Faith Matters



Daily Devotional - Wednesday, June 1, 2022 - Develop a Long-Term Focus

JUNE 01ST 2022 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, June 1, 2022 - Develop a Long-Term Focus

Genesis 25:19-34

Today's Scripture reading tells the story of two brothers, one of whom was willing to sell his birthright (a double share of his father's inheritance) for a bowl of stew. Why would Esau relinquish such a valuable asset for a temporary need? According to Hebrews, his foolish decision sprang from a godless heart (Hebrews 12:16). Esau didn't value what God had given him but was concerned only about his immediate needs.

The problem with this mindset is that it leaves no room for things of eternal value—in other words, things of God. Of course, we all like to think we have enough common sense and intelligence to make good decisions. But as followers of Christ, we must rely upon the Lord's wisdom instead of our own.

If you're constantly preoccupied with immediate needs and desires, ask the Lord to help you understand what He wants for your future. Read His Word and ask for guidance to a path that brings Him everlasting glory. As was true of Esau, certain decisions you make will have long-term consequences. So trust the Lord, and carefully consider the eternal outcome before you make a commitment.

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Daily Devotional - Tuesday, May 31, 2022 - The Reality of God's Love

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2 Corinthians 11:23-27

Have you ever wondered why a God of love lets bad things happen to you? Or whether your past keeps Him from loving you? But just because you may *feel* unloved doesn't mean that you actually are. The apostle Paul could probably relate. In today's reading we see that he encountered hardship after hardship while following God. And his past was so checkered with sin (Acts 8:1-3; Acts 9:1-2) that he could have assumed he had good reason to feel unloved.

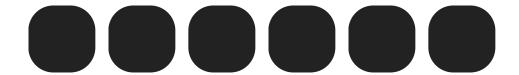
Yet Paul kept spreading his message of hope—that God loves us and sent His Son to die for our sins. The situation we find ourselves in may be unfair, painful, or humiliating, but it doesn't mean God has stopped loving us. Sometimes we face difficulty because He is smoothing our rough edges and molding us into His image. Other trials are instigated by Satan but are allowed through the Lord's permissive will.

Either way, God is working everything out for our good, according to His specific purposes for each believer's life (Romans 8:28). The key to accepting the truth of God's unconditional love is to focus attention on Him rather than on your circumstances. When you are learning of Him, talking with Him, and sharing your life with Him, trust and faith will replace doubt and fear.

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Daily Devotional - Sunday, May 29, 2022 - Sunday Reflection: Wonderfully Made

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To get the most out of this devotion, set aside time to read the scriptures referenced throughout.

Have you ever considered that fingerprints are an amazing example of how much God cares for us? Each of us is born with a certain arrangement of arches, loops, and whorls on our hands, and they don't change as we grow or age. They are also exclusive. Think about that for a moment: Out of roughly eight billion people on earth, *no two of us* have the same fingerprint.

We've each been uniquely created by God. What's more, He has a singular plan for every life (

<u>Jeremiah 1:5</u>; <u>Proverbs 16:3-4</u>; <u>Proverbs 16:9</u>). There is no such thing as a non-valuable person in God's eyes—He loves every single one of us equally and is personally involved in seeing His plans for our lives come to fulfillment. In fact, it brings Him joy to do so! So instead of comparing yourself to others or feeling inconsequential, look at the intricacy of your fingertips and remember: You are one of a kind and well-loved by the Creator God who brought you into being.

Think about it

• Have you recently spent time considering what God has planned for your life? Sit down with Him in prayer and ask for guidance and clarification to get on the right track.

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Daily Devotional - Thursday, May 26, 2022 - The Attitude of a Saint

MAY 26TH 2022 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Thursday, May 26, 2022 - The Attitude of a Saint

1 Corinthians 15:9-10

The apostle Paul had a mindset that Christians are wise to emulate (1 Corinthians 11:1). It included:

- Humility. Pride can't exist in the heart of a believer who truly grasps God's mercy. Paul spread the gospel because he believed in the sufficiency of God's grace to save sinners like himself—and you and me.
- A sense of obligation. Paul understood how far God's grace had brought him. He frequently reminded others of his role in persecuting the church (1 Timothy 1:13-15) and allowed his past to fuel his gratitude for salvation.
- A sense of dependence. Here is how the apostle described the source of his strength: "By the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Corinthians 15:10). He knew what it was to work at being religious by depending on his own efforts—and he wanted no part of it. Paul desired more of Jesus and none of himself (Philippians 3:4-8).
- A spirit of absolute confidence. Even at the end of Paul's life, he remained confident in the Lord and looked forward to his eternal reward (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

Do you see these attitudes in yourself? Praise the Lord for all that He's done, and let it motivate you to work for His kingdom. May the grace He showers on you never be in vain (1 Corinthians 15:10).

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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, May 25, 2022 - Lessons in Sonship

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John 8:25-59

Jesus' assertion that He was the Son of God incited fury in the religious leaders of His day. Yet His explanation to them so many centuries ago helps us understand how to act like God's children today:

- He spoke His Father's words to the world (John 8:26). And we were given the same assignment: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation" (Mark 16:15).
- Christ did nothing on His own initiative (John 8:28). Sonship requires surrender to the Father's authority.
- •The Son spoke as the Father taught Him (John 8:28). We should rely on the truth of God's Word, not our own wisdom.
- Jesus did what pleased the Father (John 8:29). God's children no longer live for their own pleasures but seek the joy of obeying their heavenly Father.
- Christ pursued the Father's glory, not His own (John 8:49-50; John 8:54). In the same way, we're to humble ourselves and exalt the Lord in our thoughts and behavior.
- He knew His Father (John 8:55). Like Christ, believers have the same privilege of intimacy with God.

We are God's children only because of the faithful obedience of His Son. Christ opened the door for our adoption, showered us with blessings, and demonstrated how we are to walk in faith. Now we are to follow His example.

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