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Daily Devotional - A Hunger for God

AUGUST 14TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - A Hunger for God

Psalms 63:1-5

The Lord has given us a variety of appetites, which are essential for our physical survival. But He has also created within our hearts a hunger that is spiritual. David was a man who recognized and felt this yearning for the heavenly Father. Throughout the Psalms, we find him meditating, offering praise, or crying out to God. His greatest joy was to be with his heavenly Father in intimate communion.

Hungering for the Lord is a desire to know and draw closer to Him. Sadly, this yearning lies dormant in many believers' lives. They're saved but have very little desire for more. One of the problems is that our society is filled with all sorts of things that grab and hold our interest and affections. These pleasures and pursuits compete with God for our attention, claiming our time and effort.

The good news is that a longing for God can be awakened if we are willing to change our priorities and pursuits. Although cultivating a desire for the Lord takes time, the joy we'll experience is lasting—and the rewards are eternal. We'll always get more out of a relationship with God than we put in. What's more, as our hunger for Him comes to life, He will open our heart and mind to understand and desire Him even more.

When we yearn for the Lord, He will satisfy us with contentment and a sense of completeness, while awakening an even deeper longing in our souls. Unlike physical hunger, a craving for Him is filled but paradoxically leaves us hungry. The more we are satisfied in Christ, the more we want of Him.

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Daily Devotional - The Storms of Life

AUGUST 11TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

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[Genesis 50:15-21](#)

When life gets hard, we tend to get upset and wonder how soon the difficulty will end. But God wants us to focus on Him in times of trouble. As we do, we will discover that He is doing important spiritual work during these “storms.”

Beliefs. The Bible contains what we need to know about our life in Christ. When circumstances are beyond our control, what we really believe will surface. The depth of our faith in God’s character and promises will become evident, as will any doubts or uncertainties we may have. For example, Joseph revealed strong belief when he acknowledged that God intended his hardships for his good ([Gen. 50:20](#)). There will be times when we don’t succeed—like Peter, whose fear led to denying Christ ([John 18:25-](#)

27)—but we should think of trials as opportunities to grow and deepen our faith.

Transformation. As God’s children, we are to live our lives in a way that displays Christ’s character. But we are more like jewels in the rough, aren’t we? The heavenly Father can use the storms of life to transform us into His Son’s image.

Comfort. This blessing is not only for us but also for others. Our Father comforts us in our sufferings and asks that we share what we have received with other people (2 Cor. 1:3-4).

Difficult times can come from our own mistakes, the schemes of the enemy, or the hurtful actions of others. They can even be ordained by God. Regardless of the source, our Father works in them to benefit us and to bless others. What testimony about Him can you give to a hurting world?

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Daily Devotional - Seeking After God

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Luke 12:29-34

Pursuing God through His Son Jesus is to be our highest aim. It requires an attitude of wholeheartedness, diligence, persistence, confidence, and humility. To seek Him, what actions can we take?

First, we need to study the Scriptures. A structured, ongoing examination of them will cause our faith to grow and provide what we need for life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). Next, we must maintain an active prayer life. Prayer is conversation with God—it includes both speaking and listening. Third, we are to meditate, which involves prayerful consideration of what we read in the Word. This means digesting a passage of Scripture verse by verse and asking the Lord questions about what it means. Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will gain understanding of its application to life. This process helps us absorb His truths so we can live by them.

As we assimilate scriptural principles, we gain wisdom. It becomes easier to identify where the Lord is at work and to evaluate our circumstances in light of His character and plan. We will also recognize when we are to act. As we listen to messages based on God's Word, we will grow in the Lord. Listening includes a desire to hear, a willingness to act, and a determination not to be distracted. Lastly, we should observe how God is working in others' lives, which will be an encouragement to us as well.

God promises to reward our seeking. Sometimes we will be blessed with greater understanding, at other times with inexplicable joy. Best of all, seeking always leads to finding Him ([Jer. 29:13](#))

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Daily Devotional - Praying for a Change

AUGUST 08TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Praying for a Change

James 5:16

Hanging above the door in our house, my mother's favorite plaque constantly reminded us, "Prayer changes things." From an early age, I witnessed this powerful truth through her example. She'd tell me about some difficulties she was facing and then have me pray about them with her. And later, she'd always be sure to give God the glory when sharing the awesome news that He had answered those prayers.

Indeed, this is our confidence: Anything we pray for that aligns with the Father's plan will be granted. And the more time we spend with Him, the more we'll come to understand His will and how to pray for it.

Remember, prayer doesn't change God's mind, but it does transform the believer's heart. Some requests are granted immediately, simply because our Father is good and He loves to give His children gifts. Other requests may require time or certain divine preparations before they can be given. We, meanwhile, must simply persevere in prayer.

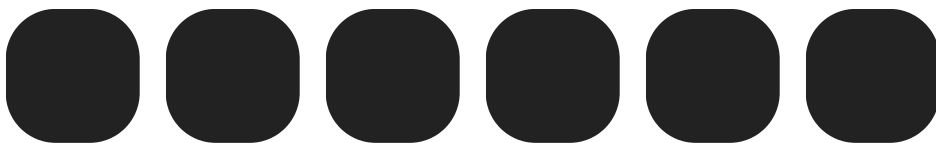
Whatever the Lord's response or timing, we trust that He has only the very best in store for His children. That means we might not receive exactly what we're asking for, but something even better. Such is God's great pleasure, for He alone perfectly knows each heart's desire and wishes to fulfill it.

Our most powerful tool for shaping the world and lives around us is always available. Prayer lets us witness God’s hand in any situation. And as we give attention, time, and perseverance to conversation with Him, we find there’s no limit to what He can achieve in people’s hearts and circumstances.

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Daily Devotional - Easy to Say, Difficult to Do

AUGUST 04TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Daily Devotional - Easy to Say, Difficult to Do](#)

God’s commands sometimes defy human logic. Take, for example, the command to rejoice in persecution. It doesn’t make sense until we realize the effect of praise—it keeps us focused upon the Lord and the good things that He can bring out of hardship.

The apostle Paul faced greater abuse and suffering than most of us ever will. He was beaten, put on trial, and imprisoned, yet he looked beyond those difficulties to what the Lord was accomplishing through his life. That is, though he didn't rejoice that he was a captive, he was able to celebrate the great ministry he had among his prison guards.

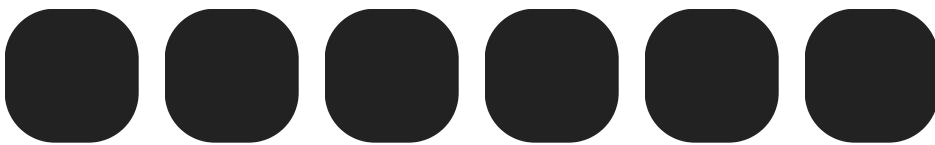
If we believe God is in control and keeps His promises, then we must trust in the principle of Romans 5:3-5. This passage assures us that our hardships have a purpose. Specifically, they develop our endurance, strengthen our character, and solidify our hope. Two immediate blessings of suffering are the deepening of our faith and the preparation for greater service to the kingdom. We're able to rejoice because we are maturing believers whom God can use for His purposes.

The Lord will bring good from our persecution, just as He did for Paul. But if we allow doubt to cloud our faith, we won't be able to rejoice in what He is doing in and through our lives. And if we can't rejoice, we are in danger of giving up before God's good work can be completed. Rejoicing keeps us focused upon the Lord and His purpose so that we may see our trial through to the end and receive our reward.

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