



The Power of Thoughts

Tom Deviney

**Matthew 22:34–40**

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”



Deuteronomy 6:5

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.

Leviticus 19:18

You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.



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Ambrose “immortal” – Bishop of Milan

Ambrosiaster – “like ambrose” – unknown author who wrote on Paul’s epistles in a style reminiscent of Ambrose

Marius Victorinus – “the man who conquers” – grammarian, who converted in 355

John Chrysostomn – “golden mouthed” – Bishop of Antioch and Constantinople



Phil. 4:4

**Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say,
Rejoice.**

“Hebrew Couplet”



Phil. 4:5

**Let your gentleness be known to everyone.
The Lord is near.**



Forbearance is individual patience that observes due measure without straining beyond its station. When we live among strangers and live in a way commensurate with our lowliness, God will lift us up."

Marius Victorinus

"They will be blessed not only from doing good deeds, but also by inspiring good deeds in others."

Ambrosiaster


"They must be prepared and wakeful in prayer, giving thanks to God and putting away every worldly care, so as to hope and have before their eyes what the Lord promises."

Ambrosiaster



Philippians 4:6

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.



Do not be concerned for yourselves. Do not give unnecessary thought to or be anxious about the world or worldly things. For all that is needed for you in this life God provides. And it will be even better in that life which is eternal.”

Marius Victorinus

“So one ought to give thanks for everything, even what seems grievous. This is the mark of one who is truly thankful. Grief comes out of the circumstances with their demands. Thanksgiving comes for a soul that has true insight and a strong affection for God.”

Chrysostom




Philippians 4:7

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.



“When the peace of god has come upon us we shall understand God. There will be no discord, no disagreement, no quarrelsome arguments, nothing subject to question. This is hardly the case in worldly life.”

Marius Victorinus




he peace of God, which he imparted to us, passes all understanding. For who could have expected and who could have hoped for such benefits?For His enemies, for those who hated Him, for the apostates – for all these He did not refuse to give His only begotten Son, so as to make peace with them.....Christ says, “My peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.” (John 14:27) For this peace passes all human understanding. How? When He sees that we should be at peace with enemies, with the unrighteous, with those who display contentiousness and hostility toward us, how does this not pass human understanding?”

Chrysostom



Philippians 4:8

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.



Of this list some items pertain to true virtue itself, while the later ones pertain to the fruit of virtue. To virtue it belongs to love truth, honor, justice and purity. To the fruit of virtue belongs that which is lovely and gracious.”


“We count on nothing of our own, but on grace alone. This is why he speaks conditionally: if any excellence, for the virtues being nurtured in us are not from us but from God’s grace.”

Marius Victorinus



Philippians 4:9

Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.



He sees that it is impossible to give precise instructions about everything – their going out, their coming in, their words, their inner condition and their company. All of these a Christian must think about in context. He says concisely and as it were in a nutshell, ‘Just do what you heard and seen me do.’”

Chrysostom


“He adds do to show that these things are not only good to think about but to bring into action.”

Marius Victorinus



John 13:17

If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.



Our God is truly the God of peace. We are constantly called to peace by God who Himself is peace. His calling is not timidity or weakness or in some show of strength. God is at peace with Himself to such a degree that He even allows sins to be committed against Him when He could certainly, by the terror of His manifested power and ineffable greatness, force even the unwilling into subjection. But peace of this kind is that of the world, not that of God, whose very nature is peace.”
Ambrosiaster

Philippians 4:10–13

I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned for me, but had no opportunity to show it. Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content with whatever I have. I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.



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