

CLEAR THE AIR: Burning Issues Confronting Christians Today

Sermon #7: #thinkbiblically! **Guidelines for Entertainment, Internet, Apps and Social media (FB, Twitter, Instagram etc.)** **Philippians 4:8**

Introduction:

Social Media is the new normal. Today it is called the Social Media Revolution.

"We don't have a choice on whether we do Social Media. The Choice is how well we do it."
Erik Qualman (American author of Socialnomics 44 years old)

The Snail Mail or Postage, Telegraph, Radio, TV, Internet, FB, Twitter, Instagram, and other forms of social media are all tools for communication, entertainment, information, and tools for establishing relationships.

Tools in and of themselves are not BAD or EVIL. How you use them? Why you use them? And what you get out of them, can make all the difference between GOOD and EVIL.

It is important then that our minds and hearts be in submission to Jesus Christ by learning to think biblically about every aspect of life. Biblical Integration is of paramount importance in our world today.

No one commits these outward SINS or outward GOOD without first having committed them in their mind. No one will make a decision on anything, including what they post, blog, write, or Tweet, unless it is first filtered in the MIND and HEART.

I would like to propose not a set of RULES but a PRINCIPLE:

"No rule is more powerful to deter or motivate you as a person than one you established in your heart"

No one can stop you except yourself! If we want to grow in godliness, we must win the battle over sin on the Heart and Mind level. The Principle is articulated by Paul in Philippians 4:8-9 and he exhorts us to develop the way a Christian THINKS.

I. WHAT SHOULD WE THINK OF?

1. Think TRUE.

The word means, "true as to fact ... it denotes the actuality of a thing"; not concealed, the truth. The "true" is that which corresponds to reality. God Himself is the ultimate test for the truth.

- John 3:33 attests, "God is true" (John 8:26; Rom. 3:4).
- Titus 1:1-3 Paul writes Titus "God ... cannot lie,"
- John 7:18; 5:31-32 Jesus also claimed for Himself that He is true

Application:

1. Before you use Social Media - is it the TRUTH? Check your sources
2. Rule #1: Do not, in any circumstance, interact with someone you don't know. *

2. Think HONORABLE (NIV – Noble; KJV – Honest)

The word means "that which inspires reverence or awe; dignified, worthy of respect."

- 1 Timothy 3:8; 11 It is a character quality required in deacons
- 1 Timothy 3:4 Elders should control their children "with all dignity"
- 1 Timothy 2:2 All should "lead a tranquil & quiet life in all godliness & dignity"
- Romans 12:10b "Outdo one another in showing honor."

Application:

1. Are the contents and ideas in your postings, SMS, blogs, FB, and Twitter honorable? Do they evoke dignity?
2. When you "like", what of it do you like? What you like represents what you think.

3. Think RIGHT. (KJV – Just)

This word is used of:

- God Himself who is righteous (Rom. 3:26; 1 John 2:29; 3:7)
- Jesus Christ is righteous (Acts 3:14; 7:52; 22:14; 1 Pet. 3:18; 1 John 2:1).
- We too need to be righteous (1 John 3:7-8).

We need to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and to exhibit the holy nature of God in us by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Application:

1. Rule #2: Do not, EVER, post a picture of yourself wearing (or not wearing) anything you wouldn't wear in public.*

4. Think PURE. (PIL – Dalisay)

The word has the general sense of innocence or the special sense of chastity. Purity of thought and purpose is a precondition of purity in word and action, as opposed to "sexual immorality, or any kind of impurity, or greed" which should not even be mentioned among God's people. **FF Bruce**

- Ephesians 5:3-5 "But do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God."

Application:

1. No Sexting!
2. Rule #3: Do not chat late at night.*
3. Refrain from swear or cuss words! OMG! Holy ****!

5. Think LOVELY.

This word occurs only here in the New Testament. It means what is pleasing, agreeable, and attractive.

- Psalm 90:17
- Romans 12:2

Application:

1. Stop Phubbing - Phone (Gadget) Snubbing
2. As missionary Jim Elliot (1927-1956) famously said, "Wherever you are, be all there."

6. Think COMMENDABLE. (KJV - Good Report/ Repute)

This comes from a compound word meaning to speak well of something. Another word is Admirable and in this sense if it deservedly enjoys a good reputation.

- 1 Corinthians 13:6 - love believes the best about another person, it refuses to believe an evil report about a brother or sister until there is certain evidence to establish it.

Application:

1. Rule #4: If someone is asking you to do or say something you don't feel good about, get out of that situation. Immediately.*

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7. Think EXCELLENCE. (KJV – Virtue)

The word “excellence” (NASB, NIV) means valor, moral virtue.

This means that as a Christian, one of the first things you must do is to stop any behavior that is not in line with God’s moral virtues as revealed in Scripture,

- 2 Peter 1:3, 5
- Galatians 5:19-21

Application:

1. Rule #5: Do use your social media interactions to show people the love of Christ.*

8. Think PRAISEWORTHY. (KJV – Praise)

The word “praise” is used both of what is praiseworthy about God and about people. Our minds should always be keyed into the things that God represents as praiseworthy. We praise God for all of His marvelous works both in creation and in history.

- Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14; To the Praise of God’s Grace and Glory
- Philippians 1:11 The praise belongs to God
- Romans 2:29; 13:3; Good people will get man’s Approval
- 1 Corinthians 4:5 God will honor people in due time

9. Final Encouragement: THINK on these things.

The word Think means to take an inventory, estimate (literally or figuratively), to conclude, to take account of and consider.

- “Give them weight in your decisions” F.W. Beare
- Allow them “to shape your conduct” Ralph P. Martin
- Therefore, Think on these things with the end goal of doing them.
- James 1:19-22

CONCLUSION:

II. How then can we THINK this way?

Proverbs 4:23 says, “Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life.”

1. We need the mind of Christ:

- Proverbs 1:7 “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge”
- Romans 8:7-9. Paul says that “the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God;
- Practice it! Phil. 4:9 “What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.”

2. A Social Media Heart Check:**

In an article dated 06 Feb 2016, written for Desiring God, Ms. Kim Cash Tate shares 4 Items to check as we engage in social media:

- a. Am I Walking by the Spirit? Romans 8:8
- b. Am I Bragging? Matthew 6:1
- c. Am I Battling Envy and Discontent?
- d. Is This the Best Use of My Time? Ephesians 5:15-17

Paul says, “Feed your mind on the pure truth of God’s Word.”

“No rule is more powerful to deter or motivate you as a person than one established in your heart”

*<http://www.christianitytoday.com/iyf/hottopics/faithvalues/5-rules-for-social-media-sanity.html?start=3>

** <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/a-social-media-heart-check>