



TOP

Daily Devotional - The Heart's Desires

OCTOBER 20TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - The Heart's Desires

Psalms 145:17-21

If you could have anything in the world, what would it be? Your answer reveals a lot about you. The psalmist writes, “Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart” ([Ps. 37:4](#)). There is nothing wrong with desires—they motivate us to achieve great things. But not all of our yearnings come from God. Consider your aspirations and what they say about who you are:

- *Do you hope for a position of authority in order to be in control?* Longing for personal advancement in order to manipulate others reveals a lack of integrity, whereas a godly person craves righteousness.
- *Do you dream about wealth and fame?* Perhaps there’s a void in your spirit that you’re trying to fill. But only God can meet the insatiable needs of the human heart.
- *Are you afraid to ask the Lord for what you want?* Maybe you think He won’t listen, but God tells us to approach His throne with boldness and confidence ([Heb. 4:16](#)).

If the Lord doesn’t respond affirmatively to your prayers, ask Him to make your desires conform to His will. Whatever you do, don’t take matters into your own hands and go after what you want. There is always a high price to pay for rebelling against God.

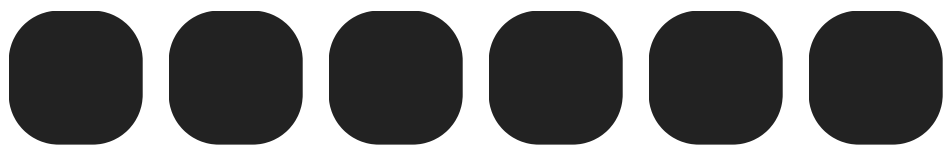
God cares for us bountifully, but that doesn’t mean we can expect Him to deliver whatever we want, whenever we want it. Only when our dreams align with His plan for

our life will He fulfill them. The thoughts that preoccupy us are an accurate barometer of the state of our relationship with Christ.

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Daily Devotional - A Real Enemy

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Daily Devotional - A Real Enemy

[1 Peter 5:8-10](#)

Let's play a little game. Imagine that you're a soldier during wartime. You've made it through basic training, mastered the weapons of war, memorized all the relevant warfare strategies, and are heading to battle.

You've seen the war in news headlines. Friends of yours have already been deployed. And now that you're on the front lines, you witness explosions and desolation all around you. Without a doubt, you know that there is an enemy out to destroy you.

Now, imagine a fellow soldier coming to you and saying, "I really don't believe there's an enemy out there. I think it's a myth, or maybe just a metaphor for evil. It isn't real."

How ridiculous! Right there in the midst of combat, with fallen comrades and used ammunition littering the battlefield, how could an intelligent person ever fail to acknowledge the presence of the enemy? It is unthinkable.

And yet, this exact situation is taking place in churches all around the world. Despite the evidence of war and regardless of the overtly personal and custom-made nature of the attacks, an astounding number of Christians simply do not believe in the existence of Satan. This is a tragic mistake.

My friend, there is a very real enemy stalking you right now, waiting for the opportunity to destroy you completely. If you want to grow and experience maturity in the Christian life, then you must take this battle seriously.

Are you prepared today? Put on your spiritual armor, and follow the Lord into battle. He'll be by your side.

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[Go to post](#)



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TOP

Daily Devotional - Dressed for Battle

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Daily Devotional - Dressed for Battle

Ephesians 6:10-18

When you wake up in the morning and get ready for the day, you're probably not thinking about stepping onto a battlefield. But the enemy is all around us, constantly assaulting our heart and mind with temptations, adversities, emotional attacks, and more. And some days, it feels as though we are standing on the front lines of combat with no protection whatsoever.

Therein lies our misunderstanding. You see, we do have protection. The Lord made provision for our nakedness in battle. He hasn't sent us to war unprotected. Instead, He's given us a suit of armor that the enemy can't penetrate—the armor of God.

In today's passage, the apostle Paul tells us step by step how to prepare for our daily warfare, and yet most Christians don't pay much attention to the instruction. We may say, "Well, that's a nice metaphor, but we shouldn't take it literally. After all, the armor isn't real." Yes, it is. It is as real as the clothes on your back.

