



AUGUST 16, 2020 | **WITH GOD** | CRAIG REES

1 Chronicles 28:9 • Jeremiah 17:9-10 • Matthew 23:27-28 • James 2:18-22 • Revelation 2:23; 3:1

BIG IDEA — We are committed to developing personal and corporate habits for a dynamic relationship with God. We emphasize prayer and the study of the scriptures as critical habits that help us discern the plans and purposes of God for our lives.

- 1. Read James 2:18-22.** A living faith does not merely affirm doctrine but reflects the truths such doctrines affirm through accompanying actions. In what areas of life is it easier to believe a truth than to affirm that truth through actions? For example, I may believe that God will take care of me, but do I affirm that truth through acts of generosity?
- At Central we emphasize developing habits for a dynamic relationship with God, especially prayer and the study of Scripture. What habits help you maintain a dynamic relationship with God?
- Pastor Craig talked about “dating” and applied it to our relationship with God. While that’s an unusual term, for sure, dating was used to express the idea of dynamic and intimate relationship with Jesus. How does thinking of our devotional life in terms of “dating” change the “feel” of “quiet times.”? How do you “date” the Lord?
- Pastor Craig shared that one purpose of prayer and the study of Scripture is that they provide the fuel for living God’s way in God’s power. In light of today’s message, how would you answer the question of why prayer and the study of Scripture are so important to you?
- “Prayer and Scripture don’t prove we are faithful but prepare us for faithfulness!”* Just because we have our quiet time doesn’t mean that we are faithful! Has it ever been true for you that you considered yourself faithful because you had a morning devotional? Thinking back to James 2, why is the view of these two acts of devotion being acts of faithfulness inadequate?
- God wants outward actions, but He wants us to have the right motivations, attitudes, and meaning. **Read Matthew 23:27-28** and **Revelation 3:1**. How is it possible for us to “look alive” but be spiritually dead?
- Pastor Craig shared that we each have ways we manage our inner life. Have you ever given serious thought to how you manage your inner life? Would you be willing to share the critical practices that help you manage your inner life?
- Share one area that, during the COVID crisis, has witnessed your inner life becoming more reflective of your outward behavior—or the other way around, for that matter!
- What is your next step in developing a more dynamic relationship with God? How can your small group support you as you seek to deepen the control of the Spirit over your inner life?