

# That's All Folks Pt. 2

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, hey, good morning. My name is Ray Sweet from First Christian Church in Greensburg, Indiana.! As always, if you'd like to learn a little more about us, you can go to FCCgreensburg.com or you can check out the FCC Greensburg Facebook page.

But hey, we are excited today to get into the Word of God, but most of all, let this Word get into us and transform these hearts. Now, the title of the message today is called That's All, Folks, Part 2. We're in our series called Rejoice in the Book of Philippians, and this is the final week of our series. You can turn to Philippians 4, verses 8 and 9. Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again, rejoice. Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God, and the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things.

[ 1 : 23 ] Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me or seen in me, put it into practice, and the God of peace will be with you. So, simple question here today. Have you ever received bad advice? Of course we have, right?

Legend has it that General Custer, at the Battle of the Little Bighorn, as they were grossly outnumbered, had a confidant give him some advice. I say we attack. What's the worst that can happen? Well, there's a reason it's called Custer's Last Stand.

I even remember a time in college where a couple of my friends were wrestling in the dorm. I was probably 21 at the time, enjoying this test of manhood that college kids love to display.

And as they were wrestling, it was definitely one-sided. And when the victor stood up, I just so happened to have a cup of water in my hand. And in that moment of orneriness, I held it out to him and said, finish him off.

Dump the water on him. And he did. And boy, was that bad advice. Because our friend went berserk as we added insult to injury.

[ 2 : 38 ] And I've been used as an illustration for Satan's temptations ever since. And while both of those pieces of advice were not good, there's even worse advice that our world likes to champion.

It sounds something like this. Follow your heart. Hollywood pumps out movies built on this idea. Our culture preaches this message in about every single advertisement.

Wars have been fought with pride and selfishness, urging this idea forward. And yet, Jeremiah 17, 9, inspired by the one who sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, preaches a different message.

The word of God says, The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? So for the last time, welcome back to our series over Philippians.

But we've been talking for two months now about living lives of joy despite our circumstances because we belong to the King of Kings. Because those who've surrendered all to Christ have been washed white by the blood of our Savior.

[ 3 : 47 ] Because we have heavenly hope. And in the lyrics of my son's first favorite song called Old Church Choir, Ain't nothing gonna steal my joy.

And that's the message that Paul is not only preaching, but he's living out in extreme persecution right before their eyes as he's in chains awaiting trial for his faith in Jesus.

And today we come to part two of... That's all, folks. Because Paul is bringing this letter to an end, helping us disciples of Jesus walk in the joy of the Lord.

See, the worst advice we can take is follow your heart. Because these hearts, we know this, they can easily be deceived and tricked into following the flesh, the world's ways.

Pursuing selfishness or comfort or instant gratification or my pride. And if your heart is prone to wander, just like mine is, let's make up our minds today that we won't throw out the art of biblical thinking for the sake of mushy-gushy feelings.

[ 4 : 54 ] Because Paul is teaching us that our thoughts determine our actions. And ultimately, our thoughts determine our future. And how I guard my mind really does matter.

Or as the late Charles Stanley said, we are to control our thoughts rather than have our thoughts control us. See, in Mark chapter 7, Jesus is teaching when the self-righteous Pharisees try to trap him in his words.

They did that often and it never went well for them. Their heart was simply to discredit him and his ministry. And after calling them out for their traditions, overriding what the Word of God taught, it says Jesus left the crowd and he was having more discussion with his disciples about it all.

And here's what Jesus says to them in Mark 7, starting in verse 20. What comes out of a person is what defiles them. For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come.

Sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly. All these evils come from inside and defile a person.

[ 6 : 07 ] So, today I want to borrow an acronym from the computer science world that is pronounced GIGO. G-I-G-O.

Now, it stands for garbage in, garbage out. And in the world of computers, it simply means that quality of the output you get from a system is directly determined by the quality of what you input. And I think you know where I'm going with this. There are a lot of Christians who love Jesus, who constantly put garbage in, and therefore get garbage out. And listen, this isn't new with us. This isn't just since the invention of social media. Trust me, it makes it worse. And there's a lot more junk that's way too easy to access. But when we welcome in and we dwell on garbage, that's what comes out of our lives.

That's what keeps us from walking in peace and ultimately the joy of the Lord. Garbage in, garbage out. And let's just be real this morning because this isn't a time to point fingers because I'd have three more pointing back at me.

[ 7 : 13 ] This is me saying, yeah, I got too much garbage coming in. I'm dwelling too much on that gossip that I mask as concern or even prayer. I'm letting a critical spirit control my mind.

