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Daily Devotional - Thursday, October 25, 2018 - Your Eternal Destination

OCTOBER 25TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Luke 16:19-26

All of us are eternal beings because we were made in God's image (Gen. 1:26). After physical death, our spirits will live forever. Where we reside—heaven or hell—will depend on whether we have accepted or rejected Jesus as our personal Lord and Savior.

Scripture teaches that all have sinned and deserve a penalty (Rom. 3:23; Rom. 6:23). There isn't anything we can do to earn God's forgiveness. Knowing this, our heavenly Father sent His Son Jesus to take our sins upon Himself and experience punishment in our place. In that way, we become part of God's family and look forward to spending eternity with Him in heaven. His only requirement for this amazing blessing is that we acknowledge we're sinners who need a Savior and believe that Jesus died to save us (Rom. 10:9-10). Those who reject Christ will spend life after death separated from Him, but those who believe will live forever with Him.

Every person will ultimately dwell in heaven or hell, both of which are real places described in the Bible. In heaven, we'll never again know pain, sorrow, or tears (Revelation 21:4). But hell is the opposite. A place of punishment, it will be the scene of unending agony and torment. Today's passage illustrates this hard fact.

Eternal punishment and the reality of hell are never easy topics to consider, but they are vitally important because they will really happen. Don't let your emotions turn you away from the truths recorded in Scripture. Instead, take heed of the warnings, and be certain you are heaven-bound

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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, October 24, 2018 - Does God Love Me?

OCTOBER 24TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Psalm 145:19-21

Life can hit us with the most unexpected and undesirable circumstances. When that happens, shock and pain might make us wonder, *Does God really care about me?*

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First of all, we know from 1 John 4:8 that “God is love,” which means His very nature is characterized by compassion and concern. Love originated with the Lord, and He is our greatest example of how to express it. This truth, combined with the reality that God is holy, means He is perfect in His love—He’ll never make a mistake in the way He loves us.

Second, we know that our heavenly Father loves us, because He calls us His children. “To those who believed in His name, he gave the right to become children of God,” writes John in his gospel (1 John 1:12 NIV). Sadly, some people don’t have a parent who shows them love. But God is the perfect parent. It would be completely against His character to mistreat any of His children.

Finally, God gave the supreme demonstration of His love at the cross. We were all dead in our sins, but Christ went to the greatest length possible to give us life. The Son of God came to earth as an expression of His Father’s awesome, fathomless, infinite love and did for us what no one else could do.

After considering these three facts about God’s love, how could we not expect Him to take care of even the smallest details of our life? Look for ways He is expressing His love to you, and remember Jesus own words on the subject: “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13).

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Daily Devotional - Tuesday, October 23, 2018 - Advancing Through Adversity

OCTOBER 23RD 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Tuesday, October 23, 2018 - Advancing Through Adversity

2 Corinthians 4:1-18

TUESDAY

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Adversity has a way of wearing us down, especially when the difficulty keeps going. Sometimes it feels as if we're simply moving from one problem to another without a pause in between. Although we cry out to God, the trials continue. What are we to do when we're overwhelmed and God isn't intervening?

One noteworthy trait of the apostle Paul was his determination to remain faithful to Christ through hardship. Many Christians get stuck in life's tough spots because they don't understand what God is doing. They want the Lord to rescue them from it, but oftentimes His desire is to give them "the surpassing greatness" of His power to go through the trouble (2 Corinthians 4:7).

How we respond to hardship reveals both our true character and our knowledge of God. It's easy to say, "I trust the Lord" when life is good, but unless we recognize that He is also sovereign even in adversity, our praises will soon turn to complaints and self-pity. Surrendering doesn't seem like a way to advance through hardships, yet it's essential. Otherwise, we may find ourselves resisting the Lord's good purposes.

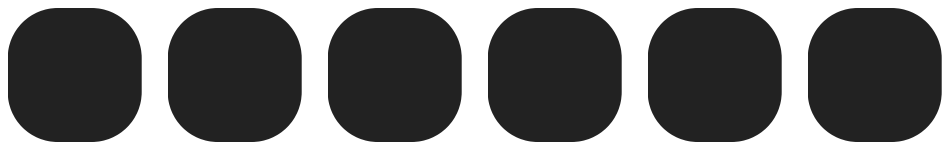
We serve a God who is worthy of our faith and confidence. Every trial is an opportunity for the light of Christ to shine through us. It's also one of the means He uses to mature our faith, conform us to the likeness of His Son, and fulfill His unique plan for our life.

When we trust in the Lord's faithfulness and sufficiency, we'll choose to focus on Him, knowing that temporary afflictions produce for us "an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison" (2 Corinthians 4:17).

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Daily Devotional - Monday, October 22, 2018 - God's Blessing of Brokenness

OCTOBER 22ND 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Exodus 2:11-15

MONDAY

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The Lord had a great calling in mind for Moses—to free more than 2,000,000 Israelites from Egyptian bondage. And the future liberator seemed qualified for the task. As Pharaoh's adopted grandson, he would have had access to royal privilege, power, and education.

But Moses also had a strong independent spirit that could get in the way of his obedience to the Lord. God's plan required a broken spirit that would follow Him and rest on His divine power.

A big mistake—killing an Egyptian for beating a slave (Ex. 2:11-12)—was Moses' opportunity to learn this important lesson. Realizing the murder had been witnessed, he fled to the desert to escape Pharaoh's wrath. It was there that he came to the end of himself.

Like Moses, we're all born with a tendency toward selfishness and stubbornness and want things done our way. But God gives us opportunities to bring every area of our life to Him in submission.

Though few will be given a task on the scale of Moses', the Father has a calling in mind for each believer. Whether His plan is that we raise a godly family, reach out to a neighbor, or run a business with integrity and consideration, He wants us to do so in His power. To prepare us for this work, He sometimes uses brokenness. That wouldn't be our chosen method, but God knows hardship is sometimes necessary to strip us of our selfish ways.

Do you want to achieve what God has planned for you to do? In humility, ask Him to bring any brokenness that He deems necessary.

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Daily Devotional - Friday, October 19, 2018 - Contagious Anger

OCTOBER 19TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Proverbs 22:24-25

FRIDAY

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Anger can wreak havoc on both the body and soul, but its scope extends beyond the individual and impacts everyone nearby. In this way, bitter outbursts and silent resentment are not just our own personal issues.

An angry spirit is contagious. It can pass from one person to another—and even from one generation to the next. Workplaces can become tense environments full of caustic words and attitudes. Ire turns homes into battlegrounds of verbal explosions or silent hostility. Even churches suffer from malicious gossip and fights over personal preferences.

God created us to live in fellowship with others, but anger can poison our relationships. Tragically, those closest to us are the ones who suffer the most. Children learn to respond to life's situations by observing their parents' example. They then develop similar attitudes and patterns of behavior. We need to give serious thought to what kind of heart we are passing down to our sons and daughters.

Thankfully, God is in the heart-changing business. Just as we learn an angry person's ways by association, so we can learn righteous ways by walking closely with the Lord. Christ calls us to come, learn from Him, and find rest for our souls (Matt. 11:28-29).

Which would you prefer: churning anger or Christ's peace? Both require sacrifice. To maintain anger, you forfeit healthy relationships and possibly a godly heritage for your descendants. But to acquire peace, you simply ask God to help you leave grudges, personal rights, and insults at the altar.

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