

The Christian Life in Biblical Perspective
7 Essentials Of the Christian Life
The Essential Lifestyle Of The Effective Christian Life
Ephesians 4:17-24
By: Dr. Harry Reeder
October 4, 2009 – Morning Sermon

Turn in your copies of God's Word to Ephesians 4:17-24 which will be our text for this study. Tonight we will be looking at Daniel 2 where Nebuchadnezzar has a dream and its about to become a nightmare for his wise men but there is a man of God ready to step forward and that's Daniel. Please join us for our fourth study tonight in the book of Daniel on how we might be in the world but not of the world. Daniel lights the way for us that we might fix our eyes on Jesus and see what His grace will do in our lives.

Now, let's look at our text for this study. Here is Ephesians 4:1, 17-24. ***1** I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called. **17** Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. **18** They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. **19** They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. **20** But that is not the way you learned Christ!— **21** assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, **22** to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, **23** and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, **24** and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*

The grass withers and the flower fades. This is the Word of our God. It abides forever and by His grace and mercy may it be preached for you.

The unbelieving world does not tell us Christians who we are. Christ tells you who you are – who you are in Him and what He has called you to do for Him. It is Christ who tells you who you are. The world does not tell you who you are, Christ does but the world can tell you how you are doing for Christ. They may not do so infallibly or insightfully but they can give some clues to you. The world can tell you how you're doing in life for Christ but not who you are in Christ but how you're doing in life for Christ. In fact, that happened in the book of Acts.

The word Christian is used three times in the New Testament, two times probably sarcastically and one time instructively. Peter uses it instructively. By the time Peter writes his epistle, because the followers of Christ were being faithful they were being put to death. They would own Christ, they would be baptized and then many of them were put to death. They were put to death because they would let no man be lord. Jesus alone was Lord in their life and not even Caesar. Because they were living as followers of Christ they were being put to death so Peter said, "If then you suffer as a Christian be glad and rejoice and don't be surprised at your sufferings" (1 Peter 4:16).

Then the word Christian was used earlier in the book of Acts. We are told in the book of Acts that the first time the followers of Christ were called Christians was at Antioch. Paul (Saul at the time) and Barnabas were discipling the believers, the

followers of Christ and the watching world said, “Christian...” and they meant it sarcastically. For them it wasn’t a badge of honor but a sarcastic comment translated “little Christs” “followers of Christ” and said sarcastically. Little knowing that they couldn’t of said anything more encouraging to a believer than to hear to some degree they were reflecting their Savior in this world.

Later on Paul will be sharing Christ with a king named Agrippa and he will finally in frustration say, “Saul, Saul your learning has driven you mad, almost thou persuades me” and I’m going to try to say it the way I think he meant it. “Thou almost persuades me to be a Christian.” He did not mean it positively, little Christ, a follower of Christ and Paul said, “Accept for these chains, I wish you had everything I have in Christ. King Agrippa.” Paul attempted to persuade him to be a follower of Christ.

Here’s the key. Christianity is not a religion that you embrace to go to heaven. Christianity is the result of you embracing a relationship with Christ as a follower. Christianity is not a religious set of rituals that you embrace in order that you come to God. Christianity that is calling people Christians is the result of following Christ. We use word Christian prescriptively and in the Bible it is used descriptively. In other words we say, “I want to become a Christian” but the Bible says you don’t become a Christian, you become a follower of Christ. The result is you begin to image Christ and you become more like Christ as you follow Him, as you put off the old man and put on the new man because He has saved you. So you surrender to your Savior and daily you’re growing in grace and becoming more like Him and that brings us to this fourth essential.

We have been looking through the essentials of the effective Christian life. What is it where Christians make a difference in their family, home, workplace, school, teams they play, relationships they have, the vocations they have, the avocations they have and hobbies they enjoy? How is it that when a Christian goes somewhere they can make a difference? We have said there are seven essentials and we have covered three of them.

