

ONE MONTH TO LIVE CHALLENGE

GIVE GOD

The first day of every week

(Worship with the Calvary Family each Sunday)

The first part of every day

(24 minutes)

The first place in the Marketplace

(Pray and fast each Monday)

The first portion of my income

(Tithing 10% of my income)

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Monday, January 4th, 2010

Ephesians 5:15-20

Begin today to take the steps that could alter the rest of your life. Join your church family at Calvary and take the “One Month to Live Challenge”. I know you can do it—God is on your side and you are not alone. Hundreds from your church family are beginning this exciting journey with you today!

Make the most of this great opportunity. Today, give God the first moments of your day, and as you pray and fast each Monday, you are opening the door for God to bless your work week. You can do this!

If we live one month with “no regrets”, we can live an incredible life with “no regrets”.

Remember, Phyllis and I are walking with you in this exciting moment!

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Tuesday, January 5th, 2010

John 10:10

As you give God the first moments of your day, remember He has incredible plans for your life! In the Message Bible, John 10:10b reads, “I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of”. Wow, that’s life too good to miss and by joining your church family in the “One Month to Live Challenge”, you are positioning yourself to experience this “better life”.

If we can live one month with this understanding, then we can live the rest of our life with “no regrets”. It all begins with choices. There are many things in life that we have no control over. We did not get to choose where we were born, when we were born or who our parents are. We do not decide when we will die or how we will die. But, we have everything to say about how we will live!

Start making good choices today—God has a better life waiting for you.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE
Wednesday, January 6th, 2010
I John 5:11-12

Remember, yesterday we were reminded that God has an abundant “better life” planned for us. Today, we must consider that this “better life” never begins until Jesus Christ becomes our Savior and Lord. That’s right. Read I John 5:11-12 again: “he who does not have the Son of God does not have life”. The unquestioned beginning of God’s plan for a great life is totally dependant on salvation.

As you spend your first moments with God today, why don’t you take some time to thank Him for loving you so much that He sent his Son Jesus Christ to bring you life. Celebrate that you have access to an abundant life through Jesus Christ. And, oh yeah, while you’re there, why don’t you ask God to give you the opportunity today to share Christ with someone who doesn’t have this chance of an abundant life because they don’t know Jesus Christ. You can do it.

Remember, life is exciting when you live with “no regrets”!

ONE MONTH TO LIVE
Thursday, January 7th, 2010
Psalms 139:13-18

What an incredible statement of God’s love and concern for you! You are so valuable and unique. When God planned your life, you made him smile. Your potential is unlimited and yet within your reach. This exciting and challenging life is ready to begin the moment you choose to accept Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord.

Your new life begins with a decision to give your life to Christ and this personal relationship with Him grows and develops as we continue to make right choices. So, today choose to live with passion. Decide that all your living that has been postponed for “someday” begins to happen today. Right now, make the decision to turn “when” into “now”. Make that phone call. Fill out that job application. Enroll in that class. Tell that friend how Christ helped you face that same problem. Forgive that person.

God’s plan for you is too important to miss even one more day!

ONE MONTH TO LIVE
Friday, January 8th, 2010
James 4:13-17

One of the great principles learned when we look at our lives through the perspective of “One Month To Live” is the importance of making the most of each day and each opportunity. This concept is not a burden but rather an encouragement to live each day at the highest level. It’s an exciting reminder that God has something strategic imbedded within each day of my life and I just need to recognize it and act accordingly.

Understanding this we then realize why one of satan’s favorite words is “someday”. See, down deep inside we know our life matters and that we’re here for a reason, but we just get caught in the crush of daily life and forget about our purpose. We agree with God, we just have trouble getting around to action. I’m not asking you to change the world today, just make one decision you’ve been putting off to “someday”. A minor change can make a major difference.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE
Saturday, January 9th, 2010
Ecclesiastes 9:10

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.

