

# BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



## FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

*Live the Way of Love*  
Romans 12:9-21; 13:8-10

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

## Leaders' Responsibilities:

**Important:** Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a Unit of sessions needs to have access to the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study". That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

## Prior to this Coming Session:

### **Gathering Time Leader:**

Have a large sheet of paper for people to write prayer requests.

### **Bible Study Leader:**

Have sheets of notepaper and pencils available for each participant.

Arrange to have a chalkboard, white board or 3 large sheets of newsprint available along with appropriate markers, chalk, or pencils.

Youth will require heart-shaped doilies or paper cut into heart shapes. A few valentines such as children exchange should also be provided.

### **Worship Time Leader:**

Ask someone who has not recently participated in the worship service to read the scripture before taking up the offering. Ask them ahead of time and give them a copy of the verse or tell them the reference (Isaiah 53:7) so they can practice reading ahead of time. A copy of Isaiah 53:7 is found on the final page of this session.

### **Music Sources:**

**Take Time to Be Holy**, *The Worship Hymnal* #587; CCLI #93748 Public Domain

**Freely, Freely**, *The Worship Hymnal* #627; CCLI #13209

**How Deep the Father's Love for Us**, *The Worship Hymnal* #101; CCLI # 1558110

**Gathering Time:** (Suggested time: 15 minutes)***Live the Way of Love*****Focal Text**

Romans 12:9-21; 13:8-10

**Background Text**

Romans 12:9-21; 13:8-14

**Main Idea**

Living in response to God's grace calls for shaping all aspects of our life by love.

**Question to Explore**

If we truly lived by love, how would we live?

**Teaching Aim**

To lead participants to identify at least one specific way in which they will put God's love into practice in their lives.

**Gathering together:**

As people arrive direct them to the board or paper provided and ask them to list one prayer request for a person other than themselves.

**First thoughts:**

James Dobson shares wonderful stories in his daily broadcast around the world. He related the story of a young man who deeply loved a young lady who did not return the favour. She rejected his every advance. He decided to write love letters to her. At first he wrote her every day. She made no effort to acknowledge the letters. He decided to increase the communications to three letters a day. Still she did not respond to him, but she married the mail carrier! Love has so many meanings. Today we will explore how we can live the way of love.

Sing **Take Time to be Holy**. Or, ask children to suggest a song about God or Jesus that has the word "love" in it.

Remind people that coming together for worship means setting aside time to be with God's people, sharing in one another's lives and expressing care and concern. A statement in our Bible study encourages us to be faithful in prayer as a means of expressing love for one another. Because our lives are often disrupted by concerns and burdens for others it is important that we show our love for one another by praying together for these needs. Using the list of prayer requests ask people to pray short sentence prayers for each of these expressed needs.

### **Closing the Gathering Time:**

Prayer is one way of expressing our love for fellow Christians. Today we will learn of various practical ways we can demonstrate to others the difference Jesus' love and forgiveness has made in our lives.

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

# 2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

**Note to the Bible Study Leader:** Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

## Teacher Preparation

### *Live the Way of Love*

#### **Focal Text**

Romans 12:9-21; 13:8-10

#### **Background Text**

Romans 12:9-21; 13:8-14

#### **Main Idea**

Living in response to God’s grace calls for shaping all aspects of our life by love.

#### **Question to Explore**

If we truly lived by love, how would we live?

#### **Teaching Aim**

To lead participants to identify at least one specific way in which they will put God’s love into practice in their lives.

#### **Introduction to your personal study:**

A large, multigenerational family with four autos park two of them in their driveway at night. The other two cars are parked in front of various neighbours. They are parked carelessly and block the newspaper distributor from delivering the daily paper, the postal carrier from leaving the mail, and the recycler from picking up refuse, newspaper, and yard debris.

You have asked the inconsiderate drivers to park in a manner that will leave access for the various services to do their tasks. They have not responded. What should be the action of a Christian in this situation?

#### **Background:**

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study**”, found at the beginning of this Unit. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you as well.