The first one is you must have a Biblical life purpose, not just any life purpose but you must have the life purpose that God has ordained. God sent His Son to die on a cross, not to give you purpose but for you to understand that He is your purpose. What is the chief end of man? It is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever and we find out that the more we enjoy Him the more we glorify Him and the more we glorify Him the more we enjoy Him. We just sung that when we sang, “In all I do I want honor You and it my joy to honor You.” All I do, I want to glorify You and the more I glorify You the more I have joy. So I don’t have two life purposes to glorify and enjoy God, I have one life purpose and that’s to glorify and enjoy Him. The two are inseparably entwined together.

The second we learned has been drawn from the book of Ephesians and the book of Romans for these lessons. The second essential is to live that kind of life you have to have lifelines. When you’re in a hostile environment you have to be nourished and you need communication. The two entwined lifelines are the Word of God and the Spirit of God. Essential number one is life is worship. Essential number two is completely dependent upon the two lifelines of daily and regularly profiting from the Word of God – the preaching of it, the teaching of it, the reading of it, the studying of it, the memorizing of it and the meditating upon it. We need to be profiting from it daily in its proclamation as we hear and study it to show ourselves approved as a workman that needs to be not ashamed and simultaneously relying upon the Spirit of God – the One who gave the Word of God through human authors now indwells us and He becomes our teacher who

is the one who illuminates the Word for us. He also empowers us to understand it and to follow it. So we need the lifelines of the Spirit of God and the Word of God. The Word of God we learn to obey and the Spirit of God we surrender to and rely upon Him completely. That brought us to essential number three.

Essential number three is if there is a life purpose and there are life lines then there will be two life marks. The two life marks of a believer have to do with what Jesus said, "They will know you by your love for one another and if you want to be a disciple of Mine you must keep My Word. Follow Me and embrace My Word." So how do you know believers? They are marked by Truth and love. The essential life marks of the effective Christian are Truth which we obey and love which we do. Christians do love. What directs their love? Truth directs their love. They speak the Truth in love. They love the Truth. The two are inseparably entwined in our lives so that what we are learning from God's Word which is Truth and what we are empowered by the Spirit of God is marked out by Truth and love. They are entwined in our life.

Now I want to go to the fourth essential which is the lifestyle of a Christian. How does the Christian live? Ephesians 4:17 says, "*Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds.*" I want to set this in context. We are not going to rip something out and take off preaching on it. Text has to be in the context. In Ephesians the Apostle Paul begins with a statement of praise as I began this morning as the Gospel Word of assurance to you. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 1:3).

A lady came up to me one day after a service when the Word of God had been preached where I pastored in Charlotte and she said, "Can I ask you something?" I said, "Yes." She said, "You've had the second blessing, haven't you?" In my life there are certain "old man" things that I haven't totally put off yet and one of them is I tend to be rather mischievous at such moments. I whispered to her, "Yes ma'am. I do have the second blessing." She said, "I thought so." I said, "Can I tell you something?" She said, "What?" I said, "I've also had the third blessing." She said, "The what? I haven't heard of that one." I said, "By the way I've had the fourth blessing" and I showed her the Ephesians 1:3 passage and went on and said, "I've been blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ."

For three chapters and 27 times the Apostle Paul is going to tell you the blessings of being in Christ and Christ in you. He will use that phrase "in Christ" and "Christ is you" 27 times. He tells you who you are in Him. Then when he finished doing that he goes to Ephesians 4:1 which says, "*I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord (on behalf of the Lord), urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called.*" Notice how he does not say walk in manner worthy of being called because that worth is only found in Christ. Worthy is the Lamb is what the angels sing in the book of Revelation. It is the worthiness of Christ that saves me, that forgives me and accepts me so I am called because of Him who could loose seals and bring me from death unto life. Now, walk in a manner worthy of that calling. In all I do I want to honor You.

Where are you? Where am I in what I do? Do I have a drive-by Christianity where in times of difficulty I run to Jesus and in times when its appropriate I always talk about Christ you know, in case it helps me move forward in life or is Christ my life? This is not what saves me. I'm saved by the blood and righteousness of Jesus. This is

what we do as saved men and women for our Savior. This is the evidence of His saving work. In all I do I want to honor You so don't walk as the Gentiles walk. Now he unfolds that for us. The word Gentile just means living apart from acknowledging the true and living God. So what is it that marks their life?

