



# The Scrolls

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

V26 N29

July 21, 2024

## PEOPLE GET READY

“The Pursuit of Spiritual Excellence”

2 Peter 1:5-11

### THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

#### The Holy Spirit

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

*“You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.”*

**Romans 8:9**



What must one do to live a productive Christian life?

God has a purpose for every one of his children, namely, to be conformed to the image of his Son, Jesus Christ (Ro 8:29). This process that believers go through to become like Jesus is called “formation” when it is viewed from the perspective of *spiritual growth and development*. The same process is called “discipleship” when it is viewed from the perspective of *training*. And it is called “sanctification” when it is viewed from the perspective of *holiness*. The process is the same regardless of the nuance given it by the term used to refer to it.

Consider the following observations on the process. First, God is at work in the process through his agent, the Holy Spirit. Paul prays on behalf of his Thessalonian readers: “May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1Th 5:23). On the role of the Holy Spirit in the process, one theologian writes: “It is specifically God the Holy Spirit who works within us to change us and sanctify us, giving us greater holiness of life. Peter speaks of the ‘sanctification of the Spirit’ (1 Peter 1:2, author’s translation), and Paul speaks of ‘sanctification by the Spirit’ (2 Thess. 2:13). It is the Holy Spirit who produces in us the ‘fruit of the Spirit’ (Gal. 5:22-23), those character traits that are part of greater and greater sanctification . . . The Holy Spirit is the spirit of holiness, and he produces holiness within us” (Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 754).

Second, we are at work in the process, too, through our involvement in disciplines the Spirit uses to sanctify us. The process is a cooperative effort between God and us. That is not to say that we have *equal* roles in the process or that we both work in the same way, but simply that we *cooperate* with God by giving his Spirit tools to use to advance the process. The same theologian writes: “The role we play in sanctification is both a *passive* one in which we depend on God to sanctify us, and an *active* one in which we strive to obey God and take steps that will increase our sanctification” (Grudem, 754). Our passive role entails *incidental* sanctification, which involves the Spirit’s use of circumstances in life to change us, for example, Paul writes: “We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they

help us develop endurance” (Ro 5:3 NLT). Our *active* role entails *intentional* sanctification, which involves the Spirit’s use of premeditated involvement in spiritual disciplines like worship, Bible study, prayer, solitude, silence, stewardship, involvement in biblical community, and the exercise of spiritual gifts, to mention just a few. When it comes to the process entailed by “formation” / “discipleship” / “sanctification,” human effort is indispensable, even though it is inadequate.

These observations on the process are reflected in the following definition of sanctification: “*Sanctification is a progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and like Christ in our actual lives*” (Grudem, 746).

On *intentional* spiritual formation, Dallas Willard offers this three-part paradigm for our part in the process – VIM. If the formation ball is in our court, how do we get that ball rolling?

First, that one must have a **VISION** for the partial transformation desired. Willard writes: “Consider a case of those who wish to speak a language they do not presently know, say French or Arabic or Japanese. In order to carry through with this simple case of (partial) transformation, they must have some idea of what it would be like to speak the language in question – of what their lives would then be like – and why this would be a desirable or valuable thing for them” (*Renovation of the Heart*, 83).

One must also have **INTENTION**; one must *intend the vision*. He goes on to explain: “Projects of personal transformation rarely if ever succeed by accident, drift, or imposition. Indeed, where accident, drift, and imposition dominate – as they usually do, quite frankly, in the lives of professing Christians – very little of any human value transpires” (*Renovation of the Heart*, 83, 84).

But even these two are not enough. One must also employ the **MEANS** or instrumentalities. He concludes: “There are means known to be effective toward transforming people into speakers of Arabic and so on. This is not mysterious. If the vision is clear and strong, and the employment of the means thoughtful and persistent, then the outcome will be ensured and, basically, adequate to the vision and intention” (*Renovation of the Heart*, 84).



## 1 EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

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### Read 2 Peter 1:5-11

5 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. 8 For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

10 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, 11 and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

### Read in another translation

5 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, 7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.

