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# Daily Devotional, Sunday, January 14, 2018 - We Have a Trustworthy Guide

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JANUARY 14TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Sunday, January 14, 2018 - We Have a Trustworthy Guide

## Psalm 32:8-9

Hanging on my office wall is a print that I've had for nearly 60 years. It shows the Lord Jesus standing behind a young man whose eyes are focused in the direction that the Master is pointing. Jesus' hand is on the man's shoulder, and I imagine He is saying, "This is the way we're going. I will get you to the destination." Although the road will be marked with both joy and suffering, the Lord leads His followers all the way to their eternal home.

Anyone who is honest will admit that he or she is ill-equipped to go through this life alone. Our all-knowing heavenly Father created us with a need for His guidance. In our own strength, knowledge, and reasoning power, we are simply not able to figure out how to make godly, wise decisions. But the Lord's assuring hand at our shoulder can lead us down right paths to good choices.

The Lord is willing and able to guide us, if we will let Him. It isn't difficult to fall in step with Him. Acknowledge that you have wandered down paths of life that led to sin and disobedience. Choose to follow His lead instead by reading the Word of God and applying biblical principles to your life. And learn to pray through both large and small decisions as you seek the path He has set for you.

Just beyond our last heartbeat lies eternity. That's where our Savior is pointing us. The path may not be clear to our eyes, but Jesus is leading us there with a steady and sure hand. Our part is to follow in obedience so that we may reach heaven and hear the Father say, "Well done."

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## Daily Devotional, Friday, January 12, 2018 - Expectation of Suffering

JANUARY 12TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Friday, January 12, 2018 - Expectation of Suffering

**Philippians 1:27-30**

One of the greatest gifts we can give new believers is the knowledge of what they can expect in the Christian life. After receiving the forgiveness of sins and being made new creations in Jesus Christ, they might expect that life will be wonderful from that point forward. And indeed, it is because we have the Holy Spirit and Christ's peace and joy within us. However, there is also the potential for suffering.

Christ saved us from sin, not from trouble. All the pain, suffering, hardship, and problems in the world originated in the Garden of Eden, with Adam and Eve's transgression. From then on, mankind has lived in a fallen environment and in personal bondage to sin. Christ set us free from the guilt and penalty of our wrongdoing, but He has not exempted us from the pain and trouble that is common to man.

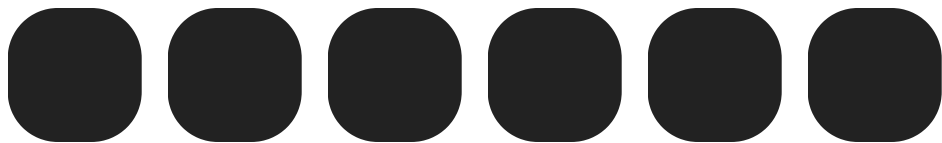
In fact, once we believe in Christ, an additional area of trouble becomes possible in our life: suffering for Christ's sake. We'd like to think that everyone around us will be just as excited about Jesus' offer of salvation as we are. But in reality, there are many opponents to the gospel. At times family members may disparage or reject us and people at work make fun of us. In some areas of the world, believers suffer physical and even fatal persecution.

So what are we to do, and how are we to behave? When the world stands against us, we desperately need the fellowship and encouragement of the church. Together, we conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel, stand firm in one spirit, and strive together for the faith

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## Daily Devotional, Thursday, January 11, 2018 - Attaining God's Best

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JANUARY 11TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Thursday, January 11, 2018 - Attaining God's Best

### **Psalm 145:18-19**

Yesterday we saw that idolatry involves giving something or someone priority over the Lord—and it leads to missing His best. Scripture also warns about other obstacles that hinder our receiving God's blessings.

As followers of Jesus, we are to pray to our heavenly Father when we desire or need something (Phil. 4:6). Sadly, many of God's children fail to do so. Some are "too busy" to bring their requests to the Lord. Others talk to the Lord in a general or mechanical way, without the genuine, heartfelt communication He desires.

Christians should come humbly before His throne, bringing requests with a submissive spirit (1 Peter 5:5-6). This means that we are to yearn for God's will above all else—even above what we think is best. It is important to acknowledge that He may have something better in mind. Then, as we faithfully pray, God may remove or alter certain longings so that our desires begin to align with His.

