

## Sunday, February 24, 2013

**Read** Philippians 2:1-11

**Reflect** Value others above yourself. Don't be driven by selfish ambition. Look to the interests of others. Humble yourself. This is all familiar ground to those who have read Philippians. But don't miss how Paul connects these behaviors with church unity. And don't miss how he holds up Jesus as an example of these behaviors.

**Pray** Give thanks to God for the way God cares about us as evidenced in Jesus. Confess selfishness. Caution -- dangerous prayer ahead: Ask God to teach you humility.

**Exercise** Learn something new about the interests of people you already know well. Ask people questions about themselves and listen as they answer. If you drive today, slow down for others and let them easily merge. If you shop today, choose the longest check out line. Do something around the house that will bless others.

## Monday, February 25, 2013

**Read** Philippians 2:12-18

**Reflect** Dying to yourself and putting others before yourself is much easier if people are watching and you can appear unselfish. But what if no one is watching? Funny, grumbling is much easier when no one is watching.

**Pray** Give thanks for the way God faithfully loves us. Confess calling attention to your goodness. Confess grumbling. Ask God to fill your heart with love for others. Ask God to help you enjoy putting others before yourself.

**Exercise** Do something considerate for another person, anonymously. Make sure to not call attention to yourself. Make a list of the things you have recently grumbled about. What can you learn about yourself from the list? What do the things on your list have in common? Ask a trusted friend, and give them permission to answer honestly, if you are a chronic complainer.

## Tuesday, February 26, 2013

**Read** Philippians 2:19-30

**Reflect** Paul found Timothy's concern for others a rare occurrence. Do you agree such a person is rare? It's award show season. Our society regularly honors people for business, military, academic, and athletic achievements. When is the last time you honored someone who risked their life sharing Jesus?

**Pray** Give thanks to God for the rare person who always seems interested in you. Give thanks to God for those who risk their lives to share the gospel of peace with others.

**Exercise** What is it about the rare person who seems genuinely concerned about you? Study them. Determine what behaviors you can emulate. Honor someone who risked self to share Jesus.

## Wednesday, February 27, 2013

**Read** Philippians 3:1-14

**Reflect** Take time to reflect on achievements that are a source of pride. Recognize they are nothing compared to knowing Jesus. Acknowledge past sins that paralyze you so that you can release them and press on.

**Pray** Acknowledge to God your desire to know Jesus. Pledge to put both achievements and failures behind you to better pursue a relationship with God.

**Exercise** Memorize Philippians 3:10-11

## Thursday, February 28, 2013

**Read** Philippians 4:1-9

**Reflect** Paul pleads with two women who worked by his side to settle their differences. He urges them to find joy in God, pray for one another, and look for the positives in each other (see the list in verse 8).

**Pray** Give thanks to God for a person you don't get along with.

**Exercise** Make a list of anything true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy in the life of a person you dislike.

## Friday, March 1, 2013

**Read** Philippians 4:10-23

**Reflect** Paul thanks those who have financially supported his ministry while making sure he isn't doing it to ply them for more. Paul can do all things (live in poverty or plenty) through Jesus Christ. Paul describes their financial support as a fragrant offering to God.

**Pray** Give thanks for those who support the ministry of the church. Ask God to help your giving be an act of worship, a fragrant offering to God.

**Exercise** Give thought to the offerings you make to support the ministry of the church. Do you worship as you give? Is your Sunday offering to support the ministry of the church given as a fragrant offering to God? Prepare to give your offering Sunday.

## Saturday, March 2, 2013

**Read** Psalm 46:10

**Reflect** "Sabbath ceasing [means] to cease not only from work itself, but also from the need to accomplish and be productive, from the worry and tension that accompany our modern criterion of efficiency, from our efforts to be in control of our lives as if we were God, from our possessiveness and our enculturation, and finally, from the humdrum and meaninglessness that result when life is pursued without the Lord at the center of it all."

-- Marva Dawn in *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly*

**Pray** Thank God for faithfully providing. Confess the need to control your life, or even the life of another. Ask God to fill your heart with peace that is beyond your understanding.

**Exercise** Pray. Read. Relax. Rest. Renew. Laugh. Walk. Play.



*Readings, prayers, and exercises to stimulate growth  
and enjoyment in living*

# The New Life



Part 3, February 24 - March 2, 2013