### **Faith Matters**



# Daily Devotional, Tuesday, May 1, 2018 - Our Inheritance

MAY 01ST 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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### Ephesians 1:3-14

Do you ever feel as if the Christian life is nothing but sacrifice? After all, Jesus said those who follow Him must deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and follow Him (Luke 9:23). If we look at salvation only from an earthly perspective, it may seem costly, but today's passage opens our eyes to the vast riches of grace that God has lavished upon us in Christ Jesus.

From start to finish, our salvation includes an abundance beyond imagination. The climax of these spiritual blessings is found in Ephesians 1:11: "We have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose." At the moment we come to faith, we receive every benefit mentioned in today's passage, along with the promise of future blessings. The Holy Spirit within us is the pledge, or deposit, guaranteeing our inheritance.

Let's consider just one aspect of our amazing legacy in Christ—our physical form. Philippians 3:21 says that when Jesus returns, He will "transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory." Right now we groan in bodies weakened and corrupted by sin, but these will be changed in the twinkling of an eye when Jesus comes for us.

John describes it this way: "We know that when He appears, we will be like Him" (1 John 3:2). God's purpose of glorifying His Son in us will then be accomplished as we are fully conformed

to Christ's likeness. So how are we to live in light of our coming inheritance? John summarizes the answer quite nicely in the next verse: "Everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."

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# Daily Devotional - Monday, April 30, 2018 - The Spiritual Fruit of Patience

APRIL 30TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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**Romans 5:1-4** 

The list known as "Fruit of the Spirit" includes patience (Gal. 5:22-23), but that does not mean the Holy Spirit wills it into the believer's life. Instead, He acts as our ever-dependable teacher and the one who enables our growth. Spiritual fruit is something that matures over time as we obey the heavenly Father and surrender to His will.

Patience with both God and our fellow man is an outgrowth of deepening faith. The Holy Spirit urges believers to take note of the Lord's handiwork on the journey through life. Our confidence in Him is nurtured by answered prayer, the rich blessings that arise unexpectedly from difficult circumstances, and every trace of good that God salvages from a bad situation. As our trust in His goodness and sovereignty grows, we find ourselves more willing to wait for God's solutions and outcomes.

In fact, I believe that recognizing God's sovereignty is key to developing patience. A significant part of surrendering to His absolute control is waiting upon Him to do what He will. It is wisdom to realize that our lives unfold according to His master plan—exasperated toe tapping doesn't make Him speed up one bit. God expects His children to step into His timeline and practice patience no matter what pace He sets.

Patience doesn't come naturally. That's why we have the Holy Spirit. He strengthens our resolve to endure without complaint when progress seems sluggish. After all, God is slow only from a human standpoint. From a divine, eternal perspective, He's always working at the perfect speed.

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# Daily Devotional - Thursday, April 26, 2018 - Overcoming Life's Ups and Downs

APRIL 26TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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#### Philippians 4:10-13

Contentment is something we all desire yet too seldom have. If it comes, it usually seems short-lived. And often we think that contentment is possible only if all our circumstances are comfortable and there are no conflicts or misunderstandings in our relationships.

The apostle Paul proves that perfect conditions are not the source of contentment. He wrote his letter to the Philippians while he was in a Roman prison. Contentment was something he had to learn, not through comfort but through hardship and suffering. Paul relied on spiritual truths to enable him to face his difficulties God's way—without complaint, worry, or fear.

In every trial, we have a choice to view the situation from our perspective or from God's. Depending on our focus, we either react emotionally or respond spiritually, based on God's Word and promises. Inner turmoil and outward agitation result when we focus on feelings instead of spiritual principles. But when we habitually see every matter from God's point of view, then irritation, anger, and blame will be replaced by an inner quietness and confidence.

Is it really possible to face serious trials and have God's peace? According to Paul, the answer is yes. We can be content in all circumstances through Christ's strength (Phil. 4:13). This isn't a natural response but a supernatural one, which God alone can produce in the lives of His children. If we'll let divine truths interpret our trials and trust the Holy Spirit to empower us to

respond in faith, our heart will find rest no matter what goes on around us.

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# Daily Devotional, Wednesday, April 25, 2018 - Comfort in Jesus

APRIL 25TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Wednesday, April 25, 2018 - Comfort in Jesus

Hebrews 4:14-16

What brings you comfort when you are suffering or going through stressful times? Although well-meaning friends may assure you that everything will be all right, the person who truly

comforts is the one who puts an arm around your shoulder and says, "I'm familiar with the pain you are feeling, and I know it hurts."

Jesus is that kind of comforter for us. He came to earth as a human, experienced pain and suffering, and faced temptation without giving in to sin. He comes alongside to help us by being ...

**Our Friend.** "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Jesus isn't a companion in word only; He demonstrated that He is the best possible friend because He willingly went to the cross to save us from our sins. He sacrificed Himself for us so we could be with Him forever.

**Our High Priest.** He became the Mediator between holy God and sinful mankind by offering His own blood as a sacrifice to reconcile us to the Father. Now we have immediate access to God in time of need.

**Our Intercessor.** Jesus sits at the Father's right hand, interceding for us. We don't always pray correctly, but what a comfort to know that the One who is perfect speaks to the Father on our behalf.

On whom do you lean during difficult times? Although people may disappoint us with quick-fix responses to our hurt, Jesus Christ understands our pain and offers unlimited compassion and help when we come to Him

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# Daily Devotional, Tuesday, Aprl 24, 2018 - The Moments That Sustain Us

APRIL 24TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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#### Psalm 145:1-21

Every believer experiences moments of challenge or discomfort. The question is, How do we deal with them? King David discovered that remaining strong and fruitful during trying circumstances begins with praising the Lord. Then, once his focus shifted upward, he was ready to meditate on the glorious splendor of God's majesty and also on His wonderful works (Psalm 145:5).

Meditation involves Bible reading but goes far beyond skimming a section the way we might with any other book. Instead, we need to pray over the verses, asking God to show us by His Spirit what the passage means, what it says about Him, and how we can apply His words to our life.

What keeps us from meditating upon the Lord and His Word? We live in such a busy culture that it's often difficult for us to slow down, settle our racing thoughts, and sit quietly with God's Word before us. As we try to concentrate, our minds are bombarded with thoughts of all we need to do. Being with the Lord may not seem as urgent as our other tasks, but it's much more important.

Meditating on Scripture increases our thirst for God, enlarges our perspective of Him, teaches us to think biblically, and increases our discernment. The insights we gain from His Word bring

encouragement, reminding us of God's constant presence and strengthening us for whatever lies ahead.

The spiritual benefits of time alone with the Lord are worth whatever sacrifice we have to make. Through meditation, our heart begins to digest the truths we know intellectually so they can impact our everyday life.

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