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Daily Devotional - Friday, May 4, 2018 - Christ is the Pattern

MAY 04TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Friday, May 4, 2018 - Christ is the Pattern

Matthew 11:28-30

If Christ were not our burden bearer, every one of us would be lost and on our way to eternal separation from God. Jesus bore our sins in His own body on the cross so that we might live righteously (1 Peter 2:24). To those who are tired and downtrodden, He says, “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28). Because our salvation is the result of Jesus being the sin bearer, He is our perfect role model.

God predestined us to be conformed to the likeness of Christ (Rom. 8:29). That’s why suffering alongside those enduring the trials of life is in our spiritual DNA—it’s part of being a child of God. The hallmark of a Christian is love, and this should be evident in the way we treat others.

But bearing other people’s burdens is difficult, particularly when we have cares and struggles of our own. Nevertheless, we should not try to wait until all of our problems are solved before deciding to emulate the work of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul, who faced many obstacles, continued to serve others. He said, “My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:19). That means we can share someone else’s burden even when we have our own. God’s grace is more than sufficient for both.

God is never too busy to tend to our cares. People all over the world are hurting deeply today. The Lord knows how you can be a servant to someone who needs your friendship. Ask Him to use you as a healing salve to bring another person freedom from burdens.

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Daily Devotional - Thursday, May 3, 2018 - A Living Hope

MAY 03RD 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Thursday, May 3, 2018 - A Living Hope

1 Peter 1:3-9

Discovering that a thief has broken into your home and stolen your valuables is a traumatic experience. It leaves you feeling shaken and vulnerable. Not only have you lost precious heirlooms and the possessions that required hard work and savings, but your sense of safety and security is also shattered.

Situations like burglary remind us that this world is not our home and one day we will leave everything behind. No one takes a moving van along after death. Therefore, we must make sure that what we view as treasure is not the things of this world (which will always lead to disappointment) but Christ, who gives us a living hope.

Look at all God has done to assure you of this hope:

- *According to His great mercy, He caused you to be born again.*
- *Since Jesus was raised to life, you too will be resurrected.*
- *Everything on this earth is destined to perish (2 Peter 3:10-11), but God has reserved an inheritance for you in heaven—one that is imperishable, undefiled, and will never fade away.*
- *By God's power through faith, you are being protected for the culmination of your salvation, which will be revealed in the last day.*

Nothing can separate us from Christ, since God is the one who holds us. And He fulfills all His promises, so we can rejoice in this hope even while facing the trials of earth. So set your heart on heaven, where Christ is—and store your treasures there. Then your love for Him will grow because of His goodness toward you. And knowing what awaits you in heaven will increase your joy.

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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, May 2, 2018 - Heirs With Christ

MAY 02ND 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, May 2, 2018 - Heirs With Christ

Romans 8:12-18

How often do you think of yourself as an heir of God? It's not usually the first thing that comes to mind as we consider the blessings that are ours when we accept Jesus Christ as Savior. Perhaps this is because we don't really know what it means to be God's heir. Nor can we begin to comprehend what awaits us in eternity or when that will be.

Being an heir is usually associated with family ties, and the same is true of our relationship to God. When we were born again by His Spirit, we became His adopted children, and as such, we are heirs along with Christ. In Colossians 1:15, Jesus is called "the firstborn of all creation." In the ancient world, the firstborn son had a place of prominence in the family and was the chief heir of all that his father owned. In the same way, Jesus Christ holds the position of firstborn and is the heir of all creation.

What's truly amazing is that He has promised to share His inheritance with us. When He returns in glory to take up His rightful place as King of Kings on earth, we will rule with Him, under His authority (Revelation 2:26-27). The Christian life is filled with undeserved favor. What we experience now of God's grace is only the tip of the iceberg.

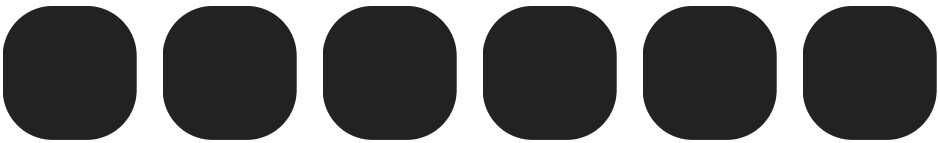
Realizing all that Christ has done and will do for His followers should prompt us to live for Him today. The Holy Spirit dwells within us, empowering us to put to death our fleshly desires and

to follow God in obedience, even when it's costly. Anything we suffer here for Christ's sake is insignificant compared to the glory that awaits us.

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

MAY 01ST 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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

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.

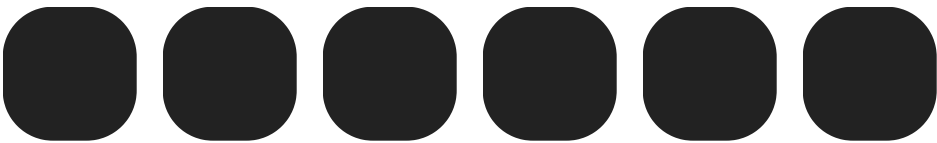
Let’s consider just one aspect of our amazing legacy in Christ—our physical form. Philippians 3:21 says that when Jesus returns, He will “transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory.” Right now we groan in bodies weakened and corrupted by sin, but these will be changed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

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

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.

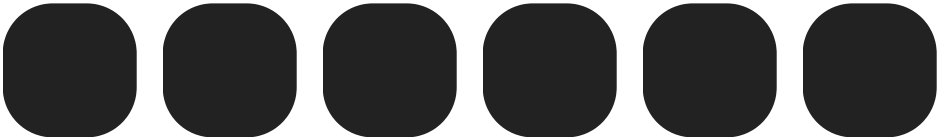
Patience with both God and our fellow man is an outgrowth of deepening faith. The Holy Spirit urges believers to take note of the Lord’s handiwork on the journey through life. Our confidence in Him is nurtured by answered prayer, the rich blessings that arise unexpectedly from difficult circumstances, 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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