

DEVOTIONS

Discipleship 1 - Chapter 5

DEVOTIONS

Devotion is an admirable quality in the life of a husband, wife, employee, or student. Devotion is “ardent attachment or affection to a person or cause; faithfulness; loyalty” (The American Dictionary). The Christian life should be characterized by devotion to the God of our salvation. Our devotion is built as we faithfully meet with God for a personal time of fellowship with Him called “devotion”.

Our devotional time is a time spent each day reading and meditating on God’s Word. It is also a time to bring our requests before God in prayer. Making time for devotions requires discipline, but it results in Christian growth and discipleship. Let’s take a moment to consider the two primary components of our devotional time.

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BIBLE READING

God speaks to us through His Word. This fact has great advantages. His Word is always accessible, never changing, totally complete, and authoritative. Because God has given us such a wonderful gift and trustworthy guide, we should willingly spend time studying the Scripture.

Psalm 1 says, “Blessed is the man...(whose)...delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night...He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.” The Bible provides guidance (Psalm 109:105) and power (2 Cor. 4:16) as well as opportunity for spiritual growth (Hebrews 5:12-14) and cleansing (Psalm 119:9).

Many Christians enjoy reading the Bible through each year. (If you read five chapters per day, you will be able to get through the Bible in a year.) Some Christians enjoy studying one book at a time. Often notes are taken or a journal is kept to make devotional time more beneficial. Regardless of your method, you should read your Bible and meditate on its truths each day.

PRAYER

Martin Luther, the great Reformer, declared, “If I fail to spend two hours in prayer each morning, the devil gets the victory through the day. I have so much business I cannot get without spending three hours daily in prayer.”

At the time of his death, George Mueller's prayer journal contained over 25'000 specific answers to specific prayers. Those that reach the highest peaks for God do so on bended knees!

People today have forgotten the power of prayer. America was founded by men like George Washington, who prayed for an hour each morning and an hour each evening. Yet, even Christians in modern America have forgotten God's promises to those who pray. Christians today have lives filled with problems which have become hindrances to prayer.

The Promises To Those Who Pray

Matthew 7:7 says, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." What a promise to men is given by an all-mighty God! But remember, before God gives the promise of Matthew 7:7, He gives the challenge of Matthew 6:33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you!"

Other great promises of answered prayer include, "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." (John 14:13-14) All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." (Matthew 21:22).

What a great challenge to know that God promises to hear and answer prayer! But why do so many prayers go unanswered?

The Hindrances To Prayer

The Bible presents several causes of unanswered prayer. These include:

1. **Unconfessed Sin.** Permitting sin in your life asking God to answer your prayers causes your prayers to bounce right off the ceiling. Psalm 66:18 assures me that "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." It is impossible to sin and simultaneously accomplish great things in prayer.
2. **Selfishness.** James 4:3 says, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." Prayer is not a tool through which we make our selfish demands known to God.

3. **Requests outside of God's will.** Often Christians ask God for things that He wisely refuses to grant. Sometimes this is hard to understand. Imagine Paul's frustrations when God refused to heal him (2 Cor. 12). Yet God allowed Paul to become stronger spiritually through physical weakness.

As you pray, first be certain that you are right with God, then expect Him to answer.

Silly Habits In Prayer

Some Christians unknowingly fall into silly habits in their praying.

1. They repeat God's name over and over and over! Remember, God knows who He is.
2. They always begin by thanking God for the day. Did you ever stop to think that God is Likely thanked more for the day than for His Gift of Jesus Christ? But which would you rather have?!
3. They change their voices. God can hear you even when your voice doesn't sound like it's coming through a stained glass window.

God promises to answer prayer that are offered by those with pure hearts. How is your prayer life today?

FROM YOUR READING

1. What does it mean to have devotions? _____

_____.
2. Making time for devotions requires _____.
3. Why is it so important to read our Bible _____

_____.
4. To read the Bible through each year, you should read _____
 chapters per day.
5. Write out one verse that promises you that God answers prayer.

_____.
6. List three hindrances to answered prayer.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
7. Those that reach the highest peaks for God do so _____

_____.

GROUP TIME

“Getting A Grasp on God’s Word”

To really get a grasp on God’s Word, I must:

Rom. 10:17

Rev. 1:3 2

Tim. 2:15

Ps.119:11

Ps. 1:2-3

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1. _____ 	2. _____
3. _____ 	4. _____

DEVOTIONAL DIARY

BIBLE



STUDY

The following material is given for your personal Bible Study and Christian growth. The basic assignments for the course are given and a special “achiever” assignment is suggested for those who desire to go the extra mile. Before you begin, pray that God will allow you to really grow through this endeavor.

SCRIPTURE ASSIGNMENT

As you do your Scripture assignment, pray that God will challenge you with the need to be faithful in Bible study and prayer.

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1. What does 2 Timothy 2:15 command the Christian to do? _____

What benefit is found through fulfilling this command?

- a. We are _____ by God.
b. We are _____ that need not _____
_____ because we “rightly divide” (interpret) God’s word.

2. Look up the following verses and list some reasons why God’s Word is so important to the Christian.

- a. John 17:17 _____
b. 