



# The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond

V26 N11

March 17, 2024

## HIGHER UP "Honoring Our King" 1 Peter 2:13-17

### THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

#### Kindness/Goodness

I choose to do the right things in my relationship with others.

*"Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else."*

**1 Thessalonians 5:15**



Why should Christians be law abiding citizens?

During his earthly ministry, a Pharisee and expert in the law tested Jesus with the question, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" (Mt 22:34; cf. Mk 12:29-31). "Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all our soul and with all your mind.'" This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments'" (vv. 37-40). So, according to Jesus, each and every Old Testament commandment is rooted in either one or the other of these two commandments.

Years later, in the fourth century, the rabbis agreed that there were 613 commandments, 365 negative and 245 positive – which implied a long felt need, even in Jesus' day, to distinguish those that were *light* from those that were *heavy*. Obviously, the commandment to not murder (Ex 20:13) is more important than the commandment to not boil a kid in its mother's milk (Dt 14:21). On Jesus' answer, one commentator writes: "It is not unlikely that Jesus' hearers were expecting one or other of the Ten Commandments, those that had been written by the finger of God and that, as a group, stood out over all the other commandments. But Jesus did not select one of those. Instead he chose the commandment to love God, the commandment that must have been most familiar of all to his hearers, for it was recited every day by the pious Jew: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." Thus far the words are identical with those in Deuteronomy 6:5 (cf. Deut. 11:13), but whereas that passage goes on 'and with all you might' Jesus proceeds 'and with all your mind' . . . Jesus was asked for but one commandment, but he goes further and adds 'a second' that, he says, 'is like it.' Wholehearted love for God means coming in some measure to see other people as God sees them, and all people as the objects of God's love. Therefore anyone who truly loves God with all his being must and will love others, and this is expressed in the commandment, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' a commandment that is repeated in the Pentateuch (Lev. 19:18, 34) . . . The two commandments go together (if anyone says he loves God and hates his brother he is a

liar, 1 John 4:20)" (Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, 563, 64).

The link between the second commandment and the fruit of the Spirit listed by Paul is obvious. The apostle writes: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Gal 5:22-23). As is the link between the fruit of the Spirit and *nine* of eleven of the Central Virtues: 1) **Love**, I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others; 2) **Peace**, I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others; 3) **Patience**, I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life; 4) **Kindness/Goodness**, I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others; 5) **Faithfulness**, I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships; 6) **Gentleness**, I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others; 7) **Self-Control**, I have the power, through Christ, to control myself; 8) **Grace**, I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me; 9) **Humility**, I choose to esteem others above myself. This means that the creed of this week's Core Competency, **Kindness/Goodness**, is a clear expression of the second commandment.

So also are the commandments Peter gives to his readers by way of summary in 1 Peter 2:17. He writes: "Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor." One commentator explains: "Honour all men means 'honour all people'; 'men' is not in the Greek text. 'All' (*pantas*) is common in reference to all people generally . . . Christians should be courteous and respectful to all people . . . *Love the brotherhood* indicates a higher obligation to fellow Christians (note 'brotherhood' also in 5:9), not only to respect them but also to show strong, deep love to them (see note on *agapaō*, 'love' at 1:22) . . . Fear God indicates a still higher obligation. Christians are not only to honour and love God (1:3, 8; 2:5,9), they are also to fear him, something they should not do toward unbelievers (3:14) or toward other believers (see note at 1:17 on fear of Gd) . . . Honour the emperor. In what is apparently mild irony Peter has put the emperor on the same level as 'all people'" (Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC, 122-23).



# EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

## Read 1 Peter 2:13-17

13 *Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, 14 or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. 15 For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. 16 Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves. 17 Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.*

## Read in other translations

13 *Be subject to every human institution for the Lord's sake, whether to a king as supreme 14 or to governors as those he commissions to punish wrongdoers and praise those who do good. 15 For God wants you to silence the ignorance of foolish people by doing good. 16 Live as free people, not using your freedom as a pretext for evil, but as God's slaves. 17 Honor all people, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the king. (NET)*

13 *For the sake of the Lord submit yourselves to every human authority: to the Emperor, who is the supreme authority, 14 and to the governors, who have been appointed by him to punish the evildoers and to praise those who do good. 15 For God wants you to silence the ignorant talk of foolish people by the good things you do. 16 Live as free people; do not, however, use your freedom to cover up any evil, but live as God's slaves. 17 Respect everyone, love other believers, honor God, and respect the Emperor. (GNT)*

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle "submit" in v. 13.
- Bracket "for the Lord's sake" in v. 13.
- Circle "human authority" in v. 13.
- Circle "emperor" in v. 13.
- Circle "governors" in v. 14.
- Underline "punish" and "commend" in v. 14.
- Box "for" indicating *reason* in v. 15.
- Circle "ignorant talk" in v. 15.
- Circle "free people" in v. 16.
- Box "as" (2x) indicating *comparison* in v. 16.
- Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 16.
- Circle "slaves" v. 16.

What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about \_\_\_\_\_."



## DIG DEEPER

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Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. List the commandments in the NIV's translation of 1 Peter 2:13-16.
  2. Peter tells his readers to "Submit themselves" (v. 13, "be subject" NET) to governmental authorities. Should their submission be viewed as *absolute*? Explain.
  3. Explain the *motivation* behind their submission.
  4. Describe the *two-fold* role of government Peter cites.
  5. Explain *why* they are to be law abiding citizens.
  6. To what exactly does "ignorant talk" refer?
  7. Explain the sense in which his Christian readers "free people" (v. 16).
  8. Explain the use of *contrast* in verse 16.
  9. Living as *free* people and living as God's *slaves* – explain the irony.
  10. **Discussion:** Talk about *exceptions* to Peter's command, namely, when Christians can *refuse* to submit to lawful authority.
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### Commentary On The Text

Daniel was among the exiles taken to Babylon when Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem in 605 B.C., where like the readers of Peter's first epistle, they lived as *exiles* and *sojourners* in a foreign land (cf. 1Pe 1:1). The king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief court official, to bring "into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility— young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's place" (Da 1:3-4). Daniel (Belteshazzar) and his friends, Hananiah (Shadrach), Mishael (Meshach) and Azariah (Abednego) were among them. Apparently, Nebuchadnezzar intended to prepare them for positions of administrative leadership if he ever needed to return to Palestine to subjugate Judah. They would study the Babylonians' language and literature for three years (v. 5).

Daniel and his friends deferred to the king's wishes and complied with the king's plan until it involved eating the food and drinking the wine the king provided, which must have entailed violating mosaic dietary laws (see J. Dwight Pentecost, "Daniel," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 1330-31). But rather than defy Nebuchadnezzar by going on a hunger strike, Daniel proposed that the king's official give him and his friends nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink for ten days, which proved to be an acceptable way to avoid disobeying the king. "At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food" (v. 15). Daniel and his friends continued to submit themselves to Babylon's rulers unless submission entailed disobedience to their God. They took issue not with what the government *permitted* but rather with what it *required*.

In 1 Peter 2:13-14, the apostle instructs his readers to follow Daniel's example by submitting themselves "to every human authority whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and commend those who do right" (2:13-14). Peter is careful to use a verb (*hypotassein*) that doesn't imply *absolute* obedience rather than a verb that does (*hypakouein*). One commentator explains: "'Obedience' [*hypakoē*] is reserved for a person's relationship to Christ by virtue of accepting the Christian message (1:2, 14, 22). Because 'obedience' [*hypakoē*] is a primary and radical commitment while [*hypotassein*] represents a secondary and more limited one, 'respect' or 'defer to' is a more appropriate translation for the latter than 'submit to' or 'be subject'" (J. Ramsey Michaels, *Word Biblical Com-*

*mentary*, vol. 49, 1 Peter, 124). Believers are to do this not because government authorities know best or are always right, but "for the Lord's sake" (v. 13), that is, in imitation of him (cf. vv. 21-23). In a nutshell, God expects Christians to comply with civil authorities even if they are neither believers nor morally upright. Furthermore, ruling authorities serve a necessary purpose, namely, to maintain a civil society by punishing those who do evil and commending those who do good (v. 14). Put differently, God expects Christians to be law abiding citizens wherever their sojourn takes them.