Christian leaders and teachers most often focus on 1 Corinthians chapter 13 when preaching and teaching on the theme of love. That scripture passage presents a clear, concise, and compelling study of God's love as it should be lived out in our lives. However, many other passages also teach about this concept, emotion, attitude, and the actions called “love”. As we know, many types of love exist. Some say that the four common words for love found in the common Greek language used in the New Testament consist of less than half of the terms used in more classical Greek. All describe an array of the things mentioned above as well as combinations of physical attraction, sexual desire, friendship, loyalty, family ties, self-sacrifice for another, etc. The writers of the Bible use the word and derivations of it several hundreds of times in describing aspects of love. Your preparation for this study concentrates on the clearly described theme that you see below: “Inter attitudes and Outward Actions of Love.” As you focus on Romans 9, compliment your study by reviewing John 3:16, 1 Corinthians 13, Jesus’ exhortations to his disciples to love others, and other passages where God’s love is taught and described.

## **Focusing on the Meaning:**

### **Inner Attitudes and Outward Actions of Love** (Romans 12:9-21; 13:8)

Verses 1-8 share how Christians are to give their lives as living sacrifices to God.

**Romans 12:9** Verse 9 summarizes this responsibility into one word, “love.” Love was not to be pretense or just a word. It is to be a love that is not make-believe. It was not to be like the kisses of an enemy. Fake love is not love at all; true love is genuine. Fake love is counterfeit. We are to shun ourselves away from evil. We are to habitually avoid evil. Instead we are to attach ourselves or glue ourselves to that which is good. We are to hate even that which has the appearance of evil. We are not only to do what is good, but also to cleave to it. It is to be an intentional choice, a real desire to care for, and a constant choice to keep going on.

**Romans 12:10** Brotherly love, the natural affection between those related by birth, was to characterize the relationship between children of God. It was to be more than the human family connection, but that of spiritual connection with fellow Christians. The care expressed for members of one’s own family should be practiced within the context of the family of God. It should even be stronger than human relationships because the tie Christians have for one another is stronger than the blood relationship. Preference should be given to one another. We are to feel and to offer consideration for others. There should be no competing for superiority. We would give others the pre-eminence. We are not to seek honour for ourselves but to give honour to others.

**Romans 12:11** There is to be no let down from our fervour to serve God. We are to maintain our spiritual glow. We are not to hesitate, to be slow, to be “pokey,” to be

sluggish in our service for Christ. Service is to be diligent. We should serve with a continuing zeal and with an attitude of glowing fervour. The phrase “serving the Lord” has two possible meanings. One is the obvious one. The main Greek letters for “lord” and “time” are quite similar. Some scholars feel that the phrase should read, “serving the time and season.” With this wording the phrase would mean to put stress on the critical current time.

**Romans 12:12** The reason for being joyful is hope. Hope then causes a person to be patient in tribulations and problems. Prayer is instantaneous, tireless, and persevering.

**Romans 12:13** The emphasis moves from the inner life of the individual to our treatment of others. This inner life determines how we treat others. Paul indicates that Christians were to share with their brothers and sisters in Christ. He could be referring to the collection that he was advocating for the saints in Jerusalem. Pursuing hospitality was more than entertaining friends. It was caring for the needs of guests who might be strangers. It was not to be restricted to those occasions when it was requested. Christians were to look for opportunities of providing hospitality.

**Romans 12:14** This is not a quotation from the words of Jesus but it is a reminder of those words from the Sermon on the Mount. The positive admonition to bless those who hurt you is followed by the negative—to not desire evil to come upon them. Christ is our example in this. If he were as quick to hurt and to take offense and as slow to forgive as we are, then none of us would be saved.

**Romans 12:15** One leader reflects that it is much more difficult for us to rejoice with the one who is rejoicing than it is to weep with those in sorrow. Envy and jealousy of the one who is happy and successful come easily. None of us want to experience situations that cause mourning yet we respond to concrete human need fairly quickly.

