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Daily Devotional, Monday, May 22, 2017 - In the Fullness of Time

MAY 22ND 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Galatians 4:4-5

In eternity past, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit planned and created heaven and earth. Yet even before Adam breathed his first breath, the Lord knew sin would enter the world, causing mankind to be separated from Him. However, a plan for our redemption was already in place, and in the fullness of time, the Son of God came as a baby and lived on the earth.

The Lord doesn't do anything haphazardly. Every plan of His is predetermined and meticulously carried out at just the right time. And this truth doesn't apply to just the big events in human history. Since He has a specific plan for every believer, He works to accomplish His goals in each Christian's life. He ordained the day of our birth, has complete knowledge of what each day will hold, and knows how long we'll live on this earth. And just as He did when Christ was born, God will, in the fullness of time, execute each part of His will for your life and mine.

However, although His plans for us are good, the only way we'll see His purposes fulfilled in our life is by submitting to Him. He's promised to work all things for our good when we love Him and are called according to His purpose ([Rom. 8:28](#)).

Are you letting the Lord have His way in your life? Even when the need seems urgent, a person with a spirit yielded to God waits patiently for the heavenly Father's plans to

unfold at just the right time. The One with complete knowledge and wisdom knows what He's doing. Wait for the fullness of His time.

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Daily Devotional, Friday, May 19, 2017 - Standing on a Firm Foundation

MAY 19TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Friday, May 19, 2017 - Standing on a Firm Foundation

[Isaiah 52:7](#); [Romans 10:15](#)

When was the last time you had a Bible study on the topic of feet? In all likelihood, you haven't ever had such a lesson. In fact, you might even be squeamish at the thought of focusing on feet. The apostle Paul, however, did not avoid the subject. He made feet a

focal point of one of his most powerful messages: the discussion in [Ephesians 6:10-18](#) about the armor of God. Let's take a closer look.

Four times in four verses (vv. 11-14 NIV), Paul declares that the armor's purpose—the value in putting it on piece by piece—lies in its ability to help us “stand,” “stand against the devil's schemes,” “stand [our] ground,” and “stand firm.” And of course, armor would be incomplete without shoes—which Paul identified as “the preparation of the gospel of peace” (v. 15). Clearly, he knew Christians needed to be on a solid foundation when facing opposition.

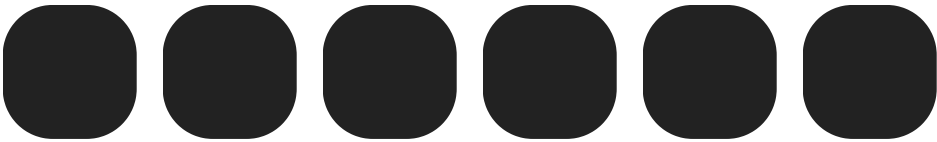
The Roman soldier's sandals had an often overlooked feature: a long spike at the heel of the shoe. Its purpose was to allow the warrior to plant his feet firmly in the ground when an opponent approached. With his feet secured in this way, the soldier had an obvious advantage: He would be able to stand his ground. This part of his uniform enabled him to keep his footing even as he faced the danger.

That is precisely what the heavenly Father wants for every one of His children: the ability to stand firm in the face of troubles. This is possible, however, only when we plant our feet on a firm foundation—the foundation of faith in Jesus Christ. Is your faith well grounded?

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Daily Devotional, Thursday, May 18, 2017 - A Purpose of Adversity

MAY 18TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Psalm 37:23-28

When we're going through an intense time of adversity, it seems we usually focus exclusively on the momentary trouble. We frequently fail to see any value whatsoever in our suffering. God, however, has specific purposes for bringing us through times of hardship.

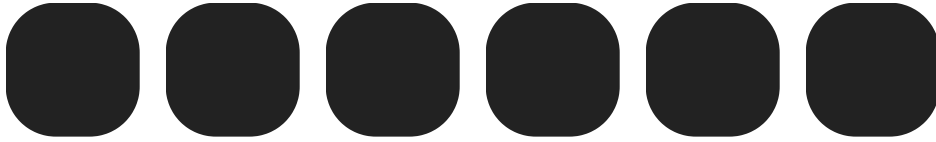
One reason He may allow adversity in our life is to teach us to hate evil. Now, you may be hesitant to use the word *hate* in any situation, and yet this is exactly what the Word of God instructs us to do. Psalm 97:10 proclaims, "Hate evil, you who love the Lord."