10 Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. 11 For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (ESV)

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

- Underline "For this very reason" in v. 5.
- Bracket "make every effort" in vv. 5, 10.
- Highlight "faith," "goodness," "knowledge," in v. 5; "self-control," "perseverance," "godliness" in v. 6; "mutual affection," and "love" in v. 7.
- Box "if" indicating a *condition* in v. 8.
- Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 9.
- Underline "nearsighted and blind" in v. 9.
- Box "Therefore" indicating *result* in v. 10.
- Circle "confirm" in v. 10.
- Circle "stumble" in v. 10.
- Circle "rich welcome" in v. 11.
- Circle "eternal kingdom" in v. 11.

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. Peter begins verse 5 with these words, “For this very *reason*.” What reason is that?
2. What does “make every effort” indicate to you about the addition of the seven virtues that follow?
3. Must the seven virtues (vv. 5-7) be added in the order listed? Explain why or why not. (Hint: “Sorites”)
4. To what does “your faith” refer?
5. Describe the virtue – one of the seven – you believe is most difficult to describe and describe it.
6. “Keep you from being ineffective and unproductive” is an example of a figure of speech called “litotes,” in which “an *affirmative* is expressed by the *negative* of its contrary.” So express the meaning of this litotes.
7. Paraphrase “confirm your calling and election.”
8. Believers who *do not* possess these seven virtues are “nearsighted and blind.” How so?
9. Explain what *results* from expressing these virtues.
10. **Discussion:** Talk about where to start when it comes to adding the seven virtues Peter lists in 1:5-7.

### Commentary On The Text

Peter's instructions to believers in 2 Peter 1:5-11 serves as a handy commentary on Paul's instructions to believers in Philippians 2:12. Paul tells the Philippians "to continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose" (2:12-13). Peter tells his readers to "add to [their] faith, goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love" (vv. 5-7). His words amount to a commentary on the meaning of "work out your salvation." And although following his instructions will involve hard work on their part, implied by the words "make every effort" (see note), God has given believers readers everything they need to live a godly life (cf. v. 3). One commentator writes: "It takes every bit of diligence and effort a Christian can muster, along with the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, to 'escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires' (2 Peter 1:4) and to bring in alongside of his faith a complement of virtue. He should work hard at cultivating the seven qualities Peter listed in verses 5-7" (Kenneth O. Gangel, "2 Peter," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 865). The same thought is reinforced by the colorful word translated "add" (see note). Another writes: "The word came to mean *generous and costly co-operation*. The Christian must engage in this sort of co-operation with God in the production of a Christian life which is a credit to him" (Michael Green, *The Second Epistle of Peter and the Epistle of Jude*, 76, italics added).

Peter's list begins with saving "faith" and ends with "love" for all others. Sandwiched in between are the following: 1) "goodness," that is, the divine trait of "moral excellence" (cf. v. 3); 2) "knowledge," that is, wisdom that leads to right decisions and right actions; 3) "self-control," that is, control over one's passions; 4) "perseverance," that is, steadfast endurance under pressure; 5) "godliness," that is, pleasing God in every aspect of life. "While God gives us the ability to become godly, it is our responsibility to use the power he has made available to us and actually work at becoming people who please God in every phase of life" (Douglas J. Moo, *The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter and Jude*, 46); "mutual affection," that is, love for other believers. The list is an example of a figure of speech called "sorites," a series of related statements leading step by step to a conclusion. Use

of the figure implies that the virtues need not be added in order, nor must one be added fully before moving on to the next.

The reason for adding these virtues follows in verse 8. Those who possess them are kept from being "ineffective," or "idle" (Mt 20:3, 6), and unproductive," or "unfruitful" (lit. "without fruit") in their Christian lives, a figure of speech called *litotes*, which means its opposite, namely, made *effective and productive*. By way of contrast in verse 9, those who do not possess these virtues are willfully blind to the implications of their salvation, having been "cleansed from their past sins." One commentator explains: "Peter wrote *blind and nearsighted* . . . If a man is blind, how can he be shortsighted? If Peter had this meaning in mind, he may mean that such a man is blind to heavenly things, and engrossed in the earthly; he cannot see what is afar off, but only what is near" (Green, 82).

