### **Faith Matters**

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# Daily Devotional - Monday, August 5, 2019 - Saved for God's Glory

AUGUST 05TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

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#### **Ephesians 1:5-6**

Salvation is an amazing gift from our heavenly Father, and since we are the recipients, it might appear that we're the primary reason He sent His Son to save us. After all, He loved us so much He didn't want us to perish. And though this is certainly true, the greater reality is that He saved us for "the praise of the glory of His grace" (Eph. 1:6).

When sinners are saved, God's glory and grace are displayed. The salvation that He offers ...

**Highlights His generosity** (v. 3). God not only gave His Son as a sacrifice for our sins, but He has also blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heaven.

**Reveals the Father's mercy** (v. 4). He took the initiative in salvation by choosing us "before the foundation of the world." His mercy toward us reaches from eternity past to eternity future.

**Emphasizes His holiness** (v. 4). Because God is holy, His goal is to make us holy and blameless so we can dwell with Him forever. This process of transformation begins at our conversion and will be completed at our resurrection.

**Shows divine love** (vv. 4-5). To rescue us from condemnation would have been enough, but in love our heavenly Father chose to adopt us and make us part of His family.

**Displays God's kindness** (v. 5). He saved us "according to the kind intention of His will" and not because of any worthiness or good behavior on our part.

Our greatest human need is to know and love the God who saved us. And through salvation, we come to experience His glorious grace.

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## Daily Devotional - Friday, August 2, 2019 - Faithful Servants

AUGUST 02ND 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Daily Devotional - Friday, August 2, 2019 - Faithful Servants

#### Colossians 4:7-17

Every word of Scripture is profitable for us, and that includes today's passage—the final greetings and instructions at the close of Colossians. Although reading a list of names may not seem edifying at first, doing so provides a lesson on living with a committed Christian community. The people Paul mentions are all examples of faithful servants of God.

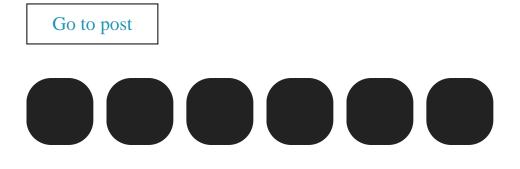
For instance, Tychicus (vv. 7-8) brought Paul's letter from Rome to Colossae since the apostle was in prison. The distance is about 900 miles as the crow flies, but it was much farther for Tychicus, who had to sail around Italy and across the Mediterranean Sea before traveling through Asia Minor on foot. Yet he faithfully endured the hardship in order to bring Paul's letter to the Colossians—and to us, since the epistle is now part of the New Testament.

Onesimus (v. 9) exemplifies a life transformed by Christ—this runaway slave was a valuable servant not only to his former master but also to Paul (Philem. 1:10-17). Then Epaphras (Col. 4:12-13) was a faithful intercessor for the church in Colossae, and Luke was a committed companion to Paul during the apostle's travels and imprisonment. And Nympha is acknowledged for hospitality in opening her home as a meeting place for the church.

In the New Testament, we're instructed to be faithful stewards, live transformed lives, pray for one another, serve humbly, and practice hospitality so Jesus' love is apparent to those who don't know Him. As the people in today's passage show, your actions can reflect Christ even more than words do.

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# Daily Devotional - Wednesday, July 31, 2019 - God's Loving Outreach

JULY 31ST 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Daily Devotional - Wednesday, July 31, 2019 - God's Loving Outreach

#### John 4:1-42

The story of the Lord's encounter with a Samaritan woman is a wonderful example of His loving response to those who hurt. Jesus is always reaching out in love, even when we do not recognize His extended hand.

Although this meeting may have appeared accidental, it was really a providential appointment with the Messiah. As the woman reached the well, Jesus initiated conversation by asking for a drink of water. His direct approach surprised her and opened the door for a dialogue that would change her life forever.

