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Daily Devotional - Friday, January 20, 2017 - The Power of the Holy Spirit

JANUARY 20TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Friday, January 20, 2017 - The Power of the Holy Spirit

Galatians 5:22-26

The Holy Spirit is vital to the Christian life. Read about the fruit of the Spirit in today's passage, and ask, *Can I be such a good person on my own?* We need divine intervention to live as God expects. That's why He gives each believer a Helper, whose job is to produce Christlike character in us.

The heavenly Father knows that His children need assistance to comply with His commands. Even Jesus Christ's most faithful followers were, on their own, helpless to obey—for instance, Peter, who pledged to be loyal until death, denied even knowing Christ ([Matt. 26:69-75](#)).

Before returning to heaven, Jesus ordered the disciples to put their missionary work on hold until the Holy Spirit arrived ([Luke 24:49](#)). Only with the Spirit's aid could Peter the coward become Peter the rock and preach a challenging sermon that convicted many ([Acts 2](#); see also [Matt. 16:18](#)).

The Holy Spirit enters a believer's life at the moment of salvation and immediately sets about the work of producing spiritual fruit. This is the outward expression of a transformed heart. When we yield to God's nurturing hand, our actions and attitudes become more loving, more joyful, more kind, more gentle ... (See Gal. 5:22-23.) He reaps a harvest of service from our life—good works that grow our own faith and expand His

kingdom.

Allowing the Holy Spirit to bring forth Christlike character is not passive. Our part is to meditate upon God's Word so we can learn about His character and apply His principles. Then, instead of satisfying our flesh, we must make wise decisions each day that allow the Spirit to develop godliness in our lives.

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Daily Devotional - Thursday, January 19, 2017 - Pitfalls in Seeking God's Will

JANUARY 19TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Thursday, January 19, 2017 - Pitfalls in Seeking God's Will

[Psalm 25:4-5](#)

As a pastor, I am frequently asked how to make the right decision in challenging circumstances. Sadly, I see many people make mistakes in this area.

For example, some people pray hastily for the Lord to lead them but do not listen for His answer. Instead, they make their own decision and trust that He will bless it. But expecting God to bless what is not of Him will lead to missing out on His best. To avoid disappointment, we must be aware of several pitfalls that interfere with hearing His direction accurately.

First, be mindful of fleshly desires. Wants are not necessarily wrong, but longings become unhealthy when they consume our thoughts. Eventually, we might believe that our desired outcome is God’s will, when in reality, we weren’t really listening to His voice.

Second, watch out for faulty advice. Even well-meaning Christian friends can lead us in the wrong direction. We should carefully seek counsel from those who walk closely with Jesus and are grounded in His Word.

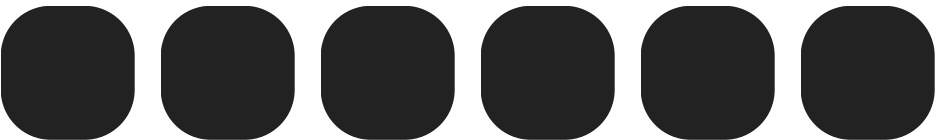
Third, be careful when you are feeling impatient, doubtful, or pressured in any way. These emotions can lead you to make rash decisions apart from the Lord’s best for your life. Patience is hard, but His perfect will is always worth the wait.

Determine to follow God’s leading. Do this by cleansing your heart, asking for guidance, waiting, and listening. When you trusted Christ as Savior, His Holy Spirit came into your heart and sealed you as His child. He will teach you how to live a godly life—direction is yours if you ask and believe.

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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, January 18, 2017 - Seeking God's Will

JANUARY 18TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, January 18, 2017 - Seeking God's Will

1 John 5:14-15

Parents train their children to do many tasks—from knowing which clothes match to handling money. As Christians, we are blessed to have an omniscient and mighty heavenly Father who is willing to make His way known to us. He wants to reveal what to do in every situation and, in fact, promises this: “I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you” ([Psalm 32:8](#)). Let’s explore how to discern God’s will at each crossroad of life.

The first step is to make sure that we have repented of all known sin in our life. Listening to the Lord while holding onto iniquity is like trying to use a foggy and unreadable compass. After confessing and repenting, we can ask for direction.

Next, we should read Scripture regularly with a seeking, open heart. The Bible is like a lamp on a dark path ([Psalm 119:105](#)).

The last step involves God’s indwelling Holy Spirit—the wonderful gift our Father has given each of His children. The Spirit provides truth and guidance as we read the Word and pray. We should listen patiently for His leading, which is often communicated quietly to our heart as we spend time with the Father.