I want to work backwards through Ephesians 4:17-19. What is the lifestyle, the walk of paganism that is apart from the living God, apart from a saving relationship with the Triune God through Jesus Christ? It is described in Ephesians 4:19 which says, "*They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.*" He gives you three things that are the features of the pagan life. One is they have become callous. Two is they have given themselves up to sensuality, that is the governing of their life with their appetites. It could be eating, drinking, sex, whatever the appetite is. It's all about gratifying my appetite. So there is self-reliance which is callous. There is self-absorption where they give themselves up to sensuality. Then thirdly, with greed they practice every kind of impurity. Another translation says they become inventors of sin. How many ways can I trample upon the glory of God? How many ways can I debase the living God and exalt myself? So they greedily pursue that way of life.

Harry, does every pagan live that way completely? No, some live this way to varying degrees and for those apart from the Lord it can also be very well hidden. Some have very admirable public lives but whenever someone apart from the Lord does not go to absolute depravity it's because of one reason. It is God's grace or what we call God's common grace has restrained them from being as evil as they would be but if you today know Jesus Christ you are not just the benefactor of common grace that restrains you, you are the recipient of saving grace that changes you. We don't have to walk like this. Don't walk this pattern.

What is it that propels that life walk, that life style of callous, sensuality, greedily inventing sin and aggressively pursuing it? He gives you three things that feed that lifestyle. Ephesians 4:17 tells us to no longer walk as the Gentiles do. How do we do this? One is in the futility of their minds. Two they are darkened in their understanding. Three they are alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them. So those that are apart from Him who are pursuing with all hardness, callousness, with sensuality, with aggressive greedy sinning against God, building depravity, devolving into sexual promiscuity to sexual perversion, from self absorption to absolute commitment to the gratification of one's appetite and the exultation of one in life, promoting oneself, relying on oneself, self-centered, so how is it that we get there? It is because our minds are thinking futile thoughts. We are darkened in our understanding and there is ignorance in them. They are thinking wrong.

We are not quite true yet. Here is the lifestyle. Here are the three things that propel it. The things that propel it are futility of the mind, darkened in understanding and the ignorance within them. So where does it all originate? It all originates in Ephesians 4:18 which says, "*They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, **due to their hardness of heart.***" As one of my mentors used to say, "The heart of the problem is the problem with the heart." It will not be solved by education. It will only be solved by a heart transplantation. We have to get a new heart. It is the heart from which the mind stays in futility, darkened in

understanding and is hardened to truth. The heart has to be changed. You have to be born again.

So what does the believer's walk look like? Ephesians 4:20-24 says, **20** *But that is not the way you (the believer) learned Christ!—* **21** *assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus,* **22** *to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires,* **23** *and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,* **24** *and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.* But you don't live that way. How do you live? Oh you live perfectly. No, we don't live perfectly. Here's how we live. Every day we change clothes. We put off the old man and we put on the new man, not for salvation but for our Savior.

To live for Christ, every day we have to put off the old man and we have to put on the new man. We put off that old self, that old way of feeling, thinking and doing. When I turn on my computer every time there is a picture and programs that come up and that is called by default. I have to default spiritually. Every morning that I wake up I want to make it all about me. I even want to make Christianity all about me. I want to make it all about Him who saved me but all about me, the one who was saved. Therefore, I have to consciously renounce that. You have to consciously renounce that and embrace the new way of life where it is from Him, unto Him are all things. That is an intentional commitment that we have to make every day. Put off the old man, put on the new man.

Now let's work our way backwards just like we did with the pagan walk. So what does the new man look like? Ephesians 4:24 says, *“and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”* Let me make this clear. The righteousness that saves me doesn't come from me. My righteousness is always a mixed report. My righteousness is like filthy rags. I can't even say the Lord's Prayer without my mind wandering and not loving the Lord with all my mind. So we are not talking about the righteousness that saves you. The righteousness that saves you is the righteousness of Christ that clothes you. Here we are talking about a righteousness that is a way of life to honor our Savior. It is a commitment to a true righteousness from motive to growth in the Lord. We want to grow not for grace but we want to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So we want to grow in true righteousness and holiness. There is the attribute of God that is the attribute of all attributes, right? Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. What does the word holy mean? Does it mean moral purity? Absolutely but that's a secondary meaning. The primary meaning of the word holy is God is holy and that means He's unique, He's one-of-a-kind. So what does it mean for us to pursue true righteousness, surrendering to a lifestyle of obedience to God's Word and what is it mean to surrender to true holiness? It means that God owns me. Nobody else does and nothing else does. You own me. I am Yours.

