

**20 September 2014**

**“From Patchwork to New Creation”**



1. How many times have you made a New Year's resolution, only to find a week later you've slipped back into your old habits? An astounding 80 per cent of New Year's resolutions fail within the first week. Why is behavioural change often so hard?
2. Throughout this week, we've heard uproar about U2's new album being put into people's iTunes accounts for free. If you get something for free, do you value it as much?
3. In the story of Naaman, the healing was the gift - he couldn't earn it, but he needed to be willing to receive the healing by the actions he took to accept it. Why do you think he was resistant to this at first? How was it more meaningful for him to be involved in his own healing, when God would have had the power to heal him without any action on Naaman's part?
4. Why is it so important that we are actively involved in changing ourselves, and becoming new creations, rather than God just transforming us? What role does free will have in all of this?
5. Naaman had to wash himself to become truly clean - cleanliness is often used in the Bible to represent salvation. We are told that although our sins are red as scarlet, Christ can wash us white as snow. Is this a one off process or a continual transformation?
6. When trying to change yourself, do you think your attitude is more important than your actions? What influence does your attitude have on your actions, and vice versa?
7. What does it mean to you to be a new creation in Christ? Does it mean becoming an entirely different person? A better version of yourself? How will you know if you are successful?
8. Once we make the decision to follow Jesus, we have to keep making that decision: just like the disciples - when Jesus called them, they came to him - but it was the fact that they stayed with him, and kept following him that truly made them his disciples. Once you've made a decision to follow Jesus, do you think it becomes easier or harder to keep making that decision every day? Why or why not?
9. What is a tangible change you would like to make this week, and what are the barriers likely to prevent you from doing so?