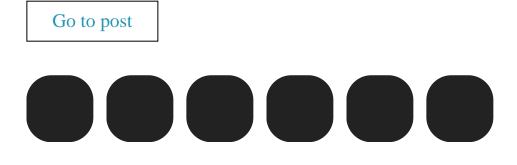
Throughout the exchange, Jesus' goal was to help the woman recognize her greatest need so He could supply the only gift that would meet it: salvation and the forgiveness of her sins. She had spent her life trying to find love and acceptance in all the wrong places. The Lord offered her the living water of the Holy Spirit—the one thing that would quench her spiritual and emotional thirst.

Like the Samaritan woman, we can at times be so intent on getting our immediate needs met that we fail to see God's hand reaching out to us in love, offering what will truly satisfy. Only Christ can eternally fill our empty souls and provide for our essential emotional needs now.

This world is filled with "wells" that promise to provide love, acceptance, and self-worth but never fully satisfy. When your soul is empty and the well runs dry, look for Jesus. He has a divine appointment scheduled with you, and He will quench your thirst with His Spirit—if you let Him.

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# Daily Devotional - Tuesday, July 30, 2019 - Essential Truths of the Faith

JULY 30TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Tuesday, July 30, 2019 - Essential Truths of the Faith

Ephesians 4:11-16

It's fairly easy to coast through the Christian life without thinking too deeply about the essentials of our faith. Every child of God knows the basics of the gospel, since they are necessary for salvation. But once we are saved, we need to grow in our understanding of the doctrines that are foundational for Christianity.

We must believe that the Bible is true. Scripture is the heavenly Father's self-revelation about His nature, plan of salvation, and dealings with mankind. It's the final authority on life, faith, salvation, and conduct (2 Peter 1:3), and we can trust that it's without error because God inspired its writers and protected its transmission throughout history (2 Timothy 3:16).

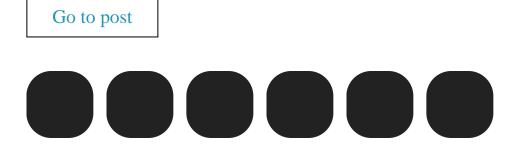
**There is only one God who expresses Himself in three persons**—Father, Son, and Spirit. The concept of the Trinity is supported in numerous Scriptures, including Jesus' baptism when all three were present and the Great Commission in which we are told to make disciples and baptize them in one name—that of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:16-17; Matt. 28:19).

**The Lord is the Creator of all things.** As His creatures, we exist for Him and through Him, and He has authority and power over us (1 Corinthians 8:6). God is not simply a greater version of us; He is in a totally different category because He is self-existent and the source of life. We, on the other hand, are dependent upon Him for our next breath.

These three essentials keep us grounded in the truth. If we doubt them, we will find ourselves deceived by other doctrines (Eph. 4:14).

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# Daily Devotional - Monday, July 29, 2019 - Making Wise Decisions

JULY 29TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

#### Daily Devotional - Monday, July 29, 2019 - Making Wise Decisions

#### Galatians 6:7-10

Much of our life can be summed up by the decisions we've made right until the present. This is why it's so important to learn to make wise choices that lead to the life God wants for us. And the foundation for doing so is a firm conviction regarding the truth of God's Word, which will ground us in every area—relationships, finances, work, church, and the use of our time.

The unchanging principle of sowing and reaping is one that should guide every decision we make, because a harvest will eventually result from the action we take. Paul contrasted two different ways Christians can sow—either to the Spirit or to the flesh.

There is a battle raging within us between the desires of the Holy Spirit, who has come to live within us, and the desires of our flesh—those sin patterns and self-serving tendencies remaining in us even after salvation (Gal. 5:17). Our goal should be to put our sinful, selfish desires to death so that we can follow the Spirit as He directs us according to the Scriptures. Therefore, the better we know and understand God's Word, the more we will be able to discern the Spirit's leading.

To make this practical, remember that every time you rehearse a wrong done to you, complain with regard to your situation, gossip about a friend, or indulge an addictive desire, you are sowing to the flesh and will reap more of the same later. But if you let the Spirit lead and empower you, you'll be able to forgive others, be content in every situation, and acquire holy desires and the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

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