**June 27, 2021**

**Holy**

1. Dedicated or consecrated to God or a religious purpose; sacred.

But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

1 Peter 1: 15-16

God, Himself is the epitome of holiness. He is perfect, complete, and sinless. He is above all and is comparable to none. He is holy in His character, in His laws, in His judgments. He is holy in His entire being. Yet, in 1 Peter 1:16, He exhorts us to be holy, because He is holy. How can we as mere humans possibly live up to such a demand? Since we are God's people, He requires us to be set apart from others, and live in such a way that the world will know that we belong to Him.

How do we become holy? Holiness comes from a true relationship with God through acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior. Seeking holiness outside of a relationship with Christ is in effect useless.

We must strive to live a life that distinguishes us apart from the world by studying God's word and thereby growing in our relationship with Him.

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**June 20, 2021**

**Faithfulness**

1. The quality of being faithful; fidelity.

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering; for he who promised is faithful.

Hebrews 10: 33

To be faithful to something or someone is to show dedication, devotion, or loyalty to that thing or person. If someone shows faith in you it is likely because you have proven to be loyal and trustworthy. God wants us to be faithful people, but mostly He wants us to be faithful to Him because He has proven His faithfulness to us. Faithfulness toward God is an essential part of our relationship with Him. How can you become close to someone you have little or no faith in?

When we placed our trust in Jesus as our Savior, it wasn't because we simply believed in Him but because we had faith in Him. As we study God's word, communicate with Him in prayer, and grow into a more intimate relationship with Him, we will naturally begin to show our faithfulness to Him.

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**June 13, 2021**

**Sanctification**

1. To set apart to a sacred purpose or to religious use; consecrate. 2. The action or process of being freed from sin or purified.

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

Paul tells us in Philippians 2:12, "to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." This does not mean we have to work to attain salvation. Salvation is a gift that is freely offered to everyone. The work Paul is speaking of is the gradual process of sanctification. Through prayer, studying God's word, sacrifice, serving, and such, our motives began to point us away from sin and toward a desire to please and obey God, whereby we begin to produce fruit that shows our sanctification. We began to be more like Christ, and others see the work of Christ in us. Our sanctification is proven through our growing love and respect of God and His word.

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**June 06, 2021**

**Accountability**

1. Accountability is taking responsibility for one's actions; to be accountable or responsible for something or obligated to answer to someone, such as a person with more authority.

If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.

James 4:17

The bible teaches us that "each of us will give an account of himself to God" (Romans 14:10-12). As men and women of God, we are held to a higher standard. Because of all the blessings that have been given to us, and all of the watchful eyes that are upon us so much more is required of us. We are responsible for how the world sees us and how the world perceives the person of God. That is a great responsibility and not to be taken lightly.

Without accountability to God, we are boats without anchors. When we doubt the existence of God or when our truth of God falters, we have the capacity to become immoral beings. That accountability keeps us fastened to the truth of God. 2 Corinthians 5:20, tells us we are ambassadors for Christ. We are

representatives of Christ, or in other words, we may be the only examples of Christ people will ever see. We make the decision to be stumbling blocks or stepping stones.

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**May 30, 2021**

**Love**

1. An intense feeling of deep affection.

"...But now faith, hope, and love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

1Corinthians 13:13

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 3:16

What is love? Simply put, God is love. God defines what love is. He offers His definition of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. Those who follow the guidelines in these verses cannot do so without possessing the characteristics of love, and that type of love can only come from an active relationship with God. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that He gave..." That is what one does when they love. Lovers are givers. God showed His love for us by giving up His son Jesus to die for us; to die in our place.

Jesus is God's manifestation of love toward us. His demonstration of love flows through our relationship with Christ. Christ shows us how to love others through His love for us. God tells us not to put our trust in man, but we can trust God's love because we can trust God. Jesus is the greatest example of God's love.

**May 23,2021**

Justification

1. A. The action of declaring or making righteous in the sight of God. B. The act by which God moves a willing person from the state of sin (injustice) to the state of grace (justice).

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ

Romans 5:1

Romans 3:23 states the "we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God." We are all born with sinful natures. But are we all justified through righteousness? Justification comes through Jesus's finished work on the cross.

It is on the basis of Jesus' righteousness that God accepts humans. This acceptance is also referred to as justification.

When Adam sinned he fell out of right standing with God. He died spiritually and was separated from God and doomed to eternal death. Every person born after Adam possesses that sin nature and is also spiritually separated from God. Before the sacrificial death of Christ, man atoned for his sins through the sacrificial death of animals. But that atonement was only temporary, and God was not satisfied, only pacified.

