



Putting on a New Self Devotions

Lesson 1, Devotion 1

“12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” – Philippians 3:12-14

What do you give your energy to? What is important enough in your life for you to give max effort to? What matters so much that you pursue it even though it costs you something? Sports? School? Relationships? Another hobby of some sort? Here's a truth that will carry you through life: whatever you give your time and energy to are the things that matter most. Look at your calendar and how you spend your days, and you will find where your values are.

Take a moment and read Philippians 3:12-14. Paul is an older man, nearing the end of his life. He is reflecting a bit on where he is in his faith. And he says in these verses that no matter all the time and energy he has put into following God, he is still pressing on. His faith is so important to him that he can say in verses 13-14 that he can forget the past (with its victories and defeats) and focus instead on the goal of knowing Christ even more.

Can you say this? Can you say that no matter where you have been in your faith, that you are 100% committed to seeing grow? Are you entirely sold out to following God with everything that you are? After all, it's what God expects from us, His children.

Think about this:

- What are the obstacles in your life that are keeping you from pursuing Jesus with all that you are?
- What can you do to get rid of some of these obstacles to follow God more wholeheartedly?



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Lesson 1, Devotion 2

⁹“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷This is my command: Love each other.” – John 15:9-17

Read the following quote and think about the questions that follow:

“When Jesus walked among humankind, there was a certain simplicity to being a disciple. Primarily it meant to go with him, in an attitude of study, obedience, and imitation.” – Dallas Willard

Think about this:

- We can overcomplicate being a Christian, can’t we? What about Willard’s quote here encourages you in your faith?
- Have you been trying to make your faith journey with God too confusing and crowded? What can you do to simplify it?
- What is the result of a pure, honest, authentic faith in God? How do you go about having such a faith?



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Lesson 1, Devotion 3

“And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.” - 1 Thessalonians 2:13

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13. What a remarkable little truth. Paul is expressing thanks to God that the people he cared about (the Thessalonians) were transformed and renewed by the “working” of God’s Word in their lives.

Isn’t this sort of a forgotten blessing we should be thankful for?

Paul is thankful that the Thessalonians “received and accepted the word of God.” But look what he says about the word of God: “the Word is at work in those who believe.” Hebrews tells us that the word of God is living and active And so we see a truth reflected here that Paul is expressing thanks for the transformative nature of God’s Word. Do we remember to be thanking God for His Word?

Each day, you see people in your schools who are hurting, who are struggling apart from God, people with questions. What hope do these people have? You know God. And you know Him because you’ve met Him in the pages of your Bible. The Bible is God’s primary means of making himself known to us. As you seek to meet the needs of those who are hurting around you, remember that the Bible is a transformative book that almost uniquely speaks to us in times of distress or heartache.

As you strive to live your faith out in the world around you, let’s not forget those who may not know God. And let us, like Paul, express thanks to God that His Word is capable of drawing people to Him, giving us strength and hope that only He can provide.

Spend some time in prayer today that God would show you people who need Him and that you would be bold enough to meet them with God's love.