

# Daily Family Devotions

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

FRIDAY

*"LOOK ABOUT YOU"*

SCRIPTURE: I Corinthians 8:1-12

In this passage, Paul is speaking of 'meat offered to idols'. In those days, the pagans offered meat to certain of their gods, then ate it themselves, believing this meat gave to them special power or blessing. Paul and the disciples knew they could eat it without being affected this way.

However - the pagans seeing them eat it, could easily misinterpret this act as one of approval or participation, and this would automatically become a puzzlement or 'stumbling block' to them. How could Christians participate in pagan activities without being hypocrites or untrue to a singularly pure faith? How could the Christian thus 'serve two gods'?

So, though those Christians knew there was no power in such things, it was imperative that they abstained - for such things *did* interfere with their witness and did bewilder and confuse those who still lived under the pagan law.

Today there are certain activities we as Christians cannot take part in without the unbelievers being understandably confused. When we follow Jesus Christ's way, we may be free of the old law, but we are under a far more responsible law - that of Love. We refrain, not out of fear, but out of love, of concern for another. No longer do we live only to ourselves. Are you at this place, yet?

*Prayer: Lord, we long to be free - and under your law, we are free, but what responsibility you give us! God, make us faithful. May we never disappoint you or cause anyone to fall. AMEN*

SATURDAY

*"NO ONE REALLY KNOWS ME BUT GOD!"*

SCRIPTURE: Romans 8:26, 27; Psalm 116

A seventeen year old girl said she turned to God out of desperation ... "I couldn't get myself across to anyone else!" she said. "Things I would say at school were taken the wrong way; I'd come home and my parents almost always found fault with something I did, without even seeing the things I was trying to change! Finally I just went to my room and said - "God, at least YOU know what I want to be ... what I'd like to do!"

"And little by little, my desperate one-sided conversations became prayer. I felt a *real* peace, a real sense of Someone's presence with me. After a while, all my anger and resentment would be gone and I would feel whole again, accepted, understood.

"I didn't really understand what was happening until one day I read that this was what Christ had promised, that this was the way God actually came to people - inside, to that part of us that needs him most.

"Now I automatically come to him, I never expect from other people the same kind of complete understanding and acceptance I find with him. And because I *don't* need this from people, I find I am able to love them much more: I go to them to give, not to receive - and I find there is no limit to that.

"People who need *God* are the luckiest people in the world!"

*Prayer: O God, how good you are to come to us like this. Please make me aware of your nearness to me. AMEN*

MONDAY, APRIL 1, 2024

*"COULD THIS BE YOUR TIME?"*

SCRIPTURE:

Esther 4:14

Genesis 42:1-25; 45:1-12

*"Who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"*

We must be constantly looking for ways in which God might need us. To go blithely through one day after another, thinking only about what *we* want, what *we* need is living half a life.

The book of Esther, like the story of Joseph, is an amazing example of how God uses one person to save an enormous nation of people. Joseph, as a slave sold by his brothers, became an instrument of their later salvation. Esther, as the queen of a pagan land, was the instrument through which God delivered his people again. No one else was in the unique position to gain the king's ear, to be the voice of persuasion for God.

You never know when God moves you from one place to another, when you find yourself in strange and even unhappy circumstances, how God intends to use you. This is why it is so important never to turn away from him, never to become bitter, angry, tired or unavailable. This could be your shining hour! It could be for this very purpose you have come into the Kingdom at this time!

*Prayer: O Father, what a privilege it would be to be used by you for such deliverance. Help me to continue to seek your face, your hand in all of my life that I might be ready to follow your plan, open to your will. AMEN*

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## TUESDAY

"GO ON; GIVE IN!"

SCRIPTURE:  
Acts 8:26-39

Has something been gnawing at you and troubling you? Is there something you feel compelled to do - and yet you continue to hesitate?

God speaks through urgency, through an indescribable compulsion sometimes. If you stop to analyze it, it often falls apart in its meaning. It may be totally aside from reason or logic; and yet until you obey this impulse, you will not know peace - and if you continue to reject it . . . that place of sensitivity to divine urgency scars over, and the next time it will be easier to ignore.

We often look at people through whom God works so constantly. "What makes him ask them?" They may not be any more capable, talented, or eager than we, and yet these people are in the midst of God's wonderful working continually. Why?

Because they move out when he asks them to move! God does not ask for talent, genius or uniqueness; he seeks obedience and availability. And until you learn to move at his command, you might as well be dead to him.

When he called Philip to run after the Ethiopian, Philip simply took off without question.

There is nothing as exciting as a life completely motivated by and in tune to God's will!

*Prayer: God, so often I am afraid to trust my soul's desire to run after you. Please teach me to respond to you freely and without fear. Help me to know when it is you calling, and when it is not. AMEN*

## WEDNESDAY

"CAST YOUR NET WHERE HE DIRECTS"

SCRIPTURE:  
Luke 5:1-11

There will be many times in our lives when we "lower the net" into a particular place - the office, our club, even our home, only to come up time and again with no results. Nothing can be more discouraging than pulling up an empty net time after time.

Then suddenly, God will lead us into a place and say, "Now," and we pull up the net full. Or perhaps he does not have us move, but at his command or at his will, this time we try again and people respond.

In the passage above, Christ is clearly showing his disciples that he has power to bless whatever we do in obedience to him. He had to prove this to his disciples before he could ask them to leave their work and follow him. Without experiencing his power in this, they probably would have had little trust in his ability to bless their luck as "fishers for men".

Once you have committed yourself to God, do not fret if you do not succeed immediately in your new "work". Not a single moment or hour of your life is wasted once it is God's; the only difference is we do not always know how much preparation he must undertake before our nets are filled. It takes more time for some people than for others. We need to be patient and keep trusting his direction.

*Prayer: Lord, as your disciples immediately lowered their nets at your divine command even after their failure, so may I not be hesitant to try with your leading. AMEN*

## THURSDAY

"NOT FOR OURSELVES ALONE"

SCRIPTURE:  
Malachi 2:7-9  
Luke 17:1-2

If we had only ourselves to consider when we make decisions, how much simpler life would be! But each of our lives - in some way - affects someone else's.

This is especially true for Christians. We not only live to please God; we live so that others may find life less hazardous, less of a heartache - more meaningful, more lighted by the awareness of our Lord.

Pleasing God and choosing what is right for us is relatively easy in contrast to caring how what we choose to do might affect another's actions.

Yes, a man can go through life giving reason for most of what he does, feeling justified, free, and unaccountable to anyone else.

But for those of us who have committed ourselves to the Higher Way, to putting him first and others necessarily second, this is no longer possible or right.

Perhaps you could go to a certain place, do certain things without them affecting your belief. God knows your heart; you know your own limitations fairly well. But people only see our actions, the places we go, and the people we choose as friends - the things we do. Are you sure that all you do is a clear indication to others that you really are committed to the higher Way? Is it easy for them to identify you with your Lord?

*Prayer: God, I want to put you first in every decision I make. May I never put a stumbling block in anyone's life. AMEN*