Christ was the long-awaited unblemished sacrificial Lamb of God that through His shed blood, He once and for all, fully took on the sin of the world. Whosoever believes and receives the work that Jesus did on the cross; have their sins forgiven and Jesus's righteousness imputed to them. God now sees us as righteous because Jesus paid the price of sin for us. Now we have put on the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The judge (God) has said all charges have been dropped and we are free to go. In other words, we have been justified. Now we are to walk in the newness of life.

**May 16, 2021**

**Authority**

1. The power or right to give orders, make decisions and enforce obedience.

Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

Romans 13:1-2

Our generation has come to feel negative about authority. We tend to desire to be the leader of our own world. There are different forms of authority: traditional, dictatorial, legal, and charismatic or personal. Authority is practiced in different ways such as in work, school, church, or home. Although authority is necessary, it is not always appreciated, and the type of authority practiced determines how readily it is received.

Traditional authority is received as legitimate because it has always been accepted. It thrives due to its historical basis. Dictatorial authority is performed without the consent of the people it affects. The leader possesses a dominant and intimidating personality. Legal authority is operated by laws, rules, and policies. The power lies within the system of regulations and not the person who enforces those rules. Charismatic authority is sanctioned due to the individual's capacity to lead due to their personality or charm, and ability to inspire others.

All authority lies with God. It is God who has established all other governing authorities. Because God loves and cares for us, He has called us to be subject to that authority because if we rebel we bring judgment on ourselves. The judgment of the authoritative abilities of those in power has not been placed on our shoulders, but our responsibility lies in the respect we show toward them.

**May 09, 2021**

**Temptation**

1. The desire to do something, especially something wrong or unwise.

When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

James 1: 13-15

The temptation to sin is everywhere and we can at anytime fall prey to it. We have comfort in knowing that even Jesus was tempted. Yet, the sin is not in being tempted, the sin is giving in to the temptation. Scripture gives us help in confronting and resisting the sin of temptation. Firstly, it is imperative that we recognize the weaknesses that lead us to be tempted and avoid those things whether they be people, places, or other such triggers. Matthew 26:41 instructs us to be diligent and pray so that we don't enter into temptation. The key is you don't have to resist that which you're not tempted by. Moreover, if temptation presents itself, we should not fool ourselves into thinking we will be strong enough to win against it. Scripture teaches us to flee temptation ( 1 Corinthians 6:18), and to submit ourselves to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you (James 4:7). Lastly, there may come a time when we're not as successful with sin as we would like to be. Unfortunately, we stumble and bow to sin. When we do, we must acknowledge it is sin, repent of our actions, and strive to not repeat our sinful behavior. We are not in this on our own. God cares for us and will give us a way of escape.

**May 02, 2021**

**Friend**

1. A person whom one knows and with whom one has a bond of mutual affection, typically exclusive of sexual or family relations.

"Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up."

Eccl.4:9,10

Jesus's life is the greatest illustration of a friend, and his announcement of this fact in John 15:13 holds true. He says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." This is exactly what Jesus did for us. He sacrificed His life for the world. What a friend we have in Jesus. Scripture speaks extensively on relationships, and friendships are one of the most important connections we can have. Firstly, it is important to choose friends who are spiritually sound and have the same goal of aspiring to please God. The friend we have in our corner can make a great difference in our lives by helping us discover and reach our purpose in God, provide us someone to confide in, strengthen us mentally and emotionally, and care enough to correct us when we are on the wrong path.

But as we can have friends that advance us spiritually, we can also have friends that drain us of all things positive. These "friends" will eventually lead us away from God and down the wrong paths. 1Cor. 15:33 says, "... bad company corrupts good manners." We cannot spend time with those who are carnal and expect to grow spiritually. We will slowly drift away from the lifestyle of praying, reading the Word, and seeking God and began to adopt the ways of the world. Amos 3:3 asks the question, "How can two walk together unless they are agreed?” So, we should choose our friends carefully because they will be very influential in our lives. You will either walk together in righteousness or in sin. Friends can lead us to destruction or be of great benefit to our lives. Proverbs 18:24 tells us that the one who is in the company of unreliable friends will come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. Choose wisely.

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**April 25, 2021**

**Obedience**

1. Compliance with an order, request, or law or submission to another's authority.

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."

