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**Grace Fellowship Church, Port Jervis, New York**

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**The Right Stuff**

**2 Peter 1:5-7**

**Prayer:** *Father, I just, again, I thank you for who you are, I thank you that we can rejoice before you for the incredible things that you have done in our lives. You have sent your Son to die in our place and we just praise you and thank you for that gift. We thank you also, Lord, for the word that you've given us, life itself, and again, I just pray for the gift of your Holy Spirit. Lord, as we open up again your book looking at a new section, I just again pray for the presence of your Holy Spirit, who alone can make this make sense. Give us the ability to hear your word and to again make it of living value, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Well, like I said, we're starting a new section this -- a new series, if you will, this morning and it's going to be on 2 Peter 1:5-7. Let me just read it to you. It says: *For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. Now*

there's a phrase in that paragraph that may just jump off the page a little bit. It's this statement: "*Make every effort to add to your faith.*" I thought we were saved by grace alone through faith alone. I thought there's nothing you could add by human effort to faith. I mean isn't the book of Galatians the Holy Spirit's response to attempting to add human effort to the gospel? Doesn't Paul say in *Galatians 3:3*: *Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?* And isn't Peter telling us to add to our faith by human effort, and if so, isn't that wrong? Well, yes, it's foolish, and it's quite wrong and Peter isn't saying that at all. What he is saying, however, is not easy to translate from Greek into English. I mean the NIV translation that I just read you this morning actually misses the mark. There's a term that they translate "add to the faith," it's actually a Greek term that is used more in connection with drama. *Baker's New Testament Commentary* says this, it says: "The word comes from the Greek world of stage and drama. The director of a play not only coached the cast. Together with the state, he also paid the expenses the members incurred for giving a performance on stage. In other words, the choirmaster added his financial contribution to the amount the state supplied. This verb, to add, then, signifies that the believer contributes lavishly to the work of his salvation." This is a highly nuanced point but it's an incredibly important one as well. What is being

said here is that the play or the drama, that is the gospel, it doesn't change, it doesn't get added to, but the presentation does depending on the players, or in this case the believers.

To put this into 21st century vernacular, imagine the gospel as this fantastically orchestrated CD. Well, you can play back that CD through a \$30 boombox or through your phone or you could play the exact same CD through a \$30,000 theater quality surround sound system. One sounds like it's coming through a phone, 'cause it is, and the other one can send chills down your spine making you feel like you're right there in the orchestra pit. Have you added anything to the -- have you added anything to the CD? The answer is no. It's the same CD, nothing has been added to it, it's just being played through different equipment. Well, the gospel is the same way, and the gospel is playing through every one of us. Some of us are living lives that are no different from the world, playing our gospel out through the cheapest of boomboxes, reducing everything to a distorted squawk that people really don't want to hear. Others allow the full volume to play with no distortion and nothing added allowing the power of the music itself to flow freely and work its magic, making every effort not to add to that gospel. It's getting ourselves and our egos out of the way so that the grace of God can be more fully revealed without the distortion of our fears and our pride and ourselves. When you listen to a great

music system, you're not really hearing or thinking about the system itself, you're just hearing the music. Same is true for the gospel and how we are to live it out. You see, we are supposed to disappear so the Lord Jesus Christ is the only music that people hear. Paul put it simply in *Galatians 2:20*, he said: *It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.* Make every effort to add to your faith is kind of a clunky and awkward way to actually say make every effort to let the fullness of the gift of faith play out in the way you live your life.

Let me just repeat again. *2 Peter* says: *For this very reason make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance, and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.* You might say, hey, it says right there in the scripture, "make every effort" and doesn't Paul say in *Galatians 3* that applying human effort to the gospel is foolishness? Well, the answer to that is Paul doesn't say that. What Paul does say is that applying human efforts to earning God's approval is what is foolish. What Paul is saying is you can't ever even think that you can make God your debtor by obeying his laws. This is how he puts it in *Galatians 3*, he says: *O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. Let me*

*ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain -- if indeed it was in vain? Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith? See, Paul's telling us that God does not reward law keeping with his Spirit and that it is faith, believing what it is we have heard that saves us and not human effort. But that doesn't mean that the full expression of the gospel is effortless.*

