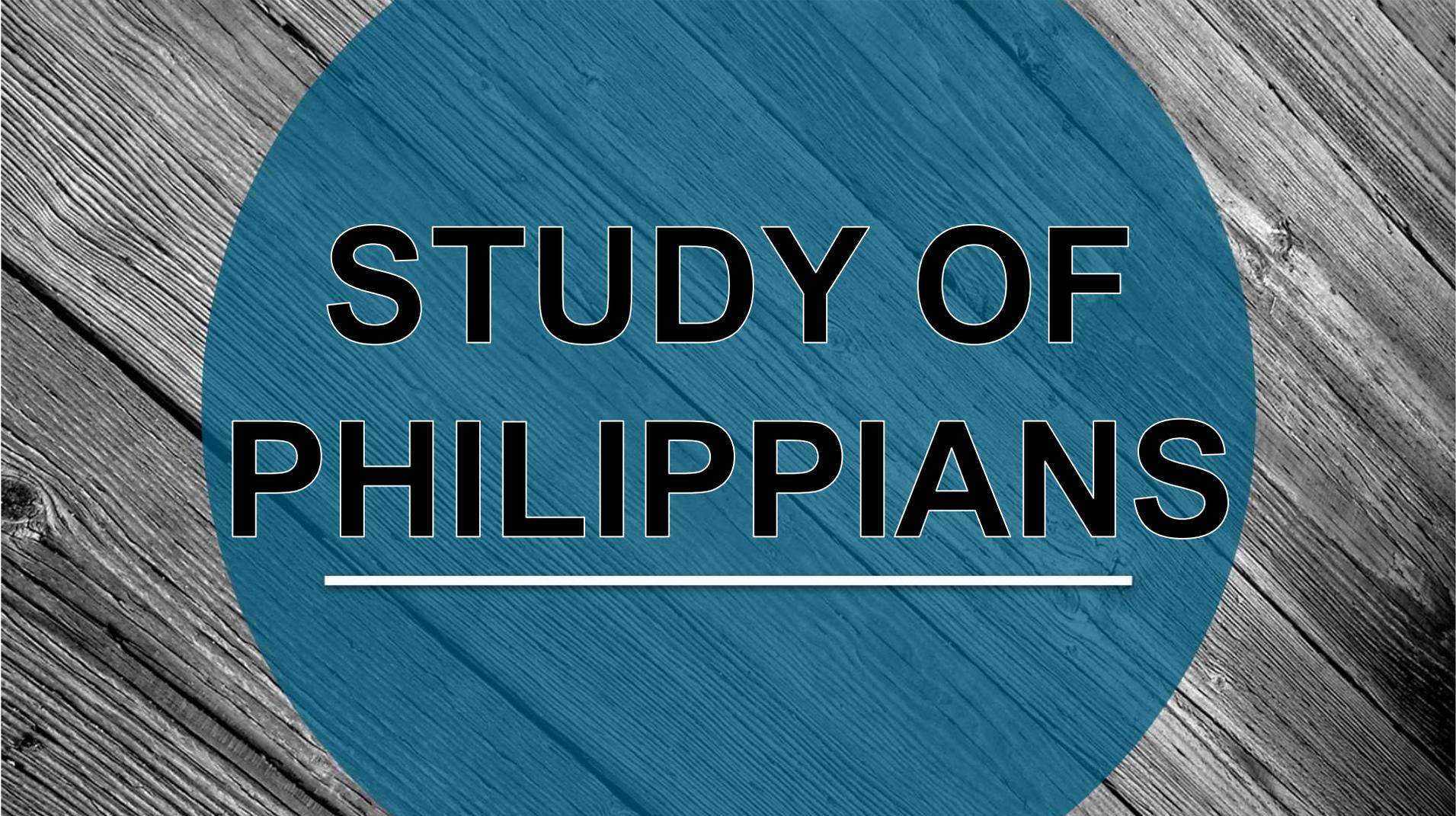


Memory Verse

Philippians 4:8

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.

