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Daily Devotional, Tuesday, October 3, 2017 - Spiritual Maturity

OCTOBER 03RD 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Tuesday, October 3, 2017 - Spiritual Maturity

Isaiah 48:10

The world's way is to choose the strongest and smartest individuals to accomplish tasks. In contrast, the Lord often selects the weakest, who have nothing to offer except total reliance upon Him. This dependency on God is what characterizes the mature in faith.

Such maturity isn't automatic. Our Father patiently meets people where they are but lovingly refuses to let His children stagnate. Instead, He helps us to grow more and more like His Son (2 Corinthians 3:18). As followers of Christ, we must let go of old ways, ideas, and motivations. The Holy Spirit illuminates our understanding and lets us see from God's perspective. Then, the Lord can build in us a dependence on Himself and a submission to His Spirit. Transformation is often gradual, but God sometimes will allow difficulty and pain to develop our reliance upon Him.

Consider biblical models of faith. Sarah and Abraham dealt with infertility for many years prior to receiving the promised child (Gen. 21:1-2). Joseph was sold into slavery and wrongly imprisoned before he spared his nation from the effects of famine (Gen. 45:5). To take on God's assignment of raising the baby Jesus, Mary risked accusations of immorality (Matt. 1:18-19), and her husband Joseph followed God's inconvenient command to flee areas of danger (Matt. 2:13, Matt. 2:22). These people all faced hardships and brokenness, which allowed them to

recognize both their own inability and God's ability.

What's standing in your way of full submission to the Lord? His desire for you is to learn to depend on Him so that in your weakness, He will be strong.

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Daily Devotional, Monday, October 2, 2017 - Avoiding Compromise

OCTOBER 02ND 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Monday, October 2, 2017 - Avoiding Compromise

Proverbs 2:1-22

Although the temptation to compromise threatens every believer, we don't have to give in to it. If we're aware of the danger and understand the downward progression and consequences, we can remain vigilant and stay on track.

The first step in learning how to avoid compromise is understanding why we find it so tempting. When others pressure us to take part in what we know God has forbidden, giving in becomes easy because we don't want to feel rejected. But anyone who's committed to living a godly life must be willing to stand alone and face ridicule or even persecution (2 Tim. 3:12). At other times, in an effort to avoid conflict, we may consent to activities that violate our conscience—then seeking peace at any price can result in disobedience.

The temptation to compromise, however, doesn't always originate with others; we can be carried away by our own desires. Many Christians have fallen into sexual immorality or pornography, and others are motivated to give in because of greed. If you alter details on your income tax or take a few things home from the office, you've stepped over the line of obedience to the Lord. Our choices should be based on scriptural truth, not on our feelings and desires.

In order to stand firm against compromise, it is important to seek wisdom in Scripture and let it set the standard for your conduct. If you begin each day with God in His Word, He will guide your way. Then when the Holy Spirit gives a warning, obey immediately, because giving consideration to the temptation opens a door for Satan.

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National Life Chain to be Held on October 1, 2017

SEPTEMBER 30TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

National Life Chain to be Held on October 1, 2017

Dexter, Missouri - The National Life Chain will take place Sunday, October 1, 2017 from 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the intersection of Business 60 and One Mile Road in Dexter, Missouri.

Life Chain is a peaceful and prayerful demonstration of pro-life supporters standing or sitting 12 feet apart in support of ending abortion.

Churches are urged to organize groups to participate in the event.

"Abortion kills children and is just wrong," commented Carol Beam, local organizer of Life Chain. "The church supports the sanctity of life from the moment of conception until natural death and offers healing to post-abortive women."

For more information call (573) 820-3506 or (573) 624-9590.

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Daily Devotional, Friday, September 29, 2017 - A Partner for Accountability

SEPTEMBER 30TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Friday, September 29, 2017 - A Partner for Accountability

Galatians 6:1-10

An accountability partner is able to perceive what you can't see when blind spots and weaknesses block your vision. Such a person serves as a tool in God's hand to promote spiritual growth, and he or she watches out for your best interest. When choosing a confidant, look for seven characteristics:

- 1. Godly.** A person who walks in the Spirit will offer genuine wisdom based on biblical principles rather than personal opinion.
- 2. Trustworthy.** No matter what you share with this individual, you must be certain that he or she will keep everything in the strictest confidence.
- 3. Accepting.** He or she must allow you to be yourself—frailties and all—and not try to remake you into someone “perfect.”

4. Courageous. A good accountability partner will lovingly confront you with the truth, even when it hurts (Eph. 4:15).

5. Forgiving. Trust is built when mistakes are forgiven.

6. Edifying. Don't choose someone with an overly critical attitude, who will make you feel worthless. Love edifies and builds up (Eph. 4:29). It never destroys.

7. Encouraging. You don't want someone with a checklist, who judges you or acts like a prophet. Instead, choose someone who takes great joy in encouraging you.

We can all benefit from someone who's able to say what we need to hear without making us feel threatened. Answerability provides checks and balances that promote spiritual growth and protect us from pitfalls. If you don't already have an accountability partner, ask God to lead you to such a person.

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Daily Devotional, Thursday, September 28, 2017 - Caring With Our Conscience

SEPTEMBER 28TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Thursday, September 28, 2017 - Caring With Our Conscience

1 Corinthians 8:9-12

How do you approach your decisions—by thinking primarily of yourself? Or do you consider how your actions will affect the beliefs and lives of others? Since coming to faith, we all have had to discipline our conscience for it to grow stronger. It is also important to use discernment so we can avoid wounding a weaker believer.

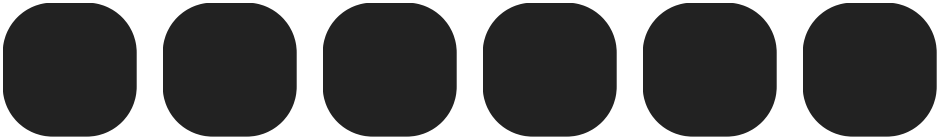
Some Christians never stop to think that their choices can hurt or destroy someone else's faith. They justify their behavior, saying God doesn't convict them for it. While they don't necessarily indulge in sinful acts, their spiritual defenses have grown strong enough to let them do things they wouldn't have done in the early stages of their spiritual walk. These believers fail to realize that younger Christians are watching how they live out their faith. When "weaker" ones follow the example they see, their ship of faith may capsize because of a conscience that is troubled or confused rather than strengthened.

Paul blames the "stronger" Christian for these shipwrecks. He says we're responsible not only for our actions, but also for the effect of those actions. In the end, we are to care more about the "brother for whose sake Christ died" than about our own wants or desires (1 Cor. 8:11).

Because our faith is on display before the world, God promises rewards but insists on responsibility. One of the rewards is freedom from condemnation. But that freedom doesn't mean license to do as we please without considering those who watch our example. Through the Spirit, we must discern the greater good and act on it.

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