**Romans 12:16** Christians are to live at peace with one another. We are not to stir up quarrels. We are to work to preserve the peace. There is to be no caste system in the brotherhood. Humility is the opposite of self-righteousness. The humble person gives himself a low evaluation before God and others. We are not to seek honour, preference, or recognition. We are not to be condescending to others but to see them as being on the same level as we are before Christ.

**Romans 12:17** The thoughts of Jesus reappear. Revenge was not to be the path of the Christian who was hurt. Domination and victory was not to be the aim in conflicts. Vengeance belongs in the hands of God. The enemies that seek to do harm and hurt should receive no ill from us but all the good we can do. Obedience to Christ means living differently in the world. Not only are we to do what is right; we are to study and predict what will be credible in the eyes of men.

**Romans 12:18** Our actions are to lead toward peace with all people. We are not to disturb or bother others. That is in our control. It is possible for others to seek to disturb or bother us. That is not in our power. We have power on only one side of the affair.



The “if possible” depends on the other person. If hostility comes up, it should not begin with the Christians.

**Romans 12:19** Brothers are not to retaliate. Leave room for God’s anger. We are not to interfere with God’s prerogative by seeking vengeance on our own. The word “wrath” is generally applied. Have nothing to do with getting even, but leave wrath to God. God says that vengeance is his responsibility - that he will pass righteous judgment.

**Romans 12:20** “Heaping coals of fire” on an enemy is not a way to “get even.” When we provide for our enemy’s needs we make him very uncomfortable and he can feel a burning sense of shame. By offering relief from his distress we can remove hostility most effectively.

**Romans 12:21** As the Christian encounters evil, he is not to be overwhelmed by it. He is to overcome it, not by returning evil, but giving what is good. Responding to evil with evil will give birth to even more evil. Evil cannot destroy evil. Only good can ultimately destroy evil.

**Romans 13:8** Pay any unpaid debt except the undying debt of love. A debt of the world is cancelled, nullified, voided, discharged, and set aside when the proper payment is made. A debt that the Christian owes and can never be paid off is that of love. It is to be continually paid. It is always with us. Payment is to be made every day as long as we live. This is a permanent debt. This debt of love is owed not only to fellow Christians but also to all people. It is not confined to the Christian fellowship but to any in need.

### **Love Summarized (Romans 13:9-10)**

**Romans 13:9** This is an example of love. Four expressions of love based on negatives are given and balanced by one positive quality of love. That quality is “to love your neighbour as yourself.” This is parallel to Jesus’ words in Mark 12:29-31 where he says that the greatest commandment is to love God with all our hearts and to love our neighbour as ourselves. There can be a love for self that is acceptable, and is not selfishness. One example of someone who is our neighbour is found in the story of the Good Samaritan.

**Romans 13:10** Here is a summary of the aspects of love stated in negative terms as listed in the previous verse. This summary is also given in the negative. It could be said, “If you don’t want it to happen to you, don’t do it to your neighbour.” Love does not withhold itself from one who needs it nor does it do evil to others. Love is at the heart and soul of the law. It is the fulfillment, the completion, of the law.

### **Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:**

Putting love into practice seems to be such a simple thing. However, Paul tells us that the success of living out love, especially God's kind of love depends on a profound understanding of how God's love differs in kind as well a quality and quantity from the love that is mostly understood.

### **For Personal Reflection:**

1. **What have I learned from this study?**
  
2. **What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?**
  
3. **What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?**

## **Bible Study Plan** (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

### ***Live the Way of Love***

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

**Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.**

#### **Focal Text**

Romans 12:9-21; 13:8-10

#### **Background Text**

Romans 12:9-21; 13:8-14

#### **Main Idea**

Living in response to God's grace calls for shaping all aspects of our life by love.

#### **Question to Explore**

If we truly lived by love, how would we live?

#### **Teaching Aim**

To lead participants to identify at least one specific way in which they will put God's love into practice in their lives.

#### **Connect with Life:**

Discuss the following with your group and get response on each question as they are asked. List a word from each response on a sheet of newsprint or white board.

How might a person respond when a car cuts in front of him suddenly?

