



[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - Spiritual Highs: Real or Counterfeit

SEPTEMBER 28TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Spiritual Highs: Real or Counterfeit

Luke 9:28-37

God gives us high spiritual experiences in order to reveal truth about Himself. But how do you know if your experience is authentic or not? Any spiritual event that magnifies itself or some other activity but does not direct your attention to God is, more than likely, counterfeit. When God lifts us up, He does so to focus our thoughts on Him.

That's what happened at the Mount of Transfiguration: As they stood in the presence of God in human flesh, Peter, James, and John saw Jesus in all His majesty. Observing Him there with Moses and Elijah, who were deceased, the disciples realized there is life after death. The things they learned frightened them, but the Lord was revealing something they would never forget.

Why does God open our hearts and give us glimpses of Himself? By doing so, He strengthens and motivates us for His purposes. At the same time, He helps us to absorb understanding that will transcend any future doubt. Peter and his companions were never the same after the transfiguration. Even when their beloved Lord was taken and crucified, nothing could erase their indelible memories of the miracle they'd witnessed.

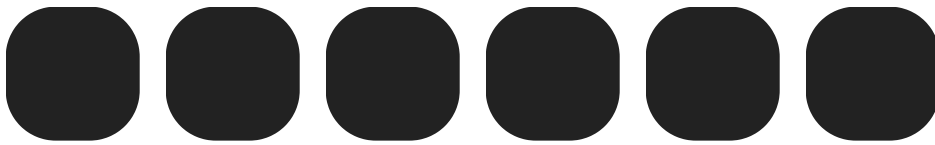
The idea that God is somewhere far away from us isn't scriptural. He wants to unveil Himself to His people and commune through His Holy Spirit. If you have never heard God speak, could it be that there is too much noise in your life distracting you from Him?

Next time you are in church, don't simply go through the motions. God wants to say something to you that will make a difference in your life. If you listen to Him, He will.

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<https://showmetimes.com/Blogpost/uuro/Daily-Devotional--Spiritual-Highs-Real-or-Counterfeit>

[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Blunt Accepts Rare Bible from Pope Francis

SEPTEMBER 28TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Blunt Accepts Rare Bible from Pope Francis

Senator Blunt Accepts Rare Bible from Pope Francis

Joined Speaker Boehner and Librarian of Congress Billington to receive handwritten and illuminated Bible for the Library of Congress

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator Roy Blunt (Mo.) joined Speaker John Boehner (Ohio) in receiving a donation of a Saint John's Illuminated Bible given to the Library of

Congress by Pope Francis this morning during his first visit to the United States. The Pope presented the Bible immediately after his remarks to a joint session of Congress, which was the first ever papal speech before Congress.

“Meeting Pope Francis this morning was a humbling and memorable experience,” said Blunt. “It was an honor to receive the donation of a very special St. John’s Illuminated Bible given to the Library of Congress by the Pope during his visit this week. The time and resources put into this completely handwritten and hand-illustrated Bible is remarkable, and I’m glad it will reside in the Library of Congress as a reminder of the Pope’s historic visit to our great nation and the inspiring and hopeful message he had for us in Congress and across America.”

The Apostles Edition of the Saint John's Bible, one of only twelve in existence, is more than 1,130 pages, contains 160 illuminations, and measures 2 feet tall and 3 feet wide when open. It is the first handwritten and illuminated Bible commissioned in more than 500 years. The Library will place the Bible on public exhibition starting on Saturday, Sept. 26.

Shown in the photo are Senator Blunt and Librarian of Congress Billington with Pope Francis as the pope presents a rare illuminated Bible to the Library of Congress
Senator Blunt is the chairman of the Joint Committee on the Library of Congress.

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[Go to post](#)



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Daily Devotional - The Secret of Contentment

SEPTEMBER 25TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - The Secret of Contentment

Philippians 4:10-13

After encountering Jesus on the road to Damascus, Paul had much to learn about salvation and following Christ. From that moment on, the apostle shared with others what he was discovering. In his letter to the church at Philippi, he wrote about an important life lesson—the secret of being content.

