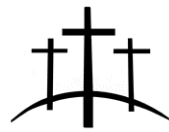


THE FIRST WORD for December 22, 2024



First Baptist Church Eden

A Place of Grace to
Believe, Belong, and Become

101 Burleson Street (325) 869-3681

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Sunday Small Groups 9:30 am

Sunday Worship 10:45 am

Pastor: John Curry (432) 923-2163 edenpastor@frontier.com

Worship Ministry Leader: Mike Turner conchospringsgolf@yahoo.com

Youth Ministry Leader: Loren Briggs (325) 656-3234 loren3484@hotmail.com

Children's Ministry Leader: Pam Young (432) 413-3205 jeunejoven@gmail.com

Adult Ministry Leader: Teresa Escue (325) 450-7279 edenfbsec@frontier.com

**FBC Eden exists to bring glory to God by becoming a "3E community":
Embracing God in worship, Encouraging one another in love to become
fully-devoted disciples, and Engaging the world with the Good News of Jesus Christ.**

December 22: Nursing Home Ministry

December 23-27: Church Office Closed for Christmas

December 24: 5:00 pm Candlelight Service

December 29: Paise & Worship

Bring it On Chili Cookoff, following morning worship

December 31: Church Office Closed

Bring it On!

Bring your favorite chili recipe (or alternative) and join us for a Potluck after church on the 29th. We will have the crackers and Fritos.

**Thanks again to Tina
Briley for her article for
this week's First Word.**

Lottie Moon Offering

Goal \$2,500

Received \$1,560

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**Today's Message
"Love-Light-Life!"**

John 1:1-9

John 3:16-21

HAVE YOU MOONED ANYBODY LATELY?

Have you mooned anybody lately? I hope you have. Okay, not in the way you're thinking. Let me explain what I mean.

I was mesmerized by the full moon this past week. It was beautiful! As I marveled at the moon, it got me thinking about some things. Of course, we all know that the moon has no light of its own. What we see is its reflection of the sun's light, but sometimes things get in the way of us seeing that reflection. A couple nights later, the moon was not visible at all because of the clouds. And, in two weeks, the moon will not reflect any of the sun's light because the earth will be between the moon and the sun. The moon will be the same; the sun will be the same; but the world will get in the way. Does that ever happen in your life?

I remember hearing a sermon years ago about how we should be like the moon and reflect the **Son's** light. It sounded like a good idea until I realized that for 14 days of each month the moon is waning—it reflects less and less light each night until finally, it doesn't reflect at all. Is that really how we need to be? Well, no, but the truth is, many of us do exactly that. We don't mean to, we just do. The world gets in the way, and we don't do anything to stop it.

As we allow things to come between us and Jesus, we cannot fully reflect the Son's righteousness. Sometimes it is a gradual thing, like the waning of the moon. Something small and insignificant, in our estimation, attracts our attention away from God. It isn't anything so serious that it will prevent us from serving God; it just diminishes our zeal for Him until our light is barely visible. Unfortunately, as long as we are reflecting the Son somewhat, as long as our light still shines a little bit, we deceive ourselves into believing it's good enough.

Jesus said, "Let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven," Matthew 5:16. Where does your light come from? It isn't really your light, but the light of the Son's Righteousness... "I (Jesus) am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life," John 8:12. We have been called to be sons of light and to reflect the Lord's glory. If we are doing anything less than that, we are being disobedient to God. He commands us in Ephesians 5:8-10 to live as children of light and to find out what pleases the Lord. According to that verse, the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth. Those things don't come through osmosis. You have to actively seek the Lord and pursue his righteousness. The Lord reveals himself in his word and rewards those who are faithful.

So, how do we then live? Commit God's word to memory, study fervently, and don't let anything come between you and the Lord because you can't reflect what isn't before you. God's desire is for you to become just like Jesus. May the Lord's righteousness be your own. Be faithful and don't let the world keep you from looking like Jesus.

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. 2 Cor. 3:18.