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Daily Devotional - Monday, February 11, 2019 - When God Says No

FEBRUARY 11TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Monday, February 11, 2019 - When God Says No

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

MONDAY

11

We've all made foolish requests of God, which we're now glad He didn't answer. But this is easily forgotten when He's presently withholding something we think is good. With so many scriptural promises to answer prayer, why is God saying no? According to His Word, there are several possible reasons.

God has forbidden it. God won't contradict His Word or will, so praying for something prohibited in Scripture is futile. Because of Moses' disobedience, God had decreed the leader wouldn't enter the Promised Land. Moses asked Him to reconsider but was told not to speak of it again (Deut. 1:37; Deut. 3:23-28).

It's for our protection. Because of the divine revelations Paul received, God allowed a "thorn in the flesh" to remain in order to keep him from exalting himself. The Lord prioritizes our spiritual protection over physical comfort.

God has a higher goal for us. Christ's power was displayed in the weakness caused by Paul's thorn. Knowing the higher goal for his suffering allowed Paul to be content and even appreciative of his weakness for Christ's sake.

The Lord has something better for us. Jesus didn't immediately heal Lazarus. Mary and Martha couldn't yet understand that He was going to do something even greater—raising Lazarus, which would glorify God (John 11:1-44).

Our motives are wrong. James says one of the reasons we don't receive our request is because we're asking for selfish reasons and not according to God's will (John 4:3).

Many times we won't understand the good that God is doing by withholding what we desire. But these examples let us know we can trust Him.

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Daily Devotional - Friday, February 8, 2019 - The Protection of Meditation

FEBRUARY 08TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Psalm 119:9-16

FRIDAY

08

If there was a seminar on overcoming sin, many Christians would sign up, hoping to discover the secret to victory over their temptations. But the answer isn't elusive; it's right under our nose. All we need to do is open our Bible. Every answer the psalmist gives to his initial question of how to keep our ways pure involves Scripture.

Live according to God's Word (Psalm 119:9-10). This means we must spend time reading and meditating on Scripture in order to know what it says and means. But that alone isn't enough to guard us from sin; we must obey it.

Treasure God's Word in your heart (Psalm 119:11). Since temptation usually comes unexpectedly, we must be prepared for it even when we can't grab a Bible. That's why having Scripture stored in our mind and heart is so important.

Rejoice in God's Word (Psalm 119:14). There is great joy and peace that comes with knowing Scripture. In fact, it should be worth more to us than all the wealth and possessions this world offers.

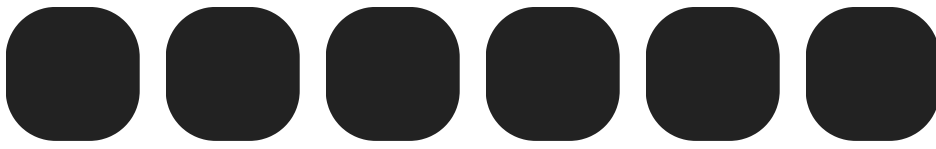
Meditate on God's Word (Psalm 119:15). We must take time to attune our heart and mind to the Lord, ponder His words, and receive the Spirit's help translating His instructions for our particular situation. This isn't a rushed process; it's a slow yielding of ourselves to the truths we read as we discover how to apply them. And consistency may require a deliberate commitment.

When we faithfully practice biblical meditation, we will discover that the Holy Spirit has been busy transforming our thoughts, emotions, and actions so we'll be more pleasing to God and less attracted to sinful pleasures. That is good news!

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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, February 6, 2019 - Biblical Meditation

FEBRUARY 06TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, February 6, 2019 - Biblical Meditation

Joshua 1:1-9

WEDNESDAY

06

If you're facing a challenging situation, it may be tempting to immediately consult friends, professionals, or the latest book or article relating to the subject. Although none of these choices are bad in themselves, there is a greater source for guidance and assurance than any of these, and that's God's Word.

When Joshua took over the leadership of Israel after Moses' death, he didn't form a committee or read up on current leadership strategies. Instead, he relied on the instructions and assurances God gave him: "Be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left" (Josh. 1:7).

Implicit in this command is the obvious truth that we must read the Bible if we want to know what God would have us do. Then we must be careful to obey whatever it says without trying to alter it, soften it, or make excuses for partial obedience.

