



FAST TRACKING OUR SUCCESS FOR 2016

OUR BEST YEAR EVER!

Faith – Choose faith over fear and failure. Starve our fear; Feed our faith.

"No one escapes pain, fear, and suffering. Yet from pain can come wisdom, from fear can come courage, from suffering can come strength."

We all need something to struggle against and to struggle for. The aim in life is not to avoid struggles, but to have the right ones; not to avoid worry, but to care about the right things; not to live without fear, but to confront worthy fears with force and passion. ~Eric Greitens

Action – Active obedience. New Habits and Rituals. Deuteronomy 6:4-7

"If we are intentional about what we repeatedly do, we practice who we want to become. And through practice, we can become who we want to be."

Your actions create feelings. Through deliberate action and thought, we can change how we feel. (Intentional living).

- **What is within your power to change?**

Share – Share our resources, our talents, our treasure. Share in generosity and abundance. Most of all; share the gospel in non-religious ways. Love people. Love the lost and the lacking.

Do something, Go someplace, Grow someone!

"There are choices made by individuals and small teams that shape the fate of the world and alter the course of human progress." ~Eric Greitens

(Apostle Paul and the Thessalonian Church)

Transform

We reflect on the wisdom of our past to see the potential of our future.

"Irrational Passion." Excellence is often irrational. Greatness is often strange. Beauty is often odd.

"We can seek to conquer what is selfish within us without eliminating what is unique about us.

To make the world excellent, great and beautiful, we may have to be a little irrational, a bit strange, and sometimes odd."

- **Colossians 3:12-17**

*Our Target: **GODLINESS** and **RIGHTEOUSNESS** **Matthew 5:1-11**

Godliness: The one true God, as creator and redeemer, requires an **active obedience** to His revealed will and a personal devotion that surpasses lip-service, mere trepidation, or bare admiration.

Pre-eminently, Jesus is the godly **One**, whose prayers were heard because of His 'godly fear' or 'reverent submission' to the Father (Hebrews 5:7).

Righteousness: Right standing with God. Right living based on our relationship with Jesus and what He has done for us. Not perfection or performance to gain favoritism from God.

DON'T-MEAN-IT SINS

Everyone roared with laughter at Maggie's story about Brad's klutziness in fixing the car. Brad was mortified.

Thad had been paying bills online and then, without ever really planning to, he found himself deep in pornography. Melanie walked in and found him viewing images he had no business seeing.

Arthur and Gabriela thought they were just getting together with some friends from church, but then they found themselves caught up in an angry coup to get rid of the pastor.

Six months later, the church was in shambles, and Arthur and Gabriela were wondering how they let themselves get involved in the mess.

Sometimes we sin without meaning to.

We aim for righteousness, honor and wisdom, but we miss by a mile.

Leviticus 4:2 introduces a Hebrew word for sin that means "to miss the mark."

George R. Knight, professor of church history at Andrews University Theological Seminary (Berrien Springs, Michigan), explains, "***You have missed, not because you are wicked, but because you are stupid, silly, careless, inattentive, perhaps lazy, or more probably because you do not possess the proper aim in life.***"

Add to that Hebrew word for sin the word "**unintentionally**," and it suggests someone wandering away like a silly sheep or someone who isn't thinking.

We sometimes feel we ought to be given a break if we didn't really mean to sin.

But the Bible doesn't cut us any slack. Whether we mean it or not, sin damages our relationship with God and with others.

Anyone who is married knows that unintentional hurts, such as teasing about someone's weaknesses or being chronically late or missing a birthday, can do a lot of harm.

Leviticus 4 shows that God takes unintentional sins seriously.

Forgiveness is available, but it doesn't come cheap. No quick, "Oops, sorry. Guess I wasn't thinking."

Specific instructions were given in Leviticus 4 for how different groups were to deal with these kinds of sins. While the details differed a little from one group to another, the basic corrective steps were the same for each situation: bring an offering, then have it sacrificed to atone for the sin.

Today, we who confess Jesus Christ as Savior are grateful that we don't have to go through the laborious and gruesome atonement rituals of the Old Testament. Still, as we read through the requirements in Leviticus, we realize how the sacrificial system illustrates the seriousness of sin.

These sin sacrifices did not overdramatize the sinner's situation; rather, they underdramatized it.

The blood of animals could never pay for sin, whether unintentional or not.

God mercifully accepted such sacrifices until His plan could be carried out to give His one and only Son, Jesus, as the complete sacrifice for sin.

Sin is terrible—even when it's unintentional.

Praise God that Christ's death provides forgiveness for us and that His indwelling Spirit ***gives us the strength to aim straight at godliness.*** —Lee Eclov

Leviticus 4:27-35 NLT

Taken from NIV Couples' Devotional Bible