

ONWARD

from the desk of Chris Greer



Hey, ! It's me, Chris. ☺☺

What do you think about as you drift off to sleep? Where does your mind go when your body stops?

A friend recently said that the characters and storylines in her favorite shows “stick” with her, and she often daydreams about them. During Lent, she’s fasting from TV to help re-train her mind on stuff that actually matters.

I know her struggle. While quarantined with COVID this winter, I succumbed to Amazon Prime and watched several episodes of a new show. I was surprised by how often I thought of the show after the screen went dark.

They were *fictional* characters in a *fictional* story, yet they were lodged in my psyche like a high school crush.

It’s one thing to rehash a recent TV binge, but it’s quite another to obsess about a painful conversation, an infuriating conflict, an attractive co-worker, or an all-consuming career. And it’s yet another to harbor hatred, ideate revenge, or be engrossed with greed.

All of us struggle with dark, negative, and sinful thoughts. Most of us don’t like it. And many of us know that God takes our minds and thought lives seriously ([see Scriptures here](#)) and calls us to something higher and healthier.

His life-giving instruction is clear:

“Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.” (Phil 4:8)

But how do we *do* that? How do we actively set our minds on those good but illusive realities?

I recently tried something that’s helped. It ain’t rocket science, but it might help you too. Here’s the story...

To help fix my thoughts on that list of good things, I sensed the Spirit inviting me to simply set my mind on Jesus. (After all, Jesus is the perfect revelation of our good and beautiful God, right? [see [Col 1:15](#), [Heb 1:3](#)])

Then, because God knows my brain needs more specific tracks to run on, he gave me three questions to consider:

What did Jesus say?

What did Jesus do?

And who is Jesus?

Simple, right? (The best things are!)

When the battle for my thoughts begins -- when I'm bored, or driving, or particularly when I'm laying down to sleep - I pick one of those questions and I dive in.

In addition to reorienting my thoughts, God also draws me close. We inevitably begin a silent conversation as I mull one of the three questions.

I'll ask one, and in response, he reminds me of Jesus' words and deeds and directs me to the truth that Jesus is my Lord, Savior, King, and friend.

Before long I'm resting in the peace of remembering and pondering the One who gave his life for me.

Is there anything more true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, and admirable than *that*? I can't think of anything.

Onward,

Chris

P.s. This probably goes without saying, but I'll say it anyway...The more you read and meditate on Scripture, the easier it will be to focus on the beautiful answers to those three questions. God speaks clearly through his Word, and uses it to fix our thoughts on Jesus.

quote of the week

"As he that fears God fears nothing else, so he that sees God sees nothing else."

— John Donne

dad joke of the week

What do you call two monkeys who share an Amazon Prime account?

Prime mates.

Did you miss one? Check out past ONWARD posts at Chris-Greer.com/onward.

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