“One Month To Live” teaches us to live with passion. That simply means we are going to make the most of each opportunity. We choose to live with no regrets. We realize that when God opens a door – we walk through it. When we hear Jesus knocking on the door of our heart – we answer! We are learning that each day is a gift to be opened and experienced. Some days are wonderful, some are ordinary and some are really tough. But none of them are unimportant. Today, God knows who you are, where you are and what you face, and He has placed value on this day. Rise up in your faith, offer up praise and “get back in the game”. Your life is worth living with passion.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Sunday, January 10th, 2010

John 13:1

It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

As we continue our “One Month to Live Journey” we learn another valuable principle from Jesus last days on earth. As He drew near to the cross in His countdown on earthly life, Jesus not only lived passionately, He loved completely. How do we love completely? We do what Jesus did. We show or demonstrate the extent of our love. With “One Month To Live” we would leave nothing to chance or just hope those near to us understood our love. We would show our love. So why don't you begin right now, today, to do this very thing.

Jesus has an abundant life planned for you and your family and friends and this is a very important step in moving into this better life. Show your love. Say the things you have always wanted to say. Say “I Love You” or “I Need You” or “You Bless Me”. Forgive! Repair those broken relationships. Do those things you've always wanted to do. Express your love.

Begin today to make sure you demonstrate your love to those around you.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Monday, January 11, 2010

John 4:17-19

¹⁷In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the Day of Judgment, because in this world we are like him. ¹⁸There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us.

As Jesus approached the cross -God's purpose for his life, he had no fear. In fact, his love became even more and more obvious. This same principle will begin to operate in and through our lives as we truly live like only one month remained.

Knowing that God loves us unconditionally and supports us unreservedly we will find such strength in this life that we will accept any challenge that comes our way. The security of his love will overcome or drive out any fear that would paralyze us.

Do not be afraid to love today. Love God with all your heart, soul, and strength. Approach him confidently in prayer knowing that he cannot wait to reveal his love to you. Let your love for God give you the boldness to forgive, repair a broken relationship, and break-out of the grip of fear.

The basic meaning of fear in this verse is “flight”. Satan wants you to run from God, run from your destiny, and run from your friends and family. But today, with a “One Month to Live” mindset, you will allow love to enable you to run to God, chase your destiny, and love your family and friends.

You're going to have a powerful day!

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Tuesday, January 12, 2010

Romans 5:5

⁵And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

At some point in life, everyone has felt that maybe there was just not enough love remaining to make a relationship work. Maybe promises had been broken, or lies told or just the pressure of life had seemed to drain love from your heart. Or maybe an unexpected hurdle has popped up. Something you had not counted on happens and you're just not sure your love is strong enough to make it through.

I have some really good news for you. As you begin this day by putting God first, help is available. God knows the challenge you are facing and He already has what you need. Romans 5:5 states that God has more than enough love to meet the demand and he is waiting to pour from His supply into your struggling heart. As you spend time in God's presence today, He will fill your heart with the love you need by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God will actually pour His love into our lives and that will always be enough. Right now, just open your heart to God, take some time, worship Him and He will fill you up with His love. You and God can do this.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Wednesday, January 13, 2010

Matthew 22:37-39

³⁷Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'^[a] ³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'^[b]

When we tap the brakes and look at our lives through the "One Month to Live" lens, we always become concerned about our relationships. If we knew our time was short, we would cut through the trivial and focus on the important—people. We would want to leave this world with everything in order with those closest to us. We would want to express our love to them. We would give and receive forgiveness. We would want our love to be clearly seen and received.

But that's the problem. We are not always able to do what we really want. Sometimes the disappointments and heartaches that have occurred in previous relationships really hold us back from showing our love today. How do we trust again? Love again? It all begins with God. Try one more time. If everyone else is a threat, begin with God. Today begin to open your heart to God. You can trust Him and you will be restored as you receive God's love. As you learn to love God, you will learn to love others.

Maybe your ideas about love were a little skewed. When you love God and receive His love, you will learn what true, healthy love is really like. Start today to open your heart to God's love. He will change your life!

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Thursday, January 14, 2010

I Peter 4:8

⁸Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

As we really consider our relationships and how important they always are, when we view them with the light of "One Month To Live" we see even greater value. We begin to understand why I Peter 4:8 declares that we are not only to love each other, but love each other deeply. We are to not only love each other deeply, we are to do this "above all".

