[8] Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Philippians 4:8

In order to embark upon the journey to become a better person, a better people, a certain amount of pride is necessary for our self-esteem. Self-esteem is the way we see ourselves. Pride is the pleasure we get in our achievements or in our possessions, even our associations. However, the most basic question I believe we should all ask is where does our pride come from? What is the basis of our pride and is it attained through our achievements and possessions or does it come from something transcendent. For many, our pride comes from the world of men and women. If we are not careful, we will base our worth on the standards set by society. We care about what people think, which is why we buy the kind of cars we buy, and why we buy the houses we buy. We care about what people think and that is why we do what we do.

Pride is necessary. So, where does our pride come from? Who or what gives us pride? Who do we value, who do we align ourselves with spiritually and emotionally? When we answer these questions, we may discover where our pride comes from and how impacts our lives. We were created with self-worth. It is instilled in us by or Creator. It is the value that God gives us that He desires we embrace. When we live out of the pride that God gives us, we are living out of the achievements done for God. Things that are done in a godly manner.

It is said the “cleanliness is next to godliness.” Is this saying pointing to the inside or the outside? Is it talking about the how clean our cars are? How well kept your home is. Certainly these are important things that was the focus of the saying, right? Not at all. It was the person. The thoughts of that person. The desires of that person. The intentions of that person. That was and remains the focus. So pride is not constructive or of benefit to you as an individual or a people or a nation if it is not housed in the proper spiritual container. It is our pride that can prevent us from seeing what is good and in front of us. Pride prevents us from seeing ourselves as we really are.

As a race of people, it is vital that we have the proper self-esteem to see ourselves properly. That we understand we are made in the image of God and by that very act of God we are somebody. However, let us be mindful that what we have, what we have become is an act of God’s grace. It is an act of God’s love. There is nothing that we have done that is beyond what God has allowed and permitted.

Who God uses is dependent upon what is inside the person. There is no way we can ignore this truth. I think the story of the Cherokee chief is appropriate. An old Cherokee chief sat down to teach his grandson about life. “There’s a fight going on inside me,” he tells the young boy, “A fight between two wolves. One wolf is evil. It’s full of malice, anger, greed, self-pity, and false pride. The other is good. It’s full of peace, love, joy, kindness, and humility. This same fight is going on inside you and everyone else on the face of the earth.” The grandson was quiet, pondering this revelation for a moment before asking, “Grandfather, which wolf will win?” The old man smiled and replied, “The one you feed.”

The potential for good or evil exists within each of us. It is our responsibility to own that fact and do what we can to nurture the good. It does us no good as a race of people to nurture that which does not lift people up. The Nazi's have a history, they have a legacy. It is not one that anyone of God and character would choose to own as their own.

Paul says in Philippians 4:8, "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."

Let us feed upon these to build our character, self-esteem and discover pride in what truly matters in life.

Blessings,
Pastor Gool