

Keep Your Mind on a Leash

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Memorial Day Thoughts - TY to Gunnery Sergeant Randy Bennett *ret.* And his daughter Heidi is a Cadet Second Lieutenant, Marine Corps Jr. ROTC (Posting the Colors). TY to Mark Petrash our bugler/trumpeter.
1. **Taps** is a bugle call - a signal, not a song. As such, there is no associated lyric. A Horace Lorenzo Trim wrote a set of words intended to accompany the music in the late 1800's.
 - a) Day is done, gone the sun, From the lake, from the hills, from the sky;
All is well, safely rest, **God is nigh.**
 - b) Fading light, dims the sight, And a star gems the sky, gleaming bright.
From afar, drawing nigh, falls the night.
 - c) Thanks and praise, for our days, 'Neath the sun, 'neath the stars, neath the sky;
As we go, this we know, **God is nigh.**
 - d) Sun has set, shadows come, Time has fled, Scouts must go to their beds,
Always true to the promise that they made.
 - e) While the light fades from sight, And the stars gleaming rays softly send,
To thy hands we our souls, Lord, commend.
 2. Memorial Day is a day of remembering the men/women who **died** while serving in our countries armed services.
 - a) *A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself.* Joseph Campbell
- B. Slide2 Movin On Up is *next Sunday* all children K-12th move up to the next grade level.
- C. Slide3 Sun Night of Prayer is next Sun Night.
- D. Lar & My trip - *Investigative Vision Trip*. Seeking partners in helping us to reach 2 unreached people groups.

II. Slide4 Intro:

- A. Slide5 Murrieta Municipal Code, Section 12.08.100 Animals: *"No person shall bring into any public park any cattle, horse, mule, goat, sheep, swine, dog, cat or any animal of any*

kind, **except** that *dogs or cats* may be permitted in the park **on a leash under full control of the owner or person in possession.**"

1. Common sense dog walking tips are to: **Keep your dog on a leash at all times.**
2. Common sense christian walking tips are to: **Keep your mind on a leash at all times.**

III. Slide6 **KEEP YOUR MIND ON A LEASH AT ALL TIMES (8)**

A. (8) Paul now gives the **standard** for our thought life.

1. Deliberately keep your mind on *Positive, Pure, Praiseworthy Points*.

B. Note the importance of the **mind & its right use**.

1. Note what **God** can do for our minds. Is.26:3 *You will keep him in perfect peace (Shalom Shalom) Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You*
2. If this **list** is suppose to be the *meat & potatoes* of our thoughts, then worry is *the Junk food for our soul*.
 - a) **True** (truthfulness). **Noble** (that which is majestic & awe inspiring). **Just** (right). **Pure** (morally pure, clean thoughts). **Lovely** (acceptable). **Good Report** (admirable, attractive). **Virtue** (the most comprehensive Gk. term for moral excellence). **Praiseworthy** (worthy of Praise).

C. **Meditate** - consider, reckon, take into account, to think on.

1. Pres tense calls for *a continual or habitual action*.
2. **We are responsible** for our thoughts & can hold them to *High & Holy ideals*.
 - a) At times I hold myself to these Holy 8...**other times** I let em run anywhere they want to run, as fast as they want to run there.
3. **Slide7a** You know there are different leashes to walk your dogs. eg: leash. lead (dog shows). choke chain. prong choke chain. **retractable???** (Allows dog to **roam** anywhere)
 - a) Your **mind** needs *different leashes* at different times. **And** sometimes that takes the *pronged* choke chain. **Or** a human shock collar?
 - b) **Be honest**, how many times has your **mind** *chewed through its leash*?
 - c) **Slide7b** *Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.* 2 Cor.10:5b

d) (nlt) *We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ.*

e) (msg) *fitting every loose thought and emotion and impulse into the structure of life shaped by Christ.*

D. **What's opposite?** When your mind is thinking on things that are *false, low morals, unjust, impure, unlovely, bad reports.*

1. (i.e.) Whatever things are true (don't believe their lies, what does Scripture say on it?) **Shift your impure thoughts to pure thoughts.**

2. **Then store em up in your mind.** Let them become like an IV Drip, *dripping these thoughts deep into your soul, when needed.*

E. Paul gives 2 lists: *Things to Meditate on* & now *Things to Put into practice.*

1. 1st, your thought life, **then** your model of effective Christian living.