Matthew 7:24

We know that obedience is necessary for every aspect of our lives: at home, school, work, and in everyday involvement in our communities. Operating in obedience is essential and beneficial to us all in that we play our role in keeping the interrelated system of our lives running smoothly. Furthermore, the bible speaks at great length about obedience. Scripture relates to us that it is needed in all relationships. It directs employees to obey employers (Eph. 6:5), children to obey their parents (Eph. 6:1), wives to submit to their husbands (Col. 3: 18), husbands to respect their wives (1 Peter 3:7), and lastly and most importantly, we are to obey God (Luke 6:46). Why does God tell us to obey? Firstly, it keeps order. What would this world be without obeyance to the laws of our community? We would all live in a world full of chaos and distraction. Next, it teaches discipline; a lesson that is not learned overnight. It takes maturity, patience, and self-control to take rule over one's character and be submitted to a system's regulations. Also, we gain a full understanding of what is right and wrong. Laws and rules let us know what is expected of us. Furthermore, in a position of obedience, we show honor and submission to authority. Lastly, we demonstrate our trust in God when we choose to obey Him. When we make that choice of submitting to and obeying the commands of God we demonstrate to Him and ourselves that we fully trust Him with our lives and that we believe He has our best interest at heart. Then He rewards us for our obedience by blessing us with grace, mercy, peace, and all the purposeful gifts heaven has to offer.

**April 18, 2021**

**Wait**

1. Stay where one is or delay action until a particular time or until something else happens; stand by. 2. Used to indicate that one is eagerly impatient to do something or for something to happen

Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you. For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.

Isaiah 30:18

I personally do not know anyone who enjoys waiting. I believe everyone at one time or another could benefit from advice on the subject. You see, most times we have no choice in our waiting. We hate waiting in line at a store, or at the doctor's office, or even to be seated at a restaurant, yet we know we must. But how we wait is optional. I believe the "how" is the utmost reason why God tells us to wait. It's not just experiencing the fruition of our desires, but what happens on the journey towards it.

Sure, there are other reasons why God tells us to stand still or to abide: He is working behind the scenes to bring things together or He is working on the hearts of those involved in the process. But most importantly, it is imperative to God that we are prepared for the things for which we are asking. The knowledge we gain and the maturity we grow into would elude us if God were to instantly give us all we requested. In other words, we hold some small responsibility for the time frame in which we receive the things we desire. In the end, we may find that through acquired wisdom and maturity we no longer have a want or need for the things we've requested of God. The thing we were waiting for no longer suits the person we have become. Waiting has its purpose.

Finally, what do we do while we wait? God's Word says to wait on Him. That does not mean we sit idly not doing anything. What we do is serve; serve God and others. We do what waiters do in a restaurant. When they wait on tables, they are serving the people at those tables. Waiting means serving, and serving takes the attention off of ourselves and onto others. We put the needs of others before our own needs. It's a funny thing, while we are focusing our attention on others, we look around and God has answered our prayers through the help of someone else. There is an adage that says, "God helps those who help themselves." I believe it's more accurate to say "God helps those that help others."

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**April 11, 2021**

**Service**

1. The action of helping or doing work for someone.

Even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Matthew 20:28

What does it mean to serve? Well, Matthew 22: 37-39, says to "love God with all your heart, soul and mind... and love thy neighbor as thyself." We love God because He first loved us. When we love God, we learn to fully love ourselves. When the love of God flows through us, we can then learn to love others as we love ourselves. We demonstrate that the love of God is within us when we show love toward others. This transformation causes a desire to serve others. We serve God when we serve others. It becomes a domino effect. Our love for God leads to loving and serving others.

The purpose of service is so God can reach others through us. The service that we provide to others leads them to God. Our testimony of the gospel and the goodness of God is shown in our actions. There are many reasons why we should serve others. Firstly, because God says we should. Moreover, it gives us happiness, connects us to others, and makes a positive difference in their lives, it helps us activate the gifts God has given us, it gives us purpose, it teaches us humility and selflessness. Finally, and most importantly, it advances the Kingdom of God. So let's get to serving others, and in so doing we help ourselves and show the love of God.

The purpose of service is so God can reach others through our hands. In II Cor. 9:12-13, the Bible says that the service we provide not only meets needs but expresses thanks to God and leads others to praise God. The Bible also says that service builds up the "body of Christ."

What does it mean to serve God? Serving God is a demonstration of your love for Him through loving service to others. Loving God with all your heart and loving your neighbor, as Jesus Christ taught, is the essence of serving God.

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**April 04,2021**

**Humility**

1. A modest view of one's own importance; humbleness. 2. The quality of being humble; putting the needs of another person before your own; not drawing attention to yourself.

..."God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.”... "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."