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**STUDY OF
PHILIPPIANS**

PHILIPPIANS

Part 20

Knowing the God of Peace

Philippians 4:8-9

We have learned...

- Paul addressed many topics in chapters 1-3
- In chapter 4, he may have dealt with the actual or potential problem of disunity with 2 women
- We are in the final exhortation or application section in this letter
- These truths we will study today were given to those who know God, to help deepen their relationship with Him

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. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me – practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Finally... Paul used this word in 3:1.

It can mean “*in addition,*” or “*in conclusion.*”

Paul is moving towards his conclusion, with commands and application for those in Philippi, to help them stand firm: 4:1.

A. 4:8 – Think About...

"In Phil. 4:8 Paul is not asking for mere reflection but for the **practical consideration that leads to action...**

When Christ is normative, *logízesthai* involves the power to live. It is not arbitrarily or aimlessly impelled to action, but unfolds in the community and comes to fulfilment in the edification of the community (1 Cor. 12 and 14)." Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985).

Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (p. 537). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans

A. 4:8 – Think About...

“*Think*” can be translated, “*count, keep a mental record, charge an account.*” It was used in business transactions, with *calculation of something*. So it requires one to consider something deeply, or as Kenneth Wuest's *Expanded Translation of the New Testament* states, “make the subject of careful reflection.”

A. 4:8 – Think About...

He gives *6 main ideas* and *2 summary statements*. He starts with *whatever is...* The imperative or command comes in the *beginning* and **everything else is subject to that phrase**. The things mentioned here were *virtues in Greek philosophy*. There are some matches to what Paul wrote in *those works* the Philippians would be aware of. Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, gives them a *different twist* - the **Lord is involved!**

A. 4:8 – Think About...

1. True

The word for "*true*" here refers to a more *comprehensive idea of truth*, or what it means to be truthful in every area of life, from our thinking to our actions. This is not just thinking **about** the truth, which is included, but having that truth impact us. This is **not** just a *philosophical or academic idea*, though it is included. This is the *practical result of being truthful* and having true character.

A. 4:8 – Think About...

2. Honorable

That is, *worthy of respect, honest, venerable, dignified, noble* or of good character. **Example:** *Royalty*. This is not stuck up, but someone who **exudes honor**, like a general in the military. This **virtue** is someone or some thing that *deserves respect*. A Christian leader and older men are to have this quality: *1 Timothy 3:8, Titus 2:2, 7*.

A. 4:8 – Think About...

3. Just

"The δίκαιος person in Greco-Roman tradition is "one who upholds the customs and norms of behavior, including esp. public service, that make for a well-ordered, civilized society"... For pagans such obligations encompassed realms both human and divine, and it is certainly the case that what is "right" for Paul is "always defined by God and his character" (Fee 417-18)." *Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament - Philippians.*

A. 4:8 – Think About...

4. Pure

This can also mean "*holy*," and was used for religious rituals, like the Old Testament *Levitical system*. It refers to what is undefiled, and for morality, it refers to *one who has integrity*, is *chaste or blameless in conduct*. When it comes to objects or thinking, it refers to something *morally pure*, like a clean movie or a baby.

A. 4:8 – Think About...

5. Lovely

This is something *pleasing*, or something that *brings admiration or affection*. This can be said of people. It can be said of creation...

Example: **Art** - drawing, painting, media, design, architecture, digital media, photography, writing, music and more.

A. 4:8 – Think About...

6. Commendable

This also refers to *something admirable, winning, praiseworthy, and goes beyond morality, though that is included*. This is someone who *does a good job, or an athlete who competes, and tries his or her best and gets 3rd place. The person followed the rules and did it for the right reasons, and is to be commended and praised.*

A. 4:8 – Think About...

7. Any excellence

Looking at these 6 virtues, if there is anything excellent, morally good or virtuous in *any or all of these, think about those things*. "Peter uses ἀρετή (*arete*) twice in that sense (God's "wonderful deeds" [1 Pet 2:9]; his praiseworthy "excellence" [2 Pet 1:3]), and twice of human virtue ("moral excellence" [2 Pet 1:5, 2x])." *Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament - Philippians.*

A. 4:8 – Think About...

8. Anything worthy of praise

If there is *anything worthy of praise*, or *praiseworthy*, think about that. If there is anything in these virtues, *people or things* that can bring praise, to God or man, as it is *used both ways*, **think about that**. I think the *primary focus is on Christ*. If there is *anything in these 6 things* mentioned that *could bring praise to Him*, focus on those things.

