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## Daily Devotional - The Purpose of Our Trials

SEPTEMBER 10TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Daily Devotional - The Purpose of Our Trials

#### 1 Peter 4:12

Some believers like to portray their lives as ideal and carefree. But in reality, being a Christian isn't always easy. In fact, sometimes we'll experience trials that truly test our faith and ability to trust in God.

In today's passage, Peter refers to times of testing as "fiery ordeals." He says we shouldn't be surprised when adversity comes our way. It's important to remember that God has a purpose for our trials and will see us through each step of the way. But what purpose does God have for the hardships we face?

First, the heavenly Father will sometimes use painful experiences to cleanse and purify His children's lives. Trials drive us to the Lord. Then, as we begin to focus on Him, we're increasingly able to see things from His perspective and often become more aware of our sin.

Second, the Lord at times allows difficulty in our lives as a way of testing us—He might be trying our faith, endurance, or devotion to Him. He uses such experiences to reveal something about our spiritual development and to strengthen our faith.

Third, God uses suffering to demonstrate His power to sustain us. When He brings us through difficult times, He glorifies Himself. In turn, this encourages others when they experience trials, because they have witnessed God's sustaining power in our lives.

Ultimately, hardships strengthen our testimony. In the midst of our struggles, we might feel overwhelmed. But once the storm has passed, we can often look back and see the Lord's providential hand carrying us through.

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## Daily Devotional - Salvation: The Work of Our Sovereign God

SEPTEMBER 09TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Salvation: The Work of Our Sovereign God

**[Ephesians 2:1-10](#)**

Salvation refers to the freedom gained when God rescues someone from slavery to sin and makes that person part of His family. This deliverance is accomplished only through His

Son Jesus, who died in our place so we might be reconciled to the Father ([Col. 1:22](#)). This statement often evokes questions:

**What if I try to live morally right, working hard at my job and being good to my family—won't God accept me?** Such questions assume that the Lord saves us on the basis of the way we live. But [Romans 3:10](#) says, “There is none righteous, not even one.” In God’s sight, even our virtuous acts are like dirty rags ([Isa. 64:6](#)). Holy God will not have dealings with unrighteous people except through the Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Won't the Lord accept us because of His goodness?** God is loving and good, but He is also just. He won't overlook sin, no matter how small we think it is. Pride makes us reject the idea that we need forgiveness or cleansing from sin.

**If we serve in our church or help the poor in God's name, aren't we part of His family?** Good works do not solve our sin problem or reconcile us to God. Only Jesus does ([Rom. 5:1](#)). Good works are an important *result* of salvation, as opposed to a basis for it.

Salvation is a work of God's grace, not the product of man's effort. When we respond to the Spirit's prompting, believe in Jesus, and are born again as God's children ([John 3:3](#)), we can be assured of our place in heaven. How sure are you?

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# Daily Devotional - Our Help in Prayer

SEPTEMBER 08TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Daily Devotional - Our Help in Prayer

### Romans 8:26-27

Does this sound familiar? Determined to spend more time in prayer, you come to the appointed hour, drop to your knees, open your mouth, and—draw a blank. Sure, you manage a few words about what you need the Lord to do for you and your family, but you should be praying for more than that, shouldn't you?

Yes, you should. Believers' needs are indeed the Father's concern; not even the smallest detail escapes His notice. However, He tells His children to imitate Jesus—they should “not merely look out for [their] own personal interests, but also for the interests of others” ([Phil. 2:4](#)).

Selfless prayer, though, isn't natural to us. We too easily (and wrongly) think of God as a genie—someone to do our bidding as we live life our own way. Thankfully, He has supplied a Helper. The Holy Spirit, our willing and able partner in praying effectively, intercedes for us when we can't “pray as we should” (Rom. 8:26).

How should we cooperate with the Spirit's intercession for us? First, we must recognize God's authority, holiness, and glory. Then, we need to submit our lives to His leadership. When we do, God's will and desires become foremost in importance for us. Finally, we must submit our future to Him, trusting Him to bring great good out of negative as well as positive events in our lives.

In submission to the Holy Spirit, we will discover greater peace and joy. We will also find new words for our prayers to the Father as we bring petitions inspired by His Spirit. Even more importantly, we will develop a deeper understanding of God's greatness.

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## Daily Devotional - Delight Yourself in the Lord

SEPTEMBER 04TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Delight Yourself in the Lord

### [Isaiah 61:10-11](#)

The word *delight* means “to gain great pleasure, satisfaction, and happiness.” Wouldn’t you like those to be the words that describe your relationship with God—one where both you and He enjoy time spent in each other’s presence? If that sounds good to you, then I have great news. God also wants that kind of delightful friendship, which develops through commitment, trust, and patience.

- *First, a believer must commit his or her ways to God. This means that we invite the Lord to examine our desires and intentions—and change whatever does not fit His purpose or advance His plan for our life.*
- *Second, a believer must trust God. Who is more worthy of our faith than the Father, who gave Jesus Christ to save wicked sinners? The One who would not spare His only Son will certainly provide all that His children need ([Rom. 8:32](#)).*
- *Third, a believer must rest in God. When we fret about an issue or something that we consider necessary, we are neither committing ourselves to the Lord nor trusting in Him.*

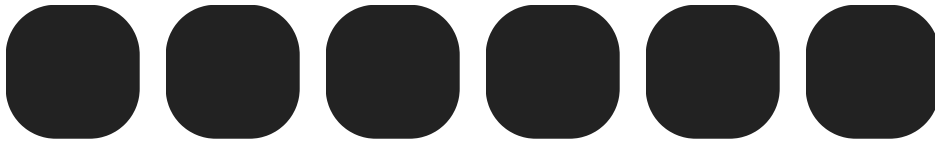
*Because our human viewpoint is extremely limited, waiting patiently rarely proves easy. God, however, has infinite wisdom and knows when circumstances and timing are perfectly aligned for His will to be done.*

A growing relationship with the Lord is not drudgery, though it can be hard work. But the effort is a labor of love, because humans are designed to derive joy and fulfillment from being in God's presence. The greatest pleasure we can experience in life is walking hand in hand with a Father who adores us.

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## Daily Devotional - How to Bolster Our Faith

SEPTEMBER 03RD 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - How to Bolster Our Faith

**Colossians 2:6-7**

Once we have made up our minds to obey God, we gather courage around us like a cloak and proceed. That is, until something causes us to hesitate and question the wisdom of this decision. Our faith is wavering. What do we do now?

**Ask yourself questions about God.** *Has God promised to meet all my needs? Has He sent the Holy Spirit to dwell in me, guide me, and equip me to obey Him? Did God promise to be with me at all times? Is anything too hard for Him? Search the Scriptures for answers, and let truth fill your mind.*

**Meditate on God's Word.** Ask the Lord to help you find Bible verses that relate to what you are facing. Then study the passage and apply its lessons to your personal situation.

**Recall the Lord's past faithfulness.** God by His very nature is faithful, and He always acts true to His character. The enemy would have us forget all that God has done for us.

**Assess the situation.** Ask, *How critical is this decision, and whom might it affect? Is this one of those forks in the road in which my unbelief could cause me or another person a lifetime of regret?*

**Choose to trust the Lord.** Make the decision to believe God and obey, no matter how you feel.

As you take a step of faith, God will strengthen you through His Spirit and enable you to continue on. Before you know it, your faith will become steady, joy will return, and you will be moving ahead once again.

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