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Crossroads Community Church

God is faithful all the time, Amen. The Lord does not slumber; His mercies are new every morning. Pastor Don prayed and shared announcements We prayed to honor our veterans and present forces for the freedoms we enjoy today. The worship team exalted the Lord with praise and stirred our hearts for the Spirit's message.

Pastor Don prayed and began, ?Can you determine a person's character by what they love?? he asked. Name three things that you love; your spouse, your family, God? What are three things you are working for, retirement, mortgage, or a new car? What are three things you think most often about, kids, Job or maybe coming to Church? We can all honestly admit that our thoughts are not always focused on God can't we? Emotions determine what we say, do and think. We all have had times when they did and have regretted it and others we haven't for example when you bought your first car or we asked our spouse to marry us; hopefully you did not regret it. What we focus on will determine how we will live. For where our treasure is there our hearts will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)

Pastor Don's message was about Holiness. What is Holiness? It is Christlikeness, it is total dedication, total obedience and surrender to Him, (Matthew 22:37-39, 1 Peter 1:15, 16). We are to be holy because He is holy. In our world today it is easier said than done. The Apostle Paul understood this when he wrote; I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. (Romans 7:15) We are faced with choices each day on what to do, say and think. A most important choice is following Jesus Christ. We need to purify ourselves, perfect our holiness but we can't do it alone.(2 Corinthians 7:1) Colossians 2:20-23 states that all human rules, that famous list of dos and don'ts in itself does not make us holy, it does not change our hearts. Certainly the list is something we ought to follow but we can't without Jesus changing our hearts, Holiness needs to be in our hearts. Only Christ can do this for us, knowing the list has no power to change our hearts or make us more acceptable to God. So we need to focus on Him, on good things, on things above not the evil things, (Colossians 3:1-8, James 4:7,8). Pastor Don demonstrated, he showed everyone a picture of a cute puppy, then he said close your eyes and don't think about the picture of the cute puppy?.by nature we all thought about the picture of the cute puppy. When we are told not to focus on something our mind gravitates to it despite not wanting to, it is the same with sin which is why we need to change our focus on things above; then we will be able to put to death our evil ways and rid ourselves of them. Throw off our old self with our past and clothe ourselves with Christ, (Colossians 3:26, 27). This is why we were so passionate about our faith when we first came to Jesus, He became our focus, He filled our emptiness with Himself and we naturally wanted to do what was right for him. He filled our thoughts, our time and our hearts instead of all the things we used to focus on to fill us up. Becoming holy is a two part collaboration between God and us. The first part is God's, he fills our hearts and changes us, and the second is ours, we co-operate by total surrender to his love. When we know and believe that He loves us we can move towards His calling in faith, even when others around us may try to discourage us or tempt us to give up by asking, ?Are you really thinking straight, are you sure, do you really need to be a devoted follower of Christ?? When we focus on Jesus, the choice is not ours, it is God's prompting through His Spirit that we obey in faith. So let us continue to believe in what He has called us to do and humbly ask, seek and knock and we will be rewarded for obeying. As Jesus promised ?Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled,? (Matthew 5:6). My friends until next week may the Lord fill your heart with His love?Shalom.