Furthermore, the Bible tells us to approach God with confidence and faith (Heb. 4:16; James 1:6). In other words, when we pray and seek the Father's will, we should anticipate that He will answer. As Isaiah 64:4 reminds us, God "acts in behalf of the one who waits for Him."

Our Father desires to pour blessing into the lives of His children. Don't allow prayerlessness to prevent His best. Express your needs and wants to God confidently and specifically. Then submit your will to His, and wait expectantly. He is faithful—you will see!

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## Daily Devotional, Wednesday, January 10, 2018 - God's Blessings

JANUARY 10TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Wednesday, January 10, 2018 - God's Blessings

**Psalm 81:1-16**

Our heavenly Father delights in meeting His children's needs and fulfilling their desires. Yet many Christians walk through life with less than God's best. How can we avoid missing out on His blessings?

Psalm 81 provides insight. The writer refers to a time when the Israelites missed the opportunity to receive God's best. As we know from the book of Exodus, the nation gratefully praised Him for their release from bondage. But then they quickly forgot and worshipped other gods, complaining about their circumstances in the wilderness. This unhealthy pattern continued all throughout the Old Testament, as the people would turn to Jehovah in time of need and then drift away.

Psalm 81:8-10 reveals God's perspective: "O Israel, if you would listen to Me! Let there be no strange god among you ... I, the Lord, am your God, who brought you up from the land of Egypt; open your mouth wide and I will fill it."

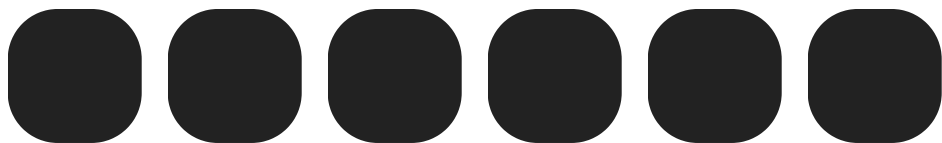
We, too, might have needs and desires that are unmet because of disobedience. Today, most people don't worship statues, as the wayward Israelites did. Our idols are less obvious—they might include a relationship, job, hobby, or anything else we put ahead of the Lord. Even making decisions based upon what others think can be idolatry; our choices should be made on the basis of biblical principle and the Holy Spirit's guidance.

Ask the Lord to reveal anything that hinders your receiving His best. Listen carefully, and let Him help with the areas He brings to your attention. He is ready to guide and bless you.

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## Daily Devotional, Tuesday, January 9, 2018 - Becoming a Prodigel

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JANUARY 09TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Tuesday, January 9, 2018 - Becoming a Prodigel

**Luke 15:11-19**

The Prodigal Son's journey away from home began with a desire. Perhaps he wanted to leave behind some of the restrictions that come with living under a parent's roof. Or maybe he wanted more money to pursue life's pleasures with friends. Whatever the case, his desire gave birth to self-deceptive reasoning, which assumes, *There's no harm in what I am doing. I deserve this.*

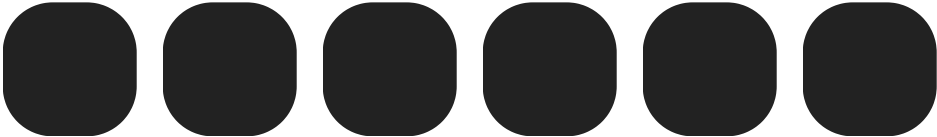
That thinking led to a decision—to prematurely ask for his inheritance—and to his departure, both from home and from what he had been taught.

A Christian who has turned away from God follows a path similar to the prodigal's. It begins in our mind with a craving for something other than what we have. The longer we allow the idea to linger, the stronger our desire becomes. When we cling to a yearning that is outside of God's protective will, then we likewise deceive ourselves and find ways to justify what we want. We will base decisions on our faulty reasoning and move away from the Lord to fulfill our self-centered dreams. Like the wayward son, we may enjoy the pleasures of the world for a time, but ultimately, we will find ourselves without the essentials common to all mankind—unconditional love, security, and a meaningful purpose for living.

We have an enemy who seeks to divert us from the heavenly Father's will, to a mindset that places desires above God and "flesh" tendencies that prefer pleasure over obedience. To avoid self-deception, make Scripture your basis for living—and adjust your thought life and choices accordingly. (See Rom. 12:2.)

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