



[TOP](#)

# Daily Devotional - Monday, July 9, 2018 - Listening to God

JULY 09TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Monday, July 9, 2018 - Listening to God

## Proverbs 2:1-7

Psychologists refer to a phenomenon known as dissociation to describe a mental state in which someone inhabits two worlds simultaneously. Many of us might have experienced this in its mildest form while driving. Our thoughts drift, and we fly right by our exit, traveling many miles before we recognize our mistake.

As Christians, we sometimes suffer from spiritual dissociation. With good intentions, we open our Bibles and begin reading only to realize several verses later that we have no idea what we just read. Although God was speaking, we failed to hear His voice. Usually, this situation can be easily remedied by rereading with focused concentration, but there are other times when we fail to hear God for more serious reasons.

Sometimes an inability to hear the Lord is simply the result of spiritual immaturity, but it could also indicate a perilous state of spiritual indifference or, worse still, rebellion. In that state, we run the risk of becoming like the man who hardens his neck after much reproof and is suddenly broken beyond remedy (Prov. 29:1).

Let's not make it difficult for God to get through to us. He's a loving Father who keeps speaking in order to turn us away from evil and direct us back to Himself. His goal is to

transform us from stubborn children needing firm control to mature followers who can be counseled merely by a word or a nudge from Him. The more receptive we become to His instructions, the more we'll experience His lovingkindness and the joy of obedience and righteousness.

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[Go to post](#)



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## Daily Devotional - Friday, July 6, 2018 - The Signs of Drifting

JULY 06TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Friday, July 6, 2018 - The Signs of Drifting

**Hebrews 2:1-3**

Regularly gathering in the house of the Lord with brothers and sisters in Christ provides an anchor of support and accountability. But skipping church in order to pursue other interests usually indicates a believer has begun to drift away from God. Less apparent are the men and women who *mentally* skip the worship service. The act of attending means nothing unless we make a deliberate decision to receive God’s Word and apply it to our life. As the writer of Hebrews warned, if we do not pay attention to what we have heard, we will drift away from it (Heb. 2:1).

However, Sunday morning is not the only time for nourishing our heart and mind with principles and encouragement from the Bible. We should be in its pages every day, reading and meditating for ourselves. When our interest in what God has to say decreases, we are already slipping out into troublesome waters. The only way to keep our way pure is by following His Word (Psalm 119:9).

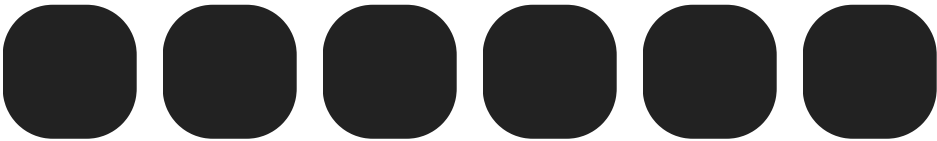
A fading prayer life often accompanies neglected Bible reading. Prayer is the way believers communicate with the Navigator. If we stop talking with Him, the God who once seemed so close will soon feel far away. That chasm in our spirit is one more sign that we’re far from shore and safety.

I’ve watched many a captain guide his cruise ship through a narrow channel. The crew members are intensely focused on their tasks because drifting means disaster. Life is full of narrow channels to navigate. We cannot afford to drift away from God and His Word. Only He can bring us safely through.

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[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

## Daily Devotional - Thursday, July 5, 2018 - The Danger of Drifting

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JULY 05TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Thursday, July 5, 2018 - The Danger of Drifting

### Proverbs 14:15-16

One fine afternoon, my best friend and I came upon an abandoned boat floating in the river. The paddles were broken, but that wasn't a deterrent for a pair of teenage boys. We shoved off and drifted downstream talking, joking, and carrying on. I'm not sure how much time passed as we floated aimlessly along, but we knew we were in trouble when a loud roar reached our ears. Up ahead, water was rushing over the dam. Panicked, we grabbed the broken paddles and pulled hard against the current. We managed to get close enough to the shore to safely jump out into shallow water, but the boat went over the edge. What started out as pure fun nearly ended in disaster.

