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Daily Devotional - Monday, November 12, 2018 - Patience - A Powerful Attribute

NOVEMBER 12TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Monday, November 12, 2018 - Patience - A Powerful Attribute

Colossians 3:12-17

MONDAY

12

Patience, or a lack of it, spills over into every aspect of our life. For example, when you're waiting for an elevator that doesn't come quickly, do you repeatedly push the button? Or if you're stuck in a grocery line that's not moving, do you wait calmly or inwardly grumble about how poorly managed the store is?

Although to some degree our temperaments may determine our ability to wait, the kind of patience God wants Christians to have is that which is produced by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). Apart from Him, we will naturally become impatient when people frustrate us or circumstances aren't to our liking.

The spiritual fruit of patience allows us to say, *I'm willing to let go of immediate gratification and wait for the Lord to supply*. It's an inner quietness and trust that comes from God alone. This doesn't mean we'll never feel pressure or stress, but when we release our expectations to the Lord, He will calm our heart and mind.

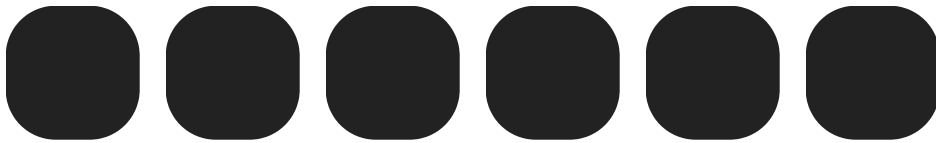
David understood this. While waiting to become king, he had several opportunities to kill Saul, the nation's current ruler. By refusing to take advantage of the situation, David demonstrated patience and faith in God's timing (1 Samuel 24:10-11; 1 Samuel 26:10-11).

Patience is a matter of trust in God. Are you willing to release your expectations for both the small and large events in your life? Can you acknowledge that the Lord's timing is more trustworthy than your own? If so, you're on your way to being a truly patient person.

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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, November 7, 2018 - Saved by Grace

NOVEMBER 07TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, November 7, 2018 - Saved by Grace

WEDNESDAY

In Christian circles, we often hear people talk about grace, but do we understand what it means? Scripture uses this word in reference to God's goodness and kindness, which is freely extended to those who are utterly undeserving—and that includes all of us.

God's grace is the means of our salvation through Christ and the basis by which He sees us. By grace, we are ...

Declared righteous. All of our guilt and shame have been removed, and Christ's righteousness is credited to us as our own (2 Corinthians 5:21). Now we can live boldly for Jesus no matter who we once were.

Part of God's family. A spiritual adoption has taken place so that we might become children of God and call Him Father (Eph. 1:5). Although the world may see us as insignificant, we should remember we're children of the King.

Made co-heirs with Christ. Our inheritance is guaranteed and kept for us in heaven (1 Peter 1:4). We've been set free from the lure of materialism because we're rich in the only way that matters (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Given new life. When we trust in the Savior, we are born again and receive a fresh start (2 Corinthians 5:17). The seal of this new life is the indwelling presence of God's Holy Spirit, who transforms us into the image of Christ and guarantees our future resurrection (Eph. 1:13-14).

Freed from the power of sin, Satan, and self. Grace teaches us to deny ungodliness and live righteously in obedience to God (Titus 2:11-12).

From the beginning of salvation to our eternal future in heaven, we are covered by God's unending grace.

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Daily Devotional - Tuesday, November 6, 2018 - The Power to Change

NOVEMBER 06TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Tuesday, November 6, 2018 - The Power to Change

Ephesians 2:1-10

TUESDAY

06

Why do many of us who have trusted Jesus Christ as Savior still feel defeated and struggle with sin? One reason may be that we have never grasped exactly what took place on the cross. Instead of living in our new identity in Christ, we're still seeing ourselves as hopeless sinners with no power to change.

To understand what a drastic transformation took place at salvation, let's see what God says about who we once were without Christ.

Spiritually Dead. We weren't simply the "walking wounded"; we were actually *dead* in our sins and powerless to make ourselves alive or able to relate to God.

Deserving His Wrath and Judgment. Our sins not only put a barrier between us and God but also made us enemies destined for His righteous condemnation.

Helpless and Hopeless. Nothing we could do would make us acceptable to God. We couldn't even turn to Him in repentance without His Spirit's intervention.

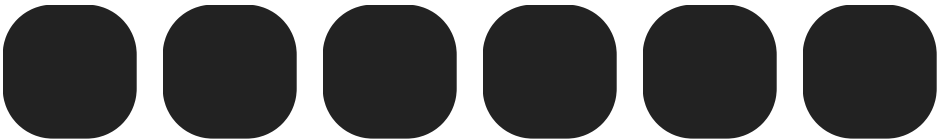
But God loved us! What an amazing thought—that the perfect, holy God would show rebellious sinners love and mercy. He sent His Son to rescue us by bearing our sins and suffering the divine wrath we deserved. Now all of us who believe in Christ and accept His saving work on our behalf are raised from spiritual death to eternal life.

The barriers that once kept us alienated from God have been removed in Christ. We no longer have to live defeated by sin, because we have the Spirit's power to live in accordance with our new identity in Christ. God's grace is sufficient—not only to save us but also to transform our lives.

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Daily Devotional - Monday, November 5, 2018 - Maintaining Church Unity

NOVEMBER 05TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Monday, November 5, 2018 - Maintaining Church Unity

Philippians 2:1-2

MONDAY

05

Churches all around the world experience brokenness. Christians are divided over a whole range of things, such as whether the service should be contemporary or traditional. Paul points out that unity is crucial to achieving our purpose. So how is that possible when a disagreement arises?

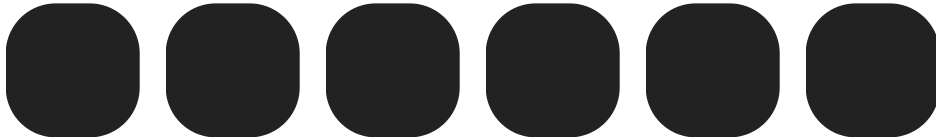
It all depends on what the difference of opinion is about. The fundamental tenets of the faith (for example, that Jesus is the Son of God, who died for our sins and rose again) are not negotiable. However, if the dispute has to do with a nonessential issue—such as a hair-splitting interpretation of doctrine—some prayerful discussion in love is acceptable, but believers should not let it cause division. In cases like this, a consensus is likely to leave some people disappointed with the results. Yet both sides should be willing to accept differences without strife.

Years ago, I was at a rural Southern church whose congregation was divided into obvious sides. The factions were essentially separate churches. Instead of addressing lots of fringe issues, I simply began to preach the Word. Over time, people who hadn't talked to one another in years began to unite. Why? The church is the body of Jesus Christ (Col. 1:24), so He can bring us together.

People selfishly believe their preferences are better than others' opinions, and in human strength, there's nothing we can do to mend our differences. But it pleases God when we sacrifice our desires for the greater good of a unified church. And obedience ultimately gives greater joy than getting our way.

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Daily Devotional - Thursday, November 1, 2018 - How to Handle Hurts

NOVEMBER 01ST 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Thursday, November 1, 2018 - How to Handle Hurts

Ephesians 4:30-32

THURSDAY

01

Are you carrying wounds around with you wherever you go? Maybe someone said or did something hurtful to you yesterday, and you can't seem to get it out of your mind. Or perhaps the offense occurred many years ago, and it's still affecting you today. Despite your attempts to bury the pain, it keeps rising to the surface.

God doesn't want us to live under a cloud of emotional pain. In today's passage, He provides the way out if we're willing to take it.

Recognize our own sin (v. 30). Although the other person's guilt seems much greater, we can't hide behind the label of "victim." Wrongdoers will be held answerable to God for their actions, but we are accountable for our response. That's why we're warned not to grieve the Holy Spirit.

Let go of sinful responses (v. 31). The only way to move forward is to drop all bitterness, anger, and malice toward our offender. Each time we rehearse the wrong, relive the pain, and feel resentment rise up within us, we're responding in a sinful manner instead of walking in obedience to the Spirit. To be healed of our hurts, we must put away such things.

Forgive (v. 32). As people forgiven of every sin we've ever committed, we have no right to hang on to others' offenses.

Each time we submit to the Spirit, He moves us forward in forgiveness. If the pain is deep, the progress may be slow. Nevertheless, continue obeying God in an attitude of forgiveness. You'll discover that as you let go of the offense, the hurt you've been carrying will be lifted as well.

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