



[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - The Decisions That Lead to Contentment

JUNE 30TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - The Decisions That Lead to Contentment

Romans 8:28-39

Think about a circumstance in your life you'd change if you could. Are you frustrated? Worried? Angry? To experience the freedom of contentment in the midst of it—whether a hardship or unfulfilled desire—you must accept the situation as having been allowed by God, even if He didn't cause it.

In these situations, I often pray, “Lord, I choose to accept this as though it's coming from You. No matter what I see, I'm choosing to look to You.” Then I can rest in His omnipotence and the knowledge that I'm a child of the living God. Instead of feeling like a helpless, hopeless victim of my circumstance, I know I'm cared for and guided by my sovereign Father through whatever may come.

The second crucial decision is total submission. This doesn't mean approaching God insincerely and saying, “Well, Lord, I just want to thank You for this! It's all just so sweet, Jesus.” No, it's not. Be honest and admit, “This is painful and I don't like it. But I choose to submit to You because You are trustworthy and loving. I'm willing to persevere until You accomplish in me whatever You want. I choose to draw from Your strength for everything I need.” My friend, if you make this decision and follow through, your fears will lose their power.

Either you believe Romans 8:28 or you don't. And if you do, you can entrust yourself to the Lord, knowing that He has your best interest at heart, will take care of you, and won't ever leave your side. When you embrace these truths, you'll have no reason to be anxious.

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Daily Devotional - Drawing from the Source

JUNE 29TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Drawing from the Source

[Jeremiah 2:13](#)

For us who believe in Jesus, contentment should be governed by inner attitude and the decisions we make rather than by external circumstances. Because Paul had learned this secret, he was able to experience joy and peace in any kind of situation—whether he was surrounded by friends or isolated in a Roman prison; whether he had plenty or was in

great need.

The apostle understood what it meant to live in Christ and to have Christ living in him ([John 15:1-9](#); [Galatians 5:22-23](#)). He had made a simple but profound faith decision to draw his life from the Lord and, as a result, had the calm assurance that what he possessed inside could never be stolen. He was confident in his identity as a child of the Almighty, with full access to the abundant life Jesus offers.

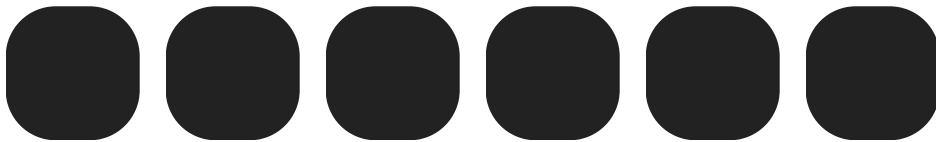
I want to challenge you—this week, when something threatens to steal your contentment, choose to draw from God; decide to stop drawing from other sources and trying to be in control. When you find yourself becoming flustered, anxious, or angry, stop and say, “Lord, You are my source, and I draw from You the capacity to be kind. I draw from You the forgiveness I need to extend right now. I draw from You the love I need to express.” This decision is a matter of simple trust.

Watch and see how God will quiet your spirit and provide confidence when you draw only from Him as your source. You’ll be surprised at your own attitude: When you respond from within—rather than from the flesh—Jesus will give you the ability to respond as He would.

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[Go to post](#)



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TOP

Daily Devotional - Serving God with a Soft Heart

JUNE 26TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Serving God with a Soft Heart

Jonah 4

What most people know about Jonah is that he was swallowed by a big fish while trying to run from God. In the creature's belly, he committed to following the Lord's will. So when Jonah was called a second time to preach repentance in Nineveh, he obeyed.

After the prophet obeyed, there was an unexpected turn of events. He crossed the city, warning the people of divine wrath—and they responded by turning away from wickedness. The Ninevites' response should have made Jonah ecstatic. Instead, he grieved over their repentance and God's mercy on them, as Nineveh and Israel were longtime enemies. In fact, he angrily told the Lord he had fled to Tarshish to avoid this very scenario of penitence and forgiveness.