Maybe the stuff I look at on my phone or my tablet isn't helping me become like Jesus. So let's take this acronym, GIGO, G-I-G-O, and let's change it up a little bit.

Let's make it PIPO, P-I-P-O. So there's no chance of any copyright infringement, okay? And let's start this way. Purity in.

Purity in. And something that's weighed on my heart for a while now is that the church has to get back to using and teaching this word purity.

Even the word holiness. And as Philippians has taught, the secret sauce of knowing Jesus produces purity that flows out of our lives from my appearance, how I choose modesty, to my thought life, to my hobbies, to my relationships, to my speech, to my actions, and beyond.

[ 8 : 22 ] Purity must be my pursuit because of God's amazing grace in my life. You know, I started off today quoting six verses from Philippians 4. We talked about the first four of those last week.

Now let's start where we left off in Philippians 4, verse 8. The Apostle Paul, through the power of the Holy Spirit, he says, Finally, brothers and sisters.

So he's kind of bringing this baby home, okay? Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things.

So let's just start down that list with the first and most important one that guides the rest of them.

And that's truth. When the well-known author, Lloyd Douglas, was in college, he lived in a boarding house.

We're talking many years ago. And on the first floor was a retired wheelchair-bound music professor. And every morning, Lloyd would poke his head in the man's room and say, What's the good news?

[ 9 : 26 ] And each time, he'd take his tuning fork, he'd slap it on the side of his wheelchair, and he'd say, That's a middle C. It was a middle C yesterday. It'll be a middle C tomorrow.

And it'll be a middle C a thousand years from now. He'd say, The tenor upstairs sings flat. The piano across the hall is out of tune. But that, my friend, is a middle C. Church, do you realize we have our middle C in a world where we're told that we all get to decide our own truth? Where one person's quote-unquote truth will lead them to hijack an airplane and fly it into a building killing thousands?

Where another person's quote-unquote truth will lead them to assassinate someone who thinks differently than them? Where another's truth will celebrate the murder of the unborn? Where still another's truth will try to redefine what the family unit should be as described by God? We could go on and on, but there's only one source of truth that we can trust.

[10:28] As Hebrews 13.8 says, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. And for us who live in an ever-changing world, our source of stability, our middle C that we can depend on and trust is the word of God.

Isaiah 40.8 says, The grass withers and the flowers fall, but listen to this, But the word of our God endures forever. See, this word brings spiritual freedom from the bondage of sin. This word transforms as we become brand new creations in Christ. This word proclaims justice and healing, standing up for the most vulnerable among us.

This word shares my God's character, proving time and time again that he is trustworthy, faithful, and steadfast. This word rips off the chains of addiction, breathing life and purpose into the child of God.

This word is a light for your path, teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training for righteousness. This word is your middle C. The apostle Paul leads off with that phrase, Whatever is true.

[11:41] To make it clear, to make it crystal clear, That this list that he's getting ready to share, All is in line with the truth of God's word. And I'm going to talk through these kind of quickly.

So here's the second one. Noble. Whatever is noble. Now we don't use that word a whole lot in our everyday lives, But it's also been translated as honorable.

And a few other times when it's used in the New Testament, It refers to the behavior of certain groups of people, Like deacons or older men in the church, Who should be noble.

Who should be honorable. Be good examples. That our thoughts should not be on trivial things of this life, But our thoughts should be heavenward.

Next, I'm going to combine two of these. He says, Whatever is right and pure. Whatever is righteous and pure. So both carry this idea of being in line With God's perfect and righteous standards that are always pure.

[12:43] And one thing I've realized in life Is that I don't have the qualifications to determine what's righteous and pure. Like you, I'm just a mist here today and gone tomorrow. Such a small blip on the radar of eternity.

But the word of God has laid out before us What God not only calls us to, But empowers us through the Holy Spirit to actually live out. Can we just be honest here for a second?

There are too many thoughts that flow through our minds That are not righteous and pure. Would you agree with that? Whether it's resentment and possibly hatred For those that we've deemed as an enemy Or someone who hurt me.

Maybe it's lustful thoughts That I know almost every male And some women struggle with daily. It could be manipulation That we think through over others in our minds And then we carry out. It could be selfishness and pride Or jealousy Or coveting what others have. The list goes on. But here's the thing about impure and ungodly thoughts. Martin Luther once said, You can't keep birds from flying over your head.

[13:48] But you can keep them from building a nest in your hair. That means we can't always control every thought That jumps into these brains. And if you're like me, Man, there's some doozies, right?

