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Daily Devotional, Friday, June 9, 2017 - Living Out Our Faith

JUNE 09TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Friday, June 9, 2017 - Living Out Our Faith

1 Peter 1:6-9

True faith is based upon Scripture and embraces its eternal principles. Genuine belief trusts that God is who He says He is and that He'll do everything He has promised.

Such faith is worth sharing with others, and this can be done in several ways. For one thing, we can verbally explain our beliefs. But we can also model a godly lifestyle, which is frequently an even more effective method of influencing people for Christ.

Once during high school, I went to see my grandfather and visited with him for a week. We spent a lot of time talking—he listened carefully to me and then spoke about the ways God had worked in various situations over the years. At the end of that week, I went home thinking, *God, if You will do that with my grandfather, what will You do in my own life?* My faith grew stronger because of those days with him.

I was also profoundly influenced by the many times I heard my mother pray. When circumstances were hard, she would kneel by the bed with me and speak to our heavenly Father. In those quiet moments, I learned that we can trust God when things look hard or even impossible. I also discovered that God is faithful.

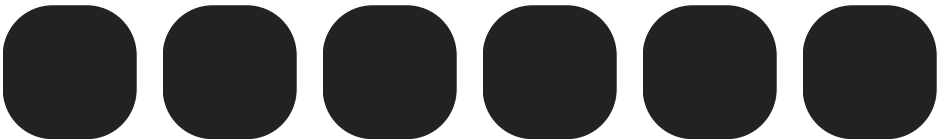
Consistency and perseverance are two other important facets of the faith we pass down. Children look to see if we mean what we say and if we will still rely on God when trouble

comes. We can use our trials to demonstrate how a godly person responds. As we live out our faith in a visible way, we will be handing down something far more valuable than gold or silver.

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Daily Devotional, Wednesday, June 7, 2017 - Single-Minded Focus

JUNE 07TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Wednesday, June 7, 2017 - Single-Minded Focus

2 Timothy 2:4-5

“No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life” (2 Tim. 2:4). The word for “entangle,” which also occurs in [2 Peter 2:20](#), means to be so wrapped

up in something that movement is hindered. This is the term the Greeks would have used to describe a rabbit ensnared in a thorn patch.

Peter’s letter admonished followers not to return to past sins, but Paul was emphasizing a different lesson: He was warning Timothy against allowing essential daily pursuits to supersede a commitment to Christ. Paul himself at times worked as a tentmaker while carrying on with ministry; however, he realized there was potential for an occupation to become all-consuming, to the detriment of a person’s spiritual life.

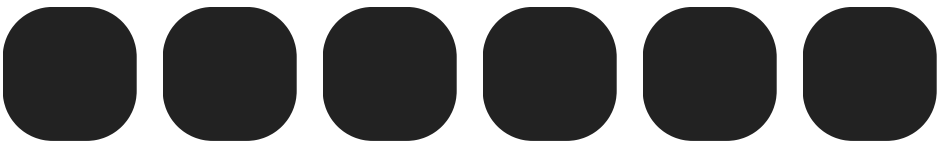
Growing and managing wealth, providing for one’s family, and taking advantage of leisure time are important activities. In fact, God encourages all of them. However, these blessings are not to become distractions that draw believers away from church or regular prayer and Bible study. Nor are we to compartmentalize our life into “Christian ministry” and “regular work/play.” We are Christ’s soldiers, no matter where we are or what we are doing—there is no such thing as a part-time warrior.

It’s important for believers not to draw artificial boundary lines between the secular and the sacred. Everything God gives—from vocation and wealth to leisure activities—is to be used for His glory. By keeping priorities straight and activities in balance, you can prevent hobbies and interests from becoming a snare.

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Daily Devotional, Tuesday, June 6, 2017 - The Character of a Good Soldier

JUNE 06TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Tuesday, June 6, 2017 - The Character of a Good Soldier

2 Timothy 2:1-3

In [1 Timothy 6:12](#), Paul calls on believers to “fight the good fight of faith.” Like first-century Christians, believers today are in a three-front war against the flesh, the world system, and Satan. The military metaphor is a good reminder that believers must prepare for daily spiritual battle. A good soldier ...