There's a statement that Paul makes in *Philippians* that perfectly sums up the tension that God wants us to hold faith and works in. When I say "tension," I'm talking about two opposing forces pulling literally this way and that, pulling against each other constantly. Those forces are a good thing and they're summed up in *Philippians 2:12*, which says this: *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.* Now the tension in that verse is the first part which says it's a hundred percent you, versus the second part which says it's a hundred percent God. You see, you work out your own salvation with fear and trembling because God is at work in you causing you to want to will and work for his good pleasure. If you only have the first part, you've got a works gospel that's going to

produce nothing but fear and trembling. And if you only have the second part, you may well have this gospel of easy believism. It's a gospel that says that I'm saved, sanctified and set apart and if God wants to change me, he's going to have to do the changing himself. I've got nothing to do with it.

Let me give you a practical example of how this worked out in my life. This is a practical example with a minor but significant change that God worked into my life many, many years ago. When I first got saved, I was a pretty heavy smoker, about pack and a half a day, pack. I smoked a lot. Regardless of how you feel about tobacco, I just want to tell you my own personal experience was that I became convicted that tobacco was an addiction and it was something that needed to be out of my life. It was something that was, I felt that God was telling me it was mastering me and my only master was to be Christ and not tobacco. But I was convinced at that time of the second part of Philippians 2. I was convinced I was saved, sanctified and set apart and if God wanted me to stop smoking, he's going to have to do a work in which I assumed I was merely a spectator. I mean, if I woke up in the morning wanting a cigarette, well God's not yet done that work in my life, so I can still smoke cigarettes. Until God completely removed from me my desire whatsoever to smoke, it was basically God's fault because he hadn't completed that sanctifying work in me. And what I finally

came to realize was that God's work, the work of the Holy Spirit was to convict me of my need to get rid of my addiction to tobacco. And as that conviction grew, I realized that it would take some considerable effort on my part. I mean I have immense sympathy for those who are still smoking because it was one of the hardest things I've ever done, but by the grace of God, in 1978, I smoked my last cigarette. What I was doing, though, is I was literally working out this one tiny little aspect of my salvation with fear and trembling because God had placed within me a desire and a will to work for his good pleasure which was to see me no longer addicted to nicotine.

Now expand that idea. Expand that idea of God doing all the work and include proclaiming the gospel in that understanding. When you do that, you can quickly see a temptation that is unique to people who have a Reformed understanding of the gospel. I mean I've often said the devil has a playbook, and it has everything to do with anything that you believe, whether good, bad or ugly, he's got ways to twist it to his advantage. One of my great fears is that our theology would somehow come around to bite us, and sometimes I think it has. Again, let me explain. One of our distinctives here at Grace is the doctrine of grace, that is we are unashamedly reformed in our understanding of the sovereignty of God. We believe that man is absolutely incapable of coming to God on his

own and that God has mercy on whom he will have mercy according to Romans 9. So we believe 100 percent that salvation is of God as *Romans 9:16* puts it: *So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.* Well, the problem is or should I say my fear is that people would take this truth about God's sovereignty, that God alone saves sinners, that they would take that truth and stretch it, stretch it to mean that God is responsible not only for the end of the gospel which is salvation, which he is responsible for, but also for the means of the gospel, which he is not, because we are. God has handed off to us, his children, a responsibility of living out the gospel as well as proclaiming it. And we believe God has chosen those whom he will with the gift of salvation but we categorically reject the notion that he removes from us the task of spreading that good news. I hate that phrase "the frozen chosen," but I certainly understand where it comes from. And I understand the frustration that coined it, and sometimes I'm afraid it fits us all too well. You know, why should I bust my back sharing the gospel when God's going to save who he wants, when he wants, and how he wants? There's a word for that kind of thinking. The word is disobedience. There's another word for it as well, it's sin. I mean it's a fact that God saves who he wants, when he wants and how he wants, but it is also a fact he wants -- no, he demands, he demands that we be part of that process. The great commission is not a suggestion, it is a