What kind of life do you think brings contentment? You might assume it's one with few troubles or great success. You may want good health, financial security, and a loving family. Paul's life was not at all like this. He was in danger from both his own countrymen and the opposition ([2 Corinthians 11:23-26](#)). Sometimes the people listened when he spoke, but more often they were hostile to his message. He also had a “thorn in the flesh,” which God refused to remove ([2 Corinthians 12:7-9](#)). What's more, Paul spent considerable time in prison, chained to a guard. Yet he boldly wrote, “I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation” ([Phil. 4:12](#) NIV).

The secret he discovered was to live on the basis of his position in the Lord, not his circumstances. As God's child, Paul knew he was spiritually rich—“blessed . . . with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ” ([Eph. 1:3](#))—because he had a loving Father and the Holy Spirit to guide him.

Contentment in our media-driven age is hard to find and harder to keep. There's always something newer, bigger, or better to buy and someone else who has what you want. When you feel unsatisfied, try basing your response on your position as a fellow heir with Christ ([Rom. 8:17](#)) rather than feelings.

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<https://showmetimes.com/Blogpost/uura/Daily-Devotional--The-Secret-of-Contentment>

[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - The Reward of Letting Go

SEPTEMBER 24TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - The Reward of Letting Go

[Genesis 22:1-3](#)

While it's often a struggle to put everything on the altar, one thing I've learned is that you don't have to understand *how* God will accomplish His plans. All He asks is that you surrender your will to His and trust that He will show you the way forward ([Prov. 3:5-6](#)). Abraham's willingness to give up what was most precious to him came from his unyielding faith in the Lord's trustworthiness.

However, if you tell God *no* because He won't explain why He wants us to do something, we are actually hindering His blessing. But when we say *yes* to Him, heaven opens to pour out His goodness and reward our obedience. What matters more than material blessings are the things He is teaching us in our spirit. But don't mistake His way of rewarding as being like a parent who withholds a treat until the child does as he's told. Rather, obeying the Lord naturally positions us to receive what He is already trying to give us and accomplish in our lives. So, when we fail to trust Him and refuse to do what He says, we are the ones choosing to close ourselves off from those good things.

What has God asked you to do? Have you only partially cooperated? Or have you, like Abraham, given up your need to understand and then obeyed completely?

If the Lord says to give more than you think you're able to give, know that He *will* provide. Whether things are running smoothly or the bottom has dropped out, He is always trustworthy. You can count on almighty God to keep His everlasting Word.

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<https://showmetimes.com/Blogpost/uur6/Daily-Devotional--The-Reward-of-Letting-Go>

[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - The Freedom of Letting Go

SEPTEMBER 23RD 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - The Freedom of Letting Go

[1 Peter 5:6-7](#)

Our heavenly Father is interested in every detail in our life. If we want Him to work in a particular area—whether relationships, finances, vocation, habits, or something else—we must be willing to let go of our control and give over to Him whatever He asks of us.

We may *think* we have no attachments that come between us and the Lord, but He knows our hearts. One Sunday as I was about to preach a sermon along these lines, He showed me something I hadn't yet surrendered. I realized I needed to deal with it, or I wouldn't be able to preach the sermon. So I was glad when the choir's song took a while, because I had time to come to a place of being able to say, "Lord, if that's what You desire, I commit it to You. You have the right to claim it at any time, so it's Yours right now."

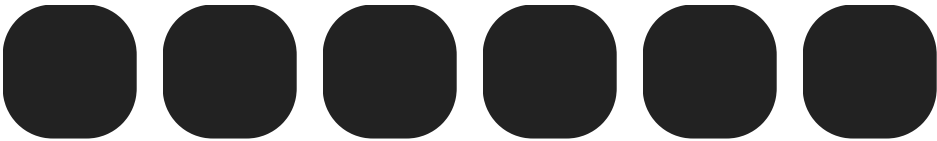
It's difficult to be completely obedient if we're holding on to something too tightly. The Lord wants our attachment to be exclusively to Him. You may have multitudes of things that God has blessed you with, but the moment any of it has a hold on you, His work in your life will be blocked. But when you open your hands, gripping nothing, you will be totally free as the Holy Spirit's power flows through you.

Is there anything you feel you could never give up? Think about whatever captivates you, and honestly consider whether it also holds you captive. I challenge you to release that relationship or situation to the Lord right now so He can give you the freedom you've been craving.

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