James 4:6,10

Humility is mentioned quite often in the bible. It is taught to us in the Old and the New testament. What is God trying to relate to us and why should we be humble. Firstly, it is because without God we can do nothing. He created us and it is "in Him we live, and move, and have our being," (Acts 17:28). Secondly, we own nothing, not even ourselves. All that we have comes from God. If we are successful, it is because He has given us the ability to achieve that success. We cannot lay claim to anything. So of what do, we have to boast? Lastly, we are here only to glorify God and to lead others to Him. It's about Kingdom business. Possessing a humble spirit will draw others to us, thereby giving us the opportunity of leading them to Christ. What's in it for us? God says to "humble yourself under His hand, and in due time He will exalt you;" 1 Peter 5:6. God "will reward you openly," Matthew 6:4.

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**March 28, 2021**

**Suffering**1. The state of undergoing pain, distress, or hardship.

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.
Romans 8:18

I don't know anyone who wants to suffer. So why does Romans 5:3-4, tell us to glory in our sufferings, or James 1:2-3, tells us to count it all joy? At one time, these verses of scripture were mind-boggling. Regardless of how much I love God, I don't choose to suffer. However, through study I learned that the glory and joy is a choice in the reaction we have to the benefits that come from the suffering. We know our suffering is not in vain. If we are honest, there are aspects of our character that will never mature if there were no troubles to fight against or trials to endure.
Enduring trials of all types builds our spiritual muscles. Scripture tells us that suffering produces perseverance, which builds character, which produces hope. Conquering and walking through our trials enables us to relate to and help others through their suffering and draws us into a deeper and more intimate relationship with God.
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**March 21, 2021**

**Patience**

1. The capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble, or suffering without getting angry or upset. 2. A quality of self-restraint or of not giving way to anger, even in the face of provocation; it is attributed to both God and man and is closely related to mercy and compassion.

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus.

Romans 15:5

We are all familiar with the saying "patience is a virtue." The question is why is patience deemed one of the most virtuous qualities to possess? We must first establish the meaning of virtue. "Virtue is defined as moral excellence; a virtue is a trait or quality that is deemed to be morally good and valued as a foundation of good moral being." Having patience requires choosing to travel the moral road. It requires self-control, humility, mercy. Hence, commanding the virtuous quality of patience necessitates the practice of other virtues.

Galatians 5:22 declares patience as a fruit of the Spirit. Therefore, every Christian should possess patience. In truthfulness, patience is not achieved overnight yet, it is a process, and a necessary one. As God has shown us patience we ought to show patience toward others through all circumstances. As we give our cares to God, He will help us on our journey. Psalms 27:14 encourages us with "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

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**March 14, 2021**

**Son**

1. A human male offspring 2. A male adopted child 3. A human male descendant; a male heir.

Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God

Galatians 4:7

Son depicts relationship or of being a familial descendant. In the scriptures, a son is more than just a male offspring; it represents much more. Scripturally, being a son can be an indication of generational faith, blessings, covenants, social status, and identity.

There are many instances in the bible where the term son is used as reference to these things. Jesus was called "the Son of David" as a promise that David's descendants would always be on the throne, and "the Son of man" to show Jesus' humanity, and "the Son of God" representing Jesus' divine nature, and believers are referred to as "the Son of Abraham" because we fulfill God's promise to Abraham. On a basic level, we are representative of our parents and we are to live lives that will bring pride to our parents.

Likewise, we are "the Son's of God" and our lives should be lived in such a way that we are great representatives of Him.

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**March 07, 2021**

**Father**

1. A male parent 2. A man who has begotten a child

As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him.

Psalms 103:13

​The responsibilities of being a father can be challenging. Yet, no one said it would not be. If you are a father, and one worth his salt, then you know it is a 24-hour job with no days off. If you need inspiration then just look up. God is the only real example we have as a father.

This is what differentiates Christianity from all other religions. It is not about rules and regulations, but it is about relationships. When we receive Jesus Christ as our Savior; we are adopted into the family of God. Mark 14:36, says "we have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, [and daughters], by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” Now that we are His children we have the right to call Him Father. He takes a vital interest in our affairs, in the way that any good earthly father would take an interest in his children. We depend on Him and as a father, he responds to the needs of His children, acting in their best interests.

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**February 28, 2021**

**Family**

1. All the descendants of a common ancestor. 2. Any of various social units differing from but regarded as equivalent to the traditional family

“Look at how good and pleasing it is when families live together as one. ” — Psalm 133:1

Many people view family as their most precious treasure. We have no choice in the family in which we are born, but we still look to them for unconditional love and support. In fact, the family to whom we belong has an impact on who we are and who we become. It determines how we see the world and how we see and treat others.

