

A Standard For Our Thought Life

*“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.”*

(Philippians 4:8)

TRUE - God is the only final test for what is true. Jesus is truth (John 14:6). God's Word is truth (John 17:17). The only way to know truth is to know the Lord Jesus Christ and to steep ourselves in God's Word.

NOBLE (HONORABLE) - This means that which is worthy of respect. We are told to be instruments for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work (2 Timothy 2:21).

RIGHT - This is in opposition to that which is wrong. We are to practice righteousness just as He is righteous. But, the one who practices what is wrong (sin) is of the devil (1 John 2:7-8).

PURE - This means avoiding anything that can “contaminate” us, our thoughts, our habits and our character. Ephesians 5:3-5 tells us that we are not to be impure with immorality, greed, filthy talk or coarse jesting, covetousness or to have idols in our lives.

LOVELY - Beautiful and attractive. Evil can appear “beautiful” but only on the surface. Underneath lies death. This is in contrast to the beautiful feet that bring good news (Romans 10:15) and how women of God contain the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit (1 Peter 3:4-5).

ADMIRABLE (GOOD REPUTE) - This means to speak well of something or someone or, deserving of a good reputation. Proverbs 25: 9-10 tells us that it is hard to lose a bad reputation for being put to shame for betraying a confidence (gossip). A good reputation by thinking and practicing things that are admirable will keep us from falling into disgrace and into the devil's trap (1 Timothy 3:7).

EXCELLENT (GOODNESS) - This is NOT the same as “perfection.” None of us are perfect but we are to practice excellence. Excellence is doing our very best! Excellence is the first quality that we are to add to our faith according to 2 Peter 1:3, 5.

PRAISEWORTHY - Those qualities worthy of praise are to be our focus. All attributes and works of God are worthy of praise (Ephesians 1:11-14 and Philippians 1:11). We will even be praised by God when we are circumcised “inwardly” (Romans 2:29). What does circumcision of the heart mean? How does the concept of “covenant” enter into this? To be continued!

How does this apply to our everyday thought life and the things with which we feed out minds?

(Take EVERY thought captive for Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:5)