

The William LeFevre Family

Missionaries in Bulgaria

June 2023

“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.” **Philippians 4:8**

To family, friends, and fellow saints,

I preached recently in our English service from the above text. Well, in all honesty, I wound up there, closing out a meandering message with a few thoughts from that verse; but what a verse! (All sermons are like drives to a desired destination. I admire preachers who can take the most direct route in the shortest amount of time with no deviation. As in life, so in preaching; I always take the scenic route. One of the drawbacks to the scenic route, however, is that you see so many wonderful things along the way, the place you arrive at can seem underwhelming. The biggest drawback, though, is that more often than not, all the passengers arrive worn out or asleep. Speaking of meandering, I'd better get back to my point.)

The entire book of Philippians concerns itself with the believers' perspective, the apostle delivering holy admonishments regarding the mind, culminating in our chosen text. The lesson being, if our thoughts are preoccupied with those things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, whatever the scripture asserts, we'll cheerfully accept and set out to accomplish.

While there are many things in life that possess one or more of those qualities listed, there is only one thing that possesses them all: Jesus Christ. He's true: genuine, real, and not counterfeit, adulterated, or false. True in the sense that He's faithful, steady in adhering to friends and promises; loyal, not false, fickle, or untrustworthy. He's honest: upright and fair in all His dealings; free from trickishness and fraud. But He's also honest in the sense that He's absolutely and always frank and sincere. He never dissembles. He's never hypocritical. He's just: fair, without favor or partiality. Just in that He always and in everything answers to and fulfills the laws, obligations, and promises contained in Divine ordinance, leaving nothing partially done or undone. Just in that He's exact and proper, neither more nor less, lacking nothing. He's pure: separate and apart from any outside influence or contaminant; clear, without admixture. But apart from being absolute in His person, He's pure in that He's free from any and every moral defilement. He's without spot; not sullied or tarnished; incorrupt and incorruptible. In short, He's holy, separate from sinners, higher than the heavens, and in a category all His own. He's lovely: amiable, pleasing to all the senses, exerting such sweet influences that one can't help but love Him in return. He has no equal in beauty or goodness, or indeed any virtue, so far excelling all rivals as to be incomparable. He's of good report: accounted well of by the honest testimony of many; free from accusation or inference as to His character, word, or action; renown and beloved.

Our Paul was so smitten with Jesus, his entire life was consumed with learning all he could about Him. He said, “I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung.” His conversion was so complete, he, without a care or a second thought, abandoned all he once cherished and set out in pursuit of the one who captivated his heart. So ardent was his dedication, and deep his devotion, that the thoughts of Jesus transformed his jail cell in Rome from a prison to a palace, added sweetness to his sufferings, brought relief to his rigor, and multiplied blessings in his bondage.

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His circumstances never altered in the least, but the dungeon couldn't alter his disposition when he was considering Christ Jesus. He adds this footnote to those thoughts, "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."

In these perilous days of gloom and despair, where a wayward world wends its way on to Judgment, all the while bombarding our senses with invitations to join it, let's unplug from the madness and let the mercies of Christ occupy our minds until we can, like Paul, rejoice in the Lord.

Speaking of rejoicing in the Lord, as I write this, little Özlem even now lingers on the threshold of Glory. Her body, succumbing to the cancer, is lessening its grip on this life, and her spirit is yearning to fly away to Jesus. I've mentioned her before, and requested your prayers for healing. The Lord has heard and will soon heal her of every ailment, never to suffer again. You'll recall she's from the village of Zlatna Niva. She's old Pastor Alish's great-granddaughter. Her constant and consistent testimony of the unfailing help of God, has literally spread all over the world. And though only ten years old, and her circle of acquaintances so small, her faith has traveled the globe and encouraged hearts far and near. Pray for her family. They've sacrificed everything to try and get her help. They've lived off of the compassion of others while seeing her to various hospitals and through treatments, being unable to work for the necessities of her health. If you'd like to be a blessing, they sure could use it, and they'd appreciate it. Their names are Ramadan, her daddy, and Zülbiye, her momma. Naturally, they're devastated, and apart from any other help, need your prayers. Pray also for her grandparents. Everyone in that church has rallied around little Özlem; her home-going will be heartbreaking. Pray Jesus gets all the glory as He gives out grace to remain and carry on.

Pray as well for the ongoing building project in Avren. That's where the printing takes place, and the assembling of all the Bibles and hymnbooks. It's also where we meet for church on Friday evenings. The second story is dedicated entirely to "Coats for Kids"; it's the storage and sorting facility and soon-to-be distribution center. There's a lot of work yet to be done.

Pray for our summer meetings. Most of our folks in the rural areas are laboring in the fields. Our crowds are smaller. Pray for power to preach. Pray for our boys, Carrick and Christian. They're both in America with their Uncle Zach's family. They are there seeing friends and relatives and attending youth camps. Remember our upcoming furlough in the fall. Seems like the more we pray, the longer our prayer list grows. Pray the Lord strengthens our faith. He is good. He knows our requests. And the same Apostle that guided our thoughts toward the person of Jesus, directs our attention to His faithfulness in provision. "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." *Philippians 4:19*

We love y'all. Pray for us.

Because of a living Savior,



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