

STAYING CALM: WEEK SEVEN

REVIEW... we stay CALM by celebrating God's goodness; we ask him for help; we leave our problems with him rather than carrying them ourselves. Tonight, we close our class with the last letter, "M"

We mind our thoughts, we focus on what is positive, meditate on What contributes to goldy minds.

Many people get it backwards. They refuse to change their thinking/ their attitudes until situations change in their favor. Reducing anxiety requires healthy thinking. Whatever we perceive to be our problem is not our main problem but how we think about it. It is time to think about what we think about! No problem is unsolvable; no life is irredeemable; yet we complicate life by how we think.

**WE ARE WHAT WE THINK...our minds have no GARBAGE DISPOSAL; if we fill it with junk, junk is all we get. We become what we think. Jesus knew the mind's power: that thinking/doing are linked. We can't live in a vacuum. Our most valuable weapon against anxiety weighs less than 3 pounds and it is lodged between our ears: OUR MINDS. Our thoughts determine HOW WE REACT, WHAT WE DO. By thinking negatively, our moods shift; our fears run wild. Thoughts can carry us into full panic mode. Paul survived his trials by focusing HIS THOUGHTS. He writes
äääää **WHATEVER IS TRUE, HONORABLE, JUST, PURE, COMMENDABLE; IF THERE IS ANY EXCELLENCE, THINK/DWELL ON THEM. ELEVATING OUR THOUGHTS ELEVATES OUR LIVES, BUT BECAUSE THE GOD OF PEACE WILL BE WITH US!****

WHAT WE CAN CONTROL...Paul saw a link between the character of our thoughts and the quality of our world. Whatever enters the mind, occupies the mind, and eventually shapes it. Thoughts carry a spiritual charge, a tug toward/away from God. No thought is purely neutral. We get anxious by feeling out of control, but we can control OUR THOUGHTS. We must choose what we think. We let God-honoring thoughts inspire us, not the anxieties/Issues of this world. Christians should focus, not on WHAT OTHERS THINK but WHAT PLEASES GOD. Sadly, our thoughts are as scattered as our lives. We are born with a capacity to focus attention, to block out distractions, yet we squander that gift.

THINK ON WHATEVER IS TRUE, HONORABLE, JUST, PURE, COMMENDABLE,
Many people focus on what is false, impure, scary, not what is noble. They dwell on what is destructive, not what is commendable. The more we focus on negative things, the more anxious we get. On a positive note, Paul believed that God could UPGRADE OUR MINDS, that we have the potential to live better lives by thinking better thoughts.