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## Daily Devotional, Monday, August 21, 2017 - The Consequences of Jealousy

AUGUST 21ST 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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### Romans 13:13

In learning about the nature of jealousy, perhaps you realize that you do, in fact, struggle a bit with this problem. Maybe you envy a friend, neighbor, or coworker in a way you've never really considered. If so, it's important to recognize this is a danger in your life that must be addressed.

As we realize how envy corrupts various aspects of our life, we can learn to identify when we have a problem. Prayerfully review this list of some consequences of jealousy:

**Fear.** You're afraid of not getting what you want or of losing what you have.

**Competitiveness.** You aggressively strive to outperform others.

**Critical spirit.** Undermining the success of others becomes a goal.

**Comparison.** You measure your success against others' accomplishments.

**Divided mind.** Someone else's success becomes a constant distraction.

**Anger.** Hostility is a natural product of jealousy and bitterness.

**Insecurity.** You never feel as if you have enough, because you place a higher value on what someone else has.

**Lack of peace.** Jealousy and peace can stand in opposition to each other; you simply can't have both.

**Illness.** Emotional turmoil can take a toll on physical health.

Remember that jealousy is a land mine that maims or destroys whoever triggers it. However, recognizing its destructive consequences may encourage you to remove this issue in your life. Then, with the Lord's help, you can begin the journey toward healing and restoration.

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# Daily Devotional, Friday, August 18, 2017 - The Confession of Sin

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### **1 John 1:5-7**

John's first epistle is not about salvation, even though it speaks of the need to confess sin. This letter is written to people who already have a relationship with God but need a reminder of how to remain in fellowship with Him. The Father intends for believers to enjoy His presence, but in order to do that, they must first deal with sin.

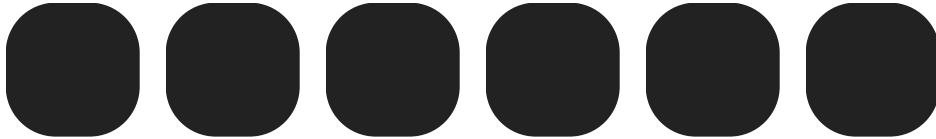
As Christians, we have been made new in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), but we're not yet perfect and therefore still sin. We are humans in a physical body that retains all of its natural tendencies—yearning for fun, rest, food, and pleasure. When those desires are under the Holy Spirit's control, we live joyful, God-honoring lives. However, if we give in to the temptation to be controlled by our natural tendencies, also known as the flesh, then we have invited sin and darkness into our lives. (See 1 John 1:6.)

It is important to understand that “walk in darkness” does not mean a believer can lose his or her salvation—those who have received Jesus Christ as Savior can never be driven from the light of His love (John 10:28-29). But we can choose to get out of God's will and veer off to a dark pathway of sin for a time. Since dark and light cannot exist together, doing so will fill our spirit with tension. Confessing our sin lifts the darkness and restores peace.

A believer in right fellowship radiates peace and contentment. We will know fullness of joy by spending time in God's presence (Psalm 16:11), aligning with His will, and sharing Him with those around us. Confessing our wrongdoing keeps our fellowship strong and glorifies the Lord.

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## Daily Devotional, Thursday, August 17, 2017 - Patience: Our Gift of Service

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### Colossians 3:12-13

When we are troubled or in pain, we turn to people who will listen patiently to our cries of distress. But I wonder how often we seek to be the person who steps up to share a hurting friend's burden.

In today's reading, the apostle Paul encouraged believers to put on a heart of compassion, kindness, and patience. In other words, we don't come from the womb pre-equipped with these traits. Rather, we receive on-the-job training in imitating Jesus Christ as we bear with and forgive one another. The Holy Spirit is more than willing to instruct us in the proper ways to grow spiritual fruit. The heavenly Father then provides opportunities for us to try out our newly

developed skills.

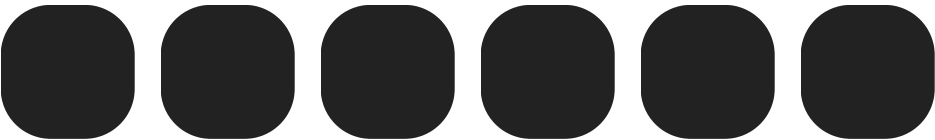
We tend to classify patience rather narrowly as “waiting.” That’s certainly part of the definition, but so are concepts like endurance, perseverance, and persistence. When we’re relating to others as Paul challenged us to do, we are not simply waiting for them to become better versions of themselves. We are enduring their hardship alongside them or persisting in our attempts to offer aid. We’re caring, listening, and serving however we can. In a world that insists on doing everything quickly, patience is an amazing gift to give another person.