There are so many reasons why we should express God's love in this way and yet the final sentence of this verse may be the most important reason – this kind of love covers over a multitude of sins. None of us is perfect. We need second chances when we are truly sincere. Love sees beyond the faults and sees what is really there; beyond the faults to real potential. We need someone to love us like this and I'm sure someone needs this kind of love from us.

We first experience this incredible love and acceptance from Jesus Christ. He looked beyond our faults and saw our need. He died in our place on the cross so we could be forgiven. His love for us knows no limits. We can share this love with those in our lives because we have received it from Christ.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Friday, January 15, 2010

John 3:16

¹⁶"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16 may be the most often quoted verse of scripture. Why don't you say it out loud right now. Listen to the words. What a message of hope and love. I'm already encouraged – what about you? Now, let's start from the beginning and say it out loud again. Ready? "*For God so loved the world that he gave* - stop! What did you just hear? God's love for us was so great that he had to do something about it. He gave. He not only gave, he gave his best – Jesus Christ, his son. Real love always works that way. When you love there is always a corresponding action. You give. You give your time, your interest, your money, and yourself.

Today husbands, give yourself to your wife. Do something that will make her realize she comes first. How about you wives? What could you do as a parent? How about teenagers expressing your love for your parents in an unmistakable way? God loves us so much that He gave His best. What was the result? Our lives are changed forever. Your love can change someone's life – give it today.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Saturday, January 16, 2010

I John 3:16

¹⁶This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

There are so many shallow and selfish definitions of love today. Some even suggest that love can no longer be defined. Thank God we can clearly understand and define true life when we look at Jesus Christ. I John 3:16 is very clear. When you love someone they come first. You lay down your life for them and wouldn't have it any other way. When you meet Christ, his love overwhelms you and changes your life. It's not vague and wimpy, it is clear and brave and life changing. And when Christ lives in you, this same love lives in you too.

Why don't we wrap up today by reading the greatest definition of love ever given.

I Corinthians 13:1-13

¹If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

⁸Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. ¹¹When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. ¹²Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

¹³And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE
Sunday, January 17, 2010
Philippians 2:5-8

⁵*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:*
⁶*Who, being in very nature God,*
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,
⁷*but made himself nothing,*
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
⁸*And being found in appearance as a man,*
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

We are going to have to take a second look at this. What an attitude! What love and passion Christ had for each of us. Notice the phrase in verse eight: *“he humbled himself and became obedient unto death”*. Then add this from Hebrews - Jesus *“learned obedience from what he suffered”*. What could this mean? During these last days of Jesus earthly life, he literally learned as he was obedient in giving himself for us. He did not have to come. He could have remained in Heaven but his love brought him to us and he learned. The Bible said Jesus learned!

Are we learning to be more like Jesus? Are we willing to obey God and trust him even when doing something else might be easier at the moment? We learn when we obey and conversely, we stunt our spiritual growth when we choose to disobey. Up to the very end Jesus was willing, obedient, and learning.

I encourage you today to trust God’s love for you. Trust his wisdom. Obey him. Take the risk. In the process you will grow and develop in your faith. Let’s follow Jesus. It may be time for an attitude adjustment.

One Month To Live

Monday, January 18, 2010

Hebrews 5:8

Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

It's really hard for us to think about Jesus learning anything—after all, how does perfection get any better? But remember, according to Philippians 2:5-8, Jesus chose to humble himself while on earth to the limitations of being a man. He was still God in nature, but he humbly laid aside the privileges of deity and walked in our shoes.

As he did this and especially as he drew near to the cross, seeing his earthly life drawing to a close, he learned a lot. He learned to trust God as never before. As Jesus “walked out” obedience, he became more and more sure that God was in charge and as a result, his faith grew and developed.

What about you and me today? Let's obey God and his word whether it's easy or momentarily really tough. Let's keep learning. Hey, let's obey like there's no tomorrow.

One Month To Live

Tuesday, January 19, 2010

Hebrews 5:8

Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

Let's look at this verse again today. During this week we are seeing how Jesus continued to learn, how he learned humbly during the final days before his death on the cross. This verse tells us that he learned obedience by what he suffered. How do we apply this truth to our lives?

