

1. **Introduction**: As Paul nears the end of his letter to the Philippians, he reminds them to always rejoice in the Lord and be reasonable in dealing with everyone. Do not be anxious for anything. God is faithful and true, In all situations, they should continue in prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to let their concerns and requests be known to God.
 - Faith in Christ brought them “peace with God.” Obedience and faithful communion with Him will bring them the “peace of God,” a peace that surpasses human understanding, that is, it is beyond human understanding but not beyond human experience.
 - The “peace of God” (4:7) will guard their hearts and minds keeping them aligned with Christ Jesus. But there is a condition. The condition is in verses 4:8-9. In summary, Paul says that in addition to prayer and supplication, focus thoughts on morally “right things.”
 - Paul tells Philippian believers how to overcome anxiety and worry so that they experience joy and contentment in their Christian life. He reminds them of the tremendous power their thought life exerts on what they are and what they will become. They need to pray and think correctly.
 - Guarding their spiritual heart through right thinking (focusing on things that are good, beneficial, and pleasing to God) will give them renewed attitude and outlook which, in turn, will transform their actions and behavior (Proverbs 4:23).
2. **Philippians 4:8-9**: *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹ What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.*
 - Each thing to be considered represents a high moral standard that encourages focusing thoughts and actions on what is truthful, honorable, fair, pure, lovely, and praiseworthy.
 - Paul lists things that should be planted in the mind, cultivated regularly, and practiced routinely in daily life. All the things Paul mentions are moral issues. He encourages them to practice what they have learned from hearing and observing him.
 - The things he lists involve general principles, widely applicable.
 - What we think about, where we get information for use in thinking, how we evaluate that information’s reliability, how we evaluate the validity of thoughts and conclusions, and how we fit results of thinking into meaningful patterns are vital components of thought.
3. **Proverbs 23:7 (KJV)**: *“As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.”*
4. **Psalms 139:23–24**: *Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me and lead me in the way everlasting!*
 - The “Finally” that begins 4:8 tells us, Paul is drawing a conclusion.
 - Paul distinguishes between external “happiness” of things and internal “joy” from the Lord. He says to rejoice in the Lord always, and to deal reasonably with everyone.
 - The key to behavior is your mind, Think about things that produce benefits you need.

- Several things are listed that deserve thinking about carefully and clearly on a regular basis. Such obedient thinking will produce results God approves.
 - *“Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise,”* think and meditate on these things. Doing this makes our thought life pleasing to God. Each phrase specifies a category that needs to be developed in detail.
5. **Think about Whatever is true:** “Truth” begins Paul’s list of things on which to think and meditate. Truth is vital. Everything else in the list depends on truth. If something is not true, then it cannot be honorable, just, pure, lively, commendable, excellent, or worthy of praise.
- Truth is the quality of agreeing with reality or fact. It's a fundamental concept that's often associated with honesty, accuracy, and authenticity.
 - George Orwell: *“The further a society drifts from the truth, the more it will hate those that speak it.”*
 - While Jesus was on trial before him, Pilate asked Jesus if He was a king.
6. **John 18:36-38:** *Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.”*³⁷ *Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world - to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”*³⁸ *Pilate said to him, “What is truth?”*
7. **John 14:6:** *“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*
- We need the truth that is in Jesus! He spoke truth while He was on earth. Then He sent the Holy Spirit to enable us to know the truth we need for a life that pleases the Father.
8. **John 17:17:** *Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.* (Believers are people of truth.)
9. **Ephesians 4:24:** *Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.*
- God calls believers to worship Him in truth (John 4:24), to love others in truth (1 John 3:18), and to always speak the truth (Ephesians 4:15, 25; Zechariah 8:16).
 - In Ephesians 6:10-17, God highlights the importance of truth by making the *“belt of truth”* the first and critical piece of the “armor of God.”
 - Being wrapped with “the belt of truth” holds the other parts of the armor of God secure. Otherwise, we have no defense against the lies of our adversary, the devil, the father of lies (1 John 8:44). The sword of the Word is both a defensive and offensive weapon.
- 10.II. **Think about Whatever is Honorable (Noble):** The Greek word translated “honorable” means worthy of being honored or entitled to respect. Peoples’ attributes or behavior, animals, physical things, and products of the mind may all be worthy of honor and respect. Honorable signifies being consistent with the character of God.