How do we feel when a person gets in a checkout line ahead of us?

How do we feel when a church or group chooses someone else's solution rather than our own?

How do we react when it seems that we are doing more than our share of the work?

What is our response when someone else gets the credit for something we have done?

Have the group look over the list. On it you may have some of these responses:

Retaliate

Pray for them

Anger

Jealousy

Frustration

Get even

Other emotions and actions

Share this: Our inner attitudes and our outer actions are usually intertwined and related. What we think and feel usually affects our behaviour. God is interested in both inner belief and feelings as well as behaviour as it relates to others. Today we will examine what the Bible commands in these areas. Obedience to Christ means that the disciple thinks and acts differently from unbelievers. The Bible says that the obedient Christian must think and operate from a viewpoint of love.

### **Guide the Study:**

Say: Let's read Romans 12:9-21 and 13:8 to see the qualities of love.

Request someone to read the passage.

Give each person a sheet of paper. Ask them to make a line from top to bottom down the center of the sheet. Have them write "Attitude /Thoughts" over the left column and "Outward Actions" at the top of the right column. As the group discusses each phrase, direct them to write the Bible phrase in one column or the other. Let the group help decide on which list each particular phrase should go. Some phrases will appropriately fit on both lists.

Reread v. 9. Ask: Where should "Love must be sincere" go?

Read to the group the discussion of verse 9 in your "**Teacher Preparation**" section.

Then ask: Where should "Hate what is evil" go?

Add: Where should "cling to what is good" go?

After the entire scripture passage has been analyzed, call for a response to these questions:

Which commands were in the “Attitude/Thoughts” column exclusively.

Which commands were in the “Outward Actions” column exclusively?

Which commands seemed to fit in both columns? Discuss.

Seek an answer: What kind of conclusion can you make from this analysis? (Thoughts/beliefs are related very closely to outward behaviour).

Reinforce their conclusions, if needed with this thought: Outward behaviour alone is not sufficient in living. It must come from the thoughts, beliefs, and feelings of each individual. Love must be the motivation.

Have the church express thinking on this: Which of the attitudes and behaviors are listed as optional? (None of them).

Read Romans 13:9-10.

Write on your white board: “Do not commit adultery,” “do not murder,” “do not steal,” “do not covet” “plus other commandments” EQUALS “Love your neighbour as yourself.”

Urge an answer: What does v. 10 say that love is? (The fulfillment of the law).

## **Encourage Application:**

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to go away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

To apply this teaching, raise these questions:

Based on love, what should be the attitude and actions when a car cuts in front of us suddenly?

What should be our disposition and response when a person breaks in a checkout line ahead of us?

Based on love, what should we feel and do when a church or group chooses someone else's solution rather than our own?

What should our thoughts and behaviour be when it seems that we are doing more than our share of the work?

What should our reaction be when someone else gets the credit for something we have done?

Finally, encourage each one in the group to determine decisions to this: What one specific way can you put love in practice this week? Think of a situation at home, at work, at school, at recreation that merits your applying love to it.

Pray or have a group member pray: God help us in this specific situation to have the attitude, spirit, and action that will express your love.

<p><b>Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time.</b> Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.</p>
--

# Youth!!! Take Ten

## Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

### *Live the Way of Love*

Romans 12:9-21; 13:8-10

**A youth will lead the following activity and comments.** No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

### **Love and/or Valentines**

From the children's valentines, read some of the phrases aloud. Ask yourselves how you would feel if you received valentines like these. Are these sentiments sincere? Do they have real meaning? Do they bring joy to the people who give and receive them?

Distribute the heart shaped paper or doilies and pencils. Look at the passage in Romans 12:9-21 and each of you select one or several ways that Christians should express love. Using a separate heart for each, list the various ways of showing love for others (hate evil, be devoted, don't be proud, etc).

Ask yourselves which of these qualities you appreciate most? Which do you need to develop in your own hearts? Which is easy for you?

Pray that you will demonstrate your love for God by allowing the Holy Spirit to remind you of ways you are to love others.