There is another family; a special family. It's the family of God, and we all have a choice of whether we want to be a part of this family. John 1:12, says "...to all who did receive Jesus, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God." When we make the choice to receive Jesus as our Savior; we are then adopted into the family of God and He becomes our Father.

Becoming a child of God changes how we walk in the world, and how we see and treat others. When we become transformed by the living Word of God, the world sees the forever changes that have happened in our lives, the eternal light that shines within us, and yearn to be a part of His family.

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**February 21, 2021**

**Pride**

1. Consciousness of one's own dignity.

A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

Proverbs 29:23

Pride can be a deceptive character. It sneaks into your life in the form of simple compliments, praise, or self-appreciation. If left unchecked, pride can grow out of control until the only person of importance in your life is yourself. God does not appreciate a prideful person; He resists him.

It is of no surprise that in Job 41:34, satan is referred to as the king over all the children of pride. If you have begun to show the consistent characteristics of pride and ego, then it is time to surrender to God, engulf yourself in His word, practice humility, and allow God to exalt you.

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**February 14, 2021**

**Courage**

1. The ability to do something that frightens one. 2. Strength in the face of pain or grief.

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The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?

Psalm 27:1

The bible is filled with scriptures of God instructing us to be courageous and to not be fearful. Why? For one, the bible tells us that "God did not give us the spirit of fear." So He wants us to realize that fear comes from satan and satan never has our best interest at heart. Secondly, when we are walking in fear, we can be easily thrown off course, become anxious, powerless, and miss hearing from God. Yet, when we resist fear and put our faith in God, we see and hear more clearly, we find the path God has set before us and set our minds to facing and overcoming circumstances. In those times when we feel fearful, we should not run from obstacles, but face them and trust that God has given us the strength and wisdom to overcome.

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**February 07, 2021**

**Peace**

**1.**Freedom from disturbance; tranquility.

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:1

At some time, we will all face circumstances that unexpectedly disturb the natural flow of our lives and leave us in a state of discomfort. Whether it is confronting a major life decision, a health crisis, or the loss of a loved one; walking in the peace that God has provided for us will put us in position to experience an indescribable strength of heart and mind we can't explain. Philippians 4:7, says it's "a peace that surpasses all understanding." This echoes the peace we have through our relationship with Christ Jesus. Before Jesus' death on the cross, we were wrapped in sin, our souls were loss, and we were in animosity with God. Yet, after Jesus' finished work on the cross, we were justified by our faith in Him and now have peace with God. Peace... it is one of God's greatest gifts to us.

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**January 31, 2021**

**Fellowship**
1. Companionship or company. 2. Community of interest, activity, feeling, or experience

 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.
1 John 1:3

What comes to mind when we hear the word fellowship. For most Christians, it is simply church attendance. Attending church on a consistent basis definitely qualifies. However fellowship is much deeper than that. It is not just sitting next to each other in church; it is what we do when we come together. In Acts 2:42, it says the early church "devoted themselves not only to fellowship, but to the apostles teaching and to prayer." It was true unity.
The modern day church has lost its unity because we have become lax in teaching and in prayer. The two things whereby growth occurs. We have become practiced at talking to, at, over, and about each other, but not with each other. When the church returns to true teaching and faithful prayer, then will it yield for us a closer relationship with each other and moreover, a deeper relationship with Christ.

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**January 24, 2021**

 **Vision**

1. The ability to think about or plan the future with imagination or wisdom.

And the Lord answered me: “Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay."
Habakkuk 2:2,3

God created us with purpose and a desire to seek out and walk in that purpose. What motivates us to stay on the course that leads to that purpose is the vision God has given us of what is to come and what we are to become. As we seek a closer relationship with Christ and become engrossed in His Word, our discernment, perception, and judgement of the world around us becomes sharper and our vision becomes clearer. It gives us a hope for the future.
Hebrews 12:1 says, "let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." We should be careful not to allow the  stumbling blocks of life to sideline us and throw us off course. God in His mercy has blessed us with a curiosity for the future and what it holds for us. It is what keeps from giving up so easily and fuels us towards reaching the promises of God.

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**January 17, 2021**

**Character**

1. The mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual.

Not only so, but we glory in our sufferings because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character, and character, hope.

