
Daily Family Devotions[®]

The thought begins in the Bible verse;
please take the time to read it first . . .

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2018

“WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME?”

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 24:36-48 (Acts 1:1-3)

(Supplementary reading John 20:11-21:25)

Many people hesitate to give their lives to God because of “What will happen to *my* plans, *my* dreams – me?”

This is a fair question. The need to be individual – specifically who we are – John, Sue, Mike, Betty – is very strongly implanted in the human heart. We want to be ourselves – not just a face in the crowd or a puppet, even for God. We fear losing our identity.

This is what Christ came to tell us: the amazing fact that God respects and cherishes the individualness of each man, woman and child. Because of this, His Way – the Christian faith – is the only one that promises the resurrection of the individual – John as John, Sue as Sue – while other religions merely propose the return of our spirits into the One Anonymous, Great Spirit – completely wiping out the individualness of each person – as though each had never been.

Everything about the Christian faith is created to make the most of the individual and to make it possible for him to live eternally, never to die but to go on being the very best, the purest that he can be forever, beginning right now – here.

And yet unless we know this, and unless we understand the wisdom and compassion of our God, we go on running from the very things we seek.

Prayer: Father, You sent Your Son to show us the truth of Your Way – and yet, Lord, we are so fearful. Teach us to trust Thy love for us. AMEN

TUESDAY

"CHILD'S PLAY – OR GOD-DIRECTED?"

SCRIPTURE:

Proverbs 3:5, 6

Psalm 118:8, 9; John 14:8-14

It is a frightening experience to watch a high-powered motor boat going at top speed without someone behind the wheel. It is just as unnerving to watch a person going through life the same way. Inevitably we witness the smash-up of the individual life and destruction it brings to those involved.

Unfortunately guiding a speedboat is still more simple than running our own lives. Somehow men are just not equipped to do it alone. We are as inept at it as a child is behind the wheel of a large boat: not high enough to see ahead into the future; not strong enough to avert disaster; not resourceful or experienced enough to keep it running smoothly.

God made man's life so intricately that it is not child's play to run it; it takes the expert proficiency of God – His wisdom, His omniscience, His power, His love for us.

And when we do see a life that is guided by Him, what a difference in power, direction and performance. A life fully committed to God is a beautiful thing to watch.

Every man, woman and child has a place for God at the helm of his life. This is why God sent His Son – to be that pilot, the helmsman of our lives. Is He yours . . . ?

Prayer: Lord, help me to think of my life as belonging to You and may I willingly give You control of it through Your Son, my Lord.

AMEN

WEDNESDAY

“THE DESIRES OF OUR HEART – ”

SCRIPTURE:

Psalm 21:1-6; 37:3-5

Scripture says, “*He will give thee the desires of thine heart – ”*

This does not mean merely that He grants us whatever we want; it means more – that in the man committed to God, the heart’s deepest desires are placed there *by* God – and therefore, we can expect His help and guidance in bringing them to fruition.

Once we look at it in this light, it becomes important that we remain committed to His will; we want to be sure that what we want is from God – blessed by Him, right for us.

How can we always be sure that our desires are His . . . ?

There will be times in our lives when, in spite of our spiritual commitment, we may desire that which is not within the will of God. When this happens, two things may occur: either God in His wisdom will not allow us to have it, or as we live with the desire we may see that its fulfillment might hurt another, subtract from another’s happiness, or in some way obstruct the divine plan.

This is why daily prayer is essential to the Christian life. Without it, we can go wrong so quickly. Without continually aligning ourselves with God, we are as helpless as planes in a fog without radio assistance.

Is there something you want very much? Search your life. Can you put God first and still desire this thing? If you attain this desire, will God still be first?

Prayer: Lord, I know Thy love for me; how lavish You are with Your goodness. May I trust it, Lord.

AMEN

THURSDAY

“WHEN WE NEED REASSURANCE – ”

SCRIPTURE:

I John 3:19-24

Are you ever filled with self-doubt and uncertainty? Do you often condemn yourself needlessly? How can you be sure you are doing what God wants you to do?

There are many times in our lives when the Christian must have reassurance, and receiving it from friends does not always satisfy the doubt. We feel the need of God's reassurance.

These powerful words are meant for such moments: “ – by this we know we are of the truth – because we keep His commandments – and all who keep His commandments abide in Him and He in them. (This is His commandment – that we believe in the name of His Son and love one another.)”

When you are in doubt as to whether you are right, ask yourself these two questions:

1. Am I acting out of a sense of commitment to Christ and His will?
2. Am I acting out of love toward others?

If you can answer “yes” to both of these, then your heart cannot condemn you for God does not condemn you. He knows your heart; He knows what the motivation is behind what you are doing. And once you are assured of this your doubt and uncertainty will vanish. Try it.

Prayer: Dear God, I know that guilt and uncertainty can weaken my effort to do those things I should do. Help me to commit all things to Thee, then after receiving Thine assurance, to go on with certainty and faith. Wilt Thou be with me, Father, I pray.

AMEN

FRIDAY

“WHY AN ALIEN, NOW- ?”

SCRIPTURE:

I Peter 2:9-12 (13-17)

A young soldier, home from a tour of duty in an isolated area, said, “I was never as homesick or lonely there as I am right now. I’ve never felt so much a stranger or so alienated – ”

And a friend said, “But how can you feel this way in your own home, your own country?”

He replied, “I’ve lived more with myself and God than with people these past few years, so that I guess I’m closer to His world than my own – ”

Have you ever felt this way – as a stranger in your own country, a misfit in your own home – an alien from society? Peter refers to this in the passage just read. We *are* aliens if we have elected to follow the higher road of Christian commitment, striving always to keep ourselves within the dominion and guidance of God.

How can the world comprehend that still small Voice which has the power to guide us unerringly through some very treacherous decisions? How can the world understand divine love as it suddenly wells up in a moment of fear or doubt? How can the world know that the only real loneliness is separation from God, and that the only real failure is in failing Him – ?

The Christian must expect to feel more and more strange in a society which rebels against God. But even as we feel the gap widen, we must do even more to build bridges of compassion and love through the knowledge that our Lord is the answer.

Prayer: Lord, as one who knows love, may I never be alone or feel deserted by Thee. Help me to feel Thy presence always.

AMEN

SATURDAY

"FOR WE ARE AMBASSADORS – "

SCRIPTURE:

II Corinthians 5:20-6:11

When an ambassador is in residence in a foreign country, everything he does is a reflection on his nation. He cannot live unto himself as an ordinary or irresponsible tourist. He is the representative of his nation. It is for this purpose he is living as an "alien" in that foreign land.

And Paul reminds us that this is precisely our position in the world. Having chosen to follow our Lord, and to be members of the higher or spiritual Kingdom of God, we live here now as ambassadors for Christ, and we no longer have the right to live only unto ourselves: we represent Him to the world.

Of course we will be homesick from time to time; ambassadors recognize this as an "occupational disease". Of course we will feel awkward and restrained at times; we are not free to do many things others do. We will often long just "to be ourselves" –

And yet, strangely, we will find that the longer we live as ambassadors the easier this becomes for us. Courtesy, the ability to listen, the need to be honest, the desire to keep communication open between God and other people, little by little begins to alter us as individuals. Soon it becomes easier to live lives above reproach – to reflect God to others, – to seek first the Kingdom of heaven. We find we are not alienated so much as needed – not deprived so much as rewarded, and that those we have won for our Lord, have become our friends as well.

Prayer: O God, let me serve Thee well. Help me to keep Thy banner high among those to whom You have sent me.

AMEN

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