

## Getting Started

*Shout for joy to God, all the earth! Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious. Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies cringe before you. All the earth bows down to you; they sing praise to you, they sing the praises of your name." (Psalm 66:1-4)*

Based on all that Pastor Lee shared as we look back on 2018, take time to make HIS praise glorious regarding the awesome deeds that He accomplished through our church family last year. Pick a few events and share how you saw the Lord work through it for His glory.

- 23 baptisms
- 512 women participated in the Women's Conference
- 80 men participated in the Lake Champion Men's Weekend in September
- 43 small groups connecting more than 400 people in community
- Growth in Kizami and Student ministries
- 23 new adult leaders in Student Ministry
- CF United Events
- Livestreaming sermons
- 1586 OCC shoe boxes
- 120 children sponsored in Senegal through MIS
- 45 soccer clubs sponsored through Sports Friends
- 8 short-term mission trips; 142 people participated
- New website
- \$30,000 raised for church construction in the village of Nalgene; Literacy classroom constructed
- Mortgage paid down to \$1.1 million (could we pay this off in 2019?)
- \$4,000 grant to fund Pastor Conference in Senegal with GTN
- \$6,000 grant for orphanage in Transnistria
- \$5,000 grant for Good Works
- \$10,000 grant for ministry in China
- \$12,000 grant to BACC
- \$5,000 grant to Chester County Women's Services
- \$5,000 grant the Chester County Gospel Mission (Prison work)
- \$2,000 grant to City Gate
- We donated a 15-passenger van to Good Samaritan Shelter
- \$51,000 given through Helps Ministry
- General Fund budget: \$2.4 million, average weekly giving per attendee of \$43/attendee

What excites you most about 2019? Share one or more ways that you desire to grow spiritually in 2019.

Discuss some ways that your small group can dig into the study of Romans this year. What topics in Romans are you looking forward to studying, memorizing, meditating on, putting into practice in 2019?

## Discussion

### *The CS Lewis Institute – Annual Spiritual Check-up*

Each year many of us will go through a physical check-up, perhaps do a financial check-up at year's end or at tax time, and perhaps do a performance review at our workplace. But how often do we take time to review our spiritual life?

Those who are saved by grace are called to grow in grace (2 Peter 3:18). As disciples of Jesus, we are to live a life of love - love for God and love for our neighbor, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Too often, in the busyness of our day-to-day lives, we let other priorities crowd out the two highest priorities Jesus gave us.

The following questions are designed to help you examine your spiritual life over the past year and to prayerfully seek God's help in areas where you sense He desires you to grow in the New Year.

As Paul prayed for the Ephesians, we pray for you - that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might (Ephesians 1:17-19).

1. *Do I love God with all of my heart soul and mind?*

2. *How is my personal relationship with God?*

- Do I have a growing desire to spend more time with God? Am I spending appropriate time praying, reading and meditating on the Word?
- Am I growing in my desire to obey and please God? Do I obey out of gratitude for God's love? Or from guilt or fear?
- Are there areas I am holding back from God? Which ones? Why?
- Am I more aware of the sins in my life? Do I repent on a daily basis and receive forgiveness and cleansing from God? Have I fully, truthfully repented of all past and current sins?

3. *Am I actively serving God?*

- Am I volunteering at church?
- Am I praying regularly for the pastor, staff, missionaries and volunteers?
- Am I seeking to make others feel welcome in my church?
- Am I doing my job with excellence?
- Am I reaching out to those around me?
- Am I praying for my work colleagues and people in my neighborhood?

4. *Am I growing in my desire and actions to give sacrificially to God's work in the church, in caring for the poor, and in other ministries? Am I teaching my children about sacrificial giving and putting God before materialistic desires?*

5. *Am I living in humility before God, my family, friends and co-workers?*

6. *Is there evidence of grace growing in my life? Do I thank God every day for his love, grace and mercy and saving me from what I deserve? Am I seeing evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in my life (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control)?*

- *Am I learning to see others through the mind of Christ? Am I treating others with the same grace God has shown me?*

7. *Do I love my neighbor?*

8. *Am I loving my family as I should?*

- *Husbands, are you loving your wives? How, specifically?*

- *Wives, are you respecting your husbands? How, specifically?*

- *Parents - are we teaching our children the Bible, how to pray, and how to please God?*

- *Children, are you honoring your parents? How, specifically?*

- *Am I managing my time in a way that reflects God's priorities and honors my family relationships? What specific changes are needed?*

- *Are there any outside influences that are harming my family relationships? If so, what will I do about them?*

9. *Am I forgiving others? Is there anyone among my family, friends, neighbors or co-workers that I refuse to forgive? Do I fully trust that God has forgiven my sins?*

10. *Am I growing in fellowship with other believers?*

- *Am I part of a small group? Is it making a difference in the lives of participants?*

- *Do I have a godly mentor to help me grow in my walk with Christ?*

- *Am I mentoring/discipling a newer believer?*

11. *Have I personally witnessed to anyone in the past year? In my neighborhood? In my workplace? Am I prepared to share my testimony? To share the Gospel?*

- *Am I fervently praying for and planning opportunities to witness in this coming year?*

- *Am I being salt and light in my neighborhood, workplace and social groups? How, specifically?*

12. *Am I focusing part of my time and money to help the poor and disadvantaged? Am I teaching my children about the importance of helping the poor? How?*

Jesus says that if we love Him, we will obey Him (Jn. 14.15), and He calls us to grow in grace and love. Do you have a plan for growing in your love for God and love for your neighbor for this next year? Will you prayerfully prepare one before the end of the year?

### **Prayer**

Pray for the spiritual growth of each group member for the coming year.