

## Food for Thought

For the week of March 30, 2014

*(Questions and Scriptures for further personal study)*

1. The Bible gives us a number of reasons why our new lifestyle of “no longer living for the flesh” is the best thing for us. What motivations can you find in the following passages to help keep you from sin and its consequences?

Galatians 6:7-8

Hebrews 12:7-11

2 Corinthians 5:10

Psalm 119:1-2

Which of these do you find most motivating to you? Which is least motivating?

2. In order for us to consistently obey God and no longer live for the flesh, we need more than knowledge, willpower and effort. We also need the power that only God provides. How does each verse below connect our obedience to God with his provision of motivation and power to obey him?

Philippians 2:12-13

Galatians 5:16-26

John 15:4-5

What challenges do you face in tapping into God's power to live the Christian life?

3. This weekend, we heard how some people won't understand why we live the way we do. They love the darkness rather than the light because they love to sin. What do you learn about how to live in the midst of people like this from Paul's instructions in Ephesians 5:15-21?

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### **Galatians 6:7-8**

7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. 8 Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. [NIV]

### **Hebrews 12:7-11**

7 Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? 8 If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. 9 Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! 10 They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. 11 No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. [NIV]

### **2 Corinthians 5:10**

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. [NIV]

### **Psalms 119:1-2**

Blessed are those whose ways are blameless,  
who walk according to the law of the Lord.  
2 Blessed are those who keep his statutes  
and seek him with all their heart [NIV]

Which of these do you find most motivating to you? Which is least motivating?

2. In order for us to consistently obey God and no longer live for the flesh, we need more than knowledge, willpower and effort. We also need the power that only God provides. How does each verse below connect our obedience to God with his provision of motivation and power to obey him?

### **Philippians 2:12-13**

12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. [NIV]

### **Galatians 5:16-26**

16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They

are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever[a] you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other. [NIV]

### **John 15:4-5**

4 Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. [NIV]

What challenges do you face in tapping into God's power to live the Christian life?

3. This weekend, we heard how some people won't understand why we live the way we do. They love the darkness rather than the light because they love to sin. What do you learn about how to live in the midst of people like this from Paul's instructions in Ephesians 5:15-21?

### **Ephesians 5:15-21**

15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. 18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. [NIV]