Romans 5: 3-4

There is something that is difficult to find in our society today. It's missing in positions of authority, it's absent in most homes, and it's not taught in many schools. It's not something you are instinctively born with, nor inherited, and it can't be bought. It is character. Character is the qualities that make up our individual personalities and makes us distinctive from the next person. We can have good character or bad character. It should be the trait we treasure most because it is basically who we are. It is how the world sees us and how we are perceived.

Scripture says when we are born again we become new creatures or a new creation. We get a chance to recreate ourselves. When we study the Word of God and apply that Word to our lives, we become transformed and the byproduct of that is we start to live out the fruit of the Spirit: Love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness gentleness, and self-control. In other words, we begin to take on the personality or character of God.

1 Corinthians 15:33, says "Bad company corrupts good character." So we have to guard the thing that is most important to us; our witness for Christ. That means taking into account with whom we keep company, and the conversations we have with others. Our character should show clear evidence of our relationship with Christ.

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**January 10, 2021**

**Determination**

1. Firmness of purpose; resoluteness. 2. The process of establishing something exactly by calculation or research.

Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.

1 Corinthians 16:13

Determination is often considered a positive attitude to possess. Its cousin, stubbornness is commonly seen as a less flattering trait. However, there is a fine line between the two because, in order for determination to bring forth fruit, a healthy dose of stubbornness is required.

Examine the life of any true Christian and you will find that it is determination that helps to build the foundation of their spiritual lives. It takes determination to turn away from sin, to resist sin, to love your enemies, to have faith in difficult times, and to pursue a full relationship with Christ.

Throughout the scriptures, Jesus encourages us to be steadfast, diligent, and to faint not. It is what makes us overcomers.

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**​January 03, 2021**

**Overcomer**

1. To get the better of; to surmount or overcome difficulties. 2. To gain superiority over; to defeat or prevail.

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

1John 5:4

Who is the overcomer? Is it the person who faithfully attends church every Sunday? Is it the person who can recite scripture by heart? Is it the person who routinely does good deeds? The overcomer is he who has a relationship with God through salvation by belief in Jesus Christ.

How does the believer overcome and what is he overcoming? 1John 5:4, states that we overcome the world through our faith in Jesus. Jesus defeated the evil powers of this world. When we place our faith in Jesus and His finished work on the cross and remain steadfast in our faith in Him, the Spirit of God that dwells in us empowers us to defeat the evils that come against us. The overcomer is the one who places his trust in the risen Son of God, and he is rewarded with eternal life.

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**December 27, 2020**

**Privilege**

1. A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one can boast.

Ephesians 2: 8-9

"What a friend we have in Jesus; all our sins and griefs to bear. What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer." How many of us have heard the lyrics to this beautiful song, but have never really considered the meaning of the words. Once we establish nonconformity with the world and renew our minds through the Word of God, we become aware of all the glorious and undeserved privileges we have in our relationship with Christ Jesus. In His Word, God has come to let us know how special we are to HIm by granting us with entitlements to which only His children have access. That is the greatest of blessings.

When we study scripture we see that God loved us so much that He thought us worthy to inherit these unmerited privileges. What are some of the privileges that we have as true believers in God? Hebrews 4:16, we have direct access to God. Romans 6: 23, we can be sure that we will live eternally with God. Jeremiah 29:12, the believer can talk to God at any time and have surety that He will hear and answer. Peter 3:18, we don't have to seek temporary forgiveness through the sacrifice of animals. Jesus became the sacrificial lamb once and for all for our salvation. We are forgiven. John 1:12, we have the right to call Him Father because we are His children. John 15:15, if Jesus was only our Saviour that would be enough. However, Jesus considers us to be His friends. 1Corinthians 3:16, God is not somewhere on the other side of the world; His Spirit dwells within us. We have the comfort of knowing that God is always with us.

So how deep is God's love for us? While other religious extremists feel the need to show their alliance by dying for their gods; Jesus loved us so much that He died for us.

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**December 20, 2020**

**Rejoice**

1. Feel or show great joy or delight

And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.

Luke 1: 47

In the book of Philippians, Paul tells us to "Rejoice in the Lord always." Well, what if I don't feel like rejoicing? With all the problems life can throw at us, the last thing we feel like doing is rejoicing. However, it is not a mere request or suggestion but rather an authoritative command.

Paul was no stranger to turmoil. In the most trying times of his life, he found solace and joy in his relationship with the Lord. He is a perfect example of how to rejoice in tough times. We do not rejoice while ignoring or denying our feelings in times of sadness, sorrow, or mourning. We rejoice in spite of our feelings. It is an act of our will and an act of obedience. Our "joy in the Lord" is not a place we visit in good times, but a place we dwell in at all times; and through our relationship with God, He will give us the supernatural ability to do so.

