

- Through the word of God, the Spirit of God causes us to be born-again and made clean, from the inside out ... So, what's going on within us, is reflected and experienced outwardly ... In particular, how we relate to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ ... 1:22 – *From a heart that's undergoing transformation, let us intentionally **pursue loving one another*** ... God uses His word to bring us to new life, and to mold our character into His very own
- The gospel that saves us, is the same gospel that the Spirit uses to sustain and sanctify us (vs22; 2Th2:13; Jo17:17-19) ... This change is occurring from the inside out ... **YOU CANNOT PRODUCE AN OUTWARD CHANGE THAT HASN'T FIRST TAKEN PLACE WITHIN** ... The Spirit works in us to work through us ... And to work in the lives of those God places around us
 - Because we've been given a new life (in/because of Christ), and this new life sets us free from the penalty and power of sin, *let us continue to allow the Spirit and the Word to wash away all forms of malice, deceit, envy, hypocrisy, and slander* ... Peter stresses that **OUR MOTIVATION SHOULD BE THE GOSPEL**, which is a powerful display of the Father's everlasting and inherent goodness and faithfulness (Rom2:4; Jam1:21-25; Tts3:1-9)
- Because we're born-again, **WE NEED TO BE VIGILANT ON WHAT WE INGEST** ... It's common to be overtaken by hatred, envy, jealousy, and pride ... Practices of deception, manipulation, and slander are any more common practice ... In this way, the church looks very much like culture ... In this way, churches become a place of hurt rather than a place of healing ... Just because these behaviors exist, and may be natural to us, doesn't mean they should exist or should remain to be natural ... All of it is sin – no matter how we dress it up and how we may justify our behavior ... All sin needs to be dealt with ... We need to deal with our issues – not excuse them, not ignore them, not justify them
 - We should not dismiss our past and neither should we live in it ... We need to honestly come to terms with our past, so that true healing can take root, and life can move forward in ways that are healthy ... CR can be a great first step ... Growth Groups ... Biblical Counseling ... **THE POINT IS TO REACH OUT BEYOND YOURSELF**
- You and I are commanded to **desire the unadulterated and life-changing word of God** – the Gospel ... Why – *so by it you may grow up into your salvation* ... **“JESUS HAS ATONED FOR YOUR IMPERFECTION AND HAS ATTAINED YOUR PERFECTION”** ... The gospel that has saved you, is the same gospel that the Spirit uses to sustain and sanctify you

What does this look like:

- **FORGIVENESS** ... *I can't forgive / I'm struggling to forgive / I don't need to ask for forgiveness, I've done nothing wrong ... I'll make this right / I promise to do better / I'll do this ... I won't do this* ... Seldom does forgiveness involve only one person ... Typically, both sides need to seek and extend forgiveness ... Intentional hurt & Unintentional hurt – the Gospel must be applied to both ... All sin is against God – we do this intentionally and unintentionally ... What's the promise: 1Jo1:9 ... In minimizing our sin (pretending) and maximizing our righteousness (performing) we allow ourselves to live in deception ... We're hindering the full effectiveness and power of the Gospel ... 1Jo1:8-10
- **STRUGGLING WITH SIN** ... Struggling with sin doesn't automatically mean you've stopped growing as a Christian ... All Christians wrestle with sin ... It's when we stop wrestling with sin that we stop growing as Christians ... The Father chose you, the Son saved you, the Spirit lives in you knowing full well of all your short-comings ... God's standard is perfection ... You and I can never meet this standard ... Jesus has and always will meet this standard on our behalf ... His obedience and victory over sin makes it possible for us to be obedient and have victory over sin ... We allow the Spirit of God to work through the word of God in us and through us
 - **WE BELIEVE THE GOSPEL ... WE REST IN THE GOSPEL ... WE APPLY THE GOSPEL ... THIS IS OUR NEW DAILY RHYTHM** ... By this are we growing up into our salvation

