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Daily Devotional - The Privilege of Knowing God

APRIL 28TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - The Privilege of Knowing God

Philippians 3:7-11

It is a tragedy that many people go through life without ever becoming acquainted with their Creator. To overlook that relationship is to miss the purpose for their existence and the greatest privilege available to mankind: knowing God. Even Christians can undervalue the honor of getting to know Christ more intimately.

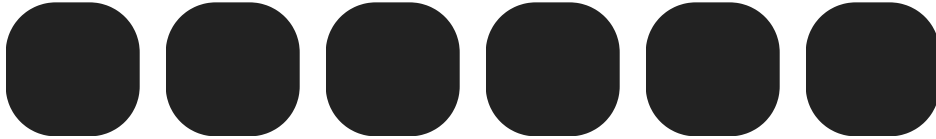
Paul's all-consuming passion to know God caused him to count everything else as worthless in comparison to that tremendous blessing. Though believers can accept Christ as their Savior, faithfully serve Him, and anticipate being with Him in heaven, many have no hunger to know Him right now. How can we be satisfied with simply being saved and have so little interest in the most gratifying relationship available to us? Pursuing Christ with passion requires sacrifice—spending time with the Lord, surrendering our will, and knowing Him through suffering. Although salvation is a free gift, intimacy with God is a costly process, but the rewards are invaluable and eternal.

Our culture floods us with distractions that can fill our minds and hearts, leaving us indifferent about developing a deeper relationship with Christ. Some people even substitute learning facts about the Lord for knowing Him relationally.

Find what is hindering your passion for God. Consider ways to carve out time each day to be alone with Him. As you go about your routine, seek His guidance and listen for His voice. You, too, will eventually count everything else as rubbish compared to knowing Christ.

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Daily Devotional - Growing Old Is Inevitable

APRIL 27TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Daily Devotional - Growing Old Is Inevitable](#)

Psalms 92:12-15

Our culture is obsessed with youth. Stores are flooded with products promising better health, fewer wrinkles, and a trim physique. However, these will only touch the surface of our aging problem. Unless death intervenes, growing old is inevitable. Living old, on the other hand, is a choice.

We each have to decide if we are going to flourish or dry up, grow strong or become weak. Physically, we may have no choice in the matter, but we can be young in soul and spirit, regardless of our chronological age.

When a righteous man is firmly planted in the Lord, he'll become fruitful in things that will last into eternity. We are never to retire from bearing fruit. Rather, God wants us to abide continually in an intimate connection with Him. In that way, we can do the work He has given us to accomplish (John 15:4).

A righteous man will grow strong in the Lord like a cedar of Lebanon (Psalms 92:12). These trees can grow to a height of 120 feet with a girth of 40 feet. That is one strong tree! As we walk with Christ into our latter years, we can have the confidence and stability that come only from growing strong in faith. Each year is an opportunity to trust God more and rely wholly on His Word.

Staying young while growing old begins with your mind. Never stop listening to the Father or learning from His Word. Allow godly thinking to shape your attitudes. Be thankful, keep laughing, and rejoice in your Lord. Above all, keep believing and loving Him with all your heart.

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Daily Devotional - Burnout and Fatigue

APRIL 24TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Burnout and Fatigue

Matthew 11:25-30

We have all experienced physical burnout—those times when we are tired from our many activities or difficulties that assail us. Even more painful is spiritual burnout—the weariness believers can feel from the pressure of trying to obey God, attend church faithfully, and spend time in daily prayer and Scripture reading. Just contemplating everything we think we must do for success in the Christian life can be overwhelming! The trouble is that we become spiritually burned out if we rely on our own strength.

When we experience spiritual fatigue, it's often because of a wrong view of our faith. We find ourselves keeping a mental checklist of dos and don'ts, striving to please God with religious activities. That's not freedom. The Christian life isn't some formula whereby we modify our behavior to gain the Lord's approval. God reached down and reconciled us to Himself the moment we asked Him into our hearts, so we already have His approval. True spiritual maturity involves a growing awareness that nothing we can do—no change in conduct or attempt to live up to regulations—will make us acceptable. Rather, we give up our inability and weakness, and instead live by faith. Then God's omnipotence can carry us through life.

Think of God's power as a river coursing through hilly terrain. We can hike, puffing and sweating, along the footpath, or we can simply ease into the water. We won't have to expend energy because the power of the current will carry us all the way to our destination.

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Daily Devotional - Expectations

APRIL 23RD 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Expectations

Luke 22:31-34

Peter was a man of great faith and bold action. But as readers of the New Testament know, his brash style sometimes led him to make humiliating mistakes. More than once, this disciple had to wear the label of “miserable failure” rather than that of “obedient servant.”

We can all relate when it comes to falling short of expectations. Obedience to God is a process—something we learn. And failure is a part of our development as humble servants. When we yield to temptation or rebel against God’s authority, we realize that sin has few rewards, and even those are fleeting.

Failure is an excellent learning tool, as Peter could certainly attest. Through trial and error, he discovered that one should never take his eyes off Jesus (Matthew 14:30); God’s plan must always have priority over man’s (Matthew 16:21-23; John 18:10-11); and humility is required of believers (Luke 13:5-14). He took each of those lessons to heart and thereby grew stronger in his faith. Isn’t that Romans 8:28 in action? God caused Peter’s failures to be put to good use as training material because the disciple was eager to mature and serve.

God doesn't reward rebellion or wrongdoing. However, by His grace, He blesses those who choose repentance and embrace chastisement as a tool for growth.

We would all prefer to grow in our faith without ever making a mistake, but we cannot deny that missteps are instructive. Failure teaches us that it is much wiser to be obedient to the Lord. That's a lesson we all should take to heart.

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Daily Devotional - Facing Temptation

APRIL 22ND 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Facing Temptation

Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed— James 1:14

What does sinful temptation consist of? James reveals two vital ingredients: first, it is being *drawn away* from God. Second, it is being *enticed* by one's *own lust*.

No matter what we may tell ourselves, any action, any person, any thing that draws our attention and affections away from God is wrong. It does not matter whether it is a romance or rock star, a **family** member or a football team — it is wrong to allow anything to come between us and our single-minded pursuit of God's glory.

This does not mean that we cease to care for or serve others; but it does mean that even our closest relationships and most committed labors must all be grounded in, and flowing out of, our love for Christ. Any other basis for a relationship or commitment is changeable, insecure, and idolatrous.

Notice that it is our *own* lust that draws us away from God. Not every lust (strong passion or desire) is wrong. Jesus and Paul both used this same word to describe their desire for Christian communion and to be with Christ, respectively (Luke 22:15; Philippians 1:23).

Whether the lust is good or bad depends entirely on its adjectives or qualifiers. Is it the lust of men, of the world, of the flesh? Are they our *own* desires/passions, or did they come from God and issue toward His glory? If they are self-motivated or self-originated then we can rest assured that they are sinful.

Every person is tempted when they are drawn away from God by their own passions or selfish pursuits. Do not be enticed; do not give into temptation.

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