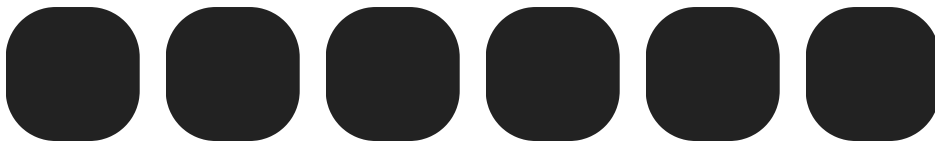
When asking the Lord to reveal His will, we shouldn’t expect instant answers. The discipline of waiting builds character, and besides, rushing the process may lead to a path that misses God’s best. Take the time to seek Jesus’ plan for your life, remembering He’ll

provide all you need to follow Him.

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Daily Devotional - Tuesday, January 17, 2017 - Wisdom Brings Joy

JANUARY 17TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Tuesday, January 17, 2017 - Wisdom Brings Joy

James 1:5-8

One of the most important tools in overcoming trials is wisdom. Ironically, this quality, which seems so rare in our world today, is actually readily and easily available to believers. Scripture says we simply have to ask, and God will give it generously.

Though wisdom certainly has rewards, it does come with a price. If we ask God to make us wise, He will allow tests in our life. Their purpose is not to point out what's wrong with our faith but, rather, to help us discover whether or not we're wise.

Temptations and difficulty also allow us to discern our level of devotion to the Lord. When we go through a time of testing, we learn whether we're willing to say, "I don't like this, God, and I don't understand it, but I'm going to obey You no matter what." There's no way to know whether we would respond that way unless we go through trials that examine our faith.

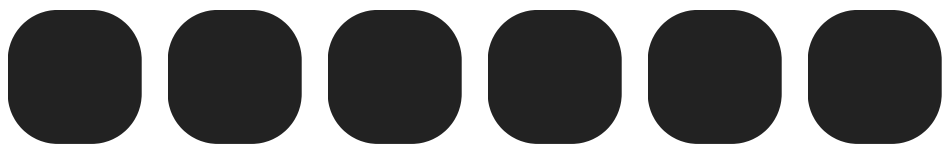
We grow in our devotion to the heavenly Father by making wise decisions despite opposition and by obeying when it is inconvenient to do so or when temptations are the hardest to resist. Such challenges are similar to a refiner's fire: They sanctify and purify us, raising to the surface attitudes that we may not realize are in our life. These situations not only reveal what God is doing in us but also can turn up the heat if we try to muffle the Holy Spirit's guidance.

When we, through wisdom, allow God to do His work in our life, we will begin to experience blessings, see His power, and feel His love in new ways. And this new growth brings great joy!

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Daily Devotional - Monday, January 16, 2017 - Testing Builds Endurance

JANUARY 16TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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James 1:2-4

“Why would a loving heavenly Father allow His children to go through terrible trials and experience sorrow?” We can understand the reason that this is a common question—it can be baffling when the all-powerful God of love seems to stand by silently while painful things happen to His followers. Where is He during personal tragedies, natural disasters, financial crises, and other times of heartache?

The Word of God is the only place we can find the real answer. Even so, today’s reading can be hard to understand or accept. One might read James’s exhortation to be joyful in the face of trials and think, *Count me out!* Difficulties and joy just don’t seem to go together—that is, unless we understand God’s perspective of what life is about.

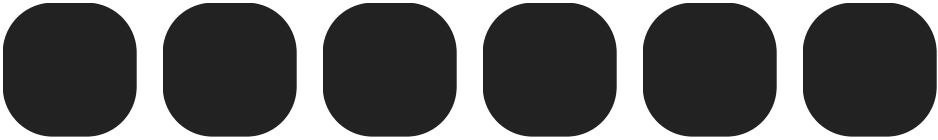
When James spoke of joy, he wasn’t referring to a cheery, frivolous feeling. Rather, he was talking about an inner sense of calmness, peace, and confidence in the Lord. He wasn’t telling us to feel happy about our trials but to know, as we go through them, that God is up to something good in our life. Our attitude during the struggle will determine what shape we’re in when we come out on the other side.

When our faith gets tested, the end result is endurance; being aware of this gives us hope and strength. What’s more, the Bible promises God will use trials for our good, so we don’t need to be afraid or anxious.

God’s desire is to bless you, not destroy you. Adversity can make someone feel like a victim, but as followers of Christ, we can choose to be victors!

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