

Meditate on Whatever Is Praiseworthy

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Here is one of the best pieces of advice that a mental-health professional can give to people: 'Focus upon the positive factors of this life.' It should come as no surprise that this concept is found in the Bible.

One verse that promotes this approach is Philippians 4:8.

Philippians 4:8—"Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things."

We began a series to talk about the characteristics mentioned in this verse. Today, we will talk about things that are "praiseworthy."

Recognize negative

Before we look at this week's characteristic, I want to remind you about a realistic approach in life—recognize negative, but dwell on positive.

- Numbers 13:26-33—Although the other spies became preoccupied with the negative factors, Joshua and Caleb recognized the challenges and focused upon God's promises.
- Luke 14:26-33—The Son of God's instruction to count the cost includes recognizing the challenges and focusing upon God's promises.

Greek word in Philippians 4:8

Let's notice the Greek word used in Philippians 4:8.

- *Epainos* (No. 1868 in *Strong's Concordance*) is the Greek noun in Philippians 4:8 translated as "praiseworthy." It is used 10 other times in the New Testament.
- *Epaineo* (No. 1867 in *Strong's Concordance*) is a Greek verb translated as "to praise." It is used six times in the New Testament.

Luke 16:8—"So the master commended [No. 1867] the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light."

Romans 15:11—"And again: 'Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!'"

1 Corinthians 11:2—"Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you."

1 Corinthians 11:17—"Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse."

1 Corinthians 11:22—"What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you."

Praise to God

- Ephesians 1:6
- Ephesians 1:12
- Ephesians 1:14
- Philippians 1:11
- 1 Peter 1:7

Praise from God

Romans 2:29—"But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God."

1 Corinthians 4:5—"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God."

Praise from brethren

2 Corinthians 8:18—"And we have sent with him the brother whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches."