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Daily Devotional - Friday, October 12, 2018 - The Results of Rejecting God

OCTOBER 12TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Romans 1:24-32

Who hasn't listened to the news and wondered, *What's going on in the world?* The evil and social decline in our present culture is something we couldn't imagine even a few decades ago. What we are seeing today is the inevitable result of a society that has denied the existence of God. As a result, many have been given over to a depraved mind and sinful pursuits.

As our Creator, God is the only one who can truly satisfy our heart. When people reject Him, they will seek alternative ways to fill the emptiness within them. But when they turn to something or someone other than God to give meaning to their life, the result is idolatry. From there, they quickly step into immorality in an attempt to gratify their desires but eventually discover that they still feel empty.

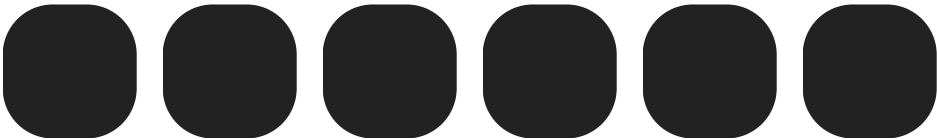
Scripture clearly warns that idolatry and immorality incur divine wrath. God's punishment of those who suppress the truth and reject Him is accomplished through His withdrawal. He turns them over to be guided and ruled by a depraved mind and degrading passions. Basically, He pulls away and lets their sin control them. There is no worse penalty than to have the Creator turn away.

Knowing what awaits those who reject God should cause us who know and love Him to respond with wholehearted devotion, faithful obedience, and overwhelming gratitude for our salvation. Sometimes we can't truly appreciate what we have until we see the horror of the alternative. Our loving God and Savior is truly worthy of all our worship.

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Daily Devotional, Thursday, October 11, 2018 - The Danger of Suppressing Truth

OCTOBER 11TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Thursday, October 11, 2018 - The Danger of Suppressing Truth

THURSDAY

Have you ever wondered why some very intelligent people live successfully by the world's standards yet are unable to comprehend the most important truths about God? Although mankind was created to acknowledge the Lord and share a relationship with Him, many people deny His existence.

God has made knowledge about Himself evident to every person and has revealed His attributes and divine nature through His creation. However, many people choose to suppress this reality because it interferes with their preferred lifestyle. Instead, they chase false philosophies that are usually mixed with just enough truth to seem believable. Yet any "truth" crafted by man is foolishness, and those who have willfully rejected divine revelation won't be able to see their error no matter how much evidence has been provided.

All the denial and atheistic arguments in the world will not change what is reality—namely, that God is the Creator, and He made mankind to love, obey, and honor Him. To resist is to choose a life of darkness and deception, which begins a downward slide ending in a hardened heart and eternal separation from a loving Father.

But God continues to invite people to believe the truth and come to Him. This is the only way to receive the gospel, which is able to save souls. In Psalm 34:8, David calls out, "O taste and see that the Lord is good." And for those who have accepted His revelations, the Lord is indeed better than all this world has to offer.

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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, October 9, 2018 - The Path of Compromise

OCTOBER 10TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, October 9, 2018 - The Path of Compromise

1 Kings 11:1-13

WEDNESDAY

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Bible stories aren't just interesting accounts of ancient people and events; they contain critical principles that apply to us all. For example, King Solomon's life helps us see the progression of compromise and its disastrous results. Solomon began his kingship with devotion to God and righteous priorities (1 Kings 3:5-9). So what happened to change his desires and direction?

“King Solomon loved many foreign women” (1 Kings 11:1). Although this was an accepted practice for kings of that era, God had instructed His people not to intermarry with other nations (1 Kings 11:2) and had specifically prohibited Israel's kings from taking multiple wives (Deut. 17:17).

“His wives turned his heart away after other gods” (1 Kings 11:4). Instead of holding fast to the Lord in love and devotion, Solomon let his wives lead him toward foreign deities.

“Solomon went after [their gods]” (1 Kings 11:5). At first he merely allowed his wives to worship their gods, but soon he was joining them in idolatry.