B. 4:9 – Practice These...

This command to the Philippians and by *extension us*, because this is from God, is to *keep on practicing or doing these things* as a *regular part of life*. He wanted them to follow his example and make these a habit.

Application: Habits. *We overcome bad habits by developing new habits.*

B. 4:9 – Practice These...

1. Learned

The word for "*learned*" refers to *teachings, learning something new, gaining knowledge and skill by instruction*, and in Scripture, about **learning and doing the will of God in one's life**. It also has the idea of an intellectual focus and conduct in one's life. Let this knowledge *infiltrate, influence* and *impact* your thinking and life.

B. 4:9 – Practice These...

2. Received

This word refers to *something they accepted or agreed was true*. This was **them saying, "amen"** to what Paul said. Within a Jewish culture, Paul was *passing along truth or tradition* that they, *were to pass on to others*. This is the way the Bible and the Christian faith are passed on.

B. 4:9 – Practice These...

3. Heard and Seen

This is *not as much* about what they heard from his lips, as much as *what they heard from his life*. He talked about what he taught. This is *focused on* what they "*heard*" from his life as he carried these things out. Jesus often said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." In **Jewish thought** this was more than just hearing and agreeing, but *doing something with it*.

B. 4:9 – Practice These...

The God of peace will be with you... This is **not** works based salvation. He wrote to those who had faith in Christ. Paul used the phrase "God of peace" often: *Romans 15:33, 16:20, 2 Corinthians 13:11*, and more. This is a **promise**. *Grammatically* this indicates *God is the origin of peace, or the One who gives peace, and He is the One who will be with you, if you do or practice these things.*

"...Paul suggested what should occupy our minds rather than anxiety and worry. Paul understood the influence of one's thoughts on one's life. Right thinking is the first step toward righteous living. What is right thinking? It is thinking devoted to life's higher goods and virtues. Thus Paul picked up a practice from secular writers of his day and listed a catalog of virtues that should occupy the mind. Such virtues are not limited to the Christian community but are recognized even by pagan cultures.

True is that which corresponds to reality. Anxiety comes when false ideas and unreal circumstances occupy the mind instead of truth. Ultimately, thinking on the truth is thinking on Jesus, who is the truth ([John 14:6](#); [Eph. 4:21](#)). **Noble** refers to lofty, majestic, awesome things, things that lift the mind above the world's dirt and scandal. **Right** refers to that which is fair to all parties involved, that which fulfills all obligations and debts. Thinking right thoughts steers one away from quarrels and dissensions to think of the needs and rights of the

other party. **Pure** casts its net of meaning over all of life from sexual acts to noble thoughts to moral and ritual readiness for worship. Thinking on the pure leads one away from sin and shame and toward God and worship. **Lovely** is a rare word referring to things that attract, please, and win other people's admiration and affection. Such thoughts bring people together in peace rather than separating them in fighting and feuding. **Admirable** is something worthy of praise or approval, that which deserves a good reputation. Pondering ways to protect one's moral,

and spiritual image in the community leads away from worries about circumstances and possessions that project a different image to the community and which thinking cannot change.

The catalog of virtues Paul sums up in two words: **excellent** and **praiseworthy**. The first encompasses what is best in every area of life, the philosophical good for which every person should strive. Here it is especially the ethical best a person can achieve. The second term refers to that which

deserves human praise. The catalog of virtues thus reflects the best life a person can live and the best reputation a person can thereby achieve in the community.

Finally, in this verse, Paul gets to his point: think on these things. That, joined with prayer will relieve all anxieties and lead one to praise God and live life the way he desires."

Holman New Testament Commentary - Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians & Colossians.

Prayer

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” Philippians 4:6

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