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Daily Devotional - Friday, August 31, 2018 - A River of Living Water

AUGUST 31ST 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Friday, August 31, 2018 - A River of Living Water

John 7:37-39

FRIDAY

31

If you've ever lived in a desert or experienced a long-term drought, you understand how essential water is. Without it, plants dry up, crops fail, animals languish with thirst, and before long the ground cracks and dust starts to blow. Sometimes, this is how life feels, too—dry, fruitless, unsatisfying, and futile.

But this should not be the case for believers. Even if the externals of life resemble a drought, inside we have the ever-flowing living water of the Holy Spirit. Of all the word pictures employed in the Bible to depict the Spirit, a river of living water ranks among the most powerful. He is seen as the source of vitality and abundance in our lives. Like a continually moving stream, He flows through us, performing His sanctifying work of transforming us into the image of Christ.

Getting to know the Spirit is a lifelong process. As we walk in obedience to Him, we experience both His quiet guidance through life's challenges and His power displayed in our weakness. We marvel when He brings to light a passage of Scripture and find solace in His comfort when we're hurting. His convictions guide us to repentance so we can be cleansed with living water. And His promptings and warnings keep us from heading down the wrong path.

Because the life-giving Spirit dwells within us, no Christian has to live a dry, fruitless life. Of course, if we opt to live as we please and indulge in sin, we'll quench Him. But the more we learn of Him in Scripture and walk with Him in obedience, the more His life will flow through us.

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Daily Devotion - Thursday, August 30, 2018 - Our Incomparable Companion

AUGUST 30TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotion - Thursday, August 30, 2018 - Our Incomparable Companion

THURSDAY

Having a faithful friend is one of God's greatest blessings. No matter what's going on in your life, you can count on that person to stick with you. However, there is no guarantee that you won't lose that friend. Unavoidable circumstances like relocation, illness, or death may take your companion away, but if you are a Christian, you have a friend who will never leave you.

He's the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus called the Helper. He's no fair-weather friend, slipping in and out of our lives when it's to His advantage. When He takes up residence within us, He comes to stay forever (John 14:16).

In most human relationships, we try to avoid the use of sweeping negative or positive statements such as, "You are always late," or "You are always there for me." However, such superlative declarations are completely fitting when applied to the Holy Spirit. Listen to how the Lord Jesus described Him:

- *"He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you" (John 14:26).*
- *"He will testify about Me" (John 15:26).*
- *"He will guide you into all the truth" (John 16:13).*
- *"All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you" (John 16:15).*

Throughout the New Testament epistles, we find even more descriptions of this marvelous companion. His ministry in our lives is varied, and His accomplishments in and through us are many. How wealthy we are to have the Holy Spirit. He is a friend who truly sticks closer than a brother!

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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, August 29, 2018 - The Practices of Maturity

AUGUST 29TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Wednesday, August 29, 2018 - The Practices of Maturity

Hebrews 5:12-14

WEDNESDAY

29

Believers are on a continual growth track that ascends higher and higher. This side of heaven, none of us ever “arrive,” but we each have a responsibility to press on to maturity. Though many people think those who know a lot about the Bible are the spiritually mature ones, Hebrews 5:14 adds the element of practice to the growth equation. This word means a custom or habit. Christian growth requires the discipline of godly habits carried out daily.

The most important practice to cultivate is a personal devotional time. Since God is the source of all spiritual development, you can’t neglect Him and expect to become mature. Transformation begins with time in His Word and prayer.

Obedience is another essential element for advancement. When our desire to obey the Lord is stronger than our attraction to sin, we’ll know we are making progress in our spiritual life.