Titus 2:11-14 says, **11** *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people,* **12** *training us to renounce (put off) ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live (put on) self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,* **13** *waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,* **14** *who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.* I belong to You. I am

unique because the ownership of my life belongs to the One who ransomed me with His blood. So I now belong to You.

How do we get there? What is it that propels that way of life, the life of the believer? What was it that propelled the life of self absorption and self exaltation? It was the futility of the mind. It was wrong thinking. One preacher called it “Stinkin’ thinkin’.” It was ignorance within us. It was being darkened in our understanding. So what is it that propels this new lifestyle? When we put off the old lifestyle we put on the new. So how do we get there? Ephesians 4:20, 21 says, **20** *But that is not the way you (the believer) learned Christ!—* **21** *assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus.* So how do we know this new way of life? It is not by intuition. It is not by conscience. It is not from the world. The Christian life is not reflexive. It is transformational from God's revelation, His Word. This is who I am, this is what I have done, this is who you are, now here is how you honor Me. In all I do, Your Word is what transforms and renews my mind. That is how it happens.

So over here is that hardened heart which has futility of mind, darkened in understanding and ignorance. The result is callousness, sensuality and inventors of sin both publicly and privately, in the light and in the darkness of life. Here is my conversion. I am new in Christ. I am saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone and here comes this new life that I live for Christ. As I live this new life for Christ I now have a new heart and that new heart desires to serve Him but I have an old man that keeps wanting to get up on that new heart. So I want to say “no” to that old man every day and “yes” to the new man. Who is the new man? I have learned him in Christ. I have heard of him from His Word and I have been taught of him from His Word. So now my mind is renewed that I may go in that direction that serves Him. It originates in Christ through a new heart, through a renewed mind and then comes this new lifestyle in the Lord.

I want to give you a couple of takeaways here in conclusion of this study. The fourth is essential is the essential lifestyle of the effective Christian is embraced by a daily commitment to put off the lifestyle of self absorption and put on Christ in mind, heart and will. It is not because of this life that saves me but it is this way of life that honors my Savior. So what does that mean? Here's the first take away.

The first take away is that this clarifies the intentional nature of the Christian life. When you were saved you received a new heart. You got a new record. You got the righteousness of Jesus. You got a new family because you've been adopted into the family of God, right? You got a new perspective. You got eyes to see and ears to hear. And you've got a new life and a new home. When you got that new perspective you were called so did you give your self eyes to see and ears to hear or did God do that? God did that. When you were born again did you born yourself again or did God do it? God did it. When you got a new record and got justified, did you justify yourself or did God justify you and give you a new record in Jesus? God did it. When you got adopted into the family of God, did you adopt yourself or did God adopt you and call you His sons and daughters? God did it. When God gave you the promise of the new home is God going to glorify you or are you going to glorify yourself? God is going to glorify you. When will He do that? He will do it at the right time.

So how am I called? God did it. How am I regenerated? God did it. How am I justified? God did it 100%. How am I adopted? God did it. How will I get promoted to

heaven? God does it. What about my new life? It is through God and you. God provides strength and He tells you to get on board. I give you these five blessings in the Gospels and the gospel calls you to this but don't do this in self-reliance. You rely on My strength in the Holy Spirit. Don't do this for yourself. You do this because you love Jesus Christ but this is what you do. Every day because you love Me is to say "no" to that old man and "yes" to the new man.

What does the new man look like? You will learn that from His Word. You will learn that from the preaching, teaching, and reading of the Word and the fellowship and all of those ways that God will inform you and transform you and work in your life but you will make it a conscientious effort to do that. In other words, repentance and obedience was not something you did one time in life. It's a way of life. It's not something you just did at your conversion. It is a new way of life.

