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Daily Devotional - God's Tools for Making Us Holy

AUGUST 26TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - God's Tools for Making Us Holy

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

Sanctification is the process God uses to conform believers to the image of His Son. The writers of Scripture used word pictures that speak of the Father's shaping work in the life of His saints. Isaiah, for example, compared the Lord to an artist making pottery: "We are the clay and You our potter; and all of us are the work of Your hand" ([Isa. 64:8](#)). These are some of the tools He utilizes to mold and perfect His creations:

The Bible. The psalmist described God's Word as "a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" ([Ps. 119:105](#)). The Holy Spirit illuminates what we read so that we can come under conviction and grow in our faith.

The Church. As part of Christ's body, we learn of God's ways from the pastors and teachers who have been called to minister. The Father also calls His children to fellowship together ([Heb. 10:25](#)), in part so He can use them in each other's sanctification process. Not only that, but there are Christians at church who will encourage their brothers and sisters in times of trouble or hold them accountable when they miss the mark.

Suffering. God freely offers us solace and help during times of difficulty, but He also uses our painful circumstances to shape us. When we submit to Him, we emerge from our struggles looking more Christlike than ever before.

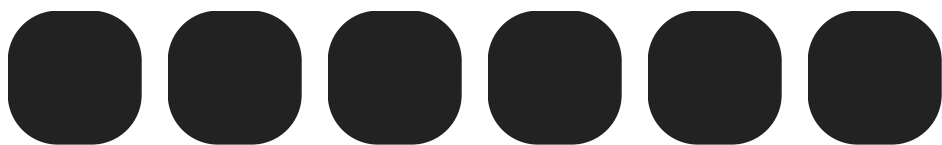
From the moment a person places trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, God's transforming work of sanctification will be ongoing throughout his or her life. As children of the King, we

should long to glorify our Father by faithfully reflecting Him. To do that, we must yield to His tools of sanctification.

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Daily Devotional - God's Condition for His Full Blessing

AUGUST 23RD 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - God's Condition for His Full Blessing

[Matthew 16:24-27](#)

The Lord wants to give each of us an abundance of blessings. Let's explore what is required so that we may enjoy all that He has planned.

Today's passage clarifies the one necessary condition for receiving His best: surrender. Every aspect of our being—body, soul, and spirit—is to be a living sacrifice. This may sound dreary, but contrary to human logic, true freedom is found only when we fully yield to Christ.

In the Old Testament, sacrifice was very common. To atone for sin, a person could bring a lamb to the altar. The animal was set apart for God's purposes as a holy offering, and through its death, restitution was made.

When we give ourselves as a sacrifice, there is, thankfully, no need for our blood to be shed. Jesus died to atone for all of our sin. So out of love and gratitude, every aspect of our life should be dedicated to Him.

What does a surrendered life entail? Most importantly, it involves complete commitment to Christ, unaltered by the world's influence. Our desires and old ways of functioning are no longer driving forces. Instead, God's Spirit guides us, and His will is the goal. Yielding to Him means following His way in attitude, words, thoughts, and deeds—and doing so unapologetically, unwaveringly, and fearlessly.

You have a choice: Either be content with less than God's best, or give yourself fully to Him. Complete surrender is not an easy road; it means dying to your desires and selfishness. But remember that the Lord is willing and able to do more than we can even imagine ([Eph. 3:20](#)).

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AUGUST 22ND 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Daily Devotional - The Patience of God

AUGUST 21ST 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - The Patience of God

[2 Peter 3:8-9](#)

God's seemingly slow reaction to sin is often puzzling to believers. Why doesn't He immediately punish those who violate His principles? The answer is found in today's passage—the Lord is patient so that all people have an opportunity to repent (2 Pet. 3:9).

In our humanness, we at times want people to suffer for wrongdoing. Jonah ran away from his duty to preach in Nineveh, because he expected that if the inhabitants repented, his gracious, compassionate God would relent about destroying the city. And that is precisely what came to pass. Instead of rejoicing in the Lord's success, the prophet complained about His treating the Ninevites with patience and mercy ([Jonah 4:2](#)).

Jonah was angry at God despite the fact that he himself had received divine mercy. (Unpleasant though it was, there are worse forms of discipline than being swallowed and regurgitated by a fish.)

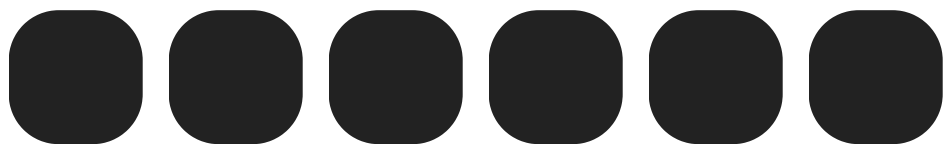
More often than not, believers have ample reason to be thankful that the Lord, unlike human beings, is slow to anger. When we are stubborn and unrepentant, He waits patiently for us to respond to conviction. Discipline is painful to both the recipient and the one carrying it out. God prefers that we see the error of our choices, stop thinking that we're getting away with sin, and turn back to His righteous path.

The Lord places a high value on repentance and maintaining fellowship. However, His justice demands a penalty. Do not wait for discipline. Instead, do what's right, and turn your heart toward God.

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Daily Devotional - Defeating False Teachers

AUGUST 19TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Defeating False Teachers

2 Peter 2:1-3

Outside a grocery store one evening, I watched two young men confronting shoppers with an erroneous statement about scriptural teaching. Anyone who seemed vague about the Christian faith was invited to learn “what God really said” at a Bible study. I was not invited. In fact, the men abandoned me quickly when I used Scripture to defend my beliefs.

False teachers want to create uncertainty in their listeners. In order to gain followers, these deceivers claim to possess knowledge that their audience lacks. The people who accept this misleading information as absolute truth will usually return to the false teacher for more. Having followers, in turn, strokes the misguided leader’s ego and provides “proof” that he’s right.

Those who have a sound doctrine won’t be led astray. That’s why it is so important for our faith to rest on biblical truth—for example, the fact that Jesus Christ died for the sins of mankind, the Holy Spirit dwells in believers, and Christians will one day be resurrected bodily. Defeating false teachers takes more than “my pastor says ...” When confronted, we must defend our faith with Scripture that we ourselves have studied. By regularly reading and applying God’s Word, we will be better prepared to defend our beliefs when presented with untruth.

Building a sound doctrine protects believers from misleading messages and arms them to defend the faith. Do not be caught unprepared. If you haven’t already started, begin to study the Bible today. Should you need help, ask your pastor or a godly mentor for guidance.

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