IV. Slide8 **UNLEASH YOUR MATURITY (9)** from *Leash your Mind to...*

A. (9) **These do.** - these practice. Continuity & repetition of practice. (LKGNT)

1. **They learned** from Paul's example. They **received** a wealth of knowledge. They **heard** his great teachings. **They saw** a super example in him.

a) **Do you have someone who is a positive model to you? If not,** in the meanwhile grab an inspiring biography of a *missionary, preacher, man/women of faith.*

B. **The God of Peace** - The only one who can bring a *Higher Peace* than the worlds peace, is the One who Transcends the world around us.

1. When you're trying to get to sleep at night & you can't because of **anxiety**, listen to **God's whisper**, *Go ahead & sleep now, I'll sit up.*

2. *There is nothing too great for God's Power; & nothing too small for His Fatherly Care.* Barclay

V. Slide9 **THRIVE IN LIFE'S SHADE (10-13)**

A. If you do any **gardening** you know that there is a whole section of flowers called, *Flowers that grow in the shade.* (Shade Tolerant Flowers)

1. **They not only grow** in the shade...*they thrive there!*

2. Some Christians seem to **blossom** when their *material circumstances* become **the most harsh & severe**. They **grow** (not wilt) in darkness & shade.
3. It's in this persistent darkness that the flowers begin to show their faces in bright fascinating glory. [the *poinsettia* to get the *red leaves* must be placed in **darkness** (12 hours at a time, for at least 5 days in a row) to change color. **At the same time, the plants require abundant light during the day for the brightest color.**
4. People like that may be put in **prison** by the world, **but** their **treasure** will be locked away with them.
 - a) Where there is much light, there is also much shade.

B. **Slide10 CONTENTMENT AND CHRIST** (10-13)

- C. (11b) Don't picture Paul writing at a desk in an office, **but** from a dark prison cell.
- D. (12,13) **Verse 13 is connected to vs.12. *So many times we hear vs.13 as if Paul 's about to bench press 305!***
 1. It sounds like this this verse has been misinterpreted to being any, **wild-eyed pipe dream** a person can concoct.
 2. Paul is saying then...*I've been in need. I've been flat level. I've been abandoned. I've been betrayed. I've been forgotten about. I've been depressed. I've been accused. I've been broke. I've been sick. But my God is still Jehovah Jira.*

E. **Be Content to live in Plenty or Poverty.**

1. We must be able to **mount up** w/wings like eagles, **but** we must also know how to **come down**. [eagles **don't only** ride the high winds...in Alaska they sit on the beaches]
2. **Are we able to live in life's Valley's?**
3. Being able to **do all things** was referring to **mostly things of abasement, hunger, & when we suffer needs.**
 - a) **Slide11a** (Msg) *I'm just as happy with **little** as with **much**, with **much** as with **little**. I've found the recipe for being happy whether **full** or **hungry**, hands **full** or hands **empty**. 13 Whatever I have, wherever I am, I can make it through anything in the One who makes me who I am.*

4. A story is told of **a king** who went into **his garden** one morning, and found everything withered and dying. He asked the **oak** that stood near the gate what the trouble was. He found it was sick of life and determined to die because it was not tall and beautiful like the pine. The **pine** was all out of heart because it could not bear grapes, like the vine. The **vine** was going to throw its life away because it could not stand erect and have as fine fruit as the **peach** tree. The **geranium** was fretting because it was not tall and fragrant like the **lilac**; and so on all through the garden. Coming to a **heart's-ease**/pansy, he found its bright face lifted as cheery as ever. "Well, heart's-ease, I'm glad, amidst all this discouragement, to find one brave little flower. You do not seem to be the least disheartened" "No, I am not of much account, but I thought that **if you wanted an oak, or a pine, or a peach tree, or a lilac**, you would have planted one; **but as I knew you wanted a heart's-ease**, I am determined to be the best little heart's-ease that I can. *Cowman, Streams in the Desert, Jan.7.*