Isn't it true, however, that we often don't act as if we hate evil? In many instances, in fact, our tendency is to play around with it, keeping it close by for our own amusement, and making excuses for its presence in our lives. We may say, "Well, I can't escape evil in this world. It's all around me! I guess the best I can hope to do is to try and manage it appropriately." What a deception this is. We are not commanded to manage or manipulate evil; instead, we are instructed to hate its very presence. Psalm 37 says, "Depart from evil and do good, so you will abide forever" (v. 27). When we see evil, we are to turn around and run in the opposite direction!

Yes, we live in a world that is permeated by evil, and we cannot avoid it at all times. However, we can remove ourselves from particularly tempting situations. The heavenly Father can help us recognize the evil one's pitfalls in our life. Pray and ask Him today for the wisdom and strength to avoid such traps.

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Daily Devotion, Wednesday, May 17, 2017 - Advancing Through Adversity

MAY 17TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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[Psalm 56:3-4](#)

There is a slogan that has worked its way into popular usage over the past few years: the stalwart cry, “No Fear!” Generally, this phrase is attached to some daring athletic attempt. But can the expression also find a deeper meaning related to our Christian life?

Clearly, it is impossible to live in this world without ever facing uncertainty, doubt, confusion, and even honest fear. Scripture does not dismiss these concerns. Instead, the Word is truthful about the adversity that we all face. The right response to these hardships is to admit our fears to the Lord and trust that He will work the situation out for His own glory and our good. (See [Psalm 56:11](#).)

Too many people try to excuse God from responsibility when they come up against an apparently immovable obstacle. What we often fail to realize is that God may desire to use that hardship to shape us into the person He wants us to be.

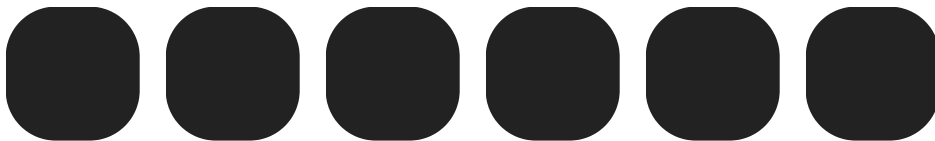
You see, adversity is an opportunity for God to purify our faith. Because God alone is sovereign in the universe, He desires to be sovereign in our individual lives as well. If we place our faith in anything other than God, He is swift to remove those obstructions that hinder our walk with Him.

If you are going through adversity, pray for the discernment to ask yourself, *Is this something that God may be allowing to occur in my life in order to bring me closer to Him?* If so, trust Him to reorder your life so He may remain Lord of your faith.

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Daily Devotional, Tuesday, May 16, 2017 - The Church: God's Design

Daily Devotional, Tuesday, May 16, 2017 - The Church: God's Design

Hebrews 10:23-25

When you hear the word *church*, do you picture a little white building full of smiling people in fancy clothes? As lovely as that image may be, God's design for church is unrelated to it. He created the church to be a unified fellowship of believers who encourage each other and carry out His ministry to the world.

The Bible clearly defines the following as ministries of the church: worshipping the living God, instructing and edifying believers, making disciples of all nations, and serving the needy. Unless the leadership is careful, however, these purposes can all too easily get out of balance, with the unfortunate result that the body ends up malnourished. For example, a church with too heavy an emphasis on praise could become introverted. Congregations that overemphasize teaching might lose their joy, and those that evangelize to the neglect of the other areas could miss out on great faith.

Because of sin and human imperfection, we do not experience church as it was originally intended. Instead, there's a tendency to overemphasize certain ministry areas. What's more, divisive arguments—many of which concern minor issues, such as music preferences or clothing choices—too often destroy church unity. Greed, pride, selfishness, and gossip can also tear a congregation apart.

Since they're composed of imperfect people, churches will be imperfect too, and expecting anything else will lead to disappointment. Nonetheless, we should strive for God's original design, continually measuring ourselves against Scripture and correcting course to realign with His purpose.

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