



[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, May 16, 2018 - God's Ultimate Purpose for Our Trials

MAY 16TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Romans 8:29-30

Difficult situations are easier to bear if we know that something good is going to result from them. The problem is that our idea of good may not be the same as God's. Since His ways and thoughts are much higher than ours, we must trust Him to know what is best, even if it causes us pain, frustration, or hardship (Isa. 55:9). The ultimate good the Lord is working to accomplish is our conformation to the image of His Son, and trials are one of the tools He uses in the process.

However, we should never think that God sends affliction into our lives and then sits back to see what will happen. Our loving heavenly Father oversees every aspect of the situation.

The Lord designs our trials. God considers every adversity necessary to achieve a specific purpose in our life (1 Peter 1:6-7). He knows each of us intimately and sees where we need correction or spiritual growth to become more Christlike.

God determines the length of our trials. From our perspective, any suffering lasts too long. But when we depend on the Lord, He gives us grace and strength to endure until His purpose is accomplished (Phil. 4:13).

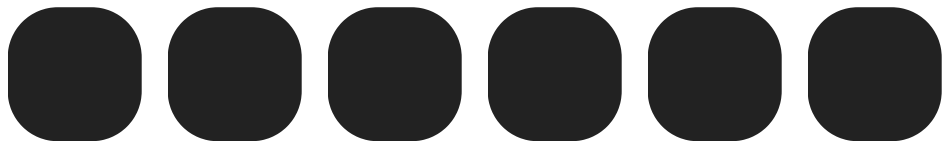
The Lord limits the intensity of our trials. He knows what we can handle and will not give us more than we can bear (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Nothing in our life is random or meaningless. Even when we don't understand what the Lord is doing, we can trust that He will use our trials to make us more like His Son in character, conduct, and conversation.

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[Go to post](#)



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TOP

Daily Devotional - Tuesday, May 15, 2018 - God Works Through Our Trials

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2 Corinthians 12:7-10

The troubles and suffering we experience in life are not random events without purpose. God works through them for our good (Rom. 8:28). We may not like or understand exactly what He's doing, but knowing some of His general goals helps us trust Him and cooperate so we can reap the benefits of a season of affliction.

Protection. After Paul fervently prayed that his thorn in the flesh be removed, God revealed to him that it was a protection from pride. We all have areas of weakness that could lead us into sin, and God in His wisdom knows how to safeguard us. Sometimes pain accomplishes what nothing else can.

Reliance. Paul's thorn, which made him weak, also taught him to endure by relying on Christ's grace and strength. In the same way, the troubles in our life often bring us to the end of our rope so we'll reach out to the Lord in humble dependence. Then we are positioned to receive the divine strength He promises to provide.

Divine Perspective. When Paul finally realized what the Lord was trying to accomplish in his life, he viewed his suffering in a totally different way. He stopped focusing on it as a pain and hindrance and instead became content: Paul could actually rejoice because he recognized that Christ's power in him was more important than freedom from pain.

Unless we realize that God always prioritizes the eternal over the temporal, we won't see the value of pain. According to 2 Corinthians 4:17, "Momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison." Therefore, we don't lose heart.

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[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - Monday, May 14, 2018 - Passing Down a Legacy of Faith

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2 Timothy 1:1-9

14

What do you want to pass down to your children? We'd probably all like to provide a large inheritance, but there's something even more valuable—a spiritual legacy.

Paul admired the faith heritage that was passed down to Timothy by his mother and grandmother. Although Eunice and Lois could not bestow salvation on Timothy, they modeled their faith in God and His Word. Timothy's greatest inheritance was spiritual instruction and godly examples from these influential women. Mothers and fathers who desire to pass along a faith legacy will make the following values part of their life:

Principles. Know and practice biblical principles. Parents can't pass down what they don't possess, but those who love and obey God's Word will eagerly share what they've learned.

Pattern. Apply scriptural principles to your life and live them out in front of your children. A consistent pattern of obedience to God inspires children to seek Him, whereas saying one thing but doing another sets a poor example.

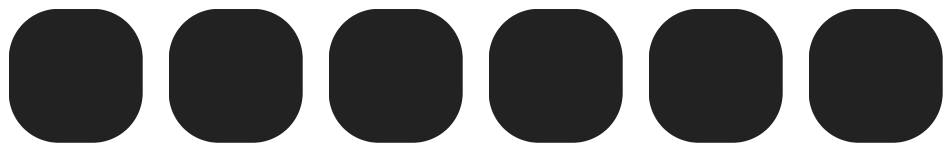
Persistence. Never give up in your attempts to impart spiritual knowledge. I learned this wise habit from my mother, who set out to instill in me the values needed to become a godly adult. To teach a particular lesson, she'd keep telling and showing me until she was satisfied I'd gotten the message.

It's never too late to begin crafting a faith heritage. Like Timothy's mother and grandmother, let's not settle for merely raising our children to adulthood. Instead, our goal should be to become godly examples who inspire and teach them to love and follow Jesus.

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[Go to post](#)



More from ShowMe Times:

[TOP](#)

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

MAY 10TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

1 Corinthians 9:23-27

THURSDAY

10

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.

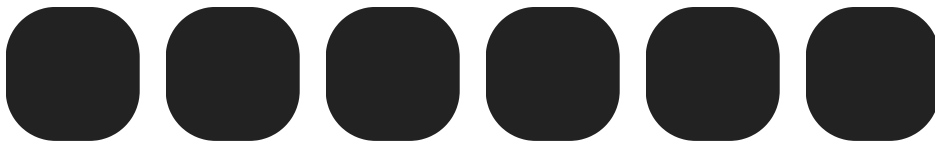
Next, we must work toward God’s goal for us. Wishing and hoping never accomplish anything if there is no action. And effort that’s not directed at the right goal is like “beating the air” (1 Cor. 9:26). We may be working hard for our own purposes, but if they’re not God’s goals, it’s all wasted effort.

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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[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

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

MAY 09TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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

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

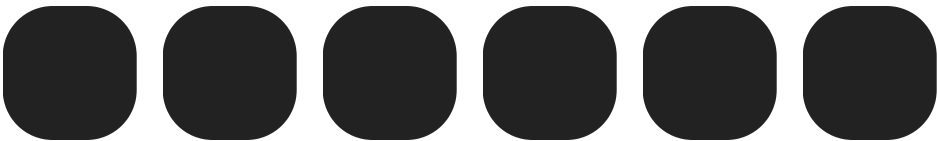
who interprets God’s Word for us, and helps us remember and apply it to our life (John 14:26; John 16:13). He’s also our encourager, and He empowers us to obey.

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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