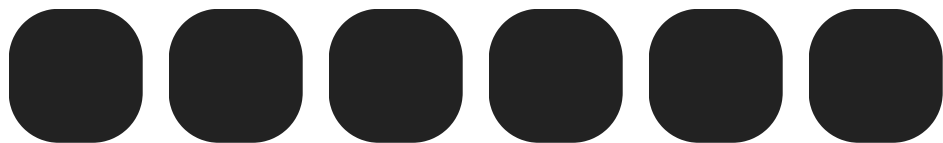
The Lord also told Joshua not to let God’s Word depart from his mouth but to “meditate on it day and night” (Josh. 1:8). Since our minds are easily distracted and often forgetful, we need more than a quick and perfunctory reading of Scripture. The best approach is to ask God to help us understand what He’s saying in His Word and then take time to think about it.

Biblical meditation isn’t an emptying of our mind but rather a filling of it with God’s Word. As we reflect upon scriptural truths, we gain a greater understanding of our Father’s ways and desires so we’ll know how to proceed according to His will.

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Daily Devotional - Tuesday, February 5, 2019 - A Father's Influence

FEBRUARY 05TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Malachi 4:5-6

TUESDAY

05

Have you ever wondered why a priority of Elijah's ministry in the last days involves restoring the relationship between fathers and children (Mal. 4:6)? Perhaps it's because the father has a powerful role, both in the development of emotional health in his offspring and in the shaping of their perceptions about God. By his example, a dad can either draw his children to God or push them away. Sometimes the easiest way to understand this is to look at negative paternal examples:

- *The angry, unpredictable father instills fear in his children and conveys to them that God is a tyrant who lashes out unexpectedly.*
- *A critical, demanding dad makes his kids feel inadequate. They see God as a taskmaster who's never pleased.*
- *The uninvolved or absent father sends the message that his children are unimportant, and both he and God are too busy for them.*
- *An arrogant dad's tough, uncaring nature leads his children to feel unloved and conclude that the Lord doesn't love them either.*
- *A fault-finding or abusive father communicates that his child is worthless and God is full of condemnation.*

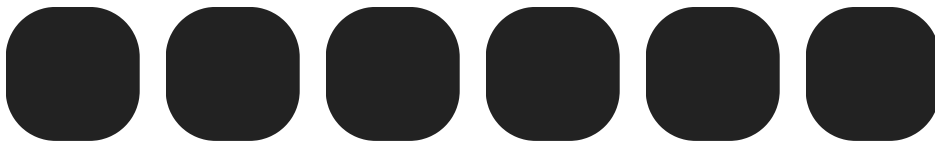
But a man with Christlike character provides children with a healthy connection, not only to their earthly dad but also to their heavenly Father.

Think about how your earthly father helped to shape your perception of God. The Bible will reveal whether your understanding of the Lord is rooted in truth or error. If your own father distorted your view of God, know that God is the perfect Father—and ask Him to help you see that truth.

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Daily Devotional - Monday, February 4, 2019 - Wounded Parents, Wounded Children

FEBRUARY 04TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Monday, February 4, 2019 - Wounded Parents, Wounded Children

Jeremiah 32:17-19

MONDAY

04

So often when we deal with difficult people, it's easy to form judgments about them based on their behavior or attitudes. But have you ever stopped to wonder what has made that person so disagreeable or foolish? When the Bible says God "repays the iniquity of fathers into the bosom of their children" (Jer. 32:18), it is speaking about generational cycles of sin. Unless someone in the family line makes a deliberate choice to change, sinful and dysfunctional behavior can be passed from parent to child for many generations.

This is really just a confirmation of the principle of sowing and reaping. We pass down standards for conduct and character traits that we received from our parents. If we are unwilling to change our sinful habits and attitudes, they will very likely find their way into our children's lives.

What is true for sin is also true for wounds. When a child is emotionally bruised in the home, his behavior and character may be negatively affected. With this in mind, think about a difficult person you know. What hurts do you think shaped his or her life? A heart of compassion

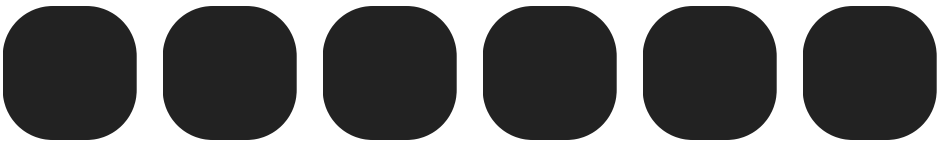
originates from a willingness to empathize with those who have been wounded. This doesn't excuse someone's sin, but it does aid in opening our heart toward the individual.

What about you? Have childhood wounds contributed to who you are today? How have they affected your life? If you haven't dealt with them, you'll probably pass similar hurts down to your children. But with God's help, you can break this cycle and begin one that will benefit future generations.

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