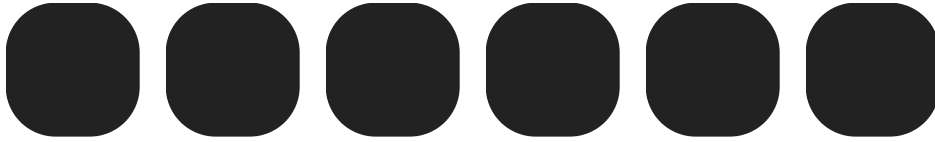
Is strong in Christ. Paul knew that the Lord stood by his side and strengthened him during trials ([2 Tim. 4:17](#)). The Holy Spirit provides the courage and power to obey God’s commands, so we can rely upon His might to carry us to victory against any enemy.

Shares knowledge. The church possesses not only the good news about salvation; it has *all* the riches of God’s Word. Many people have listened to biblical teaching and experienced the Lord interceding in their lives. To keep those lessons to oneself can leave unbelievers in harm’s way and deprive fellow Christians of necessary wisdom.

Suffers willingly. Hardship is part of combat and, therefore, part of the Christian experience. Believers will endure adversity and be asked to make sacrifices. It is little wonder, then, that Paul reminds Timothy to stand strong in the Lord and to uphold others ([2 Tim. 2:1-2](#)).

A wise commanding officer gives his troops a war cry that encourages their hearts and emboldens their steps. Paul had one, too: “Remember Jesus Christ” ([2 Tim. 2:8](#)). Keep in mind that you serve an omnipotent Lord. He stands beside you, takes part in your suffering, and holds you securely through the most formidable battles.

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Daily Devotional, Monday, June 5, 2017 - The Father's Good Gifts

JUNE 05TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Monday, June 5, 2017 - The Father's Good Gifts

[Matthew 7:7-11](#)

One of God's most generous assurances to His children is found in today's reading from Matthew 7. Not only are we granted permission to come to the Father with our requests, but He also promises to answer our prayers. However, you may be thinking, *If this is true, why hasn't He given me what I asked for?*

The key to understanding this passage is found in verses 9–11: "What man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? ... If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!" Think in terms of parenting. A child may want the latest video game, but his parent knows that a different gift would be better

for him. In the same way, the God who made us is more keenly aware of our needs than we are ([Matt. 6:8](#)).

Because of spiritual immaturity or the limitations of our humanity, we may ask for what we perceive as good and necessary, when it isn't truly in our best interest. But our Father gives what He knows is more beneficial. The qualities of Christlike character are among His best gifts, but these develop through trials and testing. We may feel He's given us a snake instead of a fish, but the problem is with our lack of understanding, not with the Lord's goodness.

When it seems that the Lord isn't answering your requests, remember that He's a loving Father, and consider what good gifts He is giving instead. Although it may take years to gain a godly perspective, in time you'll say, "Lord, You were right. Thank You for giving me exactly what I needed."

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Daily Devotional, Friday, June 2, 2017 - Our Keeper

Daily Devotional, Friday, June 2, 2017 - Our Keeper

Psalm 121:3-8

Yesterday we learned that God is our protector. Today's verses from Psalm 121 also portray Him as our keeper.

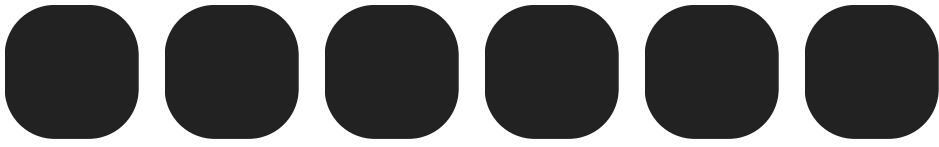
“He who keeps you will not slumber” (v. 3). Many young children are fearful in the dark. If they awaken when everyone else is sleeping, they might feel alone and scared. Our Caretaker needs no sleep; He is always alert and attentive to our cries, even when our feelings seem to tell us otherwise.

“The Lord is your keeper ... He will keep your soul” (vv. 5, 7). When parents have to leave their children for a while, they choose a trusted person to put in charge. We often say that this individual is “keeping” the kids. The babysitter is expected to protect and provide for the children. How much more invested and capable is our heavenly Father! Besides preserving us physically and spiritually, He restrains us from wrong thoughts, harmful words, and inappropriate actions. His Holy Spirit gives warnings to keep us from evil, and He also provides guidance so we'll grow in godliness.

“The Lord will guard your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forever” (v. 8). God is sovereign. He is with us always—protecting, pointing the way, and teaching us. He accompanies and leads even in the small tasks that seem insignificant.

When we grow up, many of us feel sadness and a little fear as we leave the safety of our parents' home. But we never leave the precious love and care of our heavenly Father. God is our keeper, and He cares for us better than any earthly mom or dad ever could.

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