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THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Bereans “received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so.”

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THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

*Rom. 12:1-2
Lesson #15
Changing our lives
09/7/2025*

2

Hard Questions

How can I change my life?

It starts with renewing my mind and directing my prayers to the right things.



3

What exactly is the “right thing”?

Abiding in what we have “in Christ”	Walking in the power of Christ’s Spirit	Living out our calling in this life
Christ FOR us	Christ IN us	Christ THROUGH us
		

From the Word to the Way of the Cross
From “in Christ” to Christ “in & through us”

4

How do we “put off” and “put on”?



5

Some changes in our life are limited by unrealistic expectations.

We cannot change some things. 1Cor. 12:4-7

- NURTURE - past history & experience
- NATURE - physical & psychological realities

We may not be willing to change. Rom. 7:22-23

- only if it is quick, easy, and painless

We want to change for the wrong reasons. Jas. 4:3

- to satisfy someone else’s expectations
- to become a distorted vision of self

We don’t believe we can change.

6

Some popular, but misleading,
paths to change

"If you stink, seek a shrink"
"When in doubt, cast it out"
"Let go and let God"

These have common features

1. They remove us from responsibility.
2. They ignore Apostolic teaching.

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We are not to be passive as we respond
to life's circumstances, realizing
who we are "in Christ".

1 John 3

"2 Beloved, now **we are children of God**, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him **purifies himself, just as He is pure.**"

Philippians 2

"12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your salvation** with fear and trembling; 13 for it is **God who is at work in you, both to will and to work** for His good pleasure."

8

Romans 12

"1 I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. 3 For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you **not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment.**"

Change starts with how we see ourselves
(respectable, reserved, & responsible).

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"1 I urge you therefore, brethren,"

1. **Conversion** changes our identity, position, & hope but it does not automatically change our walk.
2. We bear a **responsibility** in changing our behavior.

"...by the mercies of God,"

3. The love of God for us and the grace of God toward us is a **motive** within us.

1 John 4:19

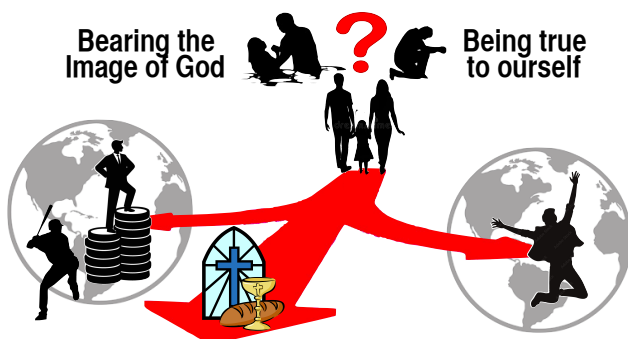
"We love because he first loved us."

2 Corinthians 5:14

"For the love of Christ controls us,"

10

The path to a changed life is easier to
see **when we know God's love and
are looking in the right direction.**



11

Our walk is shaped and motivated by
our identity & inheritance.



12

“...to present your bodies
a living and holy sacrifice,”

4. We must take our **baptismal covenant** seriously
wherein we die to our independence from God.
 - This will mean a willing **sacrifice of our worldly**
props, hopes, painkillers, and false messiahs.
- “... acceptable to God, which is
your spiritual service of worship.”
5. Our most important **act of worship** is self sacrifice.
 - This is the essence of what it means to follow
the model of Jesus' (agape) love.

13

Take Note

All humans have faith and reason.

The issue is:

What is the subject & object of our faith?

This was the point of the “fall of Adam and Eve”.

If our faith limits reality to space, time,
energy, & matter. **how do we account**
for the spiritual dimensions of
human experience?



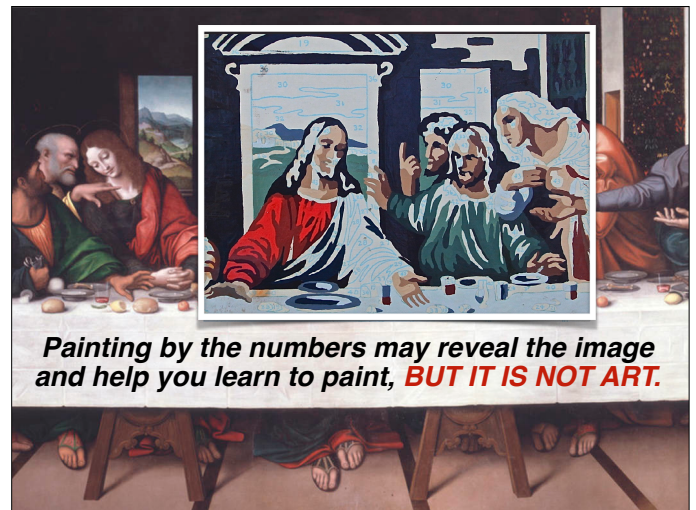
What we worship is revealed in
what we make our greatest
“life sacrifices” to or for.

14

“...2 And do not be conformed to this
world, but be transformed by the
renewing of your mind,”

6. Our **mind** (way of seeing, understanding, thinking) is
vital to changing behavior.
 - A Christian is to hear, believe, abide in, & walk by
the Word and Way of the Cross of Christ.
- “...that you may prove what the
will of God is, that which is good
and acceptable and perfect.”
7. **Godly behavior will follow** our mindset.
 - God's will is not “painting by the numbers” (a rule
book) but by the **insight of a new heart.**

15



16

Windows into the state of our soul's health

1. Action / attitude - deeds of the flesh
2. Anger - guilt, bitterness, whining.
3. Anxiety - fear, insecurity, worry.
4. Addictive behavior - painkillers
5. What do we sacrifice for?
6. What do we petition God for?

17



18



Most common prayer requests

Physical circumstances

- Vocational success
- Changed behavior
- Salvation of friends
- Spiritual revival

Seldom mentioned issues

Spiritual posture

- Thankfulness
- Insight and wisdom
- Knowing Christ
- Faith and courage to face life

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Ephesians

Our wealth in Christ ch. 1-3	Our walk in Christ ch. 4-6
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1:18-19

“18 I pray that the **eyes of your heart may be enlightened**, so that you may know what is the **hope** of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His **inheritance** in the saints, 19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His **power** toward us who believe. . . .”

20

Ephesians

Our wealth in Christ ch. 1-3	Our walk in Christ ch. 4-6
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3:14-19

“14 For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every **family** in heaven and on earth derives its name, 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be **strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man**; 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in **love**, 18 may be able to **comprehend** with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to **know the love of Christ** which surpasses knowledge, that you may be **filled up to all the fulness of God**.”

21

Ephesians

Our wealth in Christ ch. 1-3	Our walk in Christ ch. 4-6
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6:18-20

“18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times **in the Spirit**, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, 19 and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to **make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel**, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

22

Ephesians

Our wealth in Christ ch. 1-3	Our walk in Christ ch. 4-6
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He is first concerned that we see our **INHERITANCE and HOPE.**

He is then concerned that we see our **FAMILY and LOVE.**

He is finally concerned that we have courage **PERSEVERANCE and WITNESS.**

He prays that we will “get it”

He prays that we will “give it”

23

Our responsibility to change starts with addressing the right issues for the right reasons, and prayerfully attending to the heart.

It does not start with changing behavior or circumstances but with how we view and respond to things that can.

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