That's happens to many people today. What begins as fun and pleasure ends in shipwreck because people drift along, neglecting to think ahead or notice how fast they're moving away from the safety of the Lord's plan. According to the prevailing attitude of modern society, God isn't needed as long as the stream runs smoothly. In other words, when income is good, the family is safe, and health is stable, going with the flow seems fine. But in reality, a drifting man is being swept along by the world's currents, which are dangerous without Christ.

Today's passage reveals that the wise look to the future to avoid ruin. Let me put it another way: Drifting is foolish. In countless arenas of life—including marriage, family, vocation, and finances—we need to have a goal and navigation plan if we expect to be successful. Thankfully, God provides both in His Word. (See Prov. 3:6.)

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[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

## Daily Devotional - Tuesday, July 3, 2018 - Compassion for the Lost

JULY 03RD 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Tuesday, July 3, 2018 - Compassion for the Lost

**Matthew 9:36-38**

Throughout the Gospels, a phrase commonly used of the Lord is “He felt compassion” (Matt. 9:36). These words describe what Jesus often experienced when He encountered people in a helpless condition: He was moved to alleviate their suffering.

Man’s greatest suffering is due to alienation from the Lord because of sin. Even though many people don’t realize it, they are enemies of God and can do nothing to make themselves right

with Him. Thankfully, Jesus felt compassion for us and reached down to save us; otherwise, we would all be doomed to the everlasting punishment of separation from God’s presence. Yet often we fail to show that same compassion for the lost all around us. Like the Pharisees, we may avoid people because their behavior is sinful, but God desires that we show them kindness rather than withdraw into religious isolation.

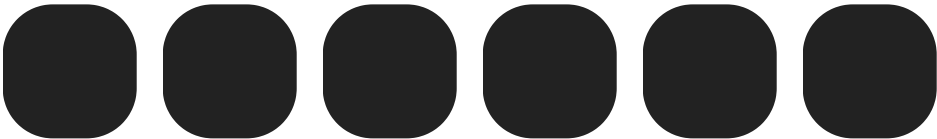
Jesus pictured the multitude of lost people as sheep without a shepherd and a field ripe for harvest. All that’s needed is for the Lord to send workers into His harvest, and that’s exactly what Jesus did when He said, “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you” (John 20:21).

There are multiple ways to show Christ’s compassion to those who are suffering physically, financially, or emotionally, and we should do what we can to help. However, temporal suffering is minuscule compared to what awaits the unbeliever eternally. That’s why the most compassionate thing we can do is to make people aware of their helpless condition before God and share the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ.

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[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

# Daily Devotional - Monday, July 2, 2018 - Put On a Heart of Compassion

JULY 02ND 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Daily Devotional - Monday, July 2, 2018 - Put On a Heart of Compassion

### Colossians 3:12-14

Have you ever noticed that some people are more naturally compassionate than others? Maybe it's their personality or upbringing. Nevertheless, in the church, every believer is told to "put on a heart of compassion" (Col. 3:12). When empathy doesn't come naturally, some Christians may wonder if something is wrong with them. So, what can we do to develop a greater sense of caring?

While emotions cannot be manufactured on demand, we can change our thoughts, which in turn affect our emotions. Compassion, like all the other qualities listed in today's passage, is possible only when we think of others before ourselves. Self-centeredness keeps us from seeing the needs and hurts of those around us and acting on their behalf. What we need is a renewed mind.

We are all born with a selfish, sinful nature, referred to as the "old self." But when a person puts his trust in Jesus, he receives a "new self" created in righteousness by God. (See Eph. 4:22-24.) As our minds are renewed with His Word and we grow in obedience, Christ's love and compassion begin to flow through us. Instead of our being oblivious to the pain and suffering around us, God will open our eyes and use us to comfort those in need.

A heart of compassion is achieved not through self-effort but through a God-focused life. As we draw near to Him through His Word and His Son, He transforms our focus, thoughts, and feelings. What a relief to know that God has provided everything we need to follow Jesus' example of caring. He always equips us to obey His every command.

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