Jonah was displeased because his heart was as hard as when he had run to Tarshish. Trapped inside the fish, he changed his mind about following the Lord's command. He expressed willingness to do whatever God wanted him to do, but in his heart, he still desired the Ninevites' destruction. Jonah's bitterness and reluctance showed through in spite of his righteous actions.

God is not fooled by good behavior that springs from a hard heart. Obeying Him with an unwilling spirit may achieve His purpose, but we lose the joy of our reward. Perhaps the Lord has called you to serve Him in a way that is personally challenging. As you commit to following His will, pray also for a soft heart. You will find peace and blessing in doing the work if you follow Him without hesitation.

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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - Lessons from the Prophet Jonah

JUNE 25TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Lessons from the Prophet Jonah

Jonah 1

The Lord's commands are clear—He tells believers when to act, where to go, and what to do. He also provides the means for following His directions. The prophet Jonah was told to leave immediately for a certain city and cry out this warning: “Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown” ([Jonah 3:4](#)). Instead, Jonah did something foolish (and altogether human). He ran.

Because he was a prophet, we can assume Jonah had studied the Scriptures and knew God intimately. Even so, displeasure over his assignment clouded his judgment, and he became convinced he could flee the Lord's presence. Jonah was wrong. God sent a great storm and isolated him for three days inside a smelly fish. In other words, the Lord didn't relent until the prophet agreed to comply.

Jonah learned that running away from the Lord doesn't release us from His commands. Whether we refuse outright or quietly choose to pursue our own agenda, we simply cannot silence His call. Our Father will neither forget a directive nor change His mind about it, and so the Holy Spirit continues prompting us until we do as instructed.

People who run from divine direction may attempt to silence the Spirit's reminders by filling their life with distractions. They know what God wants from them but are too proud, stubborn, or scared to comply. What we must understand is that God will pursue us—stripping away diversions and crutches to get our attention. Wise believers obey Him promptly rather than waste time and talent by running.

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[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - Expect Conflict

JUNE 24TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Expect Conflict

[2 Corinthians 4:5-10](#)

Contrary to popular but poor theological teaching, salvation does not guarantee an easy life. It is tempting to present Christianity as a safe haven from which to watch the world

swirl past—then one could open the door to allow in joy and blessing, but hardship could not squeeze through. That brand of religion might sell well in the world marketplace, but it isn’t real.

The truth is, Christians cannot escape conflict or ridicule. The biblical principles we hold dear often seem like foolishness to nonbelievers. What’s more, defending our faith and sharing the gospel will frequently draw criticism or anger from listeners. But Scripture counsels against keeping quiet and blending in ([Matthew 5:14-15](#)). In fact, we are to welcome disagreement as a way to grow our faith.

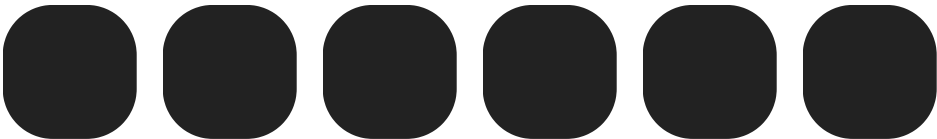
Consider this: Our belief system is named for a man who so thoroughly challenged the status quo that religious leaders called for His death. Jesus Christ was at the center of controversy during His ministry and very likely all through life. That’s why the biblical record so often shows Him slipping away for time alone with God—He was seeking direction and receiving strength. While Jesus was fully God, He was also fully human. He knew the sting of rejection and the taste of fear, just as we do ([Hebrews 4:15](#)).

As believers, we are called to be peacemakers, but that doesn’t mean isolating ourselves from all who oppose the church. Accept conflict as inevitable and reach out anyway. You can have a powerful impact simply by being the person God called you to be—His child.

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