Maybe first of all we should cut through some unfortunate religious thinking and realize just what Jesus did and did not suffer. The suffering that helped him learn obedience was not sickness or financial collapse. Now, these things happen to good people, but God does not send them. We can learn a lot while walking through this kind of suffering, but just remember Jesus came to heal you, not make you sick. He died on the cross to redeem you from the curse of sin and all that Adam and Eve lost in the Garden of Eden, not perpetuate it.

His suffering referred to here was his willing death on the cross. As Jesus loved us enough to die for us and trusted God enough to put his life in his hands, great things happened. It wasn't easy at all. There was a high price to pay for the short term, but incredible harvest for eternity. Don't be afraid to obey God today, he has a better plan for your life than even you do.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Wednesday, January 20, 2010

Hebrews 5:8

⁸Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered

&

Matthew 16:24

²⁴Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Jesus came to save us as God wrapped in human flesh. Fully God in nature and totally confined to human limitations by his choice. There was nothing for him to learn as God, but as a man he learned and developed his faith in God all the way to the cross. Jesus learned obedience from what he suffered. He learned from the cross that God can be trusted. The only way you really learn about obedience is by just obeying – do what God says. Then we discover what God had in mind all along. God will resurrect what seems to have died as we obey.

Now God is probably not asking you today to literally die on a cross. But I'm sure he is asking you to "take up your cross". That simply and powerfully means to die to yourself. To put God first, we do what Jesus did. We say with him "into your hands God, I commit my life". I'm sure if we knew there was only one month left to live that we would stop holding on to areas of disobedience and we would fully surrender to God. When we do this, we always discover God's plan was so much better than our own. Let's do this today. Let's start living an abundant life right now.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Thursday, January 21, 2010

Daniel 3

¹ King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, ninety feet high and nine feet ^[a] wide, and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. ² He then summoned the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials to come to the dedication of the image he had set up. ³ So the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials assembled for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up, and they stood before it.

⁴ Then the herald loudly proclaimed, "This is what you are commanded to do, O peoples, nations and men of every language: ⁵ As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. ⁶ Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace."

⁷ Therefore, as soon as they heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations and men of every language fell down and worshiped the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

⁸ At this time some astrologers ^[b] came forward and denounced the Jews. ⁹ They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever! ¹⁰ You have issued a decree, O king, that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music must fall down and worship the image of gold, ¹¹ and that whoever does not fall down and worship will be thrown into a blazing furnace. ¹² But there are some Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon—Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego—who pay no attention to you, O king. They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up."

¹³ Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So these men were brought before the king, ¹⁴ and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up? ¹⁵ Now when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, if you are ready to fall down and worship the image I made, very good. But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?"

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. ¹⁷ If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. ¹⁸ But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude toward them changed. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual ²⁰ and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. ²¹ So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace. ²² The king's command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, ²³ and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace.

²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?"

They replied, "Certainly, O king."

²⁵ He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods."

²⁶ Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!"

So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire, ²⁷ and the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them.

²⁸ Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. ²⁹ Therefore I decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be cut into pieces and their houses be turned into piles of rubble, for no other god can save in this way."

³⁰ Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

What an incredible moment of courageous obedience. Can you imagine how their faith grew and developed as a result of this encounter? The three young Hebrew men chose to obey God's word even at risk of their lives. They knew God was able to save them, but they also chose to face the fact that obedience to God could cost them their lives. What does this help us to understand?

The first lesson learned is that obedience is always a choice – God never forces us. You see, the choice is always ours and then God takes over from there. We never learn the "why" until we first just obey. I wonder how many great encounters with God, how many powerful faith building moments we have missed because we turned back at the entrance of a fiery challenge. Obedience is not always easy, especially in the beginning, but it's only there that we really encounter God's reality in our lives.

You may feel that by obeying God today that you will be left standing alone. You should remember, God was waiting for the three young Hebrews in the furnace not before it. You will never be closer to God than when you obey.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Friday, January 22, 2010

James 1:2-4

²Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. ⁴Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Isn't it amazing that we often learn our greatest life lessons while walking through the tough times. We have thought a lot this week about what Jesus learned as he endured the cross (Hebrews 5:8). It was his choice to humble himself and die in our place. It wasn't easy but the results of his obedience have changed the world.