**Worship Time** (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***Live the Way of Love***  
**Romans 12:9-21; 13:8-10****Beginning the Service:**

This lesson encourages Christians to have meaningful participation in one another's lives. If the group does not commonly gather for fellowship meals it might be appropriate to discuss the option of sharing a meal together.

**Offering:**

Have someone read the scripture who has not participated in the worship time recently. Be sure to ask them ahead of time to participate.

**Isaiah 63:7**

**I will tell of the kindnesses of the Lord,  
and deeds for which he is to be praised,  
according to all the Lord has done for us –  
yes, the many good things he has done for the house of Israel,  
according to his compassion, and many kindnesses.**

**Praying for the World:**

A Christian family learned about love and friendship when their children were small. In fact their daughter was only six weeks old when a youth group from a distant city attended a conference near their home. Many were billeted with church families but one of the chaperones had no one to stay with that Sunday night. The dad of the family offered him a bed in their small, crowded home. It was a stifling hot evening. The mother was not feeling hospitable, and their small son was still adjusting to his new sister. It was not the time for them to welcome a strange visitor. But it was God's time. That casual visit blossomed into a friendship of nearly 30 years and remains vibrant despite thousands of miles between the two families. Our expressions of Christian love and service often pay rich and unanticipated rewards.



It is apparent from our study today that we cannot fulfill our role in God's Kingdom if we withhold love from others. God has freely and bountifully demonstrated his love for us through our Lord Jesus Christ. Our responsibility is to let others see what God's love is like by the way we behave toward them.

Sing **Freely, Freely**, *The Worship Hymnal* #627; CCLI #13209

**How Deep the Father's Love for Us**, *The Worship Hymnal* #101; CCLI # 1558110

Pray that, like the Good Samaritan, we will be good neighbours modeling love to those whose lives we touch.

## Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

## The Diligent Christian Romans 13:11-14

Romans 13:11-14 from the Amplified version reads, “(v.11) ***Besides this you know what [a critical] hour this is, how it is high time now for you to wake up out of your sleep – rouse to reality. For salvation (final deliverance) is nearer to us now than when we first believed—adhered to, trusted in, and relied on Christ, the Messiah. (v.12) The night is far gone [and] the day is almost here. Let us then drop (fling away) the works and deeds of darkness and put on the [full] armor of light. (v. 13) Let us live and conduct ourselves honorably and becomingly as in the [open light of] day; not in immorality and debauchery (sensuality and licentiousness), not in quarreling and jealousy. (v. 14) But clothe yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, and make no provision for [indulging] the flesh—put a stop to thinking about the evil cravings of your physical nature—to [gratify its] desires (lusts).***” (Amplified Bible)

### Introduction:

A few years ago a family had a small dog that they kept on a chain so she wouldn't jump the fence. They also had a kitten that loved to antagonize the dog. The kitten knew where the chain would stop the dog when she charged the cat. The dog would not remember that just yesterday the chain had stopped her abruptly just before she got to the pesky kitten. It happened almost every day with the same result. One day the father was working in the backyard and saw the kitten as she came around the corner.

©2001-2010, Eternal Interactive, LLC, All Rights Reserved. [www.homechurchonline.com](http://www.homechurchonline.com)  
*Live the Way of Love – 04-13-11-en*

17

Unless otherwise noted, scripture taken from the Holy Bible, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. All rights reserved throughout the world. Used by permission of International Bible Society.

Neither she nor the dog noticed that he unhooked the chain from the post. On cue, the dog ran for the cat. To the surprise of both of them, the dog ran right past the cat. The dog had a puzzled look while fear engulfed the cat. The cat had been so sure of herself that she forgot to be diligent in dealing with a larger opponent.

It is always prudent for everyone to be diligent in life. The early bird gets the worm because she is diligent. The late bird could starve because all the worms have been taken. Paul explains how a Christian can be diligent in life.

