

What are You Thinking? Week 4 Resource—Philippians 4:8-9

What are we to dwell on?

Anything that is excellent or praiseworthy

These are the last two words describing the kinds of things we should think about in Philippians 4:8. We look at the first six virtues through the lens of things that are excellent and praiseworthy in the eyes of God and before others. We can look at how these things ultimately point us to Jesus.

Dwell on things that are...

True = Thoughts, attitudes, motivations, and actions that reflect what is real because of who Jesus is and what He has done.

Ask yourself...

- Do my thoughts about God line up with His character? Do they reflect the reality of who God is, or are my circumstances clouding my view?
- Do my thoughts about others reflect what is true based on what is “real” because of what Jesus has done? Change is possible...speaking truth to others rather than thinking it is better to settle for false peace (workplace and family).

Noble = things worthy of honor, whether overtly “Christian” or not.

Look for examples of...

- Choosing courage in the face of fear
- Choosing love in a culture that accepts hate as normative
- Choosing integrity when a political culture tells you to choose party
- Want a fantastic picture of this? Read *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi. You’re welcome.

Just/right = when people are set right with God and one another; when people’s dignity and value are recognized and honored. Justice is rooted in God’s character, and it is the idea of relational wholeness and restoration in relationship with God and other people.

Ask yourself...

- Where do I see justice and righteousness at work in our world? (Scripturally these two ideas go together)
- Where do I see people speaking for the voiceless? Think about God-honoring efforts to protect the unborn. Think about God-honoring efforts to see immigrants treated as the image bearers that they are.
- Where do you see people elevating the dignity and value of the vulnerable?

Pure = genuine thoughts, purposes, words, and actions. Let’s fix our minds on these things!

Ask yourself...

- Where do I see pure words? Where do I see actions without mixed motivations? Where do I see honorable purpose pursued without hidden agendas?
- We can offer our world pure questions and pure motives in a space that is often filled with “trapping” questions and mixed motivations. We can offer a better view!

Lovely = things that are pleasing, agreeable, and even attractive.

Ask yourself...

- Where do I see pleasing things that reflect and align with what God finds pleasure in?
- Where do I see beauty?
- How does this beauty point to God’s goodness as a creator?

Admirable = things that are appealing, worthy of a good reputation, and likely to win the admiration of others...avoiding what is likely to give unnecessary offense.

Ask yourself...

- Where do I see people standing for truth without demonizing those who disagree?
- Where do I see people pursuing what is good and right for others, even if it seems like an uphill battle?