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# Wednesday, December 14, 2016 Daily Devotional - An Introduction to Christ

DECEMBER 14TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

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## Revelation 1:4-8

John gives us a compact description of the Lord. Verse 5 in today's passage condenses the wondrous nature of Jesus Christ to the bare but beautiful essentials of who He is.

**Jesus Christ is the faithful witness.** Jesus came to earth to more fully reveal the character and ways of the Father ([John 14:9](#)). The miracles He performed validated His claim to be the Son of God.

**Jesus Christ is the firstborn from the dead.** The Savior bore our sins and died on the cross, was buried, and rose again on the third day. His resurrection proved that eternal life is possible for us, too, which is what Jesus taught when He said, "He who believes in Me will live even if he dies" ([John 11:25](#)).

**Jesus Christ is ruler over the kings of the earth.** The Lord raises men to power, just as it is He who removes them ([John 19:11](#); see also [Rom. 13:1](#)). And believers have access to a higher authority than human leaders. In God's throne room, we can beseech Him on behalf of our land and lay claim to His promises.

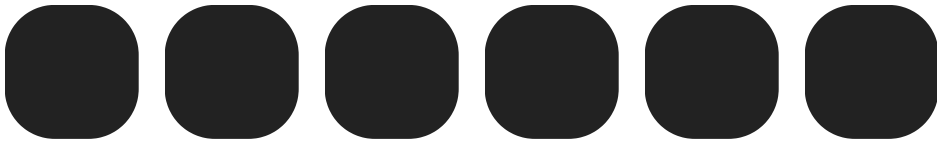
**Jesus Christ loves us and, by His blood, released us from our sins.** Note the change of tense in [Revelation 1:5](#). The Lord's love is ever-present, but He *has freed* believers from their past (NIV). Both the penalty and power of sin have been broken by His sacrifice.

When people ask you about Jesus, introduce Him by guiding them through this mini biography. In just a few sentences, John describes Christ’s character, divinity, and authority. The disciple was not timid about proclaiming the Lord to whomever he encountered. We shouldn’t be shy, either, when we serve so great a Savior.

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## Tuesday, December 13, 2016 Daily Devotional - A Pattern for Prayer

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[Matthew 6:7-15](#)

In Matthew 6:7, Jesus cautioned against meaningless repetition when talking to the Father. Just two verses later, He left a pattern to help us pray. However, in using this passage, which is known as the Lord's Prayer, we're often guilty of the very thing Jesus warned against: Instead of thoughtfully praying each line, we run through the words mindlessly. But if we take time to carefully examine Christ's words, we'll find the pattern that can transform our prayer life.

**Adoration of the Father (Matt. 6:9).** God the Father is the focus of all our prayers. We should never forget what a privilege it is to bend our knees on earth and reach almighty God in heaven.

**Submission to His Will (Matt. 6:10).** Prayer should reflect a desire to align ourselves with God's goals and purposes, not to get Him to follow our plans.

**Petition God for our needs (Matt. 6:11).** We are dependent upon the Lord, and He wants us to come to Him with our requests.

**Confession of sins (Matt. 6:12).** When we repent and forgive others, we maintain fellowship with God. But if we hold grudges, that fellowship is broken. God loves to answer our prayers when the lines of communication are not disrupted.

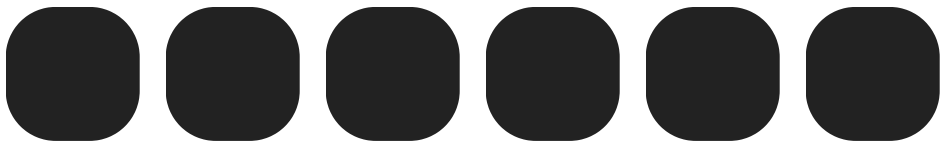
**Deliverance from evil (Matt. 6:13).** Our enemy is too strong for us, but Christ has already won the victory over him.

Jesus ended the prayer where He began—with praise to the Father for His kingdom, power, and glory (Matt. 6:13). Next time you say this prayer, concentrate on each verse. Then, following this pattern will result in a more dynamic and effective prayer life because it will be God-centered.

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## Saturday, December 10, 2016 Daily Devotional - Relying on Something Other Than God

DECEMBER 10TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

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### [1 John 2:15-17](#)

The rich young man approached Jesus to learn how to secure his future in eternity. Out of loving concern, the Lord engaged him in a dialogue to reveal his wrong thinking and thereby identify a significant spiritual problem. (See Mark 10:17-31.)

