

Friendly (lovely) thoughts should become much easier when we understand that Jesus considers us His friend.

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### GOOD REPORT

This phrase means “well spoken of - reputable.” We must dwell on things that are highly regarded in Christ. Our attention needs to be on that which bares good fruit.

*“Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.”* (Matthew 7:19)

A critical aspect of having a good report is producing good fruit. Therefore, the thought processes of a believer should be engrossed in good reports and ideas of fruit-bearing.

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VIRTUE

The word virtue has a fascinating definition. It is defined as “manliness (valor) - excellence.” So, interestingly, our thinking should concentrate on that which is full of manly valor and produces excellence. Who would have thought that manliness would be a Biblical definition of the concept of virtue?

“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;” (2 Peter 1:5)

Believers are called to diligently add virtue (manly valor) to their faith. Virtue is the first aspect we are encouraged to add to our faith. Jesus is most assuredly the apex of manhood. He is the Son of Man. He is the Son of God. There is no more excellent example of virtue than Jesus. We need our thoughts to draw us into walking righteously.

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### PRAISE

Praise is identified as “a commendable thing.” Therefore, we should direct our thoughts to matters that are admirable.

*“And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches;”*

(2 Corinthians 8:18)

What a wonderful testimony! Our desire should be that we are one whose “praise is in the gospel.”

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Conclusion:

We will become like the things about which we think. This is why God tells us that our contemplations must be on the things that glorify Him. If we want to be like Jesus, we must think like Him. We must embrace the mind of Christ.

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Stop Stinking Thinking - Part 1

By: Robert Dallmann

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*“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:”* (Philippians 2:5)

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What an incredible truth! We can and should let the mind of Jesus be in us!

But on what is our thinking often focused? Relationships. Paying bills. Politics. The depravity and vile wickedness of the world around us. What we dislike about other people. Etc.

Imagine what our lives would be like if we thought the things that Jesus thought. Imagine how our impact on those around us would dramatically change for the better.

We are called to be Christ-like...this must include how we think.

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### What To Think About

Oh, if only Scripture would tell me what to think about. **It does!**

*“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are **true**, whatsoever things are **honest**, whatsoever things*

# STOP STINKING THINKING - PART 1

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.**" (Philippians 4:8)

God knew we needed His help in knowing what we should think. But, of course, this is not the only verse in the Bible, and it is vital to be aware of the devil's schemes and the evils surrounding us. Moreover, we undoubtedly must be motivated by the reality of the eternal destination (hell) that awaits those who reject Jesus.

To "think on these things" is to make them our focus. By definition, it means to take an inventory, to estimate or calculate accordingly. We must meditate on the virtues of life in Christ while not being ignorant of the realities of life outside of Jesus.

So what are these things upon which we are to contemplate? The following are some brief definitions of each attribute intended for us to ponder. (Note: definitions have been paraphrased from the Strong's Concordance.)

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TRUE

The Greek word is defined as "true (as not concealing)." Therefore, one can know the truth but choose to conceal or **hide** it. This is similar to when Jesus spoke of lighting a candle and hiding it under a basket.

"Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." (Matthew 5:15)

Meditating on truth means **more** than thinking about factual things. It involves pondering truths,

especially those not being kept in the dark. Proper thinking also leads to appropriate actions. One whose thoughts go deeply into the truth will also **proclaim** those same realities.

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## HONEST

This word means "venerable, i.e., honorable." Honesty, in this case, is not simply agreeing with the truth or someone who is saying the right thing. It includes the **proper handling** of the truth. A person may make accurate statements but not demonstrate those truths with integrity.

*"Deacons likewise must be men of **dignity**, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain,"* (1 Timothy 3:8)

When contemplating the Christian life, we must consider integrity. Do our thoughts favor integrity, or do we lean toward prestige and self-promotion? Do we prefer honorable thinking or expediency, and "what is gain for me?"

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JUST

The definition of "just" is "equitable (in character or act) - innocent, holy." We must set our minds upon things that are fair, and this equity must be in alignment with God's Word. Interestingly, innocence and holiness are Biblically equated with being fair. Thinking about things that are "just" goes **well beyond** simply being fair. As with the parable of the **unjust judge**, the woman received justice, but the judge was still unfair. He did not act innocently or in a holy manner. He provided justice because **it was beneficial to himself**.

*"And the Lord said, Hear what the **unjust judge** saith."* (Luke 18:6)

As our mindset increasingly agrees with Jesus, we will seek thoughts of equity and innocence. Our minds will choose to consider holy decisions from people who are not self-serving but those who desire to make appropriate and God-honoring choices.

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## PURE

Innocence shows up again in the definition of "pure," which includes "properly, clean, - innocent, modest." Therefore, our minds should gravitate to pure and chaste thoughts and avoid the impure. Believer's meditations must be in step with modest purity.

*"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."* (Matthew 5:8)

The contemplations of the godly will be thoughts of purity and innocence.

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LOVELY

The word "lovely" is defined as "friendly towards - acceptable." Our thinking should prioritize friendly and proper thoughts. This combination is quite interesting. Each aspect of this word by itself could be of little clear value. One can easily be "friendly" while entirely unacceptable. And many things are defined as "acceptable" according to the world, but they are not friendly toward God.

"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." (John 15:15)