

#### **4. TESTING FOR SPIRITUAL MINDEDNESS**

To have Spiritual thoughts does not always evidence a Spiritual mindedness. Occasional Spiritual thoughts prove nothing. We are to ask ourselves whether our minds are filled with Spiritual thoughts. A person who has set their minds on achieving a specific goal in their lives, fill their thoughts, and plan, in accomplishing their goal. They are consumed by this type of mindedness that they need to find success in their dreams.

The contentment that Paul refers to in **PHIL 4:11** is only obtainable by a high degree of Spiritual mindedness. We need to have our minds filled with Spiritual thoughts. See lesson 20 on Communion with God.

In **GEN 6:5**, God says of unbelievers “every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts is only evil continually” And this was only 9 generations, from the time of Adam to Noah. The real evil in the world is the multiplicity of evil thoughts in the minds of unbelievers.

We have to experience a definite change in the things we think about. From the secular to the Spiritual. To forsake particular sins is not enough. **EPH 5:18** “Keep on being filled with the Spirit”. When we are Spiritually minded, we will be full of the thoughts of Spiritual things.

So, how are we to know if we have this evidence of Spiritual mindedness? We are directed to read **PSALM 119**. There will no doubt be those whose introduction to the length of this Psalm was brought to mind in the story by Herman Charles Bosman’s Bekkersdal Marathon, where the venerated dominee Welthagen fell into a trance in the pulpit, and we know the trials that the congregation had to bear!!!

But here we would recommend a more serious look at this wonderful piece of Scripture. I quote Spurgeon in his preface to this Psalm “Other Psalms have been mere lakes, but this is the main ocean. It is a continent of sacred thought, every inch of which is fertile as the Garden of the Lord: it is an amazing level of abundance, a mighty stretch of harvest fields. The Book of Psalms has been a royal banquet to me, and in feasting upon its contents I have seemed to eat angel’s food!!

In an age of instant solutions and the widespread use of acronyms, because we don't have time to say the full names anymore, more the pity it is that we do not have time to familiarise ourselves with scripture. Although this Psalm may appear to be repetitive in content, the subtle arrangement of the words brings out new and different emphases.

In Psalm 119, we see David expressing his continual delight in the law of God, and we must be like him. The saints of today must be like the saints of yore.

Three rules are suggested for us to follow: -

The first rule is to examine ourselves to see what proportion of our time is engaged in Spiritual thoughts. If our priority in this life is to serve our Master and prepare ourselves for our heavenly life, then we should be spending more and more time in Spiritual thought. Any person who is serious about a secular career (which is here today and gone tomorrow) devotes a considerable amount of thought and time to that career.

If we are truly Spiritually minded, we should think more and more about Spiritual things. Even when we think about secular things, we can bring them into relation with the Spiritual. After all, does not God control all events that occur on earth?

The Master forbids us to be anxious about the things of this life – yet how often are our hearts faint about the things that we worry about continually. Yet as Christians we understand that God (the great charioteer), has gathered the reins of all the horses.

A lot of the thoughts and cares of unbelievers are useless and unprofitable, arising from their pride and sensual desires. Are we part of such ilk, or do we claim our rightful place amongst those that Christ shed His blood for?

The second rule is. Do Spiritual thoughts come naturally to us at those times when we are quiet and free from our usual activities. Even the busiest of people have those times when their thoughts are able to be directed at those things that they are not immediately engaged in. If we are Spiritually minded, our thoughts would drift to the things that we find most pleasure in. Would it be to the Lord in gratitude for what He has done for us, or would it be some sensual activity?

We need to ask ourselves whether Spiritual thoughts occupy our minds when we are quiet and free from the demands of day-to-day living. There are always “breaks” in our daily routines where our minds can be directed to Spiritual thoughts. And these should come to us automatically if we are indeed Spiritually minded.

It is good and proper to have regular times where we devote ourselves to reading the word, prayer and study. But as future citizens of heaven, our thoughts should also naturally drift into being Spiritually minded.

The third rule is to ask ourselves if we are brought to regret the lost opportunities that we could have been engaged in contemplating Spiritual things. Do we rather look for excuses as to why we neglected the opportunity? Perhaps we are more apt to say, “Never mind, the time will present itself to us when we are less busy”. Time forfeited is time lost.

To be Spiritually minded is to experience the continuous flow of Spiritual thoughts throughout our waking hours. They will be thoughts of praise and thankfulness to God. They will be thoughts of peace and humility, realising that the Master has promised us “I will never leave or forsake you”.