Philippians 4:8

*“The Mind Game!”*

**Scripture:** Philippians 4:8

**Memory Verse:** *“Finally, brethren, whatever thing are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things.”* Philippians 4:8

**Lesson Focus:** To care about what we think

**Activities and Craft:** Coloring page, Work Sheet

Craft for 1st and 2nd graders: “Thinking Crown”

**Introduction:**

Tell the kids to close their eyes. Tell them that when you tap them on the head they are to tell you what they are thinking about at that time.

Tell them to open their eyes.

Brain Facts:

 How much does an average adult brain weigh? (3#’s)

 How many thoughts does the average person have per day? (70,000)

Ask all of the kids:

 “What kind of things to you think about?”

 “Are you always thinking about something?”

 “Are your thought always good thoughts?”

Today we are going to study some verses that talk about what we think about.

**Bible Study:**

 **Philippians 4:8: Read the verse**

 When this verse tells us to “meditate” on these things…what does the word

 “meditate” mean? (to think or concentrate on). This is a verb that requires action. The author, Paul, does not just want us to think or meditate but he wants us to put these things into practice. God gives us a list of things that He wants us to think about.

 Does God care what we think about?

**Let’s look at God’s list:**

 Think about:

1. Whatever is True = God’s truth
2. Whatever is noble = honorable
3. Whatever is just = righteousness
4. Whatever pure = stainless – thoughts that do not leave a stain
5. Whatever things are lovely = admirable
6. Whatever things are of good report = winsome or good reputation
7. Whatever is of good virtue or praiseworthy = excellence and consistency, something worthy of praise

The Bible used the word “whatever” before it was a slang word for not caring. Here it means that it does not matter what you are thinking about – but it does matter if it is in the following category.

All of these qualities are words that help us decide if what we are thinking about is good or not.

1. **Truth:** Our minds can focus on non-truths. We can let things bother us when they are entirely untrue.

**Example**: You get the thought in your mind that you are worthless.

 Is that a truth? Did God put that thought into your head?

 God says that you are (“fearfully and wonderfully made” Psalm 139). God says that (“nothing can separate you from the love of God.” Romans 8). So if these are God’s truths then the thought of worthlessness is not from God and is not a truth.

 **Action:** When those thoughts come into our heads we need to ask

 ourselves if this is a truth from God.

1. **Noble:** To be noble is to be honorable. When a “noble” thought comes into our head it is to be something worth thinking about.

**Example:** You start thinking about how this other kids is weird and you start making fun of him in your head. Did God put that thought into your head? God says that we are to (“esteem others better than ourselves.” Philippians 2:3)

**Action:** When the mean thoughts come into your head about others ask God for forgiveness and love for that person.

1. **Just:**  To be just is “righteous or right living.” That means we don’t think about ways to get away with doing the wrong thing. We should care if things are right or if they are wrong.

**Example:** You are so mad about something that you can’t stop thinking about a way of getting back at this person.

**Action:** Take the time to realize that these thoughts are not from God. Ask God to help your anger and ask God to help you forgive this person.

1. **Pure:** Thoughts that do not leave a stain.

How many of you have gotten a stain on your clothes that will not come out. We can stain our brain by thinking about things that are evil or corrupt. We stain our brain by listening to bad music or movies.

**Example:** You are listening to a song with bad lyrics. You love the beat and you don’t think that those bad words will hurt you. But before long you are saying those same bad words.

**Action:** Be very careful with what you watch on TV, Computers or what you listen to music. So many things in our world can stain our brain forever. You must be disciplined in what you allow yourself to see and hear.

Old saying; “You cannot prevent a bird flying over your head

 But you can prevent it making a nest in your hair” and so it is with evil

thoughts. Get rid of evil! Don’t keep thinking about it. God will help you clean up your thought life.

1. **Lovely:** Something that you would admire. Think about things that would inspire you.

**Example:** There are many things that are not worth thinking about; things that make us depressed or dark thoughts that leave us feeling hopeless. We can also have very ugly thoughts about others.

**Action:** When our thoughts start going dark we need to ask God’s help to see things the way that He sees them. “*How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them.”* Psalm 139:17

1. **Good Report:** We want to have the kind of thoughts that we would not be afraid to share with other. Like giving a good report at school. It is truthful and you did your best to give the facts about the subject.

**Example:** Someone tells you something bad about another person. You start thinking about it and you want to share it with someone.

**Action:** Ask God to help you to pray for this person. Stop sharing bad stuff about others.

1. **Virtue:** To be virtuous is to be honest and the same in every situation.

**Example:** You say you’re a Christian but you get very upset when you don’t get your way at home.

**Action:** Ask God to help you to be honest in every situation. Ask Him to help you when you start thinking about how unfair life is when you don’t get your way.

1. **Praise Worthy:** Something of value worth lifting up in praise to God.

**Example:** You got three goals in soccer and you can’t stop thinking about how good you are at soccer.

**Action:** Realize that God has given you your health and every gift that you have. Praise God for giving you your abilities.

 **Illustration:**

 What you will need:

 Clear glass bowl

 Lettuce for a salad

 A bunch of garbage in garbage can.

Tell the kids that you are hungry and that you want to make a good and healthy salad. Put some greens in the bowl. Ask the kids what else they like in their salad. Then grab the garbage can and start putting garbage in the salad bowl. Ask a child to come up and take a bite.

Ask them why they did not want to eat it.

Tell them that this is the same idea with what we think about. We may think about a lot of good things – but then when we add the bad things it results in our minds being polluted by the wrong thing. The way to get wrong thoughts out – is to get right thoughts in! What we put into our minds comes out in our words and actions. Computer programmers put in information so that the computer can function. You are programing your brain. What you put in is what is going to come out.

What are you putting into your brain?

2 Corinthians 10:5; *“…bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”*

Of all God's creatures only man
Can worship, meditate, and plan;
The gift of thought sets him apart
To love the Lord with all his heart. —D. De Haan

Godly character is shaped by godly thoughts.