In verse 15, Peter *parenthetically* explains the reason behind his instructions. It is because God chooses to vindicate those against whom false charges are made—in this case, charges to the effect that Christians are bad citizens because they choose not to participate in a variety of social functions involving pagan deities. Peter has in mind what he mentions in 2:12. One commentator explains: What must be 'silenced' [*phimoun*] is the loose talk implied by the term [*katalalousin*, i.e., spoken accusations] of that verse. Peter's confidence is that the good works of Christian believers will transform such slander into glorification and the praise of God on the day of visitation, but his best hope short of that is to shut the mouths of those who make trouble for the Christians (cf. Jesus 'putting to silence' the Sadducees in Matt 22:34)" (Michaels, 127).

In verses 16-17, Peter picks up the thought of verse 13 and links it to verse 17. His train of thought tracks the following path: "be subject" (v. 13) . . . *as* free people (v. 16) . . . not using your freedom "as a cover up" (v. 16) . . . but *as* slaves of God . . . "show proper respect to everyone . . ." (v. 17). He tells his readers to "live as free people," which they are, with one caveat, namely, that they don't abuse their freedom by using it as a "cover up for evil" (v. 16). The verse contains a striking use of *comparison* and *contrast*. On the one hand, they are to live *as* (*comparison*) free people, *but* (*contrast*) on the other hand, they are to live *as* (*comparison*) God's slaves. One commentator writes: "Christians do not have freedom to do wrong! Though free in a greater way than anyone apart from Christ can ever be, Christians are still in another sense servants of God or 'slaves of God', for they owe him their whole lives and their entire beings. True freedom, true ability to choose and do what one really wants to do, comes paradoxically in entire submission to God as his obedient servants" (Wayne Grudem, 1 Peter, TNTC, 121). He concludes these inclusive words: "Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor" (v. 17).

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## Word Studies/Notes

v. 13 *submit*                    “Submission (*hypotassō*, cf. 2:13, 18; 3:1) is the key theme of this section of the letter. The word in general means to ‘subject oneself.’ In this location, it is the acquiescence in the divinely willed order of society” (Edwin A. Blum, “1 Peter,” in *The Bible Expositor’s Commentary*, vol. 12, 233). “The word ‘submit’ is a compound verb from the Greek words *hypo* (meaning ‘under’) and *tasso* (meaning ‘to order, place, appoint’). While it is often inaccurate to determine meaning from the roots of a word, the roots here do give an adequate determination of the meaning of the verb: ‘to order oneself under, or according to, a given relationship,’ or ‘to live according to the governmental order.’ Clearly here the notion of ‘submitting’ to the government is secondary to obeying God (1:2, 14, 22) and to doing his will (2:15), because this group of subjects (the church) is ‘free’ (2:16). That is, *even though* the Christians are ‘aliens and strangers’ (2:11), they are to live in the order that God has ordained” (Scot McKnight, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 Peter*, 143). Perhaps “defer” is a better translation than “submit” (see J. Ramsey Michaels, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 49, *1 Peter*, 123-24), since “submit” does not imply total obedience (McKnight, 144).

v. 13 *Lord’s sake*                “Or ‘on account of the Lord’ gives a theological basis for this submission. Our submission to authority should imitate and thus glorify God the Son (Peter makes this latter point explicit in 2:21-23). Moreover, since God has established these structures of authority (cf. Rom. 13:1-7) he is pleased for us to submit to them” (Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC, 119).

v. 13 *human authority*        Cf. “human institution” (NET). The Greek word *ktisis*, translated “human authority” or “human institution” (NET), usually means “creature, thing created” (Grudem, 119), but in this context more likely means “human authority.” “*Grk* ‘every human creation,’ denoting either everything created for mankind (NRSV mg: ‘every institution ordained for human beings’) or every creature who is human. The meaning of the verb ‘be subject’ and the following context supports the rendering adopted in the text” (*The NET Bible* 34tn note on 1Pe 2:13), i.e., “every human institution” (NET).

