

## Accountability Questions

- **Did you spend 5 minutes a day at least 5 days last week reading the Bible?**
- **Did you share a God story with a non-believer this week?**
- **Did you have spend time alone with God this week?**
- **What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?**



# **Christian Faith Fellowship**

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**- We are not a perfect church**

**-We are not a perfect people**

**-We are here because we know we need  
God's help and He has provided this help  
through Jesus Christ our Lord!**

**CFF exists to Know Christ and to make Him  
Known!**

## New Beginnings

- There is a hope that the New Year brings with it... to put something behind us and start fresh
- We make plans, dreams, and hope for change in a variety of areas in our life...
- We planned this Sunday as a baptism celebration for the very same reason... the NEW opportunities and the open door to the future that this day holds
- The truth is – many make plans to start \_\_\_\_\_ & make a change in their life but rarely follow thru

- A brief search tells you only 8% of people who make New Years resolutions actually succeed!

(New Years Resolution Statistics – Statistic Brain

[www.statisticbrain.com/new-years-resolution-statistics/](http://www.statisticbrain.com/new-years-resolution-statistics/))

- We all know this and therefore many don't even try anymore or feel defeated before they start
- But – is it possible we don't succeed because we have unrealistic goals?
- I want to offer a goal that we will name “baby steps”
- Something we can accomplish realistically and it can make a change in our life!

## Philippians 3

8 Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ 9 and become one with him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith. 10 I want to know Christ and experience the mighty

power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death, 11 so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead!

- The Apostle Paul had 1 goal and it was his life goal – to live for Christ!
- He realized everything else was passing but that 1 thing was what mattered and therefore he determined to live his life in such a way to obtain the ultimate goal!

- If you are here I believe you have the same goal as Paul – to live for Jesus BUT you often find yourself failing and falling and the enemy is there to tell you “*you’re not good enough,*” “*you can’t do it*” and other lies!

12 I don’t mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. 13 No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it,

but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

- The main point we want to see here is the key to Paul living the life for Christ – “*Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on...*”
- How many of us are failing today because we are living in the past??? (Paul had not yet obtained)
- We own yesterdays defeat as if it’s prophetic over our life today!



- **Past failure does not make a defeated today or tomorrow!!**
- The people God used in the Bible had defeated pasts!
- Jacob was a liar and deceiver
- Moses was a murderer and couldn't speak in front of people...
- Rahab was a prostitute
- David committed adultery & murder
- Jonah ran away from God's call to preach
- Peter denied knowing Jesus 3X
- Paul arrested & killed Christians etc.

- **We also use other excuses: too old, too young, I'm nobody, too poor, too many failures, etc.**
- Abraham & Sarah were too old
- Moses couldn't talk right (80 years old)
- Gideon was too insignificant, even in his own family
- Jeremiah said he didn't know how to speak and he was too young
- Zechariah & Elizabeth were too old
- Peter & John were uneducated laborers
- Timothy was too young
- **We can always find a flaw to use as an excuse!**

- We need to adopt Paul’s statement: “*Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on...*” and begin today living as the godly people Jesus died to make us!

**2 Corinthians 5:17** *This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!*

- We are not that failure of the past... we can have a new beginning with God today!
- Let’s begin with baby steps and start a fresh journey with God – becoming all He planned for us in Christ

# Action Steps

- Do you want a fresh start with God this year?
- Realistic Goals for spiritual growth:
  - Instead of Reading the Bible in a year – read the N.T. in a year (Reading Guide in the lobby)
  - Begin a morning prayer time of 3-5 minutes creating a list every month of those things you will commit to pray for! (family, friends, workplace, church, missions, government, schools, etc)
  - Begin January by joining a small group/(discipleship)
  - Begin a Spiritual journal - evidence of God at work
  - Begin regular giving to God's work (3%?, 5%? Etc.)