

The Noisy Neighbors

We live in a neighborhood where many of the residents are older and retired and there are very few families with children. Recently a family moved in with teenagers and on several occasions they have parties and play their outdoor music system very loud. Last night was one of those nights and I had to go over and ask them to turn down the music so we could get some sleep. As I drifted off to sleep my mind ran on about how thoughtless these neighbors were. I awoke in the morning still having bad feelings towards them. I got ready to write them an angry letter to tell them how many of the other neighbors feel about them and the rowdy crowd that they have brought to our neighborhood has ruined our otherwise peaceful street.

Somewhere in this process, as I let my anger run wild and I spiraled downwards, the Lord reminded me that I needed to change my focus. I began to think about the wonderful Church service we attended on Sunday. I thought about the Couple's Retreat we would be having in a few weeks and our many nice friends that would be there. I thought about our home bible study and the new people that would be coming next week. I recalled how my children were walking with the Lord and the wonderful grandchildren we have. I thought about the good things that God was doing in my life and in the lives of my loved ones and friends. In a matter of only a few seconds the negative attitude that I had been wallowing in was gone. It was just like it was driven out by the good things. Over the next few hours I caught myself trying to slip back into the negative and each time I would fight back by considering again all that God had done and was doing in my life. I began to realize that Paul encourages us to dwell on the true, noble, right, pure and lovely because if we do that there is no room left for anger. The end result will be the life of peace we all seek.

PHP 4:8-9 Finally, brothers, 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. 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.

Richard Lewis
Pathway Christian Church
Riverside, CA