



## Pastor David's Weekly Devotional

Have you ever thought, "If the church really knew me, they would not love me (or like me) as they do"? It is no secret that Christians are not perfect. In fact, no one who has ever lived on this planet is or has ever been perfect – except Jesus Christ, of course. Many unbelievers will intently watch Christians to see if they will make a mistake in order to be able to accuse them of being a "hypocrite" (perhaps in hopes of lessening the intensity of their own guilt before God).

Unfortunately, the term hypocrite is sometimes hatefully and hurtfully misapplied. By definition, a true hypocrite is not someone who is struggling in their Christian walk, but someone who is faking their Christian walk. Literally, a hypocrite is a play-actor, just insincerely acting out the part of a Christian. Hypocrites have no genuine faith in or love for Christ. They simply are going through the motions hoping to impress certain people and deceive others. Struggling in your Christian walk does not make you a hypocrite, it only proves that you are human.

Even the Apostle Paul wrestled with this kind of spiritual battle. He wrote, "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do...For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing" (Rom.7:15,19). Can you relate? What Paul was describing was not a justification for us to continue to live in sin (cf. Rom. 6). In fact, when you read Romans 7, you find that his sin was both a detestable and agonizing frustration to him. What Paul was describing is the fight all true believers are engaged in between our spirit and flesh (cf. Gal.5). He explains that, as believers, we must fight to be sinless people in a sinful world. We want to do what is right, but unfortunately "*we all stumble in many ways*" (Jms.3:2).

So what's the answer? Well, the answer is not trying to amass a bunch of spiritual good works hoping to compensate for, or eclipse, the sinful works of our flesh. On their own – apart from Christ – good works amount to nothing (cf. Is.64:6). All "righteousness" is empty religion when Christ is out of the equation. Read what Jesus says in John 15:5, "*I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing.*"

Trying to do good works apart from Christ is like a branch trying to produce fruit without a vine. It is the vine that gives the branch fruit. The branch is simply the conduit. When we try to produce good works in our lives apart from Christ, we are like a branch that has fallen from the vine straining to produce fruit when in reality it is drying up and dying. The truth is, we are not good people because we do good works. We are only good people when the goodness of Christ is abiding in us. It is only when we are truly in Christ that the true goodness of Christ will be seen in us and flow from us. The emphasis is always on living in Christ, not doing religious works. Therefore, the way believers overcome temptation and sin is not by relying on religious efforts or human willpower, but by abiding in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Trying to be good on our own is both futile and frustrating. Doing good works will not compel us to Christ, but abiding in Christ will compel us to do good works. Rather than straining to create a bunch of good works on our own, we need to be constantly persevering to live in, through and for Christ. Then, not only will we see the fruit of true good works in our lives, but we will more importantly be living in the pleasure and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Together in and for Christ,  
Pastor David

**Scripture Readings for the week** (Monday – Sunday ~ Week #47):

*Deuteronomy 16-19; Ezra 6-10; Ps 134-136; Ecclesiastes 9-10; Zechariah 8-14; Acts 17-18; 2 Peter*

**Recommended Reading:**

*"The Pursuit of Holiness"* by Jerry Bridges

Calendar of  
Events:

November 22 & 23  
Thanksgiving ~  
Offices Closed  
December 2  
Children's  
Christmas Musical  
December 8  
Men's Breakfast  
December 15  
Women's Breakfast  
December 15  
Single Women's  
Hearts for Christ  
Dinner

Looking Ahead...

SAM's Potluck  
December 20  
Christmas Eve Services  
December 24  
Youth Winter Retreat  
January 4-6

For prayer requests,  
email Amy Woodruff  
at [prayer@sbcnb.org](mailto:prayer@sbcnb.org)  
or call 541-404-0547

We're on the Web!  
See us at:  
[sbcnb.org](http://sbcnb.org)

## Growth & Study.....

### Men's Group Studies

Mondays ~

**6:30pm** "The Measure of a Man: Twenty Attributes of a Godly Man"  
w/Jeff Etzel (541-260-8725)

Wednesdays ~

**6:30-7:30am** "Joseph-A Man of Integrity and Forgiveness"  
w/Pastor David (541-756-3311)

Thursdays ~

**6:30-7:30am** "Behold Your God: Discovering the Unfathomable Greatness and Glory of God"  
w/Pastor Tim (541-756-3311)

Fridays ~

**6:30-7:30am** "Joseph-A Man of Integrity and Forgiveness" \*Begins December 7  
w/Pastor David (541-756-3311)

### Young Adults

Thursdays ~

**7:00-9:00pm** At Skyline  
w/Pastor Tim (541-756-3311)

### Women's Group Studies

Mondays ~

**6:30pm** "Romans"  
w/Renee Middleton (541-297-2500)

Tuesdays ~

**6:30-7:30am** "Lessons from the Upper Room"  
w/Loy Huntzinger (360-607-0022)

**8:30am** "Isaiah, the Lord Saves"  
w/Beth Wallstrom (541-404-0112)

**9:00am** "Live Out His Love"  
w/Lois-Elaine Rencehausen (541-751-3169)

**1:00-2:15pm** "Covenants"  
w/Barb Young (541-404-6242)

**7:00-8:15pm** "Covenants"  
w/Barb Young (541-404-6242)

Wednesdays ~

**9:00-10:30am** "Romans"  
w/Amy Woodruff (541-404-0547)

**10:00am** "Seeking God's Great Riches, the Book of Hebrews"  
w/Karla Fries (541-267-0139)

**6:30-8:00pm** "Romans"  
w/Amy Woodruff (541-404-0547)

## Church News & Events.....

### ***Prison Fellowship Ministries Angel Tree ~ December 2 & 9***

The angel tree will be up in the church foyer on December 2 and 9 for choosing a child to purchase a Christmas gift for. Gifts will be due back on December 16.

### ***Children's Christmas Musical ~ December 2, at 6:00pm***

You won't want to miss our Children's Christmas Musical, "A Tree Lot Christmas"! Refreshments will be served.

### ***Men's Breakfast ~ December 8, 8:30am***

Men, join us at 8:30 a.m. for breakfast, devotion & fellowship.

### ***Women's Breakfast ~ December 15, 8:30am***

Ladies, please join us for a light breakfast, fellowship and devotions.

### ***Single Women's "Hearts for Christ" Dinner ~ December 15, 4:00pm***

Single women ages 18 and up, join us for a Christmas fellowship dinner at Kristi Snow's home - 918 Maryland Ave, Coos Bay. The cost is \$10 per person and includes soup, salad, bread and dessert. To RSVP or for more information, please contact Barb Miles at 541-888-0398.

### ***SAM's Potluck Luncheon ~ December 20, Noon***

For those ages 55 and up, please join us for lunch, worship and encouragement from the Word at our SAM's potluck. We don't want to miss you—if you need a ride, contact the church office at least 24 hours in advance and we will arrange a ride for you.