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# Daily Devotional - Thursday, May 10, 2018 - Discipline Determines Destiny

MAY 10TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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**1 Corinthians 9:23-27**

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The apostle Paul compares our life to a race and points out that self-discipline—or the lack of it—determines the outcome. What he’s speaking about is not simply our place in heaven, which is secured by our faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. He also has in mind our obedience and service for the Lord here on earth.

In order to fulfill the Father’s purposes for our life, we need to “exercise self-control in all things” (1 Corinthians 9:25). Though we long to obey the Lord, we have flesh tendencies, which are bent toward sin. Therefore, we need to control our sinful thoughts, impulses, and actions by making our body our slave instead of letting fleshly desires rule us (1 Corinthians 9:27).

Paul says to live with a goal in mind rather than float aimlessly through life (1 Corinthians 9:26). God has prepared good works for us to accomplish during our lifetime (Eph. 2:10). As we live in obedience to the Lord, He guides our path and empowers us through the Holy Spirit to accomplish His will.

Next, we must work toward God’s goal for us. Wishing and hoping never accomplish anything if there is no action. And effort that’s not directed at the right goal is like “beating the air” (1 Cor. 9:26). We may be working hard for our own purposes, but if they’re not God’s goals, it’s

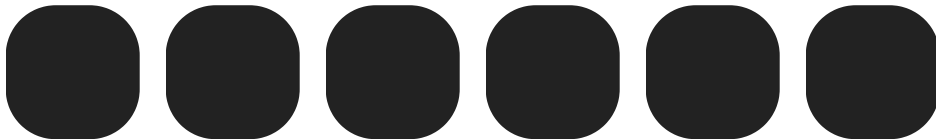
all wasted effort.

Paul tells us to run to win (1 Corinthians 9:24), but what is the prize? As we fulfill God's purpose, He does His sanctifying work in us and accomplishes His will through us. Then one day, when we finish our course and stand before Christ in heaven, we'll receive eternal rewards that never perish.

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## Daily Devotional - Wednesday, May 9, 2018 - The Truth About the Trinity

MAY 09TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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## John 14:16-20

Does the Holy Spirit seem mysterious to you? While the Bible speaks often of God the Father and God the Son, God the Spirit is not mentioned as much. Yet His personhood and work is just as important as the other two members of the Trinity.

The Godhead is composed of three distinct persons, each fully God with the same divine attributes but different roles. Each one plays a crucial part in the salvation of a soul.

- *The heavenly Father's holiness and justice demand that the penalty for sin must be paid.*
- *The Son became the sinless sacrifice that satisfied the just demands of the Father.*
- *The Spirit convicts and regenerates the sinner to believe and call on the Lord for salvation.*

When Jesus was soon to finish His mission on earth, He promised to send the disciples another Helper, the Holy Spirit. God the Spirit is so important to us that Jesus said, "It is to your advantage that I go away ... if I go, I will send Him to you" (John 16:7). He's the Spirit of truth who interprets God's Word for us, and helps us remember and apply it to our life (John 14:26; John 16:13). He's also our encourager, and He empowers us to obey.

The Holy Spirit doesn't bring attention to Himself but always seeks to glorify Jesus (John 16:14). Perhaps that's why He seems harder to know. But if we look closely, we will see how His fingers lovingly mold—just as a potter's do to clay—guiding us, challenging us, and transforming us.

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## Daily Devotional - Tuesday, May 8, 2018 - The Importance of Motive

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MAY 08TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Tuesday, May 8, 2018 - The Importance of Motive

### 1 Samuel 17:20-30

Our culture is action-oriented. Generally, when we see a problem, we plunge ahead with a solution. But before taking action, it would be wise to examine our motives. Not every good deed is prompted by a good motive.

When David arrived at the scene of Israel's battle against the Philistines, he saw Goliath for the first time and heard the Philistine's insults and mockery of the Israelites. Then someone told him about the rewards King Saul had promised to the man who would kill Goliath—great riches, the king's daughter for a wife, and freedom from taxation.

Such a generous reward was certainly a great motivator, and it obviously piqued David's interest. However, what ultimately propelled him onto the battlefield was the desire to defend God's name: "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?" (1 Samuel 17:26).

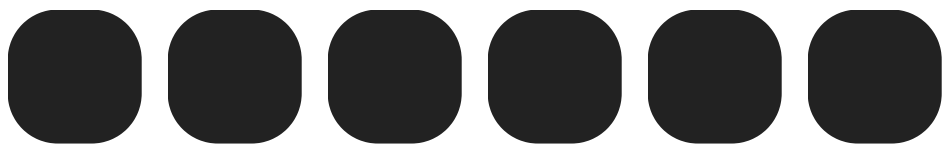
As maturing Christians, we must examine our motives for desiring victory in any battle we face. Too often we are seeking a selfish end, such as release from our discomfort and a return to an easier way of life. But God is more interested in molding us into Christlikeness than He is in keeping us comfortable.

Think about the last conflict you faced, or maybe the one you're experiencing right now. Are God's honor and your spiritual growth the focus of your desires? If not, then you are at odds with what He is trying to accomplish in your life. But if His will is more important to you than your own agenda, you can be certain that He will use the battle for your good and His glory.

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## Daily Devotional - Monday, May 7, 2018 - Overcoming Giants

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MAY 07TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

## 1 Samuel 17:31-52

The well-known story of David and Goliath teaches believers that obstacles in our life are no match for God. Whether our Goliath is a relational challenge or an overwhelming situation, we must realize that the Lord is sovereign over everything in heaven and on earth, and He has the power to give us the victory.

David had unshakeable trust because past experience had proven that God was faithful. The young shepherd recalled how the Lord gave him the victory on two separate occasions, when a lion and a bear threatened his flock (1 Sam. 17:37).

Our faith is bolstered in a similar way by remembering God's provision in our own life and by reading about His faithfulness to men and women in the Bible. This is why it's helpful to keep a record of God's faithfulness. Then when facing a trial, we can look back at what we've journaled and be strengthened, knowing that God has proven trustworthy in the past.

Trusting in the Lord gives us the courage to face our giants. Being so armed, we can respond to challenges on the basis of three important truths:

- *Who Christ is in us—our Savior and Provider.*
- *Who we are in Christ—God's adopted children, eternally secure and indwelt by the Holy Spirit.*
- *What we have in Christ—the promise of access to almighty God.*

Instead of fixing our attention on how big the obstacle is, let's begin focusing on the greatness of our God. If we'll trust and obey Him, His Spirit will equip us for the challenge, and our faith will glorify Him.

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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.

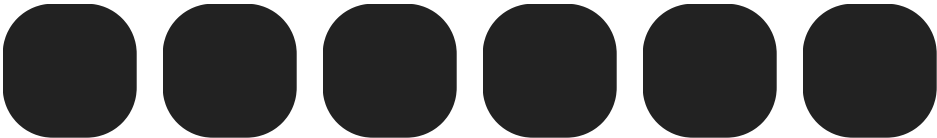
But bearing other people’s burdens is difficult, particularly when we have cares and struggles of our own. Nevertheless, we should not try to wait until all of our problems are solved before deciding to emulate the work of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul, who faced many obstacles, continued to serve others. 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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