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## Daily Devotional - Monday, November 26, 2018 - Handling Difficult Circumstances

NOVEMBER 26TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Monday, November 26, 2018 - Handling Difficult Circumstances

**Philippians 1:12-18**

MONDAY

26

Paul wrote his letter to the church at Philippi while he was a prisoner in Rome. Though confined and under watch while awaiting trial, he wrote to encourage the Philippians, assuring them that his situation was being used by God. He told them, “I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am” (Phil. 4:11).

Notice that this verse does not say that Paul was always happy. Happiness depends upon circumstances, but for believers, contentment is possible in any situation because it’s anchored in God. Although Paul’s imprisonment was difficult and uncomfortable, He scarcely mentioned the conditions. This letter is not filled with complaints but with rejoicing because his focus never wavered from Christ (Phil. 1:20-21; Phil. 3:10).

Paul did not see himself as a victim. He believed that he was under the sovereign hand of the living God. This was the place ordained for him at that time, in accordance with the Lord’s divine purpose.

What’s more, the apostle saw good results of his time in prison. The entire imperial guard heard about Jesus through the apostle’s consistent witness. His confinement was also having the opposite effect of what his enemies had planned. Instead of driving Christians into hiding,

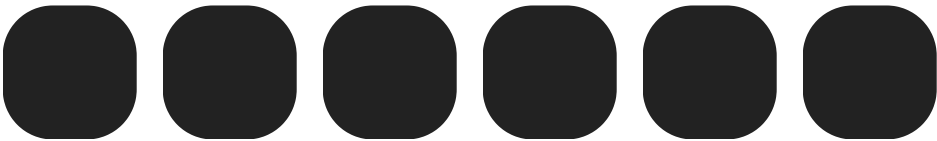
Paul’s example of contentment in the face of hardship made them bolder (Phil. 1:14).

Like Paul, we can choose how we’ll respond to pain and hardship. If we opt to be resentful and bitter, our suffering will be wasted. But if we see each situation as a wonderful opportunity for spiritual growth, we’ll be able to learn contentment and rejoice in the Lord through it all.

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# Daily Devotional - Wednesday, November 21, 2018 - Our Heavenly Father

NOVEMBER 21ST 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, November 21, 2018 - Our Heavenly Father

WEDNESDAY

When Christ taught His disciples to pray, He told them to call God “Our Father” when communicating with Him. Jesus often addressed God as “My Father,” but now they, too, shared in that privileged family relationship. All of us who’ve been born again are part of the household of God and have this same right.

Consider some of the ways our heavenly Father cares for His children. He ...

**Loves.** God’s love is unconditional, since it’s based on His nature rather than our performance (1 John 4:16).

**Listens.** When we pray, He gives us His full attention (Psalm 55:16-17).

**Provides.** The Father assumes responsibility for meeting all our needs (Phil. 4:19).

**Guides.** He is the one who directs our path when we trust in Him (Prov. 3:5-6).

**Protects.** The Lord shields us spiritually, emotionally, and physically, sifting every experience through His sovereign fingers (Psalm 121).

**Stays.** He’s not an absentee parent, since He will never leave or forsake us (Deut. 31:8).

**Disciplines.** The Lord disciplines us for our good, so that we may share in His holiness (Heb. 12:5-11).

Though experiences with our earthly dads may have distorted our perspective of the heavenly Father, we can learn to see Him as He truly is. By viewing Him through the truth of Scripture instead of our preconceptions, we will see evidence of His loving care and discover a security we’ve never known before.

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## Daily Devotional - Tuesday, November 20, 2018 - The Ultimate Father Son Relationship

NOVEMBER 20TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Tuesday, November 20, 2018 - The Ultimate Father Son Relationship

**John 5:19-20**

TUESDAY

20

God is called by a variety of names in the Bible, and each one sheds light on an aspect of His nature. Jesus' favorite title for Him was *Father*. Surprisingly, this name for God is rarely used in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament, it's used often—by both Jesus and early Christians.

Many of God's names speak of His majestic and lofty attributes that distinguish Him from mankind, but *Father* conveys intimacy. Jesus used this name not only because He was God's Son but also to help people realize that Jehovah isn't some unapproachable deity gazing down on them from a distance. Rather, He is their loving heavenly Father, who cares about them and wants to be involved in their everyday lives.

