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# Daily Devotional - Wednesday, August 1, 2018 - Spiritual Gifts Work Together

AUGUST 01ST 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, August 1, 2018 - Spiritual Gifts Work Together

## Romans 12:3-8

Have you ever noticed that people in the church don't all think the same way? When we become frustrated in our attempts to communicate with a fellow believer, we may begin to wonder whether something is wrong in our spiritual life. After all, aren't we supposed to be a united body of Christ?

It turns out that the problem could be the result of spiritual gifting. The Holy Spirit gives gifts to every believer for the common good of the church (1 Corinthians 12:4-7). But unless we realize this, we may fail to appreciate the gifts of other believers. Then it's easy to start harboring the opinion that everyone else should be like us.

For instance, someone with the gift of mercy might judge a believer with exhortation skills to be heartless—the exhorter may appear to value explaining the spiritual benefits of adversity over sympathizing with the hurting person. Yet both gifts are beneficial; used properly, they work together to help a sufferer see there's hope in the hardship and comfort for endurance.

The root of division over spiritual gifts is self-focus, which can be displayed in two ways. If we think too lowly of our spiritual gift, we may become resentful or feel unimportant. If, on the

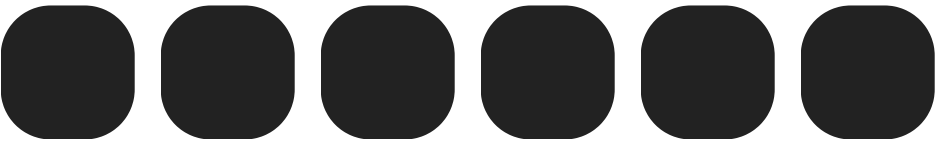
other hand, we think too highly of our gift, we may believe it's the most important one.

If you feel at odds with a fellow believer because of your differing approaches to issues in the church, stop and thank the Lord for that person and his gifting. Then pray that he will be used for the good of the fellowship and for God's own glory.

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# Daily Devotional - Monday, July 30, 2018 - True Riches

JULY 30TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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## Ephesians 1:1-8

Jesus willingly left behind His divinity and for our sake took on the limitations of human form. **Second Corinthians 8:9** tells us that He became poor in order that we might have the riches of grace. As a result, we are ...

**Chosen.** God made us part of His plan from the beginning (Eph. 1:5). He chose us to belong to Him even though we did not deserve it.

**Redeemed.** Jesus paid the price to redeem us from sin so that we might no longer be held in its bondage. The price of our redemption was His precious blood, shed on the cross (1 Peter 1:18-19).

**Justified.** We are all guilty of disobedience against God. However, when we place trust in Jesus as our personal Savior, God declares that we are justified, and He treats us as not guilty (Rom. 3:23-24).

**Reconciled.** Because of our sin, we were at odds with God. Through Christ, we have been brought back into a right relationship with Him (2 Corinthians 5:18).

**Forgiven.** God has already forgiven all our past, present, and future sins; it's a "done deal." Ongoing confession and repentance keep us in intimate communion with Him (1 John 1:7; 1 John 1:9).

**Freed from condemnation.** The Law was given for us to understand God's standards, our inability to keep them, and our need of a Savior. Jesus fulfilled the law, and His finished work counts on our behalf. We are, then, free to pursue holiness without fear of punishment when we fail (Rom. 8:1-4).

True riches are spiritual in nature, and grace has made us wealthy people. Let us never forget these remarkable reasons to be thankful.

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## Daily Devotional - Friday, July 27, 2018 - When a Child Dies

JULY 27TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Friday, July 27, 2018 - When a Child Dies

### 2 Samuel 12:16-23

Understandably, people who lose a child want assurance that their little one is safe in the arms of God. The Bible is not explicit about what happens to those who are too young to make a proclamation of faith. However, the Lord's mercy upon them becomes clear as we study His Word.

Over the years, many people have created unbiblical explanations for what happens to children who die. There are those who argue that salvation is available to some but not to others, which is scripturally untrue (John 3:16; 2 Peter 3:9). Also unsupportable is the more complicated theory that God uses His foreknowledge to determine whether a child who dies will enter heaven or hell. The idea is that He rescues those who He knows would have grown up and been saved, but He rejects the rest. What terrible uncertainty that would mean for family members

left behind.

