

Sunday, March 3, 2013

Read Galatians 5:13-15

Reflect Galatians is a book that promotes Christian freedom and warns against false teachers who promote legalism rather than grace. Paul reminds the readers that with freedom comes responsibility. He tells them since they are free, they should humbly serve one another rather than abusing their freedom by biting and devouring one another.

Pray Give thanks for the way God treats us with gentleness and kindness. Give thanks for the blessing of living in freedom from legalistic demands. Ask God to help you be responsible with your Christian freedom. Confess any episodes of “biting and devouring” your brothers and sisters.

Exercise Take time to think about your relationships. Is there someone who might think you have tried to “bite and devour” them? Honestly, is their accusation against you plausible? What could you say or do today to make amends for treating someone harshly?

Monday, March 4, 2013

Read Galatians 5:16-18

Reflect Paul encourages the Galatian Christians by reminding them that God’s Spirit leads them. Pause to reflect on the enormous idea that they and we can walk by the Spirit.

Pray Give thanks that God’s Holy Spirit lives within us. Thank God for the way God walks with us through the experiences of life, good and bad. Confess to God the urges and impulses of the flesh that sometimes divert your attention from God.

Exercise Take inventory of the occurrences (consider times, places, people, and things involved) over the last week when you have felt internal conflict between the Spirit and flesh. Do you see patterns, any common thread running through these conflicted experiences? What do these episodes teach you about how you can humbly yield to the impulses of the Spirit?

Tuesday, March 5, 2013

Read Galatians 5:19-21

Reflect Paul teaches how to tell when your life is controlled by your self, by your flesh, by your desires. He writes about the behaviors that are seen in the life of a person controlled by sin. Notice sins of all types are lumped together. Sexual sins are treated as equally sinful as sins often thought of as less serious.

Pray Give thanks to God for God’s holiness. Give thanks that God is light and there is no darkness in God. Ask God to prepare your heart for the honesty needed for the exercise that you will undertake from this passage. Ask God for self-awareness.

Exercise Sit down with the list of flesh-driven sins in front of you. Open your heart to God. Confess the sins that are obvious to you. Then go through each sin on the list, asking God to help you see the truth about yourself with each of the sins.

Wednesday, March 6, 2013

Read Galatians 5:22-26

Reflect When the Holy Spirit is welcomed into our hearts fruit begins growing. The fruit of the Spirit looks very different from what grows when we are living out fleshly desires.

Pray Thank God for the Holy Spirit. Ask God to grow you.

Exercise Look at the fruit of the Spirit. Pray through the list, acknowledging how you see these qualities in God and asking God to produce the fruit in your heart and life.

Thursday, March 7, 2013

Read Galatians 6:1-6

Reflect Paul makes it clear when someone is caught in sin the spiritual response is to seek restoration with gentleness rather than judgment. Paul also teaches the need for those who want to help those caught in sin to be aware of their own sin.

Pray Ask God to guard your heart from the sins that you have noticed in others, especially those that stir up judgment.

Exercise Reach out to someone who has been overtaken by sin. Extend grace. Express forgiveness.

Friday, March 8, 2013

Read Galatians 6:7-10

Reflect Paul reminds us the choice to live by flesh or Spirit has consequences. Paul warns against growing weary and giving up doing good to others. Paul encourages us to persevere in living by the Spirit by doing good to others.

Pray Praise God's creative power and energy. Ask God to energize you and encourage you. Ask God to open your eyes to the needs of others around you and give you the courage to do something good to bless others.

Exercise Remember something you did in the past to bless, help, or encourage someone? Perhaps something you did regularly? Something you stopped doing because you just got tired of doing it? Remember? Do it again.

Saturday, March 9, 2013

Read Exodus 16:21-30

Reflect "So very often we are too emotionally drained to be able to cope with what is happening to us or because of us. The rush of time, the pace of change, the frenzy of demands upon us all leave us physically exhausted....The Sabbath is a day set apart for deepening our relationship with God, and that necessarily leads to emotional healing." - Marva Dawn in *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly*

Pray Praise God for God's greatness. Be still with God. Enjoy the quiet. Ask God to bring peace to your heart and mind. Ask God to calm your anxieties and fears.

Exercise Reset. Unplug the television, computer, and phone for the day or at least a significant, extended portion of the day.



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

The New Life



Part 4, March 3 - March 9, 2013