

Think On These Things

"... Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8).

The admonition, *"In nothing be anxious"* is an exhortation that our minds must not be filled with uncertainty and fear as we think of things which are our cares and needs. Those needs, cares and concerns are to be deposited with our Father through our prayers as we seek His aid to provide and/or resolve those things. We must not be consumed in those things and the above cited passage, familiar to us all, will, if we heed it, help to dispel our anxieties with proper thinking. Thus we are asked to think on whatsoever ...

"Is true." True means actual, true to fact. Thinking on true things will prevent us from dwelling on things untrue. Thinking on things true will lead us to meditate on God's word; on the world which He made; of our soul's existence; of heaven, hell.

"Is honorable." The word translated *"honorable"* here is translated *"grave"* in other places such as 1 Timothy 3:8, 11; Titus 2:2. "The word points to seriousness of purpose and to self-respect in conduct" (Vines, *Expository Dictionary of N.T. Words*, Vol. 2; p. 173).

"Is just." "In the N.T. it denotes righteous, a state of being right, or right conduct, judged whether by the Divine standard or according to human standards of what is right" (Ibid, Vol. 2, p. 283). Thus it is right and just that children obey their parents in the Lord (Eph. 6:1). It is right and just that masters render to their servants what is their right wage (Col. 4:1). It is right and just to obey God rather than man (Acts 4:19). Upon Jerusalem would come destruction for their shedding of righteous blood (Mt. 23:31). The laborer hired at the third hour was promised he would be paid what was *"right"* or just (Mt. 20:4).

"Is pure." This word means "free from defilement" (Ibid, Vol. 3, p. 231). Timothy was told to keep himself *"pure"* (1 Tim. 5:22). Wisdom that is from above is *"pure"* (Jms. 3:17). Those who set themselves on the hope that in time they shall *"be like him"* purify themselves *"as he is pure"* (1 Jn. 3:3). This same Greek word *hagnos* is translated *"chaste"* in 1 Peter 3:2 where wives are instructed that their unbelieving husbands may be gained by beholding the *"chaste"* behavior of their wives. In 2 Corinthians 11:2 Paul reminded those brethren he had presented them a *"chaste virgin"* to Christ.

"Is lovely." This word comes from *prospairs*: pleasing, agreeable, lovely -- occurring only here in the New Testament. The care and tenderness of a young mother caring for her small child *"is lovely."* The reverent, parent-honoring teenager who shows he/she respects and esteems his/her parents' wishes and unashamedly shows affection for them *"is lovely."* The attentive, constant care that a mate gives his aged spouse who is disabled either in body or mind *"is lovely"*!

"Is of good report." John wrote to *"Gaius the beloved, whom I love in truth."* *"Greater joy have I none than this to hear of my children walking in the truth"* (3 John 1, 4). To the *"elect lady"* he said, *"I rejoice greatly that I found certain of thy children walking in truth"* (2 John 1, 4). To be appointed as shepherd in the flock of God, men are to have *"good report from them that are without"* (1 Tim. 3:7). Paul concludes in saying: *"If there be any virtue -- goodness; moral excellency; if there be any praise -- certainly not for ourselves but things that are praiseworthy, think on these things."*

From Proverbs: *"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he"* (23:7). Jesus warned, *"Not that which entereth into the mouth defileth the man; but that which proceedeth out of the mouth, this defileth the man"* (Mt. 15:11). *"Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh"* (Mt. 12:34). *"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life"* (Pr. 4:23). David prayed, *"Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight O Jehovah, my Rock and my Redeemer"* (Ps. 19:14). Paul, in this single verse from Philippians 4:8 has provided an excellent way to keep our heart pure -- if we will -- THINK ON THESE THINGS!

Jim McDonald