

WHAT'S NEXT

SHARPEN OUR FOCUS

Ephesians 3:21: *to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen.*

LIFE GROUP / PERSONAL STUDY:

There are times that we, as a church and as individuals, need to check in on our priorities to be sure that our focus is right. The issue may not be bad things versus good things, but perhaps the good may not be the best. Therefore, we need to sharpen our focus, for our beliefs determine our behavior. Let's make sure our focus is on living a purposeful and intentional life true to our beliefs. The Met Church community has a goal of loving those that don't know Jesus and helping those that are hurting. We want to connect people to God and to one another. What's Next? Let's fix our focus on achieving God's intentions for us.

Read Ephesians 4:1-3:

1A) Describe the conduct that Paul finds worthy of God's calling.

1B) PERSONAL: How well are you doing as a representative? Note the behaviors that come easily for you. Brainstorm ways to sharpen your focus on areas you struggle with.

Read Ephesians 4:4-6:

2A) List what unites all believers.

2B) How does Paul describe our One God and Father?

2C) PERSONAL: Unity does not just happen; we have to work at it. Picture a group that you deal with—perhaps your life group, your bible study group, or a group of friends you attend church with. Now think about the different personalities and behaviors of those in the group. Describe how those differences unite you and benefit you as a group of believers.

Read Ephesians 4:7-8:

3) What has God given each one of us?

Read Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:8-11:

4A) List the gifts described in these verses.

4B) PERSONAL: What do you think your spiritual gifts are? Consider taking an online spiritual gifts test if you are uncertain. (<https://spiritualgiftstest.com>; <https://mintools.com/spiritual-gifts-test.htm>)

5) PERSONAL: Each believer has God-given abilities that can strengthen the whole body of believers. How are you utilizing your strengths to contribute to the church? Consider ways that you could make more of an impact.

Read Ephesians 4:11-13:

6A) What are the gifts that Christ gave to the church?

6B) What is their responsibility?

6C) What is the ultimate goal as stated in verse 13?

Read Ephesians 4:14-16:

7A) PERSONAL: How would you describe a mature Christian?

8) PERSONAL: In the sermon, Pastor Bill detailed four ways to sharpen our focus so that we are on track and aligned with God's intentions for the body of believers: our responsibility, our unity, our diversity, and our maturity. Have you given thought to the fact that when you accepted Christ as your savior you became part of a bigger picture? How is your faith impacted by this and in this regard, what's next?

ACT: In Ephesians, Paul explains how church members should live in order to bring about the unity that God wants. God has called us to be Jesus' representatives here on earth, living lives worthy of this as a result. We need to sharpen our focus on this privilege. Think of everything that Jesus was on this earth and is in heaven: humble, gentle, patient, kind, loving, peaceful, merciful, and understanding. People are watching the way we, as Christians, live. As you move throughout your day focus on allowing others to see Christ in you.

Daily Devotional: It always helps to look at the context of the passage. Then try to answer the following questions about the passage. Who is involved? What is going on? Where is the action taking place? When? How can this concept apply to my life? Why is it important? Also look for Commands, Warnings, and Examples to follow or not to follow.

- This week let's explore passages that emphasize putting our focus on God.

Monday:

Colossians 3:1 ISV

"Therefore, if you have been raised with the Messiah, keep focusing on the things that are above, where the Messiah is seated at the right hand of God."

Tuesday:

Philippians 3:13-14 NLT

"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."

Wednesday:

Isaiah 26:3-4 NLT

You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you! Trust in the LORD always, for the LORD God is the eternal Rock.

Thursday:

Psalms 91:14-15 ISV

Because he has focused his love on me, I will deliver him. I will protect him because he knows my name. When he calls out to me, I will answer him. I will be with him in his distress. I will deliver him, and I will honor him.

Friday:

Philippians 4:8 NIV

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.

Saturday:

Hebrews 3:1 NIV

Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest.

Sunday:

Hebrews 12:1-2 NIV

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