Where in the world did that come from? But by the power of Christ, We can control how long they stay And whether they will take mastery over us. As quickly as those impure thoughts come in, We have to be people who rebuke them In the name of Jesus And replace them with thoughts That are pure and righteous.

And a little bit later When temptation rears its ugly head again And maybe it comes back, We replace it again. We don't entertain it. We don't let it move in. We don't let it stay for just a little while.

In church, it will get easier The more we focus our minds on that truth That is noble, righteous, and pure. Because as 1 John 3 says, Dear friends, now we are children of God. And what will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, We shall be like Him. For we shall see Him as He is. Now look at verse 3. All who have this hope in Him Purify themselves, Just as He is pure.

[15:00] So because of grace, Because of the hope that we have of Christ, Knowing our destiny is with Him for eternity, We choose righteousness. We choose purity.

Grace is that motivation. And if that motivation is lacking, Then we have to go back to the drawing board And say, wow, am I really walking In an intimate relationship with Jesus?

And then next, Paul says, Whatever is lovely. What's unique about this word Is that it's only used this one time In the entire New Testament. And it can be translated as Lovely, sweet, gracious, or generous.

But if you break the word down into two parts, Pros means toward, Phileo means love. So it literally reads that Something that pushes one towards love Or calls forth love.

So let me ask you this. What kind of thoughts does Satan want To permeate our minds with? What about rude thoughts? Perverted thoughts? Unkind thoughts?

[16:04] Resentful? Lewd? Vengeful? Wicked? Selfish? Prideful? Abrasive? I mean, we could keep going, But what do you think will flow out of you When your thoughts are calling forth love?

Exactly that. Words and actions that are lovely, Sweet, gracious. Have you noticed when our words to others Are these things that When we have to address something difficult, That it really does make all the difference?

Because when our thoughts are lovely, That means we are viewing others Through the lens of grace. We are showing, As Paul said just a few weeks back, Gentleness to all. And then next, Whatever is admirable.

Admirable. Worthy of admiration By those who love Jesus. Now if you carry this through, This is pretty convicting stuff here. Because here's the question this basically asks.

Are the things you are dwelling on in your mind, Thoughts the church would be proud of, If all your thoughts were laid bare before the bride of Christ, At this very second.

[17:09] And maybe you have it all together, But I can say emphatically, That I'm glad you all don't see my thoughts. Okay? I'm still a work in progress here. But what matters, Is that I'm seeking, To let the Holy Spirit have his way, Over every thought that captures my mind.

How did Paul say that in 2 Corinthians 10:5? He said, We demolish arguments and every pretension That sets itself up against the knowledge of God. Listen to this. And we take captive every thought To make it obedient to Christ.

So Paul gives us this list, Summing it all up by saying, If anything is excellent or praiseworthy, Think about such things. In other words, If our thinking ultimately determines our future, Then it can't be mediocrity we seek.

We want excellence, right? We want to stand before Jesus someday, Covered by his blood, Hearing that by the power of Christ, We were able to live as people Whose thoughts were true, Noble, Right, Pure, Lovely, And admirable.

Well done, Good and faithful servant. Enter into your rest. But we can't get there Until we do what this passage just said. We have to dwell on such things.

[18:24] See, that word means to evaluate, To consider, Or to calculate, This continual discipline of the mind, To set all my thoughts on these spiritual values.

And when I have garbage in my mind, That's on the runway of my heart, Ready to fly out of my mouth, I gotta stop to evaluate. Is this true? Is it noble?

Is it right? Is it pure? Is it lovely? Is it admirable? Is it excellent and praiseworthy? If not, I shut it down right there. As much as I'm tempted to let it fly, I shut it down.

And like President Calvin Coolidge once said, I have never been hurt by anything I didn't say. I'm only letting purity in this mind.

So purity in, And then second, Purity in, Peace out. Peace out. Look at Philippians 4, verse 9. It says, So this is Paul here, Whatever you have learned, Or received, Or heard from me, Or seen in me.

[19:25] Put it into, Here's your key word, Practice, And the God of peace will be with you. Paul's talking to this church in Philippi, Where many of them have been Christians for 10-12 years at this

point.

They've been taught the truth of God's word by Paul himself. They have the Holy Spirit, That's God, Taking up residence within them. They are walking out their salvation that produces peace, hope, and joy.

And Paul is saying, You've learned these truths. You've received them into your heart. Not only have you heard them from me, But I pray that you've seen me live them out before you. Not perfectly, But faithfully and sincerely.