Now, let's talk about you and me for a moment. We too have a choice about how we face our challenges. James (who learned a lot about this from watching his brother Jesus) tells us to consider or make a decision to face our tough days with an attitude of joy. How? Because we are learning through our obedience that God always has the final word when we obey him. James says that rather than fearing or running away, we should realize God will bring us through the trial and we will not just survive but actually have much greater faith when all the dust settles.

God doesn't author the bad times that come our way but he sure can make something incredible develop as we choose to trust him in the process.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Saturday, January 23, 2010

Romans 8:31-39

³¹What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶As it is written:

"For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."^[a]

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,^[b] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ok, so what's trying to separate you from God today? Anything that matches something on this list? You must remember that the presence of a problem does not mean the absence of God. Just because a problem shows up does not mean that God has gone somewhere or forgotten about you!

I am so glad we know that nothing can separate us from God's love for us. Even when we don't feel God, he's there. Even when we are weak, God is so strong. You're important to God, he loves you and I have some really good news – he's not going anywhere.

You are not alone in this moment and in fact at this very second, God is at work to bring about something good in this situation (Romans 8:28). So stand your ground, be obedient, become "convinced". Don't miss the victory God has scheduled for you. Bottom line – it's just way too soon to give up!

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Sunday, January 24, 2010

Luke 9:51

⁵¹As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.

Jesus knew what was ahead. It's why he had come. He would become the Savior of the world, that was entire purpose on this earth. He would defeat satan, he would release great hope – but there was a cross waiting on him. So what did he do? *“Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem”* He was going to finish strong.

If you and I knew we had one month to live we would also want to finish well, finish strong. We too would want to know we had completed God's purpose for our lives. I believe our focus would become crystal clear. We wouldn't waste time on unimportant things. It would probably become very difficult to get us involved in wasted efforts and dead-end causes. We too would become resolute.

Can you imagine how much you could accomplish with this mind set? Can you just think about how you would value each day and how productive and fulfilling every day would become? Well, what are we waiting for, “too late”? Let's start living, like we do only have one month left. It's “no regrets” time.

One Month to Live

Monday, January 25, 2010

Luke 9:51 “As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.”

Psalms 39:4-5 “Show me, O Lord, my life’s end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life. You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is nothing before you. Each man’s life is but a breath.”

What a great month we are experiencing! Together we have taken the “One month to live challenge” and our lives are being changed. One of the key elements of this challenge is to pray and fast on the four Mondays of January. We call this putting Jesus “first place in the marketplace”. Today as you put Jesus first in your life, know that Phyllis and I and many others are with you as you live this day honoring God.

As you pray today think about how Jesus “finished strong”. He was determined to stay on task and fulfill God’s purpose for his time on earth. We are learning to make the most of each day. Not out of fear or drudgery, but because life passes so quickly we want to make each day count. We can never go back and relive a single day. So, let’s live today with no regrets. When we live like Jesus did even the ordinary days become important. Small actions begin to matter.

Love God today. Talk to him, listen to him. Spend time with him. Hug your spouse and children today. Call a parent. Help someone. Encourage a co-worker. All these daily, common actions can add up to a life of no regrets.

One Month to Live

Tuesday, January 26, 2010

Matthew 25:23 “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’”

This week as we give God the first moments of each day we are focusing on “finishing strong”. If we are going to complete God’s purpose for life then we must become focused. I really believe that every Christian truly wants to put God first in their lives and to hear him say one day ‘well done’. But life has a way of pulling us down too many dead-end pursuits. We get lost by trying to please too many people.

Today, I want to encourage you to begin to live for the approval of God above anyone else. Of course we are to walk in love with everyone but no one’s opinion can matter more than God’s. Today is a great day to bring order and focus in your life. Live for God first. Your decisions will become clearer. Your time will be used in a more effective way. You will experience a greater measure of peace and joy. God has a tremendous plan for your life- go live it to the fullest.

One Month to Live

Wednesday, January 27, 2010

Psalms 118:24 “This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!”

