



TOP

Daily Devotional - Strength Beyond Self

MAY 26TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Strength Beyond Self

2 Corinthians 1:8-11

“Into every life a little rain must fall.” So goes the familiar saying about the inevitability of hardship. But what if the rain turns into a torrential downpour—a life challenge that requires strength beyond what is humanly possible? Paul describes such a situation in his second letter to the Corinthians. He wrote of an affliction that weighed so heavily on his heart and body that he didn’t expect to survive.

The apostle’s approach to his problem still works today: “We would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead . . . and will deliver us” (2 Corinthians 1:9-10). The strength that we need during trials is available through Jesus Christ, whose supernatural energy flows through every believer’s mind, body, and spirit.

How does this happen? When someone receives Jesus as Savior, His Spirit comes to live inside the new believer (John 14:17). As a result of this indwelling, the power that Christ demonstrated while on earth prevails in those who now call upon Him for aid. However, for us to access His supernatural strength, we must trust His promise to supply what we need when we need it (Philippians 4:19). As long as we attempt to muddle through using our own abilities, we will prevent His Spirit from unleashing divine help.

Jesus Christ’s power is released into our life when we acknowledge our helplessness. The effect is immediate. As soon as we surrender to the Lord, His might is working within us so we can endure hardship while maintaining our joy and peace.

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Daily Devotional - Forgiving Hurts We Don't Deserve

MAY 24TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Forgiving Hurts We Don't Deserve

[Colossians 3:12-14](#)

It is truly amazing how some people attempt to justify an angry, unforgiving heart. They may think, *God knows what that person did to me, so He understands why I feel this way.* Well, He certainly understands, but that doesn't mean He approves.

Jesus faced appalling betrayal and abandonment, so He knows human emotions inside and out. Yet the Lord does not agree that we should feel justified about an unforgiving attitude. The Savior had a God-centered view of forgiveness that withstood the vilest torture. This is something we should thank God for every morning. Why? Because we are

the ones who betray the Lord daily.

We have wronged Jesus in ways no one has ever wronged us. We've denied Him His rightful place in our lives. We have doubted His Word, ignored His instructions, and left Him out of our day-to-day lives. We've sinned against Him and shamed Him by sinning against others.

What is Jesus' response to this abuse? "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest" ([Matthew 11:28](#)). Now, do you really believe He will justify your unforgiveness under any circumstances? No, He won't.

When you look to God to excuse your unforgiving heart, you'll hear Him answer, "Look at the cross." There, you'll discover the price that was paid for your own forgiveness. [Colossians 3:13](#) spells out our solemn responsibility: "Forgive as the Lord forgave you" (NIV, emphasis added). Just as we have been *forgiven*, so we must now become *forgivers*.

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[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - Unforgiveness and Hate

Daily Devotional - Unforgiveness and Hate

Ephesians 4:31-32

One of the most destructive attitudes—if not the most destructive—for a Christian to display is hate. Think about it. How well can the saving light of Jesus Christ shine in a life that is totally shrouded in loathing, rage, and malice? And what picture of Christ does this type of person show to the unbelieving world?

Hate is a total breakdown in the Christlike attitude we are called to exhibit. Yet even in churches, it's not hard to find individuals just brimming over with hostility. Where does it come from? One of the key reasons believers are so prone to hatred is an inability to forgive those who caused them hurt—especially when such treatment is undeserved.

Let's take a "hate test." Think about someone who hurt you in the past, and consider these "heart checks":

1. **IF YOU HATE SOMEONE, YOU CANNOT SHAKE THE MEMORY.** Does the scene play out in your mind over and over?
2. **IF YOU HATE SOMEONE, YOU CANNOT WISH HIM OR HER WELL.** Do you genuinely wish the best for a person who has hurt you?
3. **IF YOU HATE SOMEONE, YOU WANT THAT PERSON TO HURT JUST AS YOU HURT** Do you secretly desire this individual to experience the same pain that was thrust upon you?

If these questions have revealed any hidden animosity in your heart, don't leave your chair until you prayerfully meditate on [Ephesians 4:31-32](#). First, read the passage aloud. Then, personalize it into a prayer, and let God's Holy Spirit cleanse your heart of hatred by empowering you to forgive an old hurt.

[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - Dealing With Fear

MAY 21ST 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Dealing With Fear

Philippians 4:6

Not only is anxiety uncomfortable; it also leads to negative consequences. For example, reasoning becomes cloudy when permeated with worry. So an anxious person will have trouble making wise decisions. Fear of failure may also lead to procrastination or lack of productivity. Apprehension can devastate personal and spiritual growth, relationships, and work. So conquering fear is important.

These four steps can help:

1. **IDENTIFY THE FEAR.** Ask yourself, *What are the circumstances surrounding my feelings? What triggered them? What message am I telling myself?*
2. **TURN TO THE LORD.** Remember that God loves you and desires a close relationship with you. He is in sovereign control of your situation, so bring your apprehension to Him.
3. **REBUKE THE FEAR.** You have authority and power in Jesus' name to reject what isn't from Him. Meditate on Scripture passages such as [Matthew 10:31](#) and [Proverbs 1:33](#). Let God's truth replace any wrong thinking.
4. **CLING TO YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER.** Take your focus off your circumstances, and look to the One who promises His help. The Bible gives this

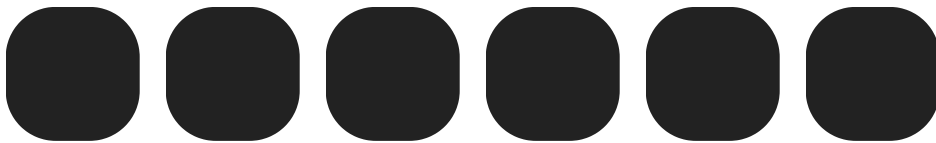
assurance: “Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand” ([Isaiah 41:10](#)).

Circumstances are external and often beyond your control. But your response originates within. It’s amazing how fears diminish in the Father’s presence.

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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - Understanding Anxiety

MAY 20TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Daily Devotional - Understanding Anxiety](#)

[2 Timothy 1:7](#)

Throughout scripture, the lord gives us evidence that many people deal with anxiety—even those considered pillars of faith. For example, we can deduce that the apostle Paul must have felt fear, since God instructed Him not to be afraid “any longer” ([Acts 18:9](#)).

The fact that fear is common, however, does not mean it is from the Lord ([2 Timothy 1:7](#)). Of course, certain situations—like hearing a loud noise when we are alone—will trigger a frightened response. But God doesn’t want us to live with *ongoing* anxiety.

Common worries include the fear of death, poverty, illness, old age, criticism, and the loss of a loved one or something cherished. Why do we find it so hard to let go of our concerns, even when God clearly states, “Do not fear” ([Luke 12:7](#))? The reason is that worry can become deeply ingrained in the way we think. Sometimes we have unhealthy thought patterns that stem from feelings of inadequacy, a sense of guilt, or a mistaken view of the Lord. It’s not uncommon for insecurity in childhood to develop into a lack of confidence later on. Life experiences can be another factor. For instance, a person who has lost a parent suddenly in a car accident is likely to struggle with worry.

Regardless of the cause, anxiety will take our eyes off our omnipotent, loving heavenly Father and focus our attention on our circumstances. No wonder God repeatedly reminds us not to fear—He wants His children to feel secure in His capability and trustworthiness.

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