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# Daily Devotional, Friday, June 23, 2017 - God is Present in Dark Times

JUNE 23RD 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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## Genesis 39:1-23

In this day of instant news, we regularly see images of calamity in our world. And on a personal level, we experience seasons of hardship as well. The same is true of friends and family who encounter job layoffs, marital troubles, difficulties with children, and other challenges.

As Christians, we have a heavenly Father who has promised to be with us in our struggles. We can rely on Him—He knows what will happen before we do; nothing is hidden from His sight ([Heb. 4:13](#)). He sees in the darkness of troubled times as clearly as He does in the daylight ([Psalm 139:11-12](#)). Through His Spirit, He offers us the comfort, strength, and wisdom to persevere.

The story of Joseph illustrates this truth. After being rejected and sold into slavery by his brothers, he was falsely accused by his master's wife and imprisoned. But in the midst of those terrible times, the young Hebrew man experienced God's presence and favor.

I doubt Joseph comprehended the Lord's intentions during his slavery and imprisonment. But later on, as second-in-command to Pharaoh, he understood God's purpose in allowing those difficult years. In the end, Joseph testified to what he knew to be true. His brothers had meant to harm him, but God used all the hardship to accomplish His good plan ([Gen. 45:4-8](#); [Gen. 50:20](#)).

When troubles hit, remember what is true and take heart. The indwelling Holy Spirit has the resources to provide what we need, equip us for the journey, and sustain us with His presence throughout the dark days. Nothing can stop the purposes of our Lord from being carried out ([Isa. 14:27](#)).

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## Daily Devotional, Wednesday, June 21, 2017 - The Keys to Success

JUNE 21ST 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Wednesday, June 21, 2017 - The Keys to Success

[1 Thessalonians 5:24](#)

Have you ever felt discouraged about trying to live the Christian life? If your efforts to make a difference in the world seem fruitless, following the Lord's example could change your outlook.

Christ served others in love, and His actions had tremendous impact in the world. How was He so effective? Scripture tells us that Jesus did not speak or act on His own initiative but instead depended upon His Father abiding in Him to do the work ([John 14:10](#)). And we are to do likewise.

Yet we often attempt to serve out of our own skills, intelligence, and ability to reason. Even though we may pour great effort and long hours into ministry, these alone won't produce fruitfulness. It's far more important to minister as the Lord intended.

True service is commissioned, empowered, and blessed by God alone. It may be our hands that are laboring, but our Father is the One at work. And the glory belongs to Him, not us.

What comfort this should give us! The Lord is not looking just for people who are extremely talented. He will use all who are willing to let His Spirit work through them. And we can be confident that He will provide everything we need in order to do whatever He asks.

Who among us can serve the living God? Truthfully, no one can. Genuine service occurs only when we allow the Almighty to pour Himself through us; we are mere vessels. Even if the impact is not obvious to us, we know that God always achieves His purpose—and what's more, He is glorified.

**Bible in One Year:** [Psalm 55-59](#)

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## Daily Devotional, Tuesday, June 20, 2017 - Work Is a Ministry

JUNE 20TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Tuesday, June 20, 2017 - Work Is a Ministry

### [Ephesians 6:5-8](#)

Christians sometimes make the mistake of mentally separating their work life from their spiritual life. This mindset says, “Sunday is the Lord’s day, but the rest of the week belongs to me.” That is an unbiblical way to live. God’s Holy Spirit should be involved in everything we do, and we ought to recognize Him as our guide, comforter, and intercessor no matter where we are. Why would we want to exclude Him from something that takes up a large part of our week?

The apostle Paul clearly teaches that work is to be done as for the Lord ([Col. 3:23](#)). Other people may do a job better because of greater skill or experience, but believers should be known for doing quality work in a timely, wise, and respectful manner. And we can trust the Holy Spirit to equip us to do just that.

Serving the Lord on the job means that our workplace is also our ministry site. A job provides money to support the family, but when done faithfully, it becomes far more than simply a means to make a living. One’s work also develops character, builds a sense of self-worth, and develops skills. Moreover, while we are around coworkers for a number of hours each day, we have opportunity to build relationships, bear testimony, and glorify

our heavenly Father.

Work shouldn't be seen as drudgery; it is an opportunity to show love for the Lord. The reward for those who serve God and love others on the job is greater than a paycheck. They are blessed with a ministry—a harvest field for the kingdom, right inside the factory, office building, or construction site.

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## Daily Devotional, Monday, June 19, 2017 - The Testing of Our Commitment

JUNE 19TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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**Hebrews 11:8-9**

In situations when God is testing us, He will teach us new and deeper truths about Himself, His purposes, and His promises. Though we feel stretched in painful seasons, such difficulties are always designed to be beneficial.

From a human perspective, times of testing can be baffling because we don't understand how anything good could result. Consider God's command that Abraham sacrifice his long-awaited son Isaac. Abraham's earthly viewpoint could have regarded this order as:

**Unreasonable.** "I cherish my son above all else. How could You ask this?"

**Untimely.** "Why now, Lord? My son is still young. He is the one through whom my descendants are to come."

**Unfair.** "It's not right that You ask this. Haven't I left home to follow You?"

**Unbearable.** "This is too hard for me. I cannot take this pain."

Abraham rejected that kind of thinking. Instead, he trusted God. The trial revealed Abraham's unshakable commitment to the Lord's plan.

Knowing which circumstances will help us grow, our Father asks us to exercise faith and choose His way. Recalling His unending love and wholehearted commitment to His children will help us do this. Be assured that God makes no mistakes in His dealings with us.

Imagine Abraham's joy when the Lord provided a ram as a sacrifice in Isaac's place. We will receive the same reward of spiritual joy when we remain steadfast. Won't you respond to times of testing as Abraham did—by trusting and obeying God?

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## Daily Devotional, Friday, June 16, 2017 - The Unconditional Love of God

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### [Romans 5:6-8](#)

New believers may find it difficult to accept that God loves us just as we are. Much of the world operates by conditional love, which offers approval and acceptance on the basis of performance. So when we first come to Christ, there is often a natural tendency to assume we must strive to “earn” blessings—such as monetary wealth, loving families, and solid careers.

Divine love, however, can never be earned by human effort. There’s absolutely nothing we can do to make our Father love us more. Nor can we influence Him to ever stop loving us. (See [Rom. 8:38-39](#).) Many believers understand this intellectually, but they may have trouble believing it deep down in their heart.

No matter what has occurred in your past or what you feel right now, God’s love has always been freely given to you. Our heavenly Father pours His love upon us without exception—no ifs, ands, or buts. It’s not as if He postponed loving you until the moment you invited Him into your life. Nor did He begin loving you when you first started going to church or when you rose from the baptismal waters. In truth, the Lord never *began* to love you at all; He simply always has. From the creation of the world, God knew you and

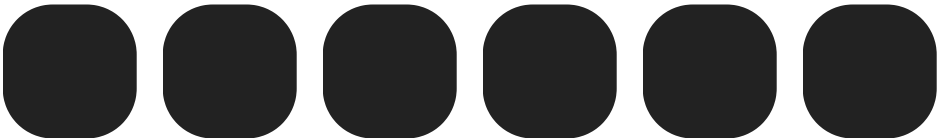
loved you ([1 John 4:19](#); [Psalm 139:13-16](#)).

Are you rejoicing in the Father’s love? Do you exude peace, or are you focused on what-ifs? Is your life characterized by power and purpose or by fear? Recognizing the amazing truth of God’s unconditional love is life-changing. Prayerfully open your arms to His love today.

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