command. *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.* See, if I'm not actively sharing the gospel through my prayers, through my deeds, through my finances, through my words, I am in fact defying that command. I greatly fear becoming the frozen chosen. I mean, if God wants my neighbor to be saved, hey, go ahead, save him. The question is is he free to use me in that process? And if he's not free, then I really am defying his command. I mean God became flesh and dwelt among us because he so passionately cared about bringing life to those who were dying, and if his Spirit is in you, then that passion to share his gospel has got to be in you as well. That caring part is really just a sign that the Spirit of Christ is in you. And if anyone should feel free to share the gospel, it should be those of us who believe that it is God who saves and not us, that we're simply the messengers. Listen to what Paul says in *1 Corinthians 3*, he says: *What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.* Now, when you share

the gospel, sometimes you simply plant, sometimes you simply water, and other times you are privileged to be the one actually reaping the harvest, but each time it takes effort. And the frozen chosen make no effort. The really chosen understand that we don't save anyone because God gives the growth. We understand that God saves but that he saves through us.

Now, I say all of this by way of introduction to this list that we're going to be looking at in 2 Peter. I mean, it opens up with a whole slew of problems. It starts out by saying "*make every effort to add to your faith.*" We understand that is playing the gospel CD without the distortion of self and then comes this list of seven qualities describing how to do that and it starts out with yet another difficult word. The first quality we're to add to our faith is goodness. Right off the bat we have a problem and it's that English word "goodness." I mean, doesn't God say in *Romans 3: There is none good, no, not one?* So what is he asking for? I mean is he asking for the impossible? Well, you can guess that the translators, they really had a problem with this word. And you can guess that they had a problem with this word by the variety of translations that the Greek has here. I mean the NIV translates the word "goodness," the King James and ESV describe it as "virtue" another translation says "good character." The actual Greek word used here is the word "arete" and the word is defined by *Vine's*

*Expository Dictionary* as -- quote -- "whatever procures preeminent estimation for a person or thing. Intrinsic, eminence." Well, that clears everything up nicely. D. Martin Lloyd Jones defined it as moral energy, as vigor, and he compares it to the passion that a sportsman or hobbyist has for a sport or hobby, and he wonders why Christians can't seem to muster that same kind of energy for the kingdom of God. Well, in trying to cast about for a term to get a handle on to describe this term, I came upon a phrase that was coined actually by the late Tom Wolfe. It was not coined for Christians, it was coined for astronauts. And the term that he used was "the right stuff."

In 1982, Tom Wolfe wrote a novel about seven test pilots that were chosen to become astronauts for Project Mercury, which was America's first space venture. The book became a very popular movie of the same name. It was after Russia had launched its Sputnik satellite. We in America panicked and we launched a space program of our own. And a review of the movie describes America's search this way, it says this: "In an effort to find the right man for the job, the government searched the desert and the seas, compiling a crew of daredevil space cowboys willing to do anything for the chance to represent America in the space race. After grueling medical, physical, and psychological tests, seven men were left standing, led by American hero John Glenn, test pilots Gordon

Cooper, Gus Grissom, Scott Carpenter, and Navy man Alan Shepard. With the help of the media and the government, these men became overnight heroes, sacrificing their freedom and their families with the dream of space travel." Now according to Tom Wolfe, these are people who had "the right stuff." It was a combination of passion and of energy and of courage. Well, I believe that what Peter is telling us to flesh our faith out with is to make every effort to add to your faith "the right stuff." It's those qualities given to us by God to allow the gospel CD to play out magnificently in our lives. Or not.

I mean, when we talk about passion, energy and courage, let me tell you first of all what they are not, all right? Passion is not watching *Fox News* at night and getting ticked off at the culture wars. It's being moved by God's Spirit at all the spiritual death and dying that surrounds me. It's being moved to pray to ask God for opportunities to make a difference in somebody else's eternity and a determination to do actually something. And energy is not being able to muster enough energy to come to church a couple times a month and somehow think that's the sum and substance of what it means to being a Christian. It's a determination to take whatever skills, gifts and circumstances God has placed me into and use them to advance the kingdom. And courage is caring more about Christ and his kingdom than I do for my own personal safety bubble. You

know, I think of the courage of our brothers and sisters around the world who literally are taking their very lives in their hands simply by willing to show up at a public worship service. I wonder what would our attendance be here at Grace if there was even a remote possibility that armed attackers would descend on us with guns or bombs or clubs and the police would never even lift a finger to help? That's reality for many of our brothers and sisters. *"Make every effort to add to your faith goodness"* means letting the passion, the energy and the courage that the Spirit of God gives you find a way to express itself, not on some cheap boombox, but on a top notch stereo. It's the right stuff that lets the gospel of Jesus Christ shine through with the least amount of distortion from self.

