

Open with prayer

Review Bible memorization verses:

Struggles from this past week, and/or areas of expected upcoming struggle.

Review: What are some things you've learned in your Bible reading this week?

Christian Character

Romans 12:2-3

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may approve what the will of God is, that which is good and pleasing and perfect. 3 For through the grace given to me I say to each one among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound thinking, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

What is the way we should think about our surroundings as Christians? (v2) What does this say about our place with regard to other Christians? What about other non-Christians? (both same v3)

Philippians 2:3-16

3 doing nothing from selfish ambition or vain glory, but with humility of mind regarding one another as more important than yourselves, 4 not merely looking out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this way of thinking in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although existing in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a slave, by being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore, God also highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that EVERY TONGUE WILL CONFESS that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father. 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. 14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing, 15 so that you will be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to boast because I did not run in vain nor labor in vain.

How is this mindset in opposition to what the world teaches? (vv3-11). How should we be considering the work we do that we know no one else will be checking up on after us? (vv12-13) What does this say about our attitudes toward the work that we don't like to do, or that we feel has been unfairly put on us? (vv14-16)

Galatians 5:22-26

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become those with vain glory, challenging one another, envying one another.

What do these verses allow us to do for ourselves? For other non-believers? For other believers who are living according to these verses? For other believers who are NOT living according to these verses?

Acts 20:35

"In everything I showed you that by laboring in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

What is this verse stating that we give? (it isn't restricting the giving to anything – it applies to the giving we can provide wherever there is weakness and need)

2 Peter 1:5–7

5 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, 6 and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, 7 and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.

What will the world say in response to the person demonstrating this character? What will our families say (think)? What will others in the church (say, think, be forced to consider for their own faith)?

Romans 5:3–5

3 And not only this, but we also boast in our afflictions, knowing that affliction brings about perseverance; 4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; 5 and hope does not put to shame, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Two things: Our attitude in response to affliction – “boasting” (or testifying to what we know God is accomplishing), and our awareness of what the affliction brings about (vv3-4)

1 Samuel 16:7

But Yahweh said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but Yahweh looks at the heart.”

**Read the chapter for context*

What does this mean for our consideration of what we see in others? Do these verses suggest that it isn’t just about what we project, or is it also about what we project toward others of how we perceive them?

James 1:2–8

2 Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith brings about perseverance. 4 And let perseverance have its perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. 5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But he must ask in faith, doubting nothing, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, 8 being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

James and Paul obviously kept similar counsel. What part of this address of character tells us what we are to do as we endure (persevere), *when we lack wisdom (v5 – because we will lack wisdom, and God promises to provide it when we seek Him)

New Bible memory verse for the week:

James 1:2–4 *Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith brings about perseverance. And let perseverance have its perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

Close with prayer