Psalms 118:24 has probably been sung and repeated as often as any verse in the Psalms. I hope we do not allow our familiarity with these words to rob us of their impact. There’s no coincidence that God focuses our attention on *today*. Not yesterday or tomorrow. Too many people live their entire lives either stuck in the past or putting off all their real living until *someday*.

There's no mistake that rejoicing was connected with living in the *now*. God is well aware that some days even some seasons of life are very difficult. But if we will take each day with God as our strength and help, we can find something to be thankful for even in the midst of a tough time. We can rejoice that we are not facing today's challenge alone God is with us. We can rejoice that in all things God is working for our good!

I want to encourage you to stop postponing your life! It's time- God made this day. Do not be afraid. Look for God. Take his hand. Find something to be thankful for and this day will have meaning for you.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Thursday, January 28, 2010

John 17:1-4

1After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. 2For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. 3Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. 4I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.

Check out verse four again. Every true Christian wants to bring glory and honor to God. In other words, we want the people around us to see Christ in our lives and to recognize that God is present and at work. Bottom line, we want our family and friends to realize that the only explanation for our peace or joy or courage is the great God that lives in us and give him all the credit.

So how do we know if this is happening? Jesus helps us with this. He said he brought glory to God on earth by completing the work he had given him to do. We must understand that our individual lives matter and that God also has a purpose for each one of us. Let's be honest.

We have a lot more ordinary days than spectacular ones. But the good news is, that in order to complete our work and fulfill our purpose, we must realize each day has value. We fulfill our purpose and bring glory to God on earth one day at a time.

So, make today count. All God asks is for your best. Today is an important day because it's one more step in completing your work and giving God glory. Be Blessed!

ONE MONTH TO LIVE

Friday, January 29, 2010

Acts 1:4-8

4On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.

5For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

6So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

7He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

During this week we have been considering how we can “finish strong”. How we can fulfill or complete God’s purpose for our lives. Everyone wants to live a life that matters. A life that leaves a positive impact, that causes people to see that Jesus is alive and well and available. Since we all desire this, is there some reason why so many fall short of this?

I know this, if we are to fulfill God’s purpose for our lives it will require God’s power in our lives. See, we cannot complete a God-sized job with man-sized power. We must apply the lesson learned from Acts 1 in our own lives. Once you know God’s purpose for your life, you must rely on God’s power to complete the task. So today, I have an incredible thought for you – all of God’s power is available for you as you serve Him. Take some time today and every day, and before you begin your pursuit of purpose, passionately pursue His power.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE
Saturday, January 30, 2010
Mark 2:22

“And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, he pours new wine into new wineskins.”

During this last week of our “One Month to Live Challenge” we have been focusing on finishing strong. It’s important to not only start the race but finish and win the prize - to hear our Lord tell us as we reach Heaven, “well done”. To finish well we must be willing to recognize an important principle that all great “finishers” have learned.

Jesus said in Mark 2:22 that we must understand the principle of continued spiritual growth and obedience. In other words, we may have to learn a new way of doing things if we are to continue our journey. We must allow God to shape us into new wineskins. We must remain more devoted to God’s plans than our plans. We may not always do everything the same way. Think of Israel’s journey to the Promised Land. Each day they had to follow the cloud of God’s presence and keep moving until they reached their goal.

Change is not always easy but it is often necessary to continue to grow in our faith. Why become a new wineskin? So you can receive a new infilling of God’s presence. Be ready today to be filled and strengthened for your journey.

ONE MONTH TO LIVE
Sunday, January 31, 2010
Philippians 3:12-14; II Timothy 4:7-8

“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, 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, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.”

Congratulations! You have taken the “One Month to Live Challenge” and I believe that your life has been challenged and changed! Together we have learned how to begin living a life at the highest level. We are learning to live more passionately, love completely, learn humbly and finish strong.

Today as you look back over the lessons learned this month and then look forward to the rest of your life I want you to carry an important principle with you. NO REGRETS! That’s right, no regrets. Paul lived like this and we catch his heart in these two passages.

Phyllis and I join you on your exciting life journey of NO REGRETS!

