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Daily Devotional - Seeking Guidance: The Pattern

MAY 15TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Seeking Guidance: The Pattern

Matthew 7:7-8

There's a pattern we should follow in seeking God's guidance, and the first step involves cleansing. Sin can strangle the Holy Spirit's power in us and cloud judgment, so we must ask God to reveal and then forgive anything that might interfere with what He wants to tell us.

Of the remaining steps, the most important is surrender. The Lord cannot share His plans for our life until we are committed to following Him no matter what. He certainly knows whether we're seeking direction in order to *obey* or merely to *consider* what He suggests. Therefore, surrender precedes even our request for guidance. First John 5 says God hears and grants our petitions when they align with His will ([1 John 5:14-15](#)). When believers yield themselves to Him, they'll find their way to the right request and the best possible answer.

Most of the time, God guides believers to an answer through His Word, which is why I encourage meditation upon Scripture ([Ps. 119:105](#)). Our reading may take us to a chapter that deals with our very situation or to a passage containing an applicable principle. At times the crystal-clear message God speaks to one person's heart is something no one else would glean from that particular passage. The key is to believe that the Lord will guide you, and to live out that faith ([Mark 11:24](#)).

Waiting is important, as the process of seeking guidance can often be slow, and running ahead or manipulating circumstances can be a costly mistake. The omniscient Sovereign

of the universe acts on behalf of those who wait for Him (Isa. 64:4). So seek direction and you will receive it—that’s a promise.

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Daily Devotional - The Desires of Your Heart

MAY 13TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - The Desires of Your Heart

[Psalm 37:1-5](#)

When people speak about their wants, they often cite today’s passage with zeal despite having little genuine understanding. We love the idea that the Father will give us the desires of our heart. Unfortunately, when we focus only on receiving good things, we miss the psalm’s context, which is a divine promise with human obligations.

God's greatest interest is not to indulge us, but rather to give us more of Himself. Self-indulgent prayers overlook the first requirement for the promise's fulfillment: delighting in the Lord. We are to take pleasure in time spent communing with Him and serving Him. As we read God's Word and pray, we'll experience His work in our life, and our faith in Him will deepen.

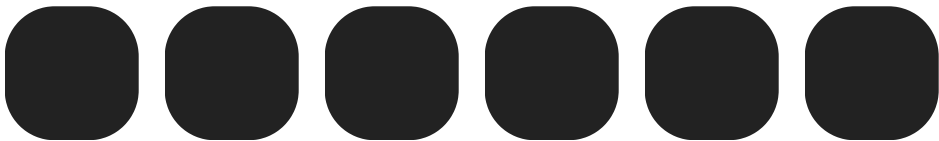
Over time, our growing trust in God means that we begin to appropriate His ways of thinking. Then committing to His plan—the second requirement—remolds our heart's desires until they look like His own preferences for our life. Even so, sometimes what God provides may appear very different from what we requested. But when He hears our shortsighted appeals, He answers based on His infinite knowledge and His great love for us. Instead of giving us what we *think* we want, He bestows the perfect answer to our prayer.

God derives enjoyment from granting our requests, but His greatest joy is hearing us express an earnest desire to know Him better. The by-product of delighting in God and committing to His way is receiving our heart's wishes. Our primary reward is a relationship with the loving God who offers to share Himself with humanity.

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Daily Devotional - When We Are Lonely

MAY 11TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - When We Are Lonely

Hebrews 4:14-16

Despite the fact that technology enables us to stay connected with each other, we haven't solved the problem of loneliness. Many people still feel cut off from those around them. The real solution for healing the deep ache of isolation in our heart is an intimate relationship with the heavenly Father.

As He was about to create Adam, God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" ([Gen. 1:26](#)). One point of resemblance to the Lord is our desire and ability to share intimacy with other people. Moreover, we're created to commune with the Father.

Adam and Eve had a close bond with the Lord, who spent time with them in the Garden of Eden. However, the couple's disobedience caused a rift in the relationship. And since God is holy, He can't allow anything unrighteous into His presence. Once sin entered the world through the first couple, every person born would be tainted with it and, consequently, would be separated from God. Yet because of His love, the Lord planned a way to bridge the gap between Himself and mankind.

Jesus Christ took our transgressions upon Himself when He died on the cross, wiping away the stain of sin. Whoever trusts in His sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin goes over the "bridge" formed by the cross. Each new believer is reconciled—that is, immediately restored to a right relationship with the Lord.

Reconciliation with the Father means that we are never alone ([Deut. 31:6](#)). We may still feel lonely on occasion, but we have a constant companion with whom we can talk. And He will provide comfort to our heart.

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Daily Devotional - The Way of Faith

MAY 10TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Daily Devotional - The Way of Faith](#)

Hebrews 11:23-28

Moses, a shepherd, stood before Pharaoh and ordered the powerful ruler to release the people of Israel from slavery. The confrontation must have seemed a ridiculous spectacle, even to the slaves Moses had been sent to rescue. But after 10 plagues and many dealings with the Egyptian leader, Moses brought the country to its knees with a shepherd's staff and his faith in God.

Choosing to walk by faith instead of living on the basis of feelings, opinions, and logic often means being misunderstood. Our actions may appear unreasonable to the outside world (and sometimes even to ourselves), but what could be more reasonable than allowing our omnipotent God to guide us? When we, like Moses, find our talents and abilities are no match for the task at hand, God's power will accomplish through us what needs to be done. (See [2 Cor. 12:9](#).) The Lord isn't always "reasonable" as we interpret

reason, but He works out our circumstances through our obedient actions. We can be confident that He who used a shepherd to challenge a pharaoh is trustworthy.

Living by faith requires releasing our human sense of what is best and reasonable in order to rely wholly on God—it involves obeying when the Lord tells us that we are to speak or act. God wants us to trust that He has a plan for our life and is constantly directing circumstances and maneuvering people to ensure that His purpose is achieved.

Whatever the challenge, you can be successful by choosing to depend entirely upon the Father. He will stand you up before your own personal Egypt and make you victorious.

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Daily Devotional - Joseph: Forward by Faith

MAY 09TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Daily Devotional - Joseph: Forward by Faith](#)

Genesis 39

As believers, we'll all falter occasionally in our faith. When that happens, how can we keep doubts to a minimum? The key is to remain focused on the Father so that we can move forward in His will for our life.

Consider the Old Testament hero Joseph, who trusted in God during all the harrowing events of his early years. Faith sustained him through betrayal, slavery, and imprisonment. Resting on his confidence in the heavenly Father, Joseph didn't allow his circumstances, environment, or the opinions of others to divert him from acting according to the Lord's will. Joseph believed that every situation of his life was by God's design.

Most people react to trials by complaining that the situation is unfair and undeserved. They are so focused on the misfortune of their circumstances that they miss opportunities to serve God.

Joseph chose a different approach. This young man who'd been sold into slavery by his brothers decided to do his work with excellence. His duties in Potiphar's house were probably menial, but he performed them as if working for God. This kind of commitment earned Joseph the attention and respect of his master, and the Hebrew slave was rewarded with greater responsibility. [Genesis 39:23](#) says, "And whatever he did, the Lord made to prosper."

As Joseph moved through one hardship after another, he stayed focused on the Lord, who had promised to raise him to a position of leadership ([Gen. 37:10](#)). He had a practical approach to the downward turn in his fortunes: He kept thinking about God and serving Him instead of dwelling on his trials.

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