- F. **Slide11b** Where do you put the emphasis on vs.13? On, **I can** or on **through Christ**?
1. The secret of the **I can** life lies in those 2 words...**through Christ**. [the secret of spiritual victory]
 2. **John Henry Jowett** told about a small village where an elderly woman died. She died "**penniless, uneducated, unsophisticated**", **but** during her lifetime **her selfless service** had made a tremendous impact for Christ. On her tombstone **Slide11c** they chiseled the words, "**She did what she couldn't.**"
- G. Paul never said: *I can do all things through **Education**, or I can do all things through **Money**, or **Power**, or **Thinking Positively**, or **Confidence in myself**.*
- H. **Who strengthens me** - So, how can I live the **can do** life? Well, this is how...
Slide12 I can do all things through Christ, **when** I allow Him to **do all things through me**.
1. I can heal this **marriage** through Christ, **when** I allow Him to do all things through me.
 2. I can battle this **addiction** through Christ, **when** I allow Him to do all things through me.
 3. I can say no to _____ through Christ, **when** I allow Him to do all things through me.
 4. I can find my **career** through Christ, **when** I allow Him to do all things through me.
- I. So, we learned last week, *when **anxiety** appears, the cure is **Prayer**.*
This week Paul adds, *When **life is disorderly**, the cure is **mental & practical discipline**.*

J. He who made the **little slave-baby** the strong champion of the Exodus. **And** the **shepherd-lad** the slayer of Goliath. **And** the captive **Daniel** prime minister of mighty Babylon. He who transformed Simon to Cephas. Saul into Paul. **And** has made 1000's of his humble followers spiritual giants...can enable **you & me** to **do all things** if we live in the secret of that little phrase, **through Christ**. *Swindoll*

VI. Slide13 SPIRITUAL INVESTMENT (14-18)

- A. **Through Christ** you can **be** what you ought to **be** (11), **do** what you ought to **do** (13), **&** we see we can **have** what we ought to **have** (19).
- B. (14) You **do well** if you **participate** in someone's **distress/pressure/trouble/tribulation**.
1. What Lar & I hope to do on your behalf or the next 2 weeks.
- C. Paul didn't have **a wealthy organization** giving him support, **but he did have a great God** who enabled **generous friends** to meet his needs.
1. Paul thanks them for remembering him & his needs.
 2. Because of their **pattern of giving**, they were a blessing to him.
- D. (17) Paul identifies some of the **benefits** in store for those who gave...
1. A business metaphor explaining their earthly investment accrued heavenly dividends. **This is Fruit Storage**, fruit in their account.
 2. Isn't it great to know there are still great ways to **invest** in His kingdom.
 - a) Allow the Lord to help you with your **Heavenly Portfolio Management**. **Guaranteed returns :)**
 3. **If you tithe here at CM there is fruit to your account**. We are known as a church that takes care of peoples needs. That offers: counseling, a mid-week BS, CR, FreshHope, Divorce Care (DC feedback: **How did u hear?** from my pastor/from my priest).
- E. (18) **Indeed I have all and abound**. I am **full** - **Wow!** Just take that in.
- F. Paul saw their gift as **a fragrant sacrifice** that was **pleasing to the Lord**.
1. **How do you make a filet mignon better?...By wrapping it in bacon, of course.**

2. It's like your spouse/boyfriend/girlfriend spraying their favorite perfume/cologne on. Not only are they beautiful, but now they smell good too.

VII. Slide 14 GOD. GLORY. GREET. GRACE. (19-23)

A. GOD (19)

B. My God...your needs...His riches.

1. Paul beautifully lived this out in his own life & was confident that God would do the same for *his beloved Philippians*.
2. *He who gives, makes himself richer, for his own gift opens to him the gifts of God.*

C. God would not only bless them out of, but according to, His glorious riches.

1. Not like a millionaire giving a little from his vast resources, to a good cause, but God gives in proportion to His infinite resources.

D. The Philippians don't need to practice caution in giving. They are free to give, and in doing so they testify to God's provision. If they keep what they have in order to provide for themselves, they won't experience the generosity of God through the generosity of others. *Faithlife Study Bible (Php 4:19). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.*

E. GLORY (20)

F. He deserves the glory. It's Him

G. Here is a ch.4 survey of why God deserves all the glory.

1. **Because:** We stand fast, in the Lord (1). We rejoice, in the Lord (4). We let our requests be known to God (6). We receive the peace of God (7). We follow Paul's example & gain the God of Peace (9). We can do all things, through Christ (13). We can rest because God shall supply all our needs (19).
2. So why does God deserve all the glory? *Hint:* because it's all of Him!

H. GREET (21,22)

I. Paul's greetings.

J. GRACE (23)

K. As was his usual practice & favorite theme... Paul gave great prominence to Christ's marvelous Grace once again as he concludes his letter.