In verses 10-11, Peter states the logical *result* (cf. "Therefore") or the *conclusion* to what he has written. He begins by repeating himself, "make every effort" in verse 5 "to add to your faith," here in verse 10 to "confirm your calling and election," that is, your salvation, which involves God's decision to save *you*, "your election," and God's summons to salvation through faith in Christ to *you* made effective by the working of the Holy Spirit, "your calling" (Ro 8:30; 2Th 2:14). The evidence of a believer's salvation is found in the manifestation of the seven virtues Peter lists. "When a Christian develops the character qualities of v 5-7, he is producing valid evidence for others to observe that God has indeed 'called' and 'chosen' him. This is similar to James's doctrine of justification by works before men. The unsaved are not likely to believe that we are in God's favor on our own say-so alone. But a life filled with moral virtue and capped with love (v 7) can be very persuasive. As the Lord Jesus put it: 'By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another' (John 13:35)" (Zane C. Hodges, "Making Your Call and Election Sure: 2 Peter 1:5-11," *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society* 11:20 [Spring 1998]:32). The presence of these virtues in a believer's life will prevent that one her from making a train wreck of their spiritual walk in this life and will ensure a rewarding welcome into Christ's eternal kingdom in the next.

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## Word Studies/Notes

v. 5 For this very reason Cf. v. 3. “It is ‘for this very reason’ – that is, God’s provision of all that we need – that we are to seek spiritual maturity” (Douglas J. Moo, *The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter and Jude*, 44). “Because of our new birth and the precious promises and the divine power offered us in Christ we cannot sit back and rest content with ‘faith’ (cf. Jas. 2:20). The grace of God demands, as it enables, *effort* in man” (Michael Green, *The Second Epistle of Peter and the Epistle of Jude*, TNTC, 75).

v. 5 **make every effort** “The words make every effort to translate a participle (*pareisenenkantes*, ‘applying, bringing to bear alongside of’; used only here in the NT) and *spoudēn pasan* (‘all diligence’ or ‘all zeal’; *spoudē* in Rom. 12:11 is rendered ‘zeal’)” (Kenneth O. Gangel, “2 Peter,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 865).

v. 5 **add** “The word *epichorēgō*, *add*, is a fascinating one. It is a vivid metaphor drawn from the Athenian drama festivals, in which a rich individual, called the *chorēgos*, since he paid the expenses of the chorus, joined with the poet and the state in putting on the plays. This could be an expensive business, and yet *chorēgi* vied with one another in the generosity of their equipment and training of the chorus-es” (Green, 76).

v. 5 **faith** I.e., saving faith in Jesus Christ.

v. 5 **goodness** Cf. “virtue” (ESV); “excellence” (NET); “moral excellence” (NASB). “‘Goodness’ (*arete*) is the same word Peter used at the end of verse 3 to describe God’s quality of moral excellence. Peter here borrows again for the wider Greek world, where the word meant, broadly, ‘virtue’ (the word occurs elsewhere in the New Testament only in Phil. 4:8 and 1 Peter 2:9)” (Moo, 45). “It is excellence of achievement or mastery in a specific field – in this case virtue or moral excellence (cf. Phil 4:8; 1 Peter 2:9)” (Edwin A. Blum, “2 Peter,” in *The Bible Expositor’s Commentary*, vol. 12, 269).

v. 5 **knowledge** Gk. *gnosis* (cf. *eipgnōsis*, v. 2) with the nuance “wisdom” or “sagacity,” knowledge that leads to right decisions and right actions in God’s sight. “Here, it most likely refers specifically to the ability to discern God’s will and orient one’s life in accordance with that will” (Moo, 45). Still, “the Christian needs to know all that God has revealed in His Word, not just the gospel (cf. Matt. 28:19-20)” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on 2 Peter,” 2024 ed., 21, [planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/2peter.pdf](http://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/2peter.pdf)).

v. 6 **self-control** “Self-control, an aspect of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:23), enables believers to avoid falling prey to the temptations – especially sexual – that are so unavoidable in the world we live in” (Moo, 45).

v. 6 **perseverance** Cf. “steadfastness” (ESV); “endurance” (GNT); “patience” (NCV); “patient endurance”

(EHV). “The word *hypomenēn* means ‘staying under.’ It is frequently used in the New Testament to refer to constancy or steadfast endurance under adversity, without giving in or giving up (cf. Rom. 5:3-4; 15:4-5; 2 Cor. 1:6; 6:4; Col. 1:11; 1 Thes. 1:3; 2 Thes. 1:4; James 1:3)” (Gangel, 866).

v. 6 **godliness** “‘Godliness’ (Gr. *eusebeia*) refers to behavior that reflects the character of God (cf. v. 3; 3:11; et al.). It presupposes a desire to please God in all the relationships of life” (Constable, 22).