Charles Spurgeon pastored the Metropolitan Tabernacle. When I was over there this last year I had the opportunity to stand on the steps and I thought back to an account that is in his life of a notorious drunkard in London who everyone had been praying for and a deacon brought him to church. After the service this notorious drunkard went to the mourner's seat and was prayed with and made a commitment to Jesus Christ. This deacon ran up to Charles Spurgeon and said. "Pastor, do you think he was converted?" Spurgeon said, "How can you ask me to ascertain in a moment what it will take the man's life to reveal?" He's not saying he has to live well enough to be saved but he's saying that if this was a conversion it will show up in his life because faith is not an act of the moment. Faith is the acquisition of a lifestyle and the evidence of faith is obedience. To get to obedience you have to put off and put on. So it is with that new way of life. It is an intentional way of life.

I call it a FIT Christian. I got this from somebody else but I'm calling it. F.I.T. - faithful, intentional, teachable. It is teachable so that I know the new way. It is intentional so that I live that way. It is faithful because He is faithful to me and will never deny me that I want to confess Him in my life. Now that it's clarifying the call so let's clarify the means.

Before we were converted we probably picked up some things from the pagan life. Do you know what the pagan life is? I have a mind, a heart and a will. From my heart my mind thinks wrong and I do wrong but in life that's not the way the pagan lifestyle is lived. The pagan lifestyle is lived by if it feels good do it. Then I'll adopt whatever way of thinking that will support what I am doing, whatever religion I need, whatever way of life I need. Its feel, do, think. But when you are converted and saved by grace that way of life is turned around. It is no longer feel, do, think, now it is think, do and feel. I know through the renewing of my mind what is right. Now for my Savior I want to do it and then God gives me the joy of walking in the triumph of Christ. I am now by God's grace being filled up in my heart with what I'm supposed to think and my feelings are following along with me so that I have joy, even the joy of the smile of a martyr who is burning to death at a stake yet gladly gives his life, not because that's enjoyable, but the joy of following Christ. For to me to live is Christ and to know what it means to be faithful unto Him.

I had two great encouraging moments in my life when I was in Charlotte that is related to this at least in some measure. Will a Christian ever be sinless here on earth? No I just want to sin less and do what honors Him more. I don't want to betray Him, I

want to honor Him. So what do I have to do? I have to be converted and I need a new heart. Then I have to intentionally submit to the filling of my mind in hearing, studying and teaching of His Word and fellowship and in all of those ways that God fills up my heart and life that I might do that which is pleasing to Him. Oh the joy of following Christ so that Christian isn't the prescriptive term I assume but it's the descriptive term of the observation. This man is a follower of Christ. Something has happened in his life. I had a taste of this in Charlotte.

Briarwood sent me to plant a church in Charlotte in 1983 and I was fearful for many reasons. One reason was I was going back home after 14 years. I was going to go back and be a "Charlottean" but 14 years before that I was a "Charlotten." I was profane, immoral, ungodly, vulgar and a man of absolute paganism. I was likeable on the outside but an inventor of evil. God was gracious. He saved me and called me to Himself. Lo and behold He let me serve Him as a pastor and then I was encouraged to go to Charlotte. I remember talking with Frank Barker about it and one of the questions I asked him was "Doesn't it say in the Bible about a prophet not having honor in his home town?" Frank explained to me how to view that and that kind of freed me up to go back but I still had some fears. I could see myself up there preaching on some issue of virtue on the Christian life and picturing someone in the congregation, a blast from the past, saying, "Hello Ike, hello Harry, remember me?"

In fact, one Sunday I stood up to preach and there was a young lady that had gone to my high school that I had known. Her name was Vicky. On the way out she said something to me. Before I tell you what she said let me tell you about another time and it was when we went out to plant our first church called Grace Presbyterian Church out on Rocky Ridge Road. I was out there meeting with a core group and we had a worship service that Sunday afternoon. There was a man in the back with a beard that looked familiar to me. After the service we had a Q & A and this man spoke up and said, "Ike?" and whenever I heard that I knew it was another blast from the past. He said, "Ike? Are you Ike Reeder?" I said, "Yes sir." Then he said what Vicky said on her way out that Sunday which was "What happened to you?" I was so glad at least to some degree something had happened that they asked me that question – what happened to you? And I told them. "Amazing grace, amazing love, that found a wretch like me. I was blind but now I see. I was lost but now I'm found."