- A person’s thought life determines the way they live. Today, a person’s thought life is constantly being bombarded by things that are not honorable or noble. Immoral entertainment and sexual promiscuity are wide-spread. Pornography seems to be everywhere. Our elected officials at all levels seem incapable of speaking a complete sentence without at least one curse word.
- If believers fail to keep our minds focused on honorable thoughts, we risk falling into dishonorable traps. The most honorable thing we can contemplate is the Word of God which is always worthy of our attention. Obedient knowledge of Scripture is the best protection against dishonoring God.

11. **III. Think about Whatever is Just:** By “just,” Paul means conforming to God's righteousness, doing what is morally correct, acting with fairness. A just person will focus on doing what is morally right, fair, aligned with God's standards of justice.

12. **IV. Think about Whatever is Pure:** “Pure” refers to that which is morally right, virtuous, and free from any contamination by evil. Thinking about what is pure means keeping your focus on positive and wholesome ideas.

- **James 3:17 NASB:** *But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.*
- **Psalms 19:8b-9:** *The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.*

13. **V. Think about Whatever is Lovely:** That which is “lovely” is pleasing, agreeable, amiable, something that attracts, pleases, and can win admiration and affection. Lovely thoughts bring people together in peace rather than separating them in anger. Think about things that are pleasing and acceptable to God, things that are worthy of Him.

14. **VI. Think about Whatever is Commendable:** Commendable means being admirable, deserving of recognition.

- For example. the Word of God is commendable, worthy of our closest attention.
- Avoiding evil actions and doing that which is right and good is commendable. Being generous, trustworthy, and “on time” are commendable actions.
- Another meaning of commendable is “having worth, merit, or value.” We might say to a person, “your honesty is commendable” or “wow! That was fast,” when a person has acted with commendable speed.

15. **VII. Think about Whatever is Excellent:** In Paul's writings, "excellent" usually signifies being morally superior and aligned with God's standards. It reflects a pursuit of God-like excellence in all aspects of life. Excellence is the complete fulfillment of intended purpose.

- In general, being excellent at anything implies being exceptionally good or superior in doing associated tasks. Excellence requires superior skills and understanding.
- The skill set required may be broad or narrow. An excellent astronaut needs a broad skill set for dealing with both the expected and the unexpected.

- An excellent farmer must have exceptional skills in many different areas.
- The skills and aptitude needed to be an excellent portrait painter are quite different but related to the skills to be an excellent house painter.
- Becoming excellent in any kind of task requires knowledge, wisdom, and experience.
- We often think of excellence as being superior in a specified area of expertise.
- A tool is excellent when it does the intended job with perfection.

16. **VIII. Think about Whatever is Worthy of Praise:** God is worthy of all praise! Paul gives us some of the many reasons that God is worthy of our praise.

- **Ephesians 1:3-14:** *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee[c] of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*
- **Philippians 1:9-11:** *And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*
- “Worthy of praise” means something that is commendable, excellent, or admirable. Thinking about things worthy of praise encourages believers in their daily activities.
- What Jesus accomplished for believers during His incarnate life is worthy of praise.
- God’s righteousness is eminently worthy of praise.
- **Psalms 35:27–28:** *Let those who delight in my righteousness shout for joy and be glad and say evermore, “Great is the Lord, who delights in the welfare of his servant!” Then my tongue shall tell of your righteousness and of your praise all the day long.*
- **Psalms 40:3:** *He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord.*

17. **Next:** Begin with Philippians 4:10.