So my question that first comes to mind is do you know any Christians that have the right stuff? I want to define it this morning by looking at one believer's life, and I admit, this is an exemplar. What an exemplar is is somebody who is way up there, you just look at it and say, wow, that's what it means. I want to look at the life of an exemplar by the name of John Chau. John Chau is a person of passion, he was a person of energy and courage. And first, John Chau was passionate about the kingdom.

J. Oliver Conroy writing in the British tabloid *The Guardian* wrote

this just last year about John Chau's passion: Chau was born in Alabama but grew up in Vancouver, Washington, near the beauty of the Pacific Northwest. He was raised by a Chinese father, a psychiatrist, and an American mother, an attorney, with two siblings. As a child he was consumed by two passions that became increasingly intertwined: Outdoor adventure and Jesus Christ. He loved hiking, camping and travel, and he meticulously documented his exploration on social media. On Facebook, he was fond of quoting Jim Elliot, one of five missionaries killed by a tribe in Ecuador in 1956. A mission trip to Mexico during high school was particularly formative. When he returned, he gave a short homily on his experiences. "We can't be lukewarm," he argued, shifting nervously but speaking with conviction. "We need to know how to defend our faith. When we go out in our world, there are people that'll just come and oppose us, and they'll have questions, and they'll have arguments...We can't just, like, go out there unprepared. We need to know what we believe and why we believe it." In November -- and again this is November of last year -- on an obscure island in the Indian Ocean, (John) Chau -- a 26-year-old American adventure blogger, beef-jerky marketer, and evangelical missionary -- was killed by the isolated tribe he was attempting to convert to Christianity."

John Chau had passion. He also had energy. The article goes on to

say: *It seems inevitable that Chau's personality -- God-fearing, outdoors-loving, and obsessed with pushing himself to extremes -- would be attracted to being a missionary. He first read about the Sentinelese during high school, according to the New York Times, on a missionary database called the Joshua Project. The Sentinelese, hunter-gatherers who inhabit North Sentinel Island in the Andaman Island chain, are considered one of the earth's last uncontacted peoples; their entire tribe is believed to number several dozen people.*

Now because this is an isolated and a hostile tribe, folks insist that they remain isolated because it's obviously their choice and there's a danger they might contract some diseases they had no immunity to. And the article refers to that and again it says this of Chau, it says: *Hoping it would lessen the risk of accidentally infecting the Sentinelese, he entered a self-imposed quarantine. For 11 days he went without direct sunlight. He prayed, exercised, and read The Lives of the Three Mrs. Judsons, a 19th-century missionary account. John Middleton Ramsey, a friend of Chau's and a fellow evangelical, defended his actions. "His motivation was love for the [Sentinelese] people," he told me, "If you believe in heaven and hell then what he did was the most loving thing anyone could do." He added: "A lot of people have said these people obviously want to be left alone, so we should respect their wishes.*

*Well my ancestors were also savages that wanted to be left alone. I'm sure glad missionaries like [saints] Kilian and Boniface stepped up and were willing to give their lives, that I don't live in a society like that any more."*

So Chau had passion and he had energy, but he also had courage. His encounter went like this, it says: *He saw hut and some dugout canoes. As he paddled up to the beach, several Sentinelese, faces painted yellow and speaking a language of "high-pitched sounds", came rushing out. "My name is John," he shouted from his kayak. "I love you, and Jesus loves you." When the islanders began stringing their bows, he panicked. He threw toward them some fish that he had brought as a gift, then, according to his diary, "turned and paddled like I never have in my life."*