v. 7 **mutual affection** Cf. “brotherly affection” (ESV, NET). “‘Brotherly kindness’ (Gr. *philadelphia*) is thoughtful consideration of fellow believers (cf. 1 Pet. 1:22; 3:8; Rom. 12:10; 1 Cor. 12:25-26; 1 Thess. 4:9; Heb. 13:1). Overt acts of kindness manifest this characteristic (Gal. 6:10)” (Constable, 22).

v. 7 **love** “‘Love’ (Gr. *agape*) refers to the highest form of affection, God’s kind, that seeks the welfare of the person loved above its own welfare (John 3:16; 13:35; Gal. 5:22; 1 Pet. 4:8; et al.). It reaches out to all people, not just fellow believers” (Constable, 22).

v. 9 **nearsighted and blind** Or perhaps “willfully blind” because of “shutting one’s eyes” (Moo, 48).

v. 10 **confirm** I.e., “validate,” “certify,” or “attest.” While a professing Christian’s behavior doesn’t *determine* their election and calling, that is, their salvation, it does either *confirm* it or call it into question in the eyes of others.

v. 10 **stumble** “What Peter means is that the Christian will be spared a disastrous coming to grief (NEB; cf. Rom. 11:11)” (Green, 83) – the Christian will not make a train wreck of his spiritual life.

v. 11 **rich welcome** “The holy and fruitful lifestyle of v 3-8 can be a demonstration – a verification – that an individual Christian has not only been ‘called,’ but actually ‘chosen,’ for *great reward* in God’s future kingdom. As he or she diligently pursues this pathway, doing the things that Peter has enjoined, he will be able to avoid any serious spiritual fall (you will never stumble). Thus his pathway can climax in a rich entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Everlasting wealth, or treasure*, can be his in an everlasting kingdom” (Hodges, 34, italics added).

v. 11 **eternal kingdom** “Christ’s messianic kingdom began on this earth when He began His public ministry and will continue forever. Now as He rules from heaven on His Father’s throne, He will rule on the earth during the Millennium, and then He will rule in the new heavens and new earth (cf. 2 Tim. 4:18). I take it that Peter was referring to the time when his readers would go to be with the Lord” (Constable, 29).

# 4

## APPLY THE TEXT

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### CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Add to your faith seven essential virtues to be spiritually productive, to give evidence of your salvation, to secure your Christian walk, and to receive a rich reward when you enter Christ's kingdom.

### 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

There’s a lot to do when it comes to raising kids. On one hand, we have our normal household chores that contribute to the functionality of our family – laundry, carpool, scrubbing toilets, making food and washing the endless cups that seem to be scattered throughout the house. On the other hand, we have the task of raising these little darlings to be fully functioning adults and teaching them how to be patient, kind, gentle, merciful and loving humans. That’s a tall order, but I want to let you in on a little secret I’ve learned. We can’t do any of this if faith isn’t the foundation, for ourselves and for them. Where are you in your relationship with Christ? Have you trusted in Jesus as your Savior? Where are your kids in their spiritual development? Before you teach them about loving others, you must let them know how much God loves them—enough to send Jesus to the cross to die for us. From the time our kids are born, God gives us opportunities to share the Gospel with them. Even before they develop language, we should be whispering in their ear the enormity of Jesus’ sacrifice. As they grow older and discover our created world, help them fall in love with the Creator. When the time is right, teach them that Jesus died for them so they can have a forever relationship with God. Don’t let church be the only place your kids hear the Gospel message. Instead, allow church to be the place that supplements your teaching. God chose you to speak Gospel life into your child. We’re praying for you!

What Does The Bible Say?	What Do You Think?	What Do You Do?
<p>Read 2 Peter 1:5-11</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. List the qualities of spiritual growth in 2 Peter 1:5-7.</li> <li>2. What will these qualities keep you from?</li> <li>3. What will you receive if you do these things?</li> </ol>	<p>What is the difference in working for and working out your salvation?</p>	<p>Make cookies this week and talk about how each ingredient has a purpose to make the cookie the best cookie ever. How is this like the list of qualities that contribute to spiritual growth?</p>

### CORE COMPETENCY: The Holy Spirit

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

### MEMORY VERSE: Philippians 1:6

*“He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”*

## KidPIX COUPON

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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