible describes the mind of an unregenerated person as being alienated, spiteful, reprobate, blinded, hostile, and defiled. Those same terms can be applied to the man himself. The regenerated mind (heart) is described as willing, peaceful, right, renewed, having Christ's mind, obedient—all terms equally descriptive of a Christian.

### YOUR OPENER

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# Mind

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## RESPONSES

1. (Teachers, be prepared with your own clippings.)

Briefly review some of the clippings brought by your students. Discuss which type of articles they enjoy reading. Why? How do the things they read and think about affect their emotions? Tie this in to the text, Philippians 4:8, by discussing the importance of the things they think about.

2. Allow several of your students to volunteer their definitions. Key in on the fact that meditation takes time, that it must be done in depth, and that the subject must really be “digested” and broken down. Apply this broadened understanding of the word *meditate* to the following Scriptures: Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2; 1 Timothy 4:15.

3. Some possible responses might include Isaac (Genesis 24:63), David (Psalm 63:6), Joshua (Joshua 1:8). Ask your students to name some of the benefits of meditating on the Word. The Scriptures previously referred to in Joshua 1:8 and 1 Timothy 4:15 mention specific benefits. Guide their answers to further focus on the growth of spirituality, and the potential for a stronger, more vibrant witness to others.

4. Permit volunteers to share their Scriptures and special thoughts revealed through meditation.

In Proverbs 23:7, we learn that as a man thinks in his heart, so he is. Our actions are almost always preceded by thoughts. Once we have committed our hearts and minds to Christ and are truly born again, our desires are changed from those which are sinful to those which are pure and godly. However, as long as we are here on earth, we can be tempted to think to do evil. Therefore, it is important that we make a conscious effort to direct our minds away from evil and toward the good. With our new godly nature, we must continue to live with minds controlled by the Spirit of God.

1. We cannot ignore the evil in the world. Christians love sinners but hate the evil they do. Clip articles from your newspapers or magazines which illustrate some of the evils present around us, and some illustrating Christianity in action. Note your reaction to these articles.

2. Research the meaning of the word *meditate*.

3. Name Old Testament characters who meditated often on God’s Word.

4. Select a Scripture that at some point in your life you meditated on and from which you gleaned some spiritual insight or strength. Write down this Scripture and what it meant to you.

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## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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5. Write Psalm 119:148 in your own words.

6. Psalm 143:5 gives us appropriate things on which to meditate. Read the verse and then give a specific example for each.

7. It has been said that even the good and necessary can keep us from the better, which can, in turn, keep us from the best. Explain how this can be with reference to what we think about.

8. Isaiah 26:3 gives one benefit of keeping our minds fixed on God. What is it?

9. Peter exhorts us to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18). Even Jesus “increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke 2:52). In light of today’s lesson, note here the action you plan to take to increase your Christian stature.

**THOUGHT PROVOKER:** At the end of a regular workday, take inventory of how many times during the day your mind was on Scripture, a hymn, the presence of Christ, the need to see your fellow workers saved, a prayer, and the like.

5. Allow someone to read his version. Discuss the fact that the individual's time for meditation can be whenever the Lord lays it on his heart.

6. Have one student read the verse aloud. Then allow other volunteers to give their examples for remembering the “days of old,” meditating on “all thy works” and the “work of thy hands.” It might be interesting to briefly discuss what the difference is between the last two phrases. Perhaps “all thy works” refers to God’s dealings and strivings with man, while “the work of thy hands” refers to His creations.

7. Your discussion should bring out that it may be easy to allow their minds to become filled with the events and circumstances of their lives. These things may be good things. The Christian probably will not be tempted to dwell upon things that are worldly or sinful. But even the good things of their lives may occupy so much of their attention that they do not set aside enough time to dwell or meditate on things which would help them develop spiritually.

8. Perfect peace. Your discussion could center around how man today is searching in many avenues for peace. Ask your class to name some of these. The answer to having true peace is found in this Scripture. How important it is to allow their minds to dwell on Christ!

9. The obvious answer will be to meditate on God’s Word. Another would be to read more of God’s Word.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Discuss Philippians 4:4. What does it mean to “rejoice in the Lord always”?

What are some things that the Lord has done for you about which you can rejoice?

On what things should our minds be dwelling according to Philippians 4:8? Give some examples.

In what ways can we resist worldly thoughts?

What effect will worldly thoughts have on us? On our spiritual lives?

How do we know when other things are becoming too important?

Consider the ANSWER story and tell what you think some of Jeff’s old friends might say to him. How might he answer them?

What effect will worry, doubt, disunity, mental disturbance, or spiritual disturbance have on our spiritual lives?

What is meant *carnally minded*? *Spiritually minded*?

Why is it important that we keep a watch on what we allow our minds to dwell upon?

In what way does your mind (and speech) reflect what is in your heart?

## THINGS TO DO

Make some REACTION FLASHCARDS with pictures of things or situations. Ask a question or make a statement as you show the flashcards to the children. Have the children tell you what a Christian’s possible reaction would be in contrast to a non-Christian’s possible reaction. Examples: Torn jacket—“Bobby is wearing an old jacket to school.” Cross—“What does this remind you of?” Broken toy—“Jill broke Andy’s new toy.” Wrecked car—“Joe was hurt because he was driving too fast.”

Show your students a bottle which has smears of mud or dirt on the inside to represent the mind of the flesh polluted by the thoughts of the world. Tell them that the bottle (the mind) must be cleaned if it is to be useful again. Use a jug of water that represents Christ, and show how only Jesus can clean the mind. Only when our minds have been cleansed from the thoughts of the world

can new and beautiful thoughts enter in. Rinse the dirty bottle out with the water from the jug to demonstrate this. Then fill the clean bottle with flowers and clean water.

Discuss ways we can, in everyday life, keep our minds and hearts stayed on the good, the pure, the virtuous when so much around us is evil.

On a blackboard or overhead projector, list the items given in Philippians 4:8, and ask the class to provide real-life examples of each.

Choose several verses that deal with keeping your mind and thoughts on Christ; e.g., Psalms 19:14; 48:9; Proverbs 12:5; Isaiah 26:3; Romans 8:6; 1 Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 2:5; 4:8; 1 Timothy 4:15. Write each verse on a different piece of paper. Hand out the verses, one to each student. Have a list of questions to match each verse. Example: “Who thought of the lovingkindness of God?” The child who has the slip of paper with Psalm 48:9 written on it, will be able to answer that question.

## Answers for ANSWER