You know, courage is not the absence of fear, and you can tell by John Chau's account that he's -- at this point he was actual terrified. But courage, as I said, is not an absence of fear, it's what you do with your fear. Go back to the article, it says: *Later that day he made another attempt, this time landing on the island. He laid out more gifts, then approached the hut he was chased from earlier, staying out of arrow range. About a half dozen Sentinelese emerged began to "whoop and shout". He walked closer to try to hear what they were saying. He tried to "parrot*



their words back to them," and the Sentinelese burst out laughing. They were probably "saying bad words or insulting me," he concluded. He sang worship songs and preached from Genesis. For a while the Sentinelese seemed to tolerate his presence. Then a boy shot an arrow at him. The arrow struck the waterproof Bible he was holding. He pulled it out, gave it back to the boy, and hastily retreated. The Sentinelese had taken his kayak, so he was forced to swim almost a mile to the fishing boat. "I'm scared," he wrote that night in his diary. "Watching the sunset and it's beautiful." He was "crying a bit" and "wondering if it would be the last sunset I see before being in the place where the sun never sets." "You guys might think I'm crazy in all this," he wrote to his family, "but I think it's worth it to declare Jesus to these people." Is this "Satan's last stronghold," he asked God -- a place "where none have heard or even have a chance to hear your name?" He decided he would make his next attempt without the fishing vessel floating nearby. Appearing alone might make the Sentinelese more comfortable, he thought. And if the approach went "badly," this would spare the fishermen from having to "bear witness to my death." His diary makes it clear that he didn't want to die, but accepted the possibility. "I think I could be more useful alive," he wrote, "but to you, God, I give all the glory of whatever happens." He asked God to forgive "any of the people on this island who try to kill me" -- especially "if they succeed."

*Shortly after dawn on 16 November the last day he was seen alive, John Chau asked the fishermen to drop him off alone. He knew the risks; but the people of North Sentinel were damned, and he was determined to save them. He struck out once more for the shore.*

*Another article states: John Allen Chau, 26, is believed to have been hit with a volley of arrows shortly after making land on North Sentinel Island, part of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, last Friday. It says again: Chau wrote a letter to his parents. "You guys might think I'm crazy in all this, but I think it's worth it to declare Jesus to these people." Please do not be angry at them or at God if I get killed. Rather, please live your lives in obedience to whatever he has called you to and I'll see you again when you pass through the veil. This is not a pointless thing. The eternal lives of this tribe is at hand and I can't wait to see them around the throne of God worshiping in their own language as Revelation 7:9-10 states." He signed off: "Soli deo gloria" (glory to God alone).*

*This is what "the right stuff" looks like. Again, this is as good I think as the right stuff gets, but don't expect the world or even the Christian community to applaud. And again, the article states: When Chau's death became international news, many Christians were keen to disavow his actions; Chau's father believes the American*

*missionary community is culpable in his son's death. John was an "innocent child," his father told me, who died from an "extreme" vision of Christianity taken to its logical conclusion. All Nations, the evangelical organization that trained Chau, described him as a martyr. The "privilege of sharing the gospel has often involved great cost," Dr. Mary Ho, the organization's leader, said in a statement. "We pray that John's sacrificial efforts will bear eternal fruit in due season." "John Allen Chau is not a martyr," responded one Twitter user, capturing the prevailing sentiment on social media. "Just a dumb American who thought the tribals needed 'Jesus' when the tribals already lived in harmony with God and nature for years without outside interference." "I'm sorry," another commented, "but what a deluded idiot."*

Well, I have to say that even the author of this very long article, who I don't think is a Christian, he also concluded that John Chau had the right stuff. This is what he said. He said: *Chau's decision to contact the Sentinelese, who had made it clear over the years this they prefer to be left alone, was indefensibly reckless. But it was not a spontaneous act of recklessness by a dim-witted thrill-seeker; it was a premeditated act of recklessness by a fairly intelligent and thoughtful thrill-seeker who spent years preparing, understood the risks, including to his own life, and believed his purpose on Earth was to bring Christ to the island he*

*considered "Satan's last stronghold."*

Peter says: *Make every effort to add to your faith goodness,* and John Chau did just that. And the goodness that he added to the presentation of the gospel that was his life, it was the right stuff. It was full of passion and energy and courage and it was all pointed at sharing the gospel. You say, well, what do you expect? He was a missionary. Just understand, these people are no different from us. They put on their pants just like we do, one leg at a time. And I just wonder why it is that they can go to the end of the earth to share the good news of the gospel and we seem to have a hard time going next door. I just wonder if maybe it's because we don't have the right stuff, and maybe we've just forgotten that we need it.