By placing patience on the list of spiritual fruit (Gal. 5:22-23), God indicated that every believer could develop this trait. Whatever additional gifts and talents you possess, patience is an attribute that you can put on. Practice it for the glory of God and as a way to serve your fellow man.

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# Daily Devotional, Wednesday, August 16, 2017 - The Rewards of Patience

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### **Psalm 40:1-17**

The Scriptures contain many stories of people who waited years or even decades before the Lord's promises came to pass. What modern believers can learn from the patience of biblical saints like Abraham, Joseph, David, and Paul is that waiting upon the Lord has eternal benefits.

Today let's look at Israel's most memorable monarch. David was the chosen heir to Israel's throne, but he spent years dodging King Saul's wrathful pursuit. Despite having two different opportunities for vengeance, David resisted the temptation and spared Saul's life. He chose to adhere to God's timetable for his coronation instead of dishonoring the Lord by killing the divinely anointed king. David's psalms reveal his intimate awareness of Yahweh's work in his life. The shepherd king not only achieved his objective through patience; he also observed that God's way is always the best.

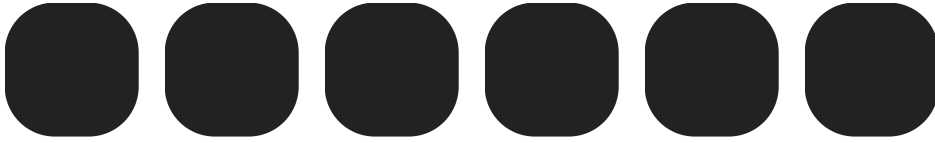
David left behind an incredible testimony of God's faithfulness for each of us to read and ponder. He was committed to waiting upon the Lord, and as a result, he had the Father's approval and blessing. We cannot underestimate the reward of living in divine favor. That isn't a special state reserved for the "giants of the faith" like David. All who obediently endure until the Lord acts on their behalf abide in His favor (Isa. 40:31).

David didn't receive his blessings because he was special; he was honored among men because he honored the Lord above all. And since he trusted in God's faithfulness, he endured hardship with patience. We, too, can expect to be blessed when we wait upon the Lord.

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## Daily Devotional, Tuesday, August 15, 2017 - Obstacles as Opportunities

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### Psalm 27:14

Learning to see obstacles as opportunities takes time. Recalling certain truths can help our perspective:

**God is at work.** As barriers remain in place and our situation seems unchanged, God is orchestrating people and events to move His plan forward. He works silently, invisibly, and effectively.

**God prepares the way.** He has already decided in His mind which hindrances to remove and which to leave unaltered. For the obstacles that remain, the Lord will arrange a way around them or fit them into His plan. What He has determined will be accomplished.

**God requires our cooperation.** He wants us to be ready to face difficult situations. Through His Word, He communicates what we need to know and also equips us (Heb. 13:20-21).

**God is personally involved.** He wants to develop in us a greater sensitivity to His presence. Through Scripture, prayer, and other believers, we can receive the assurance that the Lord is near.

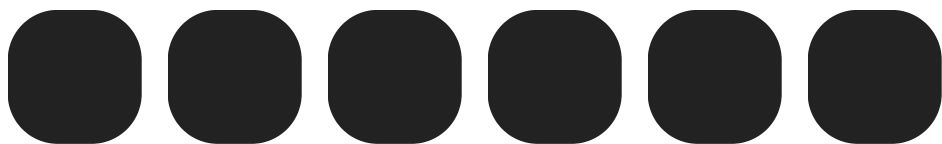
**God gives clear instruction.** He does not bring confusion. Whether we receive His direction in stages or all at once, He asks us to trust in Him rather than our own thinking (Prov. 3:5-6).

Facing challenges involves courage, patience, and faith. It takes courage to accept the presence of barriers, to move in step with God, and to do what He asks. Patience is required as we wait for Him to equip us and reveal His plan. Faith is necessary for us to trust God with the outcome and to focus on obeying Him.

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