When we are faced with the most difficult of trials, will we fold our arms and complain or will we put our trust in God and rejoice in the Lord always? Rejoicing in the Lord will in time bring us the peace and fullness of joy we long to experience.

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**December 13, 2020**

**Sacrifice**

**1.**The act of giving up something that you want to keep especially in order to get or do something else or to help someone.

He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world

1 John 2:

A young man approached Jesus one day and asked Him what was required of him to receive eternal life. "Keep the commandments," Jesus answered. "I have kept them all. What else do I lack," the young man replied? What Jesus said next was very distressing to the man. Jesus tells the man to sell all that he has, give to the poor, and then come and follow Him. The young man went away sorrowfully because he was very rich. Jesus turned to his disciples and said, "a rich man will hardly enter into the kingdom of God.

Firstly, Jesus did not imply that a rich man could not go to Heaven, but that someone who has gained his riches through the world system would not find it easy to begin governing his riches through God's system, or God's way of doing things. Secondly, I believe Jesus was not so much concerned with the man's riches, as much as He was concerned with the condition of the young man's heart. The rich, young man wanted eternal life but not enough to sacrifice all he had to obtain it.

God wants to know that He is first in your life. In Matthew 10:37, Jesus says, "He who loves father and mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." He will have nothing and no one before Him. Are we willing to give up what we have in our hands in return for what God has in His? It is a sacrifice worth making.

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**December 06, 2020**

**Endure**

**1.**To suffer something painful or difficult patiently. 2. To remain in existence; last.

You will be hated by all because of my name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.

Matthew 10:22

The bible offers us plenty of examples of believers who faced great adversities and overcame with even greater faith. We can follow in the footsteps of these believers and overcome our personal obstacles as well. The greatest example we have is Jesus Himself. Hebrews 4:15 tells us that Jesus can relate to us in our lowest form because He was tempted as we are but without sin. It is natural to perceive our personal adversities as God's punishment for our shortcomings. But oftentimes the hardships we face are a demonstration of God's love for us in full bloom.

We would rather experience pleasure than discomfort. However, adversity teaches us lessons we would otherwise never learn in times of contentment. We learn patience, determination, humility, faith, and how to become more like Jesus. It makes us come to the realization of how much we really need God, the Father. Proverbs 24:10 tells us, "if we faint in the day of adversity, our strength is small." When walking through these personal valleys and facing our own Red Sea moments is not the time to give up, but it is the time to endure.

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**November 29, 2020**

**Accountability**

**1.**Accountability is taking responsibility for one's actions; to be accountable or responsible for something or obligated to answer to someone, such as a person with more authority.

If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.

James 4:17

The bible teaches us that "each of us will give an account of himself to God" (Romans 14:10-12). As men and women of God, we are held to a higher standard. Because of all the blessings that have been given to us, and all of the watchful eyes that are upon us so much more is required of us. We are responsible for how the world sees us and how the world perceives the person of God. That is a great responsibility and not to be taken lightly.

Without accountability to God, we are boats without anchors. When we doubt the existence of God or when our truth of God falters, we have the capacity to become immoral beings. That accountability keeps us fastened to the truth of God. 2 Corinthians 5:20, tells us we are ambassadors for Christ. We are representatives of Christ, or in other words, we may be the only examples of Christ people will ever see. We make the decision to be stumbling blocks or stepping stones.

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**November 22, 2020**

**Mercy**

1. Compassion or forgiveness shown toward someone whom it is within one's power to punish or harm

Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

Proverbs 28:13

The book of Lamentations teaches us that 'God's mercies are new every morning', which is how often we need it. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus' mercy is evident toward others; it is a part of His very nature. He demonstrated this by healing the sick, forgiving sin, and pardoning those who conspired against Him. It is His love and mercy for us sinners that called Him to endure the call of the cross and to lay down His life for us.

His mercy is granted at the confession and repentance of our sins. But God tells us to forgive others as He has forgiven us. We are to extend that mercy toward others as much as we desire it for ourselves. Our ability to love and show mercy toward others is what connects us in our humanity. May we not take advantage of this amazing offering.

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**November 15, 2020**

**Integrity**

1. The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness 2. The state of being whole and undivided.

The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.

Proverbs 11:3

How God sees you is how you truly are. There is no fooling God because He looks at the heart. Your reputation is the image you present to the world, however, your character is the truth of who you are when there is no need of impressing anyone. Integrity makes no room for hypocrisy. God wants us to be sound in our thinking, undivided in behavior, upright in our morality, and honest in our dealings with others. In other words, He desires us to be whole and complete in our character.