Throughout His time on earth, Christ revealed by example what this kind of loving relationship is like. He fully depended on His Father for daily direction, power, and provision and obediently carried out His every instruction. Jesus often took a break from the demands of ministry to find a secluded place to be alone with Jehovah. We know the Lord successfully conveyed to His disciples the riches of this relationship, because Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father” (John 14:8)—he wanted to know Him the way Christ did.

Do you long for that kind of intimacy with God? He wants to relate to you as a father does to His child—and He’s given you the privilege of drawing near to Him. In fact, He chose you before the foundation of the world and waits with open arms for you to enter His loving embrace.

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## Daily Devotional - Monday, November 19, 2018 - Contentment in All Circumstances

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## Daily Devotional - Monday, November 19, 2018 - Contentment in All Circumstances

### Philippians 4:10-13

MONDAY

19

Think about the times when you have felt truly satisfied. What caused you to feel that way? For most people, a sense of well-being comes when their environment is just the way they want it, but that wasn't the case with Paul. He learned to be content in every circumstance, good or bad.

We'd do well to learn a few lessons from him. After all, we can't avoid all difficult situations, so we might as well discover how to face them with a tranquil, settled spirit rather than with frustration and anxiety.

**Contentment isn't governed by external circumstances.** Changing the situation may bring temporary relief, but satisfaction based on circumstances will always be sporadic and fleeting. It's a matter of how you think, not what you have.

**Contentment flows from an inward attitude.** The apostle's inner calm came from a mind set on Christ. Choosing to trust the Savior no matter what, Paul allowed the Holy Spirit within him to rule his emotions and shape his responses.

**Contentment is learned experientially.** This isn't something you can acquire from a book or sermon, because it's a process that must be lived out. Paul learned contentment—in persecution, suffering, and prison. The Lord used every difficulty to transform him.

Situations that cause frustration, anxiety, and displeasure are also the ones God uses to produce contentment in us. When you are fed up with your own grumbling, disappointment, and dissatisfaction, then you are ready to let the Lord teach you His new way of living—in joyous trust.

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## Daily Devotional - Thursday, November 15, 2018 - Getting Ready

NOVEMBER 15TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Thursday, November 15, 2018 - Getting Ready

### 1 Peter 1:13-16

We all face difficulties in life. Biblical thinking and balanced judgment can help us prepare to deal with challenges, and 1 Peter 1 contains valuable instructions. We are to ...

**Fix our hope on Jesus** (v. 13). No matter how hard the circumstances, life has purpose and meaning in Christ. The heavenly Father has promised always to be with us and to keep watch, like a shepherd caring for his sheep. (See Matt. 28:20; John 10:14.) Through the Holy Spirit's transforming power, troubled times can become opportunities for us to learn more about God's faithfulness, draw on His strength, and experience personal growth.

**Resist our former lifestyle** (v. 14). When troubles come, it is tempting to revert to ungodly habits or take up new ones. In these seasons of life, Satan will encourage us to pursue any path that leads away from the Lord. We need to remember that we are new creations whose lifestyles

are to match our position as God’s children. That old behavior does not fit us anymore.

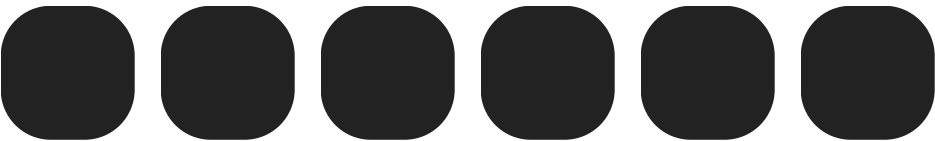
**Make holiness our goal** (v. 15). Being “holy,” or “set apart,” begins with giving up control over our life and yielding to the Holy Spirit’s rightful authority. As we submit to Him, He will begin to express the life of Christ through us. By learning what pleases God and acting accordingly, we cooperate with His efforts to conform us to the Son’s image.

While struggles are part of everyday life, we do not have to be overcome by them. Think about a specific step you can take to start carrying out these instructions today.

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