And so what is the right stuff? Well, it's a combination of passion and courage and energy and God has given it to every one of us. It's all there. It's right on your CD. But if you're playing on a cheap boombox, you probably can't hear it, but it's there. Now you might think it's okay for missionaries to have the right stuff but it's another thing entirely for us. For missionaries, the gospel's their job, it's their calling, it's their life. For those of us in the real world, the gospel is what? Our hobby? Our pastime? Our social obligation? Our what? I mean, I just wonder

if we know. I know what I think it's supposed to be, it's supposed to be no different than it is for the missionaries. It's supposed to be that our passion and our energy and our courage is spent on the one thing that matters and that is the kingdom. I mean Jesus said: *"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."* And he didn't make that statement to missionaries alone, he made it to all of us.

So how do we get this -- how do we get this right stuff? Well, we get it the day that we fully realize what John Chau understood with crystal clarity, and that is that absolutely everything in this world outside the kingdom of God is ultimately meaningless. Many of us, believer and unbeliever alike, don't see that until it's too late to have it pilot our lives. But those who see it clearly early on, they're the ones who acquire the right stuff. And when you see the world for what it really is, when you agree with Solomon that all of life is essentially a meaningless striving after the wind, you are well on your way either to profound depression or the right stuff. I do know that those parts of my life that don't have to do with the kingdom are all going to eventually simply disappear. And if my life is all about those things, I may as well despair right now because it's just not enough. I mean when we reach that point of wanting to seek the kingdom first, we can go in either of two different directions, we

can drop it all and become missionaries or we can realize that the missionary mentality is something that provides meaning to any occupation, no matter what it is. I mean it was the famous missionary David Livingstone who said: "I have found that I have no unusual endowment of intellect, but I this day resolve that I would be an uncommon Christian." There's no higher calling than to be an uncommon Christian. It's the essence of the right stuff. And it applies whether you're a garbage man, a housewife, or a president. You see, the beauty of God's way is that very few of us are called to greatness, but every single one of us is called to faithfulness, and in God's eyes that is greatness. When we resolve to be faithful in all that we do, God can and will take care of the rest. And one thing I can say to all of us today is that we still have the time and we still have the opportunity to point our lives towards the right stuff. And I can also say that for all of us in one way or another, that opportunity is shrinking every single day, and before we know it, it will be too late. All the decisions to opt for the temporary and the illusory or what is real and what is lasting, it will all have accumulated and played themselves out either on a cheap boombox or a fantastic stereo in the end, because God says, as we sow, we reap.

So how do you want your CD to play? Well, you start out like you start anything else, you start at the beginning as a new believer

in Christ. I mean you look at how Peter opens up this chapter. We're looking at it, he opens it up with these words, he says: *Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.* So if we've obtained like precious faith, Peter next says we are: *Partakers of the divine nature.* What he's telling us is that we have God in Christ living inside of us. And when that happens, nothing is ever the same. Ray Ortlund once said: "Christian conversion is not God sprinkling his pixie dust blessing on our typical routines. It is a paradigm shift for the whole of our lives, with new categories and new capacities." We recognize that we have been given the ultimate privilege. God himself has left heaven itself to become one of us, to live out the same kind of life that we live but to live it out perfectly and then he went to offer up that life on a cross as a sacrifice for our sins. Then he made the perfect exchange, his righteousness for our sins, and that by faith his goodness becomes our goodness and we can stand before a holy God clothed not in our unrighteousness but in his righteousness, perfect and accepted. John Chau just couldn't keep that knowledge to himself.

And so how about us? There's really quite a contrast between a pixie dust blessing, something that blesses our typical routines and a paradigm shift for the rest of our lives. It's a shift in

which we are passionate, energetic and courageous, all about displaying the right stuff of the our gospel in our lives. So we say which one is eternal? Which one really matters? Which one do you want? *For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness, and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. Let's pray.*

*Father, I just again, I look at people like John Chau and I say, I marvel, I just absolutely marvel at somebody who has so captured what it means to have the right stuff, to have the passion and the energy and the courage to say the kingdom is what matters first and foremost, I live for the kingdom, I die for the kingdom. Lord, that's not just for missionaries, that's what you expect from every single one of us regardless where you have put us. It doesn't matter, Lord, if we're a missionary out in the farthest remotest jungles or whether we're here working at McDonald's, it doesn't matter. Lord, wherever it is that you've placed us, give us that same passion, that same energy and that same courage. Give us the ability to play our CDs on the best stereos there are, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*