Do you want to see a dramatic change in your life? Do you want to stand strong in the face of adversity? Do you want to overcome temptation? Then you need to dress for battle.

I challenge you to intentionally put on your spiritual armor every day for the next seven days. Put on one piece at a time—the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the belt of truth, the sandals of peace, the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit. Just try it as you meditate daily on Ephesians 6:10-18, and watch what God will do

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[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - Understanding Your Call

OCTOBER 14TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Understanding Your Call

[Mark 8:34-35](#)

I like to use the word believer when talking about God’s children, as it specifically refers to those who have trusted Jesus Christ as Savior. That is a much smaller population than those who label themselves “Christian.” But did you know that even fewer people could rightly be called “followers”? These are the people who passionately pursue the Lord’s will in all things.

Are you a believer or a follower? Trusting in Jesus Christ is fundamental, but doing so is the first step, not the culmination, of a person’s faith. Our primary purpose is to take a life-long journey following in the Lord’s footsteps, honoring Him with our actions and speech, and always increasing in biblical wisdom.

A follower’s life is summed up in the phrase *complete obedience*. In fact, Jesus defined true Christians as those who prove their love for Him by keeping His word ([John 14:23](#)). When it comes to obeying God, there are really only two responses—“I will” or “I won’t.” It’s tempting to say, “I will, but ...” as some of Jesus’ would-be disciples did, but that’s a roundabout way of saying no. Followers remain faithful to the Lord’s plan

whether doing so is easy or hard. Not only that, but they proclaim Him in both blessing and calamity, and go even when they don't like where He leads.

Followers pursue the Lord because they know that the reward is a deeper, more passionate relationship with Him. They are not just waiting to spend eternity with God in heaven. They realize that eternity begins now, as they accompany Him on the righteous path He has set before them.

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<https://showmetimes.com/Blogpost/v5oh/Daily-Devotional--Understanding-Your-Call>

[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - Faith Barriers

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[Exodus 3:10-22](#), [Exodus 4:1-17](#)

God enables us to carry out His plan for our life. When we fall short of accomplishing the goals He has set for us, it is not because He in some way failed to provide the necessary equipping. Instead, failure is usually the result of an obstacle within our heart—an attitude that short-circuits our faith. As a result, the flow of God’s power is hindered, and we cannot become the person He desires us to be.

Moses is a dramatic illustration of the disruptive potential of faith barriers. Called to one of the greatest missions in all of Scripture, the future leader responded with excuses for why he should not obey.

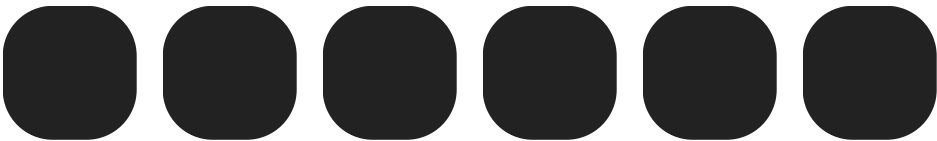
Excuses for disobedience haven’t changed much since Moses’ encounter with the burning bush. He tried to hide behind the same faith barriers that believers cite today: poor self-image (Ex. 3:11-12), ignorance about God (Ex. 3:13-21), self-doubt (Ex. 4:1-9), feelings of inadequacy (Ex 4:10-11), and fear of failure (Ex. 4:12-13). Each time he protested that the Lord had asked the wrong person—a slow-tongued shepherd of slavery lineage, who murdered a man and became a fugitive—God responded with a firm, persuasive rebuttal.

The theme of God’s answers is something all believers need to understand, just as Moses finally did—namely, that when we are called to serve, our strength, skill, and wisdom do not matter. Rather, it is the Lord who does the work through us. He doesn’t seek out the most qualified person for a particular job but instead calls men and women who are willing to surrender themselves to Him. When His strength works through their weakness, it is obvious that only God could have achieved the result.

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