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Daily Devotional - Praying with Impact

OCTOBER 15TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Praying with Impact

1 John 5:14-15

Since praying is such a common practice for believers, over time it's easy to fall into habits that result in a lifeless and empty prayer life. Instead of a dynamic conversation with thoughtful requests and active listening for God's response, our prayers can seem more like grocery lists. Because communication with the Lord is such a vital part of the Christian life, we occasionally need to examine how we're doing. Begin by asking yourself these questions:

- How effective are my prayers? *Is the Lord answering your petitions, or does it seem as if they never go past the ceiling?*
- Who am I praying for? *Are most of your requests for yourself or are they for others?*
- What am I asking God to do? *Have you looked in the Word to see what He wants, or are you praying according to your plans and desires?*
- When do I pray? *Is it only when you need something?*

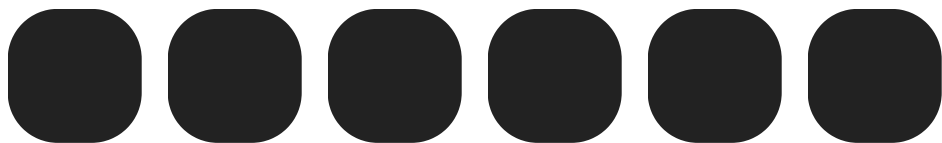
If you discovered any selfishness in your answers, you're not alone. Most of us struggle to enter God's presence with our eyes focused on Him instead of our needs. But the only way we'll be able to pray with impact is to fill our minds with Scripture so we can find out what the Lord wants to do.

Your prayer life can become effective and dynamic if you'll approach the Lord with a clean heart ([Ps. 66:18](#)), align your requests with His will, and believe He will do what He says ([Num. 23:19](#); [John 14:13](#)). Then you'll be able to pray with absolute confidence, knowing that He will hear and answer your petitions.

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Daily Devotional - The Problems with Laziness

OCTOBER 14TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - The Problems with Laziness

[Proverbs 6:9-11](#)

The book of Proverbs has much to say about people who are lazy. They are regarded as sluggards who do not think beyond today ([Proverbs 20:4](#)), who wrongly consider themselves wise ([Proverbs 26:16](#)), and who are on a path leading to future poverty.

When people develop a habit of laziness, they tend to offer excuses—such as “I was too tired” or “I ran out of time” or “I wasn’t sure what you were asking for.” They’ll avoid doing something they don’t like, even if it’s their responsibility, and they won’t bother to seek clarification when a request isn’t clear. Instead, they do only what pleases them. Sadly, individuals who act this way have trouble recognizing what they are doing wrong, and they find criticism unreasonable. Though such men and women might think that nobody notices their attitude, it is usually very apparent to others.

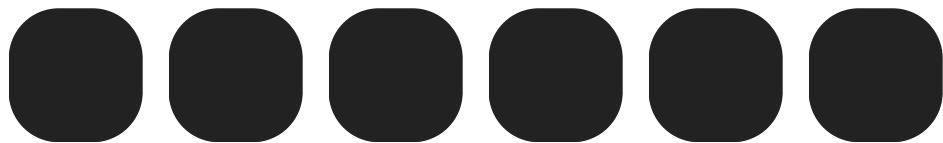
People may fool themselves and even each other, but God, who sees poor attitudes and careless ways, is not pleased by shoddy efforts. He has prepared work for us to do and expects it to be handled conscientiously. The Lord knows that the consequences of laziness are serious: At work, there is the possibility of frequent criticism or even termination; at home, neglect can add tension to the atmosphere and build frustration; and in a trickle-down effect, children may start copying their parents’ undesirable work habits.

If you are already a disciplined worker but must interact with people who are not, continue to please the Lord with diligence in your work. In addition, pray for patience ([Gal. 5:22](#)), and be an example of Christ to those around you.

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Daily Devotional - The Danger of Laziness

OCTOBER 11TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - The Danger of Laziness

2 Thessalonians 3:7-10

The Lord has appointed believers to be His ambassadors to a lost and hurting world. As His followers, we are to represent Him in our character, conduct, and conversation whenever we interact with family, friends, neighbors, or coworkers.

