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Daily Devotional - Thursday, September 6, 2018 - Our Eternal Rewards

SEPTEMBER 06TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Thursday, September 6, 2018 - Our Eternal Rewards

Revelation 4:9-11

THURSDAY

06

Throughout Scripture, we find references to crowns. Let's take a look at how they reveal the eternal rewards of loving Jesus Christ and following Him obediently.

The Crown of Victory. To finish life well, believers need Olympic endurance. Athletes in those ancient games were crowned with a perishable circlet of laurel leaves. But when we pursue our God-given ministry and triumph over sin, we'll be given an imperishable crown (1 Corinthians 9:25-27).

The Crown of Exultation. Any believers to whom we ministered through the power of Jesus will be "our glory and joy" before the Lord (1 Thess. 2:18-20). Just imagine how you will rejoice in heaven upon seeing and talking with the people you care about, who appreciate your spiritual investment in them.

The Crown of Righteousness. Following Jesus is not easy, but there is great reward for living righteously when facing temptation or hardship. Believers who pursue godliness can look forward to the life to come—and to meeting God with a pure conscience (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

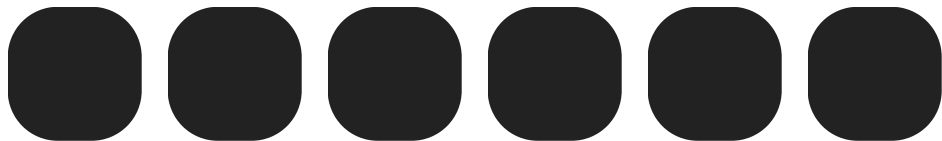
The Crown of Life. Anguish and pain are unavoidable in this life, but we can take heart because much spiritual growth happens in adversity. Hang in there to receive the crown of life that the Lord promised to those who love Him (James 1:12).

In heaven, what will we do with the crowns God has given us? We will cast them before Jesus' feet (Revelation 4:10), laying them down as a tribute to the One who saved us, gifted us, equipped us, and lived in us. Everything good and right comes to us through the Lord, so He deserves our crowns.

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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, September 5, 2018 - A Foundation of Value

SEPTEMBER 05TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Matthew 7:24-27

WEDNESDAY

05

The head of my seminary once commented that constructing anything worthwhile requires a firm foundation. So a chicken coop may not need much of a base, but a high-rise office building must be erected upon tons of buried steel and concrete.

The most valuable thing you can build is your life, which could be likened to a skyscraper. No foundation is stronger or steadier than Jesus Christ, so to build wisely, you must ...

Apply the Word of God. Believers build a lasting scriptural structure through study and application of God's Word. The Lord's principles and commandments are the blueprint for an abundant life.

Give sacrificially, forgive willingly, and love extravagantly (Acts 2:45; Eph. 4:32; 1 Peter 1:22). Pride and selfishness have no place in this edifice. Using these as construction materials results in a teetering shack that is susceptible to fire.

Use your gifts to glorify God. The Holy Spirit has equipped every believer to serve the Lord. We want to use our time on this earth courageously, glorifying our Father with our talents and resources.

Share the gospel. Telling others about Jesus Christ is the greatest service we can offer to God and to our fellow man. The Lord Himself has called us to this task (Matt. 28:19).

Kingdom builders aren't creating monuments for the world's pleasure. Rather, they are raising spiritual skyscrapers that reflect God's glory. The truth is, many acts of obedience are seen only by the Lord, but He remembers every grace-filled word and deed, and He intends to reward each one.

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Daily Devotional - Tuesday, September 4, 2018 - Every Christian Rewarded

SEPTEMBER 04TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Tuesday, September 4, 2018 - Every Christian Rewarded

1 Corinthians 3:5-15

TUESDAY

04

Scripture is very clear about the fact that wonderful benefits await believers who obey and bring glory to God. In Psalm 19, David wrote that there is great reward in keeping the Lord's precepts (Psalm 19:11). What's more, the promise of heavenly gifts comes straight from Jesus Christ's mouth in the Sermon on the Mount. (See Matt. 5:12.)

Reread today's passage, and notice Paul's assertion that he and Apollos would each receive rewards for their service to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 3:8). God neither offers group prizes nor reserves treasure only for those who work in ministry. We are all ministers of the gospel, whose good works store up heavenly treasure. God sees our Spirit-led decisions and actions as worthy of reward. You may not feel particularly important or essential in this big world, but your every action and word matter to God. What He values is the believer yielding to the Holy Spirit's direction.

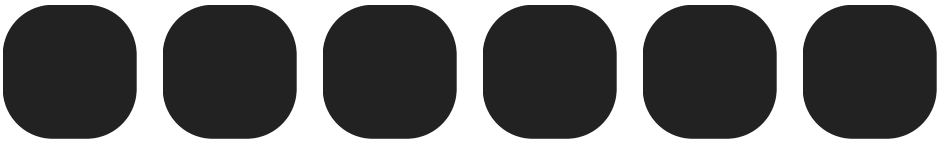
The motivation behind our actions is important too—sometimes good works are done for the wrong reasons. For example, Jesus revealed that some religious leaders were fasting to gain attention, not to please God (Matt. 6:16). When a person seeks the applause of men, their adulation is the sole reward. While this may feel good for a while, flattery is not eternal.

I suspect that one day we'll all shed tears of regret over the righteous acts we neglected or the work we did for personal glory. We will realize how much more we could have done for the Lord. But then He will dry our tears and make us new, as He promised (Revelation 21:4-5).

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

AUGUST 31ST 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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

John 14:15-17

THURSDAY

30

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:

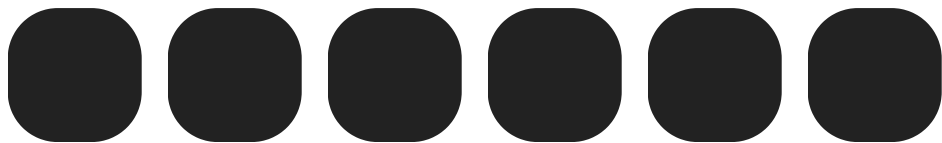
- *“He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you” (John 14:26).*
- *“He will testify about Me” (John 15:26).*
- *“He will guide you into all the truth” (John 16:13).*
- *“All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose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