When God is doing that work we are going to have that opportunity to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ to put off and to put on and that brings me to the third and final takeaway. Let's clarify the motivation. We don't do this to be saved. We do it because we're saved. We don't do this to get God to love us. We do this because God loves us. What we are doing when we put off and put on everyday is we're setting the nail. My grandfather, my mother's dad, was a marvelous carpenter. He was a fence maker. My dad one day built a porch on the back of our house. If there was anybody less able with tools than me it was my dad. This porch had to be truly a cost saving measure as to why he did that. One day my grandfather came over and said, "This thing is going to fall in." He was a prophet. I wish you had been there the morning my dad and mom were eating breakfast on that porch and we watched them disappear into the valley. My grandfather said, "This thing is going to fall apart. Look the nails are coming out." He looked at my dad and said, "Didn't you set the nails?"

By God's grace He has given us the privilege of reliance on the Holy Spirit out of love to Christ to set the nail every day, to drive it in. Put off the old man, put on the new every single day. That is what He has called us to do. Change clothes every day. Tomorrow morning for Christ I want you to change clothes, not for salvation but for your Savior. You have to do it this way. You have to put off to put on. When you wake up in the morning what do you have on? You have on your pajamas. Then what will you do? You won't put on what you are going outside in but you will put off those bed clothes and then you will put on what will take you out for that day. Don't try to put on without putting off. It will just get messy later and then you'll take something off and that will be what you just put on, on top of the other. So you have to put off to put on. Put off the old man, renounce self. Die to our self and the futility of our mind. With a renewed mind put on the new man in Christ, having put off the old man, to live for Christ that day.

When you change your pajamas to your clothes do that in private, please. But when you change clothes in Christ, your spiritual clothes, you do that not only privately but you also do it publically. It takes God's people to help you change that's why He has preaching when we assemble to help renew the mind. That's why He has prayer, the Sacraments and worship. Please, I beg you not to play drive-by church. I drive by the mall. I drive by the school. I drive by my church and I stop off at a certain time. The church is the covenant community that the Lord Jesus has put together and it is that which He uses to help you change clothes everyday, in fellowship, in worship, in preaching, in Sacrament and all of those things that are there. They are all there to help you change clothes.

It is utter paganism to try to live the Christian life in individualism. We are not self reliant. We are reliant upon the Lord in the body of Christ and I can't sever myself from it. I need that in my life. Do you remember Lazarus? Do you remember how the Lord raised him up to life and then what did He say? He told all those around Him, "Take the grave clothes off of him." God's people are here to assist you in taking the grave clothes off everyday and put on the new clothes to walk around in and for Christ. Oh the glory of doing that and oh the joy of serving Him! Here's the way Paul says it. Philippians 2:12 says, "*work out your own salvation with fear and trembling...*" He doesn't say "work for your salvation" because Jesus did that work. He goes on to say, "*For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure*" Philippians 2:13. Let's pray.

Prayer:

God, our joy is to honor You and to honor You we want to do that in what we do and say. Would You this day for those who have a heart for Christ give them an intentional, faithful and teachable life that their mind might be renewed to fulfill the desire of that new heart which is to walk surrendered to the Word of God and the Spirit of God in true righteousness for their Savior and to embrace holiness. Lord may the world see in the way we live salvation by grace and growing in grace and may we honor you in all we do. That's our joy. Father there may be some reading this today who have not yet embraced that joy, would You draw them to Christ? Would You this day draw them unto Him who gives them a new heart, a new record, a new family and a new home as well as the power, strength and desire to live a new life? Father, we'll give You the praise as they simply say, "Lord, I know I need a Savior. I come to Jesus just as I am without one plea but at

the cross Your blood was shed for me. I come. “ Father, I pray this in Jesus’ Name,
Amen.