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## Daily Devotional, Monday, November 13, 2017 - God's Answers to Prayer

NOVEMBER 13TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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**Matthew 7:7-11**

Too often, believers view God as a great cosmic Santa Claus: We think of our prayers not as petitions but as demands. Then, if God does not grant our request, we're thrown into a faith crisis, believing He no longer answers us. The real problem, however, is that we misunderstand the Lord's three answers to prayer:

**1. Yes.** We love this response! There is nothing more exhilarating or faith-inspiring than to watch the Lord move mountains to provide what we once considered impossible.

**2. No.** Here is where the problems begin for us. But we must accept the fact that God says no to some of our requests. This is certainly not because He's greedy or uncaring—on the contrary, He is generous, loving, and concerned about His children.

Matthew 7:11 does not say God will give "everything to those who ask Him," does it? No, it says that the heavenly Father will give what is good to those who ask. Quite often, giving "what is good" means that He doesn't agree to things He knows are wrong for us.

**3. Wait.** This answer can be even harder than a flat-out *no*. Yet some things that are good and godly may still be wrong for us today. Remember, God is eternal; He sees all time at the same time. If He regards tomorrow's blessing as a curse today, He'll withhold it for a season until we're ready to receive it.

Friend, do not be misled if God's response isn't what you expected—or wanted—to hear. Instead, praise the Lord for answering our requests the way He knows they should be answered!

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## Daily Devotional, Friday, November 10, 2017 - Three Ways to Think Right

NOVEMBER 10TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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### Philippians 4:4-9

We all want to experience joy and peace in difficult times—to have a sense of security and the confidence that the heavenly Father loves us. Yet we are oftentimes held back by worries and other pressures.

There are three ways we can govern our thoughts:

1. Screen them. Imagine there's a grid protecting your mind, and whatever you think about must first pass through it. If you have built your filter upon the Word of God, any unscriptural ideas that try to get through will set off a warning alarm. You can check each thought by asking yourself a series of questions: *What's the source? Where will it lead me? Is this scripturally sound? Is this going to build me up or tear me down? Can I share this with someone else? Does it make me feel guilty? Does it fit who I am as a follower of Jesus Christ?*

2. Select them. God has given you the right and the power to decide whether or not you will accept a thought. Every time an opinion or teaching hits your screen, you can choose to either let it through or discard it. Since the idea itself may not be wrong or right, those same screening questions can help you know what to do next.

3. Cultivate them. Accepting godly thoughts (and rejecting evil ones) is not enough. You need to dwell on the ideas that align with God's Word and then start practicing them.

Allow God to pour Himself into your life and to reign in your mind. In doing so, you will see awesome changes take place.

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# Daily Devotional, Thursday, November 9, 2017 - Outh Thoughts: Who's in Control?

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NOVEMBER 09TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Thursday, November 9, 2017 - Outh Thoughts: Who's in Control?

## **Colossians 3:1-3**

Do you ever struggle with thoughts that you know you shouldn't have? Perhaps you sometimes allow your mind to drift over into unforgiveness, pride, lust, or anger—attitudes and feelings that you know are not good. How do you tend to respond when this happens?

We live in a time and culture that continuously bombard our mind with information through radio and TV broadcasts, movies, newspapers, and the internet. Sometimes the message is good, but often it isn't. And the truth is that our thinking affects us more than we may realize, shaping us into who we are becoming. Thoughts reap actions, actions reap habits, habits reap character, and our character reaps our destiny.

In today's reading, the apostle Paul urges believers to "keep seeking." In other words, we need to habitually seek Christ and continually set our mind on things above. Scripture reassures us that we can control our thoughts by relying on the Lord. (See 2 Corinthians 10:5.) If we continually look to God for help with how we think, He will mold our heart and shift our attention from materialistic, ungodly priorities to more wholesome, spiritual values (Phil. 4:8).

The moment we place our trust in Jesus, we become brand-new people. That is the basis for our capacity to think correctly (that is, to think more like Christ) and therefore make wise decisions in life. This doesn't mean we will always think right thoughts, but we now have the responsibility—and power through the Holy Spirit—to steer our mind in a heavenly direction.

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## Daily Devotional, Wednesday, November 8, 2017 - Loved but Lost

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NOVEMBER 08TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Wednesday, November 8, 2017 - Loved but Lost

### **John 3:16-19**

Through faith in Jesus, we move from our lost condition to adoption into God's family. Unless we trust in Christ, we face permanent alienation from the heavenly Father. On judgment day, each person's eternal destiny will be determined, based on that individual's spiritual state. Members of God's family will live in heaven with Him. But those who remain blind to divine truth, which is found only in Jesus, will be sent away to live in eternal torment (Revelation 20:12-15).

Many people struggle to reconcile this teaching with the concept of a loving God. They reason that love would not condemn anyone to torment. The truth is, the Father desires reconciliation with man—not separation. His love for us motivated Him to provide all we need to receive forgiveness and thereby be reconciled to Him. It is man’s choice to refuse or accept God’s provision of Jesus as the remedy to the sin problem. An unsaved person can’t blame God for his eternal state; his suffering will be due to his own rebellion against the Lord.

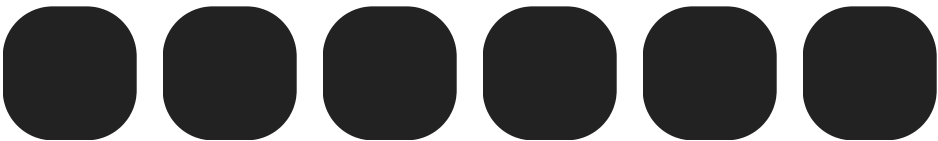
A second common objection says, “Love would accept people on the basis of their moral lives and good deeds.” This argument assumes that God ignores sin and bases His decision about heaven on behavior. But since He is holy and just, He won’t allow sin to go unpunished. Because of His great love, however, He provided a way for our sin debt to be paid—through Jesus’ atoning death.

God shows no favoritism. He extends love toward the whole lost world and invites everyone to come to Him through faith in His Son Jesus Christ.

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# Daily Devotional, Tuesday, November 7, 2017 - Who Are "the Lost"?

NOVEMBER 07TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Tuesday, November 7, 2017 - Who Are

## Luke 19:1-10

Zaccheus worked as a chief tax collector for the Roman government. His profession caused him to be despised by his fellow Jews. When Jesus sought him out and asked to visit his home, the crowd was dismayed—the Lord was associating with someone whose conduct made him a sinner in their eyes. The Savior responded, “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

The word *lost* is a biblical term used to describe the spiritual situation of everyone who has yet to receive Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior. In this state, a person is separated from God—there is physical life but no spiritual connection to the heavenly Father. *Lost* doesn’t have to do with physical location; it speaks instead of spiritual deadness (Eph. 2:1), when the mind is blind to the truth of God.

Man’s sinfulness was established through the disobedient action of the first human being—Adam. When he supported Eve’s plan and disobeyed God, his nature became one of rebellion, and all generations from then on have inherited his sinful flesh tendencies. Everyone is born into this world with a nature bent away from God (Rom. 5:12).

Zaccheus was a sinner because of his lost condition, not because of his greedy profession. Good behavior doesn’t make us a Christian, nor does bad conduct disqualify us. The tax collector received salvation through faith in Jesus. By trusting in Christ as Savior, we, like Zaccheus, are no longer lost; we’re made spiritually alive. Hallelujah!

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