First, the wealthy man erroneously believed that good deeds were the means of entering heaven. Eternal life is not “bought”; it is a free gift through faith in Jesus Christ. Nor is it something we can attain apart from God. Eternal life becomes ours at the moment of salvation, when the life of God comes to us in the person of His indwelling Holy Spirit ([John 4:14](#); [John 14:16-17](#)).

Second, the man’s identity was tied up in material things. Jesus addressed his spiritual problem by issuing a loving challenge: “Sell all you possess and give to the poor ... and come, follow Me” ([Mark 10:21](#)). The Lord was not saying that giving everything away was the path to salvation. He wanted this young man to realize his difficulty—that his possessions owned him. Jesus offered treasure in heaven, but the man turned away. His action revealed what Jesus already knew about him: Attachment to belongings superseded the offer of *true* riches. Jesus then explained that those who have wealth and position tend

to trust in themselves and not in God.

In our culture, we have so much more than most people in the world—which means we’re at risk of falling into the same trap. We believe in Jesus for salvation but trust in ourselves for daily living. We depend on our intelligence, talents, material possessions, or family to help us, but God wants us to rely on Him alone. On whom or what do you depend?

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## Friday, December 9, 2016 Daily Devotional - Clean Feet, Clean Heart

DECEMBER 09TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Friday, December 9, 2016 Daily Devotional - Clean Feet, Clean Heart](#)

[John 13:3-15](#)

Israel can be a dusty place, and sandaled feet get filthy walking to and fro. In ancient times, a person entering a home removed his sandals and cleaned his feet. Or if the homeowners were wealthy, servants would do the washing. This distasteful but necessary task fell to the worker of lowest position in the household.

Imagine the disciples' surprise when the Son of God put Himself in the role of a lowly servant and knelt to wash their feet. The need for such a service was great, as they had been traveling for some time. But not one of them offered to do it.

Jesus did more than fill a need; He offered an object lesson. As He explained, "I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you" ([John 13:15](#)). Some churches have incorrectly interpreted this as a command to make foot washing an ordinance. But it's possible to perform a ritual without contemplating the significance of Christ's actions.

In fact, the washing isn't the main point—it's the attitude that counts, not the act. Jesus desires that we be willing to humble ourselves to serve others. He is looking for men and women who will ignore pride, position, and power in order to do whatever must be done, wherever it needs doing, and for whoever requires assistance.

Jesus performed His greatest and most humble acts of service within 24 hours of each other. He washed dirty feet by using hands that would then be pierced by nails. The message here is that every task God gives us is important to His kingdom.

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# Thursday, December 8, 2016 Daily Devotional - The Pattern for Servanthood

DECEMBER 08TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

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## Matthew 20:25-28

In the world's thinking, great men are the ones with authority, prominence, and power. Though Jesus Christ had all that, He laid it aside to become a servant ([Isaiah 42:1](#)).

Jesus gave Himself completely to fulfill the Father's plan of redemption, even though the beneficiaries—namely, each of us—were undeserving. God, who is holy and righteous, has “eyes ... too pure to approve evil, and [He] can not look on wickedness with favor” ([Habakkuk 1:13](#)). But all of humanity is stained by wrongdoing ([Romans 3:23](#)); everybody is born captive to the desires of the flesh ([Romans 6:16-18](#)). When people claim to be living on their own terms, they are actually serving whatever their human nature craves. The penalty for that false sense of liberty is death ([Romans 6:23](#)).

Jesus' ultimate act of service was to give His life as a ransom for many ([Matthew 20:28](#)). The word ransom describes the price paid to set a slave free—Christ voluntarily purchased our liberation. There was only one way our holy God could remove our guilt yet remain true to His own law: Someone sinless had to pay our sin debt for us.

Jesus' sacrifice spared us the penalty we deserve. Instead, we receive the gift of grace and have been declared no longer guilty. Moreover, we are elevated from slaves to sons and daughters of the Almighty!

Jesus served the Father's purpose faithfully. He gave up His righteousness to carry the weight of all our wickedness—and endured a crushing separation from His Father. To meet our needs, the Savior held nothing of Himself back and thereby set a powerful example of servanthood for us to follow.

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