## **I. The diligent Christian is an aware Christian.**

Paul writes, “**...You know what [a critical] hour this is (v.11).**” (Amplified Bible) Tornadoes are dangerous storms people in some areas face each year. The weather can be pleasant and enjoyable. Thunderstorms can come in a line moving swiftly. Tornadoes can be embedded in some of those storms. Wise people watch the gathering storms and realize that time is crucial for human safety. Preparations must be made quickly to face the impending danger. It is important to know what time it is.

A lady set her clock one night, not noticing that the hour hand was not where it should have been. The alarm went off and she faithfully prepared breakfast. She hadn't slept well and was unusually tired. She woke her husband up to breakfast at 2:00 A.M. They were neither one hungry or rested after a rather short night. She had cooked breakfast so they ate it and went back to bed until time to get up. Now they both set an alarm so they will be aware of the time. A Christian must be aware that time is critical because the day of our “final deliverance” is near. Christ is coming soon. We must make preparations quickly.

Paul continues in verse 11, “**...it is high time now for you to wake up out of your sleep – rouse to reality.**” (Amplified Bible) How often do sleepy drivers cause automobile crashes? How many people sit to watch a movie and miss the exciting ending because they fall asleep? How many people fail to see dangerous weather approaching because they are asleep? We must be awake because the return of Christ is near.

## **II. A Christian demonstrates his diligence through action.**

He casts off deeds of darkness. Paul lists some of those deeds in verse 13: “**...revelling (carousing) and drunkenness, not in immorality and debauchery (sensuality and licentiousness), not in quarrelling and jealousy.**” (Amplified Bible) Can you imagine any more destructive sins to our societies than alcohol, smoking, and drugs? They have laid waste to many lives around the world. The diligent Christian will cast off such deeds to honour Christ.

He also walks in a way that Christ is glorified. Paul also reminds us in verse 13-14, “**Let us live and conduct ourselves honourably and becomingly...and make no provision for [indulging] the flesh...**” (Amplified Bible) Can you think of some things

we can do to honour Christ? Pray? Read God's Word daily? Live purely? Love God? Love each other?

### **III. A Christian demonstrates his diligence by what he wears.**

He puts on light. Paul says in verse 12, “**...put on the [full] armour of light.**” (Amplified Bible) A child does not like to walk in the darkness. It can be frightening. When a Christian is not living a life that honours Christ, he likes to hide it in the dark. If we put on the armour of light, we don't have anything to hide from God or man.

He puts on Christ. In verse 14 Paul writes, “**...clothe yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah...**” (Amplified Bible) A central message of scripture is Jesus is Lord. God's Will for each of us is that we become like Christ. That is what Paul is saying here. A t-shirt carried the message, “Be patient with me, God isn't through with me yet!” We are constantly striving to become more like Christ.

### **Call to Commitment:**

God wants us to be diligent Christians. We can accomplish this by being aware of the shortness of the time we have. We must forsake darkness for the light of Christ to His glory. We also are to allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives to make us in the image of Christ.

### **Concluding the Service:**

**Read:** In the 1970's a piece of literature called “*The Desiderata*” was very popular. Its beautiful words parallel much of our scripture lesson and inspired many to live better lives.

It ends with these words:

Therefore be at peace with God,  
whatever you conceive Him to be,  
and whatever your labors and aspirations,  
in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery, and broken dreams,  
it is still a beautiful world.  
Be cheerful.  
Strive to be happy.

(by Max Ehrmann, circa 1927, Bell & Son Publishing, LLC, New York, NY)

However, the poem expresses the world's concept, and not Christ's, on what it means to be at peace with others and with God “as you conceive Him”. The motivation is self,

not service to the King of Kings. The motivation for Christians to live righteously is to serve our Saviour, not to gain the approval of the world.

Ask someone to pray before you go that each of you would live this week more aware of Christ's presence in your lives and diligent to serve Christ in everything you do.

Copy for a person to read during the Worship Time when you give your offering to God:

**Isaiah 63:7**

**I will tell of the kindnesses of the Lord,  
and deeds for which he is to be praised,  
according to all the Lord has done for us –  
yes, the many good things he has done for the house of Israel,  
according to his compassion, and many kindnesses.**