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Daily Devotional - Friday, April 12, 2019 - Where the Battle is Won

APRIL 12TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Friday, April 12, 2019 - Where the Battle is Won

Matthew 26:36-46

The garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives was one of the many places our Lord prayed throughout His earthly ministry (Luke 22:39). But believers [remember](#) it best as the site of a great spiritual battle. The story of Jesus pleading with His Father is extremely meaningful to Christians, in large part because His humanity is so evident. From the description in today's passage, we can see that Jesus, the God-man, experienced fear, anxiety, and dread as He prayed. In other words, He reacted to His imminent ordeal with feelings we can relate to and understand.

Satan taunts believers by telling them they can't be like Jesus because He is God. But He was God cloaked in human flesh, which means that He experienced the world as we do. Yet He won every spiritual [battle](#) he faced. The secret to His success is what He did at Gethsemane. He secluded Himself and prayed until His will was fully surrendered to the Father. The battle was won on His knees.

Jesus left the garden a prisoner, but at the same time He walked out victorious. He accepted God's will for His life, even though pain was a certainty. Our Savior had been called to die, and He knew that the potential blessings and consequences were all in His Father's hands.

As believers, we confront some fearsome trials too, and God [uses](#) these hardships to conform us to His Son's image (1 Peter 4:12-13). If we are to be like Jesus, we must learn from His actions. In the face of difficulty, we should seek God's will and leave the consequences in His almighty hands.

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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, April 10, 2019 - the Source of Discernment

APRIL 10TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

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1 Corinthians 2:6-16

Spiritual discernment is a supernatural ability, which requires supernatural power. In our human strength, we can rely only on what we see, hear, feel, and know in order to make decisions and evaluate circumstances and relationships. But when the [Holy Spirit](#) comes to live within us, He opens up an entirely new dimension of understanding. He shows us things we could never figure out by ourselves.

The Bible is one source of spiritual discernment, but without the interpreting power of the Spirit, reading it would be strictly an academic endeavor. It is the Holy Spirit who takes the words of Scripture and brings them to life in the believer's heart. He knows precisely how to apply God's Word to our exact need at the right moment. You have probably found this to be true: A passage you've read many times hasn't stood out before, but when you need a particular message, that familiar verse jumps off the page right into your heart and transforms your thoughts.

That's the work of the Spirit—His job is to open our understanding to “the things freely given to us by God” (1 Corinthians 2:12). The Lord isn't trying to hide His thoughts from us. Rather, He wants us to [know](#) how He thinks so we can proceed wisely.

Then what should we do if we're struggling to understand Scripture? The Lord wants us to seek Him and ask for wisdom to comprehend. This requires time invested in Bible study and prayer. And remember, the more yielded we are to the Spirit, the more we'll be able to hear His voice.

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Daily Devotional - Monday, April 8, 2019 - Courage Behind Your Convictions

APRIL 08TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Monday, April 8, 2019 - Courage Behind Your Convictions

Daniel 1:1-21

Today we live in a society that is convinced there are no absolute moral truths. It not only considers the Bible outdated and irrelevant to contemporary problems but also sees each person as free to decide what is right. As a result, our culture is ungodly, immoral, violent, and self-centered. How are we as Christians supposed to live in such an environment?

We need look no further than the example of a teenage boy named Daniel, who had the courage to stand for his convictions in the midst of the depraved atmosphere of Babylon. Despite his immersion in Babylonian culture, he committed to following the Lord faithfully, even if doing so would cost him his life. The issue of diet may seem trivial to us, but Jewish people of his day believed eating meat that had been offered to idols was an abomination to God.

In the modern Western world, we may find it hard to relate to Daniel's example. Few of us are willing to take such a bold stand even though we have no fear of losing our life. It's the threat of rejection, ridicule, or being seen as narrow-minded or judgmental that keeps us silent. Or worse, it may be that we don't have any strong convictions because we haven't let God's Word develop them within us. Ignorance of Scripture may let us live comfortably in a sinful culture, but it will never please the Lord.

God is looking for people like Daniel—followers of Christ who will stand by their convictions, regardless of threats or the temptation to compromise for the sake of profit or acceptance. Are you such a person?

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Daily Devotional - Thursday, April 4, 2019 - Praying God's Desires

APRIL 04TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Thursday, April 4, 2019 - Praying God's Desires

Colossians 1:9-12

As Christians, we all long to make necessary changes in our life so we'll become more like Jesus. And we're also concerned about the spiritual growth of fellow believers—especially our loved ones. But transformation doesn't come about by trying harder or putting Bible verses on sticky notes in hopes that family members will read them and shape up. The most powerful resource we have is prayer, and Paul has given us a pattern that is Christ-centered and specific.

Too often, believers pray without giving much thought to what God wants to do in a person's life. Instead, we focus on our own ideas regarding what He should do. How much more effective our prayers would be if we prayed according to God's will by using His Word as our source for requests.

The prayer from Colossians 1 focuses on the heavenly Father's desires for His children. When we go before the Lord and substitute our own name or the name of a friend or family member for "you" in verses 9 and 10, we are praying His specific will for that person. The Lord delights in responding to requests that someone be filled with knowledge of His will and walk in a manner pleasing to Him.

However, we must be careful not to think of this prayer as a magic charm. It doesn't work that way. These godly qualities take time to develop in a life. And if we are praying these things for ourselves, we must avail ourselves of the means God has provided for our sanctification or transformation—namely, His Word. If we want to know and understand God's will, we should ask Him and search the Bible.

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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, April 3, 2019 - Receiving God's Power

APRIL 03RD 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, April 3, 2019 - Receiving God's Power

Ephesians 1:13-19

There is so much that Christ wants to give us. What I'm talking about is not material wealth but spiritual blessings, one of which is that we might know the "surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe" (Eph. 1:19).

We need God's power both personally and corporately. But what is required for His power to be released upon us? I believe the answer is the same whether we're talking about individual believers or local churches.

Faith in God and His Word. It is essential to believe that the Scriptures are absolutely true and sufficient for life and godliness. Any time a pastor or a congregation begins to question the Bible's inerrancy, sufficiency, or clarity, that church has denied the source of its own power.

Dependence on God. Jesus said that apart from Him, we can do nothing of any spiritual value (John 15:5). In fact, God's power is perfected in us when we are weak and rely fully on Him (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Obedience. We can't expect God's power to flow through us when we are living in outright sin or rationalizing partial obedience. But He's always ready to strengthen those who obey Him.

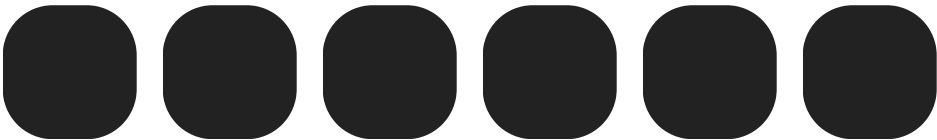
Prayer. When we come humbly to the Lord with our needs and in submission to His will, we can be confident that He will work on our behalf.

Sometimes we think that God empowers us to achieve goals, but in actuality, the Spirit comes to live Christ’s life through us. His power flows in us when we submit every area of our life to His authority—including our plans, desires, and future.

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