



[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional, Tuesday, January 30, 2018 - Called to Ministry

JANUARY 30TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Colossians 4:7-18

The last chapter of Colossians contains a long list of people who served alongside Paul. What's not highlighted in these verses is these individuals' talents, skills, abilities, wealth, or position in society. Instead, Paul focuses their character, their service for Christ, and his love and appreciation for each one.

We are each called to ministry in one form or another. Although we tend to think of ministry as something that's done inside a church, in reality it encompasses everything we do all week long, no matter where we are. In God's eyes, there's no division between sacred and secular activities.

For example, while Luke was a physician by profession, he was also an evangelist, a missionary, and a divinely inspired writer of Scripture. His career was not his primary source of purpose and self-fulfillment; rather, it was a means through which he served Christ by ministering to others. A faithful friend and traveling companion to Paul, Luke offered him encouragement and comfort until the day of the apostle's execution (2 Tim. 4:11).

Luke was perfectly suited for the work the Lord planned for him. He had an analytical, detailed mind which made him a skilled doctor. It also served him in carefully investigating and writing

an accurate account of Jesus' life (the gospel of Luke) and the events of the early church (the book of Acts).

Each of us has been created and fitted by God to fulfill the particular ministry He's chosen specifically for us. We have been placed on this earth not simply to enjoy ourselves, accumulate wealth, and achieve prominence but to serve the Lord. Our responsibility is to respond with obedience to His call.

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[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional, Monday, January 29, 2018 - Resisting Compromise

JANUARY 29TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Daily Devotional, Monday, January 29, 2018 - Resisting Compromise](#)

2 Timothy 3:14-17

Yesterday, we saw how King Solomon’s life illustrated the peril of compromise. Concession begins in a seemingly insignificant way. For instance, someone might want you to make a financial decision that you know in your heart is unwise. But you go along with the plan because you don’t want to hurt the other person’s feelings. You have compromised the message of the Holy Spirit, who warned you.

Small compromises lead to more serious ones. With each successive concession, our conscience is weakened. Ultimately, whenever we give way to evil—whether we let go of a doctrinal belief or simply listen to music that taints our thoughts—we always lose.

We compromise for a variety of reasons. Many do so from a fear of rejection or of being unappreciated. Some choose this route to avoid conflict. Still others may begin to doubt God’s trustworthiness or goodness; as a result, they give up on Him, compromising their basic beliefs and undermining their reason for assurance.

To be men and women who are strong enough to resist making concessions, we need to develop some essential armor. First, we must have strong convictions about the Bible and depend on it as a guide for daily living. Next, we need to have faith in God’s promise to supply all of our needs. Finally, we must find the courage to trust in Him, even when we are misunderstood, persecuted, or falsely accused. When we surrender our life to God, He replaces enslavement to compromise with security in Him.

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[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional, Friday, January 26, 2018 - Seeking the Lord

JANUARY 26TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Friday, January 26, 2018 - Seeking the Lord

Hosea 10:12

As Christians, we all probably spend some time seeking the Lord, but to be truly successful at it, we must learn to adjust our focus. The reason focus is important is that what we behold, we become. If we fix our attention on the sensual and materialistic, it won't be long before we ourselves start leaning in that direction. Try giving up television for a couple weeks, and see how it impacts your mind. While you might not notice its influence, it actually has a subtle but gripping effect on you and alters the way you think.

On the other hand, if you focus your love and attention on Jesus, you will become like Him. It's almost like osmosis—we absorb His characteristics as He pours Himself into us. We can fix our mind on Him when we pray, when we study the Scriptures, and when we meditate on God's truths.

But more than that is involved. We must go deeper, to the point that we are listening and sharing our hearts with Him. If we are open and transparent before Him, He will speak and fill us with Himself.

When we learn to receive from Him in this way, we'll find that our hunger and thirst for everything else begins to diminish. It's not that our desires will disappear, but instead, they become redirected.

You will discover you have a growing hunger for the Lord and a longing to know Him in a warm and personal way. And you will notice your joy bubbling up and overflowing so that it cannot be stopped or stifled. Why? Because once you have begun to seek the Lord, you will recognize Him as your all-in-all.

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[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional, Thursday, January 25, 2018 - Hindrances to Hearing

JANUARY 25TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Daily Devotional, Thursday, January 25, 2018 - Hindrances to Hearing](#)

1 Kings 19:8-18

Have you ever put a seashell to your ear? The common belief is that if you do so, and if you stay perfectly still and quiet, then you can hear the sound of the ocean inside the shell. It seems unlikely, yet when we try it, we always seem to hear something, don't we?

There are many things in life that we simply cannot hear until we become quiet and focus our hearing intently. When we concentrate on a shell, we hear the ocean. But what can we expect if we turn our attention to God?

In today's passage, we see Elijah in desperate need of a word from the Lord. First a mighty wind blows through the mountains where he is resting, but God is not in the wind. Then an earthquake shakes the very ground, but God isn't in the earthquake, either. Finally a brilliant, consuming fire appears, but Elijah knows this is also not God.

Then, after the dramatic occurrence of these three mighty forces—all of which could have been a fine representation of God's power—the Lord approaches in a gentle breeze. And Elijah recognizes Him immediately.

God does not always speak to us in the way we expect. It is possible to expend so much energy searching for Him in the powerful, distracting "noise" of life that we can overlook His most intense call—which often comes through silence.

What might God be whispering to you today? Calm your mind and become quiet before Him; He may just shock your senses with His compelling, small voice.

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[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, January 24, 2018 - A Spiritual Pottery Lesson

JANUARY 24TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Isaiah 64:8

I decided to take a cue from the prophet Jeremiah, who visited a potter's studio at the Lord's request (Jer. 18:1-6). So I stopped by an art institute to observe a class—my sole purpose was to better understand the biblical metaphor of God as the Potter and people as the clay. Here's what I learned when I walked into a room full of whirring pottery wheels.

The Potter has power over the clay. He can do what He chooses. We humans do have limited free will, but God's will is greater. So even if we try to resist His sculpting hand, He continues to work toward His purpose. The master Craftsman has set out to achieve a particular design in us, and He has a plan to make it take shape.

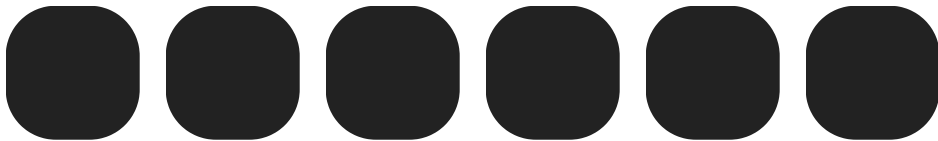
The Potter works the clay with patience. Since God knows that spiritual maturity can't be rushed, He forms our Christlike character slowly—one experience at a time. That means He must also have perseverance, as human clay sometimes shifts off-center and becomes misshapen. Just as clay can be fashioned only when it sits precisely in the middle of the wheel, Christians must be in the Father's will to grow spiritually. The Potter maneuvers the drifting believer back into position and begins remolding. He never discards His vessels but tirelessly works to perfect them.

Our God is a personal Potter. His creations reflect His personality and character. And His Spirit is poured into each human vessel so He can be an intimate part of our life. The result is a work of true beauty—a saint wholly committed to Him.

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