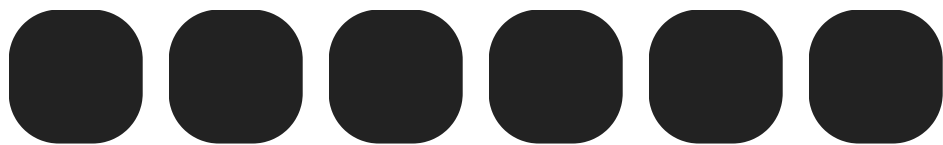
In terms of physical development, the goal is to become more independent and self-sufficient as we age. But in the spiritual realm, the opposite is true. Those who are mature in Christ recognize their own inadequacy and rely on the Holy Spirit within them. It's His job to transform our character and empower us to accomplish everything the Lord calls us to do.

In God's eyes, maturity isn't the same as getting older. By digging into Scripture and developing God-pleasing habits, we can use our years to grow stronger in the Lord instead of wasting time with passivity. No one becomes mature accidentally. Spiritual growth requires a diligent pursuit of God.

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Daily Devotional - Tuesday, August 28, 2018 - A Barometer for Spiritual Growth

AUGUST 28TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

1 Corinthians 13:11-13

28

Since our Father wants us to mature in the faith, we should stop periodically and examine our life to see if we're making progress in this area. Physical growth is fairly easy to evaluate—all you need is a tape measure. But how can you tell if you're growing spiritually? Let's begin by considering how children develop.

Desires. Have you noticed that your childhood toys no longer interest you? The maturing process changes our desires in the spiritual realm, too. When we're growing, the world's pleasures lose their appeal, while our hunger for God and His Word increases. We are eager to be with Him and share with others how He's working in our life.

Understanding. When you were young, your perception of the world was very limited. In the same way, we lack spiritual understanding when we're new believers. But in time, we begin to see life from God's perspective. Trials and temptations become opportunities for growth, and service for the Lord becomes an honor instead of a burden.

Selflessness. The most obvious sign of a toddler's immaturity is his selfishness. He wants his way, and he wants it now! Hopefully that is no longer characteristic of you. A mature believer is submissive to the Lord, willing to wait, and more concerned about others than himself.

How are you doing in these three areas of growth? Maybe it's time to let go of a few childish ways in order to grow into a mature believer. The greatest evidence of maturity is love. When the Lord and other people have first place in our heart, it's then that we're most like Jesus.

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Daily Devotional - Monday, August 27, 2018 - Wisdom for Good Health

AUGUST 27TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Monday, August 27, 2018 - Wisdom for Good Health

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

MONDAY

27

Early in my college days, I studied and worked excessively, as I wanted to offer the Lord my all. Eventually, I realized that neglecting my health could hinder my serving Him, so I therefore had a responsibility to take care of my physical body. Since then, I have tried to use wisdom with regard to health. I believe that includes having the proper motivation and a commitment to practice discipline.

When we understand our worth in the Father's sight, we will be motivated to pursue good health. Our bodies are the temple of the living God (1 Corinthians 6:19). The Holy Spirit lives in us and carries out the Lord's work through us. When we are taking care of our health, we position ourselves to be able to serve when God calls. Our heavenly Father knows many of us have infirmities, but He wants us to take care of ourselves so we do not make our condition worse.

Discipline is the other component of a health-conscious attitude. Many of us approach exercise and weight loss in a "fits and starts" manner. While that may offer some value at the time, a more lasting method is of greater benefit. We need to develop new routines, within the structure

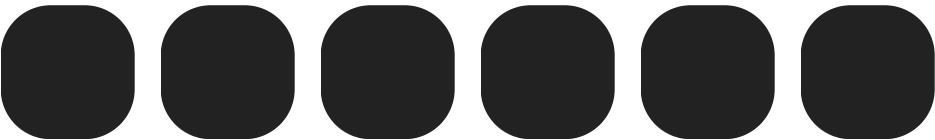
of our family and work, for our bodies to thrive. Consistency over the long term is necessary if we are to stay in good condition.

A desire to eat right and exercise regularly does not guarantee we'll avoid disease or live a long life. But it does mean we will have done our part to keep God's temple in good shape for Him. Our calling as God's children is best fulfilled when we seek physical as well as spiritual vitality.

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