

THEME: WHO I AM IN CHRIST

TOPIC: I AM POSITIVE

TEXT: PHILIPPIANS 4:8; 1 TIMOTHY 4:12 NLT; ROMANS 12:2; EPHESIANS 4:23;

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, 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 (KJV).

1. Whatsoever is True (Not Maybe, Not Opinion, Not Lies).

Philippians 4:8 as a whole, is a guideline for the kinds of thoughts God desired to occupy our mind. There is a need for us to think about each component separately.

Going through an exercise designed for discovering the meaning of Scripture, “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true.” “What does *true* mean?”

“Obviously *true* means truth, the truth of Scripture. And *true* means the truth as opposed to lies. But *true* also means real, because what is true is what is real.”

Continuing on with the exercise, you need to ask, “Is there a command to obey?” Recite your way through the entire verse until you land on God’s command at the end of it—“***think on these things.***” Stated in the positive, God is issuing the command to “**let your mind dwell on what is true or real.**” And stated in the negative, the same command would be “Do not think on things that are not true or real.”

Q: Give different examples of what is considered to be true?

2. Breaking Through

“Whatsoever things are true...think on these things.” In just eight words—out of the fathomless treasure of God’s Word. There lies your breakthrough—God doesn’t want us to spend our precious time and equally precious mental energy thinking on things that are not true or real.

Here’s something for us to think about. It’s been estimated that 10,000 thoughts pass through the human mind in one day. Obeying God’s command to filter our thoughts through His grid of ***true and real*** is no easy task. But, thanks be to God, He helps us accomplish whatever He asks us to do!

Q: Why is it important for you to filter every thoughts that passes through your mind?

3. Making Progress

Encouraged—and excited!—about the above discovery, you ought to start evaluating your daily thoughts in light of the first few words of Philippians 4:8. There is a need to train your thoughts; that is to make it a point to ask yourself, “Am I thinking on the truth—on what is true and real?” You will soon discover that within a few weeks, as you continued to ask this question. You will make some dramatic progress in changing your thought-life.

There is evident solution, and hope which lies in keeping your thoughts within the biblical boundaries of Philippians 4:8—“Whatsoever things are *true* or *real*...think on these things.” The above truth could help significantly in ones step toward spiritual mental health.

Q: How key is it for us to apply the truth in Romans 12:2 as a believer?

4. Realizing Strength for Daily Life

Blessings abound when you and I think on what is true and real. And one of those blessings is strength for daily life—strength that includes energy, health, and vitality.

In the spiritual realm! Like a virus, your thoughts can drain your energy and cripple your usefulness. But, praise God, the opposite is also true. Your thoughts can be a source of strength. When you think on the powerful truths of Scripture, God uses His Word to change your way of thinking.

Q: Just how important is the role of the word in living with positive thoughts?

5. Loving God...Even More

Every time you hold your thoughts up against God's standards of what is true and what is real...and then *choose* to "think on these things," you are loving God with all your mind. With His help, His Word, and His Spirit, you can triumph over negative emotions, damaging thoughts, and destructive attitudes.

Q: What is the correlation between having a positive mind and your walk with God?

Conclusion

The book of Proverbs says: '*... as he thinks in his heart, so is he*' (**Proverbs 23:7a**).

In keeping with that thought, Paul suggests to his readers about 'Divine programming' that will ensure their peace. He calls upon them to think about:

- **the true**—those things that correspond to the teaching of God's Word.
- **the noble**—those things that have the dignity of moral excellence.
- **the just**—those things that conform to God's standards.
- **the pure**—those things that are free from the taint of sin.
- **the lovely**—those virtues that make believers attractive and winsome, such as generosity, kindness, compassion and willingness to forgive.
- **the "things of good report"**—those things that give Christians a good reputation and a good name.

Paul sums it all up by telling his readers to meditate on anything of virtue and anything worthy of praise.