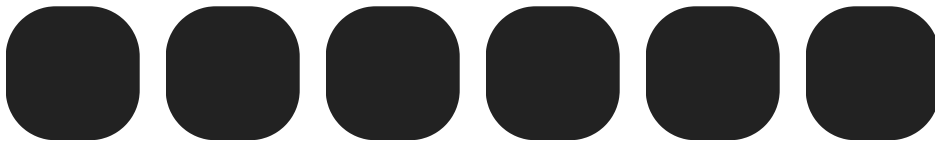
God doesn't keep people guessing. What His Word teaches is that during the early years of life, a child does not know how to choose good from evil (Deut. 1:39; Isa. 7:16) and therefore isn't held responsible for his moral conduct. Accordingly, when a little one departs from life, the Lord is waiting with open arms. This theology makes biblical sense, given the Father's character, desires, and plan.

Until a child is mature enough to decide about whether to serve the Lord, he or she is safe from divine judgment. Our just and loving God does not punish children for being too young to grasp their need of a Savior. Believers join their departed little ones in heaven (2 Samuel 12:23).

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## Daily Devotional - Thursday, Friday, July 26, 2018 - An Anchor Full of Promises

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## Daily Devotional - Thursday, Friday, July 26, 2018 - An Anchor Full of Promises

### Psalm 57:1-3

Yesterday we looked at the anchor as a symbol of God's unchanging Word. We know that sailors use this device to keep a vessel from drifting and also to protect it during storms. So how does the Bible help us in stormy times?

The Word of God ...

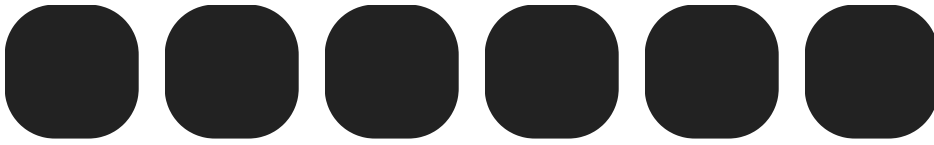
**Comforts us.** It tells us that our Father will give us peace and rest when we go through trouble and carry heavy burdens. Many of the psalms were written out of David's own experiences of receiving comfort and strength from God during storms in his life, and they are a great place to start.

**Reminds us that God is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent.** Not only does the Lord know exactly where we are in our storm and what we're going through, but He's also with us in the middle of it. In fact, He has the ability to calm the storm, though He most often uses His power to bring us safely through it.

**Guides us.** Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." The psalmist assures us that the Bible shines a light as we walk, enabling us to safely move forward, step-by-step, in the right direction.

We must remember it's not enough for a boat to simply *have* an anchor; in order to do any good, the anchor must be *utilized*. Similarly, it's not enough to own a Bible and know, in theory, that it is full of promises. God's Word can be effective in our life only if we read, meditate, believe, apply, and obey it. Then the anchor works every single time. We may be shaken—even a little beaten up at times—but we will ride out the storm and sail on!

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## Daily Devotional - Wednesday, July 25, 2018 - Our Anchor in Stormy Times

JULY 25TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, July 25, 2018 - Our Anchor in Stormy Times

### Hebrews 6:17-20

One thing common to everyone is the experience of going through storms. Whether these are literal weather events, personal trauma, or the turmoil caused by war and social unrest, we all face circumstances over which we have little control. Some storms are over quickly, whereas others seem unending. Some tempests cause little damage, but others leave great devastation in their wake.

- *Where do these storms come from?* At times we bring them into our own life through choices we make, but other times they're caused by someone else's actions. It may even be that the devil has stirred up some adversity to distract or hinder us. And there are occasions when God's work in our life requires a storm to fulfill a special purpose.

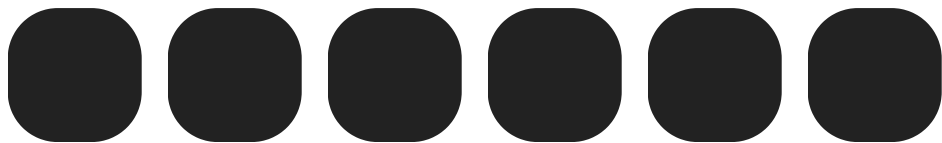
• *Why does the Lord allow storms in our life?* Difficulties tend to turn our focus toward God. We either start questioning Him or go to Him for help and strength. He may want our attention because there's a sin we need to deal with. Or perhaps He wants us to let go of something we need to surrender to Him. It could be that He wants to conform us to His image (Rom. 8:29) or equip us to serve Him.

• *How do we respond to storms?* When we struggle against God because we don't like the hardship we're going through, that's an indication we don't trust Him. Instead of trusting that He is working good in our life, we may wrongly believe He's trying to hurt us. At such times knowing Scripture is crucial for the believer. His Word is the immovable anchor in our storm. We can trust the Bible because, like God, it never changes!

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