

"You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you." Isaiah chapter 26 verse 3

Does this make you feel bad because you don't have perfect peace? It sounds fairly simple, doesn't it? If our minds are stayed on God and we trust in him, then we will have peace. The fact that we still find it difficult to get to that place, even as believers, suggests that there's a bit more to it than that.

If we lack peace in our hearts, then it suggests that there is something going on within us that prevents our minds being stayed on God. It can be regrets from the past or anxieties about the future; either or both will keep us from consistent peace.

Most of us go through life measuring ourselves against someone or something. Perhaps we have hard wired into our minds and hearts unrealistic standards of performance or behaviour which we live in fear of falling short of. Where these come from is immaterial. What they show us is that how we measure our value and worth is essential to our peace. We will feel valued, acceptable, validated according to how well we order our lives, keep the house, perform at work, behave in company.

These are all conditional measures of our worth. They may be valid under certain circumstances, if they are reasonable and not used to control and dominate us. But they are not measures of our fundamental worth as human beings. There is only one place we see that and that is in God.

When we measure ourselves against God's perfection and holiness, we fall far short, of course. Our value in God's estimation is born, not out of our ability to succeed, but out of his love and compassion for us in our helplessness. Such is his love and desire for us that he sent his Son Jesus to give his life so that we could be reconciled to him. The death of Christ is the greatest measure of our true worth.

When we stay our minds on God, we must make sure that we are not thinking that he is measuring our worth according to all those human conditions. He is not going to reject me today because I didn't do so well at work, or because I was angry with someone, or because I 'missed a bit'. A person with their mind fixed on God sees themselves loved, forgiven, accepted, complete, not because of anything they have done or failed to do, but because of God's faithful, undying, unfailing love for them.

Prayer

Father, thank you that your love for me is truly unconditional. Help me to know that your love for me and your valuation of me is measured in the death of your Son, Jesus and not in anything I may be able to achieve by my own effort. Let me not measure my security by whether or not I let you down, because I know that in many ways I always will. But I praise you and bless you that you will never let me down and that I can always place my trust in you completely to will and act for my best good, because you love me. In Jesus' name, amen.

All these devotionals can be found on our website inghamitechurch.org on the 'Resources' page. Click on the link to go there.