There is a time when we must examine ourselves to see if we are living how the Word commands us to live. It is imperative to do so if we are to be pleasing to God, to walk in true integrity, and draw others to God by showing that His Spirit dwells in us.

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**November 08, 2020**

**Forgiveness**

1. A conscious, deliberate decision to release feelings of resentment or vengeance toward a person or group who has harmed you, regardless of whether they actually deserve your forgiveness. 2. To cease to feel resentment against

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Ephesians 4:32

In Matthew 18:21, it is recorded that Peter comes to Jesus and says, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Until seven times? Jesus answers him and says, "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven." This is not to say you only forgive 490 times and then no more. Jesus is saying to forgive as often as is needed. In other words, Jesus commanded that we forgive others as He forgave us. We must become acquainted with the truth that our relationship with others affect the relationship we have with God.

Forgiveness is for our personal well-being as well as a route to possibly and eventually leading the offender to feel convicted of their actions. Through the process of forgiving others, we free ourselves from the hurt, anger, and animosity that can imprison us; and are healed and sustained, spiritually, emotionally, and even physically. Forgiving those who have wronged us or our loved ones is a selfless act that demonstrates to the offender how the loving nature of God flows in our spirits.

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**November 01, 2020**

**Regeneration**

1. The process of renewing or restoring something, especially after it has been damaged or lost.... in the context of religion, regeneration is used to refer to a kind of spiritual rebirth.

Ephesians 2:4-5

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great mercy with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ, (by grace you have been saved.)

The heart of the unregenerate is in conflict with the will of God. His mind, emotions, and will are not aligned with the word of God. This person lives by his own rules and principles and is only concerned with satisfying his own pleasures. But God provided a solution by way of Jesus Christ. God reconciled us to Himself through the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross.

Peace was provided to us on the cross. Before salvation, we were at enmity with God. Through the gift of salvation, our hearts are made new and we are at peace with God. Now, our renewed heart is demonstrated in our character and conduct, and our desire is to please, love, honor, and obey Him.

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**October 25, 2020**

**Redemption**

1. The action of regaining or gaining possession of something in exchange for payment, or clearing a debt. 2. The action of saving or being saved from sin, error, or evil.

I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.

Isaiah 44:22

"But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. We have now been justified by his blood," Romans 5:8-11. Adam and Eve were in perfect relationship with God. When they disobeyed God, that sin caused a separation in the fellowship they had with God, and therefore, sin entered the world.  Humankind was alienated from God, but through the death and resurrection of Christ we have been redeemed, or bought back through the price Christ paid on the cross, Romans 4:25; 2 Cor. 5:18,19. Because of the gift of redemption offered us through the death of Christ, we have a right relationship with God, and have been set free from sin and death.

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**October 18, 2020**

**Faith**

1. Strong belief in God or in the doctrines of a belief system based on spiritual apprehension rather than proof.

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of God

Romans 10:17

A major part of our faith comes from studying, listening, believing, and applying or living the Word of God. Tough times can cause us to waver in our ability to fully trust God. The more we get into the Word of God and the Word of God gets into us, the more our faith will grow. Real faith requires us to believe in the things we do not see. This is the true test of faith. In those times when trouble surrounds us, it is then that our trust must remain steadfast in God, and what God has promised us in His Word. He will not allow struggles that we cannot endure to the end.

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**October 11,2020**

**Unity**

1.  The state of being united or joined as a whole; condition of harmony; accord; oneness;

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

Psalms 133:1

I believe we can all think of a time when we have overcome obstacles together that we otherwise would not have separately. Ecclesiastes 4:9,12, reads "two are better than one... and a threefold cord is not quickly broken." We can accomplish more together than we ever can alone. Unity fosters a feeling of harmony, compassion, and love. Dealing with a situation alone can bring feelings of despair and hopelessness; where togetherness brings strength. God did not create us to be alone. You are your brother's keeper.

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**October 04, 2020**

**Hope**

1. A feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen..

Remember the word to your servant, upon which you have caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction, for your word has given me life.

Psalms 119: 49-50

Hope is the light that leads us away from doubt and towards the path to where all things are possible... the presence of God. Without Him there is no hope. God created that place of expectancy within us. The level of hope we possess is in direct balance to the faith we have in God. Because we know with God all things are possible. We learn that the hope we live by every day is based on the hope we have in Christ. As we encourage ourselves in this truth, we inherently encourage those around us.