God expects us to be diligent in our work and faithful to complete it. However, in our self-absorbed, pleasure-seeking culture, it's very easy to get sidetracked into laziness. This sin is dangerous in a Christian's life because of the potential harm that can result—it can hurt our witness for Christ, damage our relationships with others, and waste both the time and the gifts the Lord has given us. Another negative result of such a lifestyle is a character marked as unreliable and untrustworthy.

Laziness frequently shows up as procrastination. We procrastinate when we tell someone we will take action and then repeatedly delay the start time. Or we may begin a project and yet find reasons not to finish it. Surely, if a believer is known as an unreliable person, it damages his or her testimony. We're also a poor example if we make an attempt to carry out responsibilities but do so in a haphazard or incomplete way. Nor should we be neglectful about the needs of others or relationships with loved ones.

Irresponsible behavior doesn't fit who we are in Christ. If you realize you've been careless in some area in your life, pray, "Lord, I have not lived as I should, and I ask You to forgive me. I choose to turn away from my lazy and neglectful attitudes. Please help me to follow through and become someone who is industrious for You."

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Daily Devotional - Encouragement in Tough Times

OCTOBER 09TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Encouragement in Tough Times

[Judges 7:8-25](#)

Yesterday, we read about how God shrank Gideon's army down from 32,000 men to just 300 before an extremely important battle. Let's see what happened next.

Of course, Gideon was feeling anxious. He was about to attack an enemy camp of more than 130,000 trained soldiers, and he was going to do it with just a handful of men. In this terrifying moment, God gave Gideon what he needed most: encouragement.

God woke Gideon in the middle of the night and strategically positioned him to overhear an enemy soldier recounting a frightful dream—a vision of Israelite victory! This unlikely circumstance assured Gideon that the Lord was at work. God graciously used that incident to demonstrate His sensitivity to one man's faintheartedness. And He still does so for us today.

Consider the power of a friend's encouraging words. Think about how meaningful it is when an unexpected blessing seems to fall from heaven right at your darkest moment. Ponder the impact of reading a reassuring verse when you most need it. These are not

“happy accidents”—rather, they are precious confidence builders from God.

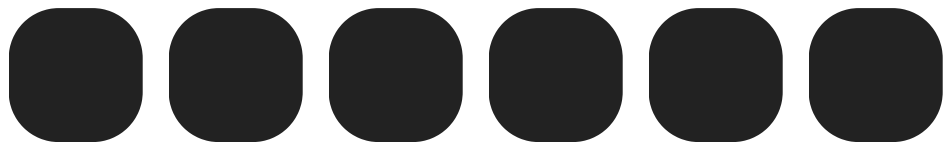
Our challenge is simply to remember the times in the past when our loving Father has encouraged us. Standing on the evidence of His faithfulness, we can boldly face the future, knowing that we are not alone.

As inhabitants of a fallen world, we will face seemingly insurmountable obstacles. But as children of God, we are never beyond reach of the Lord’s empowering encouragement.

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Daily Devotional - When the Odds are Against You

OCTOBER 08TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - When the Odds are Against You

Judges 7:1-7

Have you ever felt backed into a corner, with the odds stacked against you? In situations like that, Christians too often refuse to acknowledge an important truth. That is, they fail to recognize that God may actually be orchestrating their challenging circumstances.

You may think, *No way. God protects me from such things. The world and Satan are doing this to me.* Perhaps. Yet maybe, just maybe, God is trying to tell you something—and He first needs to get your attention.

Time and again in Scripture, we see that the Lord uses difficulties to build our faith. It's easy to trust Him when things go our way. However, God often removes comforts and false securities from our lives to remind us that He is the true source of our strength.

Consider today's passage, in which Gideon was ready to lead a powerful militia of 32,000 men into battle against the enemy. However, the Lord stepped into the situation two different times, whittling the Israelite army down to less than one percent of its original size. We may have replied, "What? It's impossible to defeat enemy forces with just 300 men!" That's probably true; 300 men alone couldn't do it. But the Lord could.

When the odds are not in your favor, don't think that God has abandoned you. Your money, your success, and even people you thought were friends may disappear, but those wouldn't win the battle anyway. Stand your ground and stay focused on the Lord. With everything else stripped away, you'll be amazed at what your heavenly Father will achieve.

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