So church in Philippi in the first century, Church in America in the 21st century, Church in Greensburg, Indiana, And First Christian Church of Greensburg. Put it into practice.

Train your mind to reject garbage. And only accept purity. And the result will be what Paul says. And the God of peace will be with you.

[ 20 : 29 ] And yet you can hear thousands of sermons in your lifetime that are biblical and relevant. You can read the Bible from cover to cover. You can have perfect church attendance for years.

You can serve faithfully, even holding a leadership title of some sort. And those are all good. And they're godly. If, if we are putting it into practice.

James 1.22 says, Do not merely listen to the word of God, And so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. And then if we jump down to James 1.25, But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and continues in it, Not forgetting what they have heard, But doing it, They will be blessed in what they do.

So purity in, Peace coming out. Church, as we come to an end of this eight-week series through the book of Philippians, I pray that God has blessed you in it and through it.

It is my prayer that through Paul's example, Through his Holy Spirit-inspired words, That we can see that joy that comes because I know Christ personally.

[ 21 : 37 ] And I want to share one more good example of this with you. A story from Daryl Stetler. An example of joy and chaos. So it's about a lady named Susanna Wesley.

You may not recognize her name right away, But I will guarantee that you felt the ripple effects of her life. She was the mother of John and Charles Wesley, Two of the most influential leaders in church history.

But long before their sermons stirred thousands or their hymns filled the churches, Their mother was preaching her own kind of sermon from the kitchen. Susanna Wesley had 19 children.

19! Just imagine that for a second, okay? And in the chaos of 18th century life, We're talking no dishwashers, no air conditioning, No grocery pickups.

She still made time for something that mattered more than anything else. Prayer. Time in God's presence. But how do you pray when the house is so loud? When there are children everywhere, Literally everywhere, And there's no place to be alone.

[ 22 : 42 ] Well, Susanna had a solution. She would sit down in her kitchen, throw her apron over her head, And she would pray. That apron became her holy place.

It was her tent of meeting. Everyone in the house knew when mama's got her head over her apron, Or her apron over her head, Excuse me. You don't bother her. She's talking to Jesus.

She did this every day, Often spending up to two hours in prayer and scripture reading. Not in a cathedral. Not on a retreat. Not in the middle of clatter, crying and chores.

That's exactly where it was. And it was there in that sacred little fabric covered sanctuary that she found joy. Deep, sustaining joy in God's presence.

And it rubbed off on her children. Church, I love that picture. Because it reminds us the presence of God isn't confined to a church building or a mountaintop experience.

[ 23 : 38 ] It's not something that you have to schedule a week away for. You can encounter Him in the middle of your daily grind. Even when life is noisy and messy, you can draw near. Sometimes joy doesn't come from escaping the chaos.

It comes from inviting God into it. And it's my prayer, as we close out this book, That we will be a church that always places knowing Jesus first.

Because when we do, God will take care of the rest. And we will be a people of joy. So let's say it one more time.

Ready? Say it with me. Bidy, bidy, bidy, bidy. That's all, folks! Let's pray. Father, thank you so much for this series in the book of Philippians.

And just how you have shown us that we can have joy no matter the circumstances. Thank you for that, Jesus. Thank you for the joy that we can walk in every day.

[ 24 : 38 ] Thank you for the hope that you offer. You are so good. And Father, I just pray that we will guard these minds. That we will bring purity in so that peace can come out.

And that it will not be garbage in, garbage out. So Father, help us with every thought to sanctify that in you. To have these different markers in our mind.

Is it right? Is it noble? Is it true? Is it pure? Is it lovely? Is it admirable? Father, help us to always gauge our thought life that way.

And to just reject anything that goes against the truth of God's word. Thank you, Father, for these truths that you've taught us today. Thank you for this study in the book of Philippians.

May we truly be a people who are joyful. We pray this in Jesus' holy and precious name. And God's people said, Amen and Amen.

[ 25 : 40 ] Hey, thank you so much for tuning into God's word today. Just a quick invitation for you. If you've been listening to this, maybe this is the first time. Maybe you listen all the time.

But if you've been listening and you have questions about your faith. Maybe about First Christian Church of Greensburg. That's who we are. My name is Ray Sweet. I'm one of the pastors here. Maybe you have questions about what it means to truly follow Jesus. We would love to come alongside you. So here's a couple ways that you can reach out to us. You can call us 812-663-8488.

That's 812-663-8488. Or you can email me at ray at fccgreensburg.com. Hey, thank you so much for tuning in today.

Have a great week.