“The Lord said to Solomon, ... ‘I will surely tear the kingdom from you’” (1 Kings 11:11). Because the king ignored reproof and continued to disobey, Israel experienced a civil war that

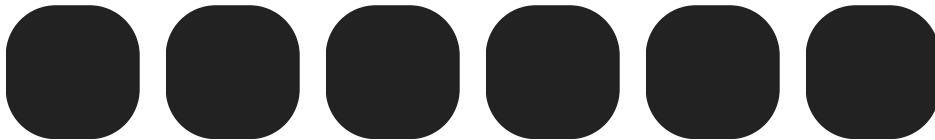
divided the nation.

Compromise begins when we ignore God's instructions and follow the world's practices. Then we start loving people, activities, or things more than we love God and soon find ourselves pursuing what He has forbidden. If we don't heed His discipline, we're in danger of losing what He intended for our lives. But if we refuse to compromise, we'll remain devoted to Him.

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Daily Devotional - Tuesday, October 9, 2018 - The Death of Self

OCTOBER 09TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Tuesday, October 9, 2018 - The Death of Self

Jesus Christ was obedient to the point of death (Phil. 2:8). While some Christians may be called upon to give up their life for the glory of God, most believers won't face martyrdom. The death required of us, however, is no less real. We die to self.

Human beings are an independent lot. We want things our way, in our time, and on our terms. But Jesus said that anyone who wants to be His follower must deny him- or herself (Matt. 16:24). Of course, that covers obvious issues like sinful habits and evil thoughts. But it also means that in some instances we must decline good things because they come at the wrong time or don't fit God's plan.

To an outside observer, the Christian's commitment to obey must seem strange, especially when hands emptied by self-denial take up a cross instead (v. 24). Sometimes following the Lord involves suffering. What bystanders can't see or experience is the deep satisfaction believers gain from doing what is right. Jesus once said, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work" (John 4:34). As food is to the body, so obedience is to the soul and spirit. Working for God nourishes, energizes, strengthens, and enlightens—bringing us even more satisfaction than do those things we typically think of as pleasures.

Even when self-denial hurts, obeying God brings joy. Believers who prioritize submission to Him will know what I mean. Contentment is found in drawing close to the Lord, sensing His approval, and looking forward to hearing, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" (Matt. 25:21 NIV).

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Daily Devotional - Monday, October 8, 2018 - Obedience or Preference?

OCTOBER 08TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Monday, October 8, 2018 - Obedience or Preference?

Matthew 26:36-42

MONDAY

08

Every believer must choose whether he will live by the principle of obedience or follow his preferences. When a person commits to doing the Lord's will, then every situation and decision is sifted through the standard of "God said it, so I'm going to do it—and that's the end of it." He or she may complain, weep, or try to argue. But in the end, the individual will be obedient, no matter what.

I recall being invited years ago to interview with a church in Atlanta. During the entire trip, I told the Lord that I didn't want to move. I fussed and carried on a good while, but I knew Atlanta would be my new home. I didn't like the idea, but the alternative was unimaginable: There are few things more unpleasant than living with the nagging anxiety that you missed out on something good.

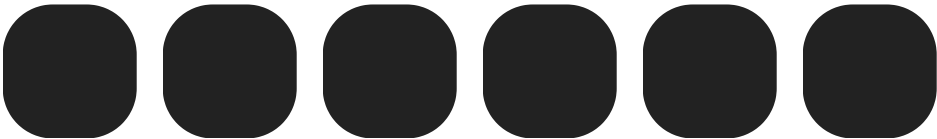
The Lord certainly understands our need to question, cry out, and petition Him for the strength to do what He commands. Hebrews 4:15 tells us that we have a high priest who can sympathize with us. Jesus wasn't excited or happy about the cross. He grieved over the coming separation from His Father. Nevertheless, He was committed to following God's will (Matt. 26:39). No one took Christ's life from Him; He laid it down (John 10:18).

Our lives are about fulfilling the heavenly Father’s purpose. Many people miss out on its goodness because they choose to follow personal preferences instead, believing their own choices are better. Obedience is sometimes hard, but the struggle and sacrifice are worth it. The Lord’s ways and principles lead believers to joy and peace.

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