v. 13 *emperor*                    Cf. “king” (NET). “The ‘king’ (*basileus*) is the title used in the East for the emperor who had the ‘supreme authority’ among people” (Blum, 233). “If the early dating of 1 Peter is correct (early 60s), then the emperor to whom Peter is referring is none other than the rascal Nero. Hort tartly remarks that ‘there could be few rulers indeed whose claims on loyalty would be sustained by less personal merit’ than Nero” (McKnight, 145).

v. 14 *governors*                “The governors (*hēgmones*) are the legates, procurators, or proconsuls charged with carrying out the imperial will of punishing the disobedient and rewarding the good” (Blum, 233); cf. Pilate (Mt 27:2) and Felix (Ac 23:24).

v. 14 *punish, commend*        Together the two terms briefly

express a purpose of civil government. “The word *ekdikēsis* (‘punishment’) has the connotation of taking vengeance, making a wrongdoer pay a penalty for the wrong done (note the word Rom. 12:19; 2 Thes. 1:8; Heb. 10:30) . . . Peter here includes retribution, the inflicting of just desert on the one who has harmed others, as a legitimate purpose . . . Government are also to praise those who do right as a reward for good conduct and an example and incentive to others. Moral behavior, not economic status or political favoritism, is to be the criterion” (Grudem, 120).

v. 15 *ignorant talk*            I.e., accusations to the effect that Christians are not good citizens. “In this context **ignorant talk** means the making of groundless accusations against believers by those who are unaware of the spiritual motive for the way Christians behave, for to be **foolish**, in biblical terms, means to leave God out of account (Ps. 14:1; Luke 12:20). It was only too easy for Christian practices to be misconstrued as anti-social or even as treasonous” (Norman Hillyer, *1 and 2 Peter, Jude*, NIBC, 79).

v. 16 *free people*                “Submission to lawful authority does not negate Christian liberty (cf. Gal. 5:1, 18)” (Roger M. Raymer, “1 Peter,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 847). Most translations begin a new sentence in verse 16 by supplying the word “Live” (cf. NIV, GNT, NET, ESV, et al.). “There is no main verb in this verse, but it continues the sense of command from v. 13, ‘be subject . . . as free people . . . not using . . . but as slaves of God’” (*The NET Bible*, 38tn on 1Pet 2:16)—thus linking verse 16 to the imperative in verse 13. Some, however, link verse 16 to the four imperatives in verse 17. However, “once it is recognized that the four imperatives of v 17 resume and expand on the single imperative of v 13, a better alternative presents itself. The connection of v 16 with the [‘submit yourself’] of v 13 is most easily maintained not by suppressing its connection with v 17 but precisely by emphasizing it: ‘As those who are free . . . yet as God’s slaves, show respect for everyone. . . .’” (Michaels, 128). “Peter has in mind not political or social freedom (which for household servants [2:18-25] and wives [3:1-6] was limited at best), but freedom in Christ from the ‘ignorance’ (1:14) or ‘darkness’ (2:9) of paganism” (Michaels, 128).

v. 16 *as slaves*                Cf. “as free people” (v. 16). “The contrasting phrases with [*hōs*, “as”] are more than similes, more even than metaphors; they express for Peter an ‘actual quality’ (BGD, 898.2.1a) of those redeemed in Christ—a spiritual and psychological state of freedom from the old ‘natural impulses’ (cf. 2:11), and a firm commitment of mind and heart to God” (Michaels, 128).

v. 17 *show proper . . .*        “We should respect everyone (‘honor all people’), but we should love fellow believers (‘the brotherhood’). God deserves fear, whereas the civil ruler (‘king’) is worthy of respect (‘honor’). These two pairs connect with Jesus’ teachings that we should love our enemies . . . and ‘pay to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God the things that are God’s’” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on 1 Peter,” 54, [planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/1peter.pdf](http://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/1peter.pdf)).

# 4

## APPLY THE TEXT

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### CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Live as law abiding free people – God’s slaves, who do not use their freedom as a cover-up for evil.

### CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



## 3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



## FAMILY TALK

During the three minutes I was in the toddler area last Sunday, the Lord showed me what complete lawlessness would ensue if He left us to our own devices. One child considered another child’s head target practice as he chucked a plastic toy, another child had a meltdown over the type of snack being served and the alarms sounded with an urgent potty-training emergency. Anyone who challenges the fact that we’re born with a sin nature clearly hasn’t been around toddlers. The very nature of sin is self-rule, and like toddlers, our rebelliousness wrestles to come out when others exert their authority over us. In the parenting world it’s so much easier for us to lay down our God-given authority and let our kids run amok. However, part of our responsibility is to help our kids learn how to acknowledge, obey and submit to the authority of God and other people in charge by first acknowledging, obeying and submitting to us. Even when it’s not fair, they don’t like it or they wouldn’t make the same decisions we did, our kids need to know how to submit to proper authority, and that starts at home. We teach our children to gracefully accept authority by modeling submission ourselves. How do you speak about others in authority, like your boss or the current president? Do you acknowledge and obey rules or laws that don’t make sense? Do you require your children to respect your authority or let them go their own way? This week, give some thought to how you respond to or exercise authority and ask God to help you honor Him. We’re praying for you!

### What Does The Bible Say?

Read 1 Peter 2:13-17

1. To whom should we submit?
2. What effect will doing good have on others?
3. How does Peter suggest the readers live their lives?

### What Do You Think?

How does submitting to people in authority honor the Lord?

### What Do You Do?

Rewrite verse 17 and offer 3-5 examples for each of the four instructions listed. Which of these four do you do well? Which do you need to work on?

### CORE COMPETENCY: Kindness/Goodness

I treat others better than myself.

### MEMORY VERSE: 1 Peter 1:3

*“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”*

### KidPIXCOUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: [kids@wearecentral.org](mailto:kids@wearecentral.org)

- I completed my Bible Study
- I memorized this week’s verse
- I brought my Bible to church
- I brought a friend



CHILD’S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

# OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

## CENTRAL BELIEFS

**Authority of the Bible** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)  
*I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.*

**Church** (Ephesians 4:15-16)

*I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.*

**Eternity** (John 14:1-4)

*I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.*

**The Holy Spirit** (Romans 8:9)

*I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.*

**Humanity** (John 3:16)

*I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.*

**Identity in Christ** (John 1:12)

*I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.*

**Jesus Christ** (Hebrews 1:1-4)

*I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.*

**Life Purpose** (Acts 20:24)

*I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.*

**Personal God** (Psalm 121:1-2)

*I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.*

**Salvation by Grace** (Ephesians 2:8-9)

*I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.*



## CENTRAL VIRTUES

**Love** (1 John 4:10-12)

*I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.*

**Joy** (John 15:11)

*I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.*

**Peace** (Philippians 4:6-7)

*I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.*

**Patience** (Proverbs 14:29)

*I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.*

**Kindness/Goodness** (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

*I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others*

**Faithfulness** (Proverbs 3:3-4)

*I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.*

**Gentleness** (Philippians 4:5)

*I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.*

**Self-Control** (Titus 2:11-13)

*I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.*

**Grace** (Colossians 3:13)

*I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.*

**Hope** (1 Peter 1:3-5)

*I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.*

**Humility** (Philippians 2:3-4)

*I choose to esteem others above myself.*



## CENTRAL PRACTICES

**Bible Study** (Hebrews 4:12)

*I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Biblical Community** (Acts 2:44-47)

*I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.*

**Compassion** (Psalm 82:3-4)

*I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.*

**Disciple-Making** (2 Timothy 2:2)

*I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.*

**Evangelism** (Acts 1:8)

*I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.*

**Generosity** (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

*I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.*

**Prayer** (Psalm 66:16-20)

*I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Single-Mindedness** (Matthew 6:33)

*I focus on God and His priorities for my life.*

**Spiritual Gifts** (Romans 12:4-6)

*I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.*

**Worship** (Psalm 95:1-7)

*I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.*

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