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Daily Devotional, Friday, May 5, 2017 - Choosing Love Over Rights

MAY 05TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Friday, May 5, 2017 - Choosing Love Over Rights

Matthew 5:38-48

We talk a lot about rights these days. Yet the attention given to human entitlements hasn't brought about corporate or personal freedom. Instead, most people are prisoners of jealousy (*You have greater rights than I do!*), greed (*I deserve more!*), or bitterness (*My rights have been violated!*).

In lieu of focusing on what is due them, Christians should follow Christ's command to love enemies and forgive persecutors ([Matt. 5:44](#)). Believers lay down their rights so they can take up the cause of a holy kingdom. That doesn't mean we let people trample on us. Rather, we offer a proper response according to biblical principles. In short, we should be more concerned about showing God's love to those who wrong us than insisting on privileges we assume are rightfully ours.

Perhaps you're thinking that I don't know how you've been mistreated. Indeed I don't. But I do know how Jesus reacted to terrible abuse. He was betrayed by His friends, persecuted by His people, condemned by His peers, and crucified for our sins. Yet He said, "Father, forgive them" ([Luke 23:34](#)).

Before assuming that Jesus' capacity for forgiveness and love is out of reach for mere human beings, remember: His Spirit dwells in believers. We can choose to give away our rights and let God's love work through us.

[Luke 6:29](#) says to turn the other cheek and give up more than is asked because expressing love outweighs exerting our rights. You can't lose when you show others the boundless care of the Lord. You gain His blessing, and what's more, someone could be saved because of your example.

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Daily Devotional, Thursday, May 4, 2017 - The Power of Love

MAY 04TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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[1 Corinthians 13:4-6](#)

Today's verses teach that love "does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth" (1 [Corinthians 13:6](#)). This means believers aren't to dwell on the harm others cause and write them off as hopeless, despicable criminals. Love enables us to hate the evil unjustly visited upon the innocent while valuing the one who committed the act. More simply, we hate the sin but love the sinner.

In spite of everything that seems apparent about someone who's been driven to sinful actions, God has created him or her with the potential to be made into something good. Outwardly, it may seem as if a difficult upbringing, poor treatment, or negative influence has corrupted a person's morality and worldview beyond repair. For such individuals, the capacity to love and rise above circumstances can get buried so deep that it may seem nonexistent.

God still considers the most evil and corrupt person worth saving. How do I know this is true? Because in [John 3:16](#)—one of the very first verses we teach children—He said that whoever believes in God's Son will have eternal life. Many of us are guilty of thinking we deserve His love because we look good compared to those we deem unlovable. But God doesn't work that way. He loves every single person, no matter how awful his or her sin may be.

God doesn't want anyone to mistreat others; such sinful action will bring repercussions or discipline. But the Lord does extend His care, mercy, and salvation to anybody who wants it. He keeps no record of wrongs. He loves without conditions. And He wants us to love in the same way.

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National Day of Prayer To Take Place at Dexter City Hall

MAY 03RD 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

National Day of Prayer To Take Place at Dexter City Hall

?Dexter, Missouri - The National Day of Prayer event will be held at 12:15 p.m. at the Dexter City Hall building located at 301 E. Stoddard Street across from the downtown fire station. If rain they will move across the street at the First Christian Church.

The public is encouraged to attend this free event.

"The National Day of Prayer is an annual observance held on the first Thursday of May, inviting people of all faiths to pray for the nation. It was created in 1952 by a joint resolution of the United States Congress, and signed into law by President Harry S. Truman."

The theme this year is **For Your Great Name's Sake! Hear Us... Forgive Us...Heal Us!** Taken from Daniel 9:19, which says, "*O Lord, Listen! O Lord, Forgive! O Lord, Hear and Act! For Your Sake, O My God...*".

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Daily Devotional, Wednesday, May 3, 2017 - Fellowship With Jesus

MAY 03RD 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Wednesday, May 3, 2017 - Fellowship With Jesus

[Luke 10:38-42](#)

Two sisters were busy preparing for Jesus' visit. Upon His arrival, Mary turned her attention to the Lord. Meanwhile, Martha was distracted by the preparations ([Luke 10:40](#)) and became agitated that her sister was no longer helping. We may be thinking Martha was right—if there was still work to be done, her sister should not have been sitting down. Then we hear Jesus' perspective. Observing that Martha was worried and upset about many things when only one thing was needed, He said Mary had chosen what was better ([Luke 10:42](#)).

There are some important lessons to be learned from this story. First, to have fellowship with Jesus, we may have to leave some things undone. Jesus knew how hard the women had been working and how much Martha longed to finish the tasks. But their greatest need was to spend time with Him. The sisters' focus was to be on listening, learning, and interacting with Him.

The second lesson is that our choice to forgo an activity may be misunderstood. Martha certainly didn't comprehend her sister's decision. What's more, if we fail to take time with the Lord, there may be unpleasant consequences. We see this in the way Martha's

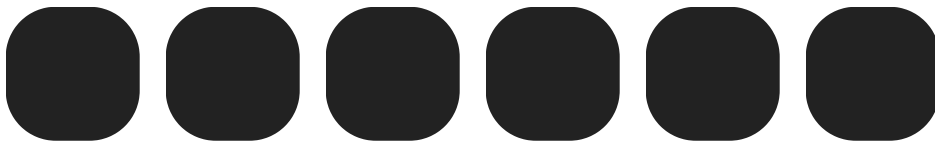
distraction led to worry and agitation. Jesus invited her to choose the better way—namely, to be with Him.

Establishing a habit of communing with God is essential to our spiritual health. Even in our daily work, we can learn how to maintain an awareness of Him. So aim to choose the better way, as Mary did. Connecting with Jesus regularly will sharpen your focus on what is most important and help you distinguish what is good from what is truly the Lord's best.

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Daily Devotional, Tuesday, May 2, 2017 - Developing a Godly Lifestyle

MAY 02ND 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Romans 12:2

Today's verse outlines the commitment and steps necessary in developing a godly lifestyle. Paul was urgently warning believers not to be conformed to the patterns of the world. Our susceptibility to compromise is one of the greatest dangers in the church today.

Through ungodly relationships and the impact of media, we're being influenced by people who are not following God's ways. Our society tells us to put self first, take what we want, protect our rights, and promote our own interests above others'. In contrast, Jesus said that our heavenly Father will provide what we truly need ([Phil. 4:19](#)), we are to deny ourselves and follow Him ([Luke 9:23](#)), and the humble—not the proud—shall receive honor ([James 4:10](#)). Conformity to the world's ideals will lead us away from God.

At the same time, Paul urged us to pursue godly transformation of our mind, to set our thoughts on things above ([Col. 3:2](#)) and to focus on what is true, right, pure, and lovely ([Phil. 4:8](#)). Adopting a Christian worldview will lead to Christlike actions. It requires making adjustments in how we look at life, until our thoughts line up with Scripture. We must also protect our mind with biblical truth and surround ourselves with mature believers who can warn us when we start to stray.

Ask yourself, *Am I focusing on what is important to the Lord? Avoiding compromise? Making a conscious effort to adhere to biblical truth? Demonstrating a pattern of godly transformation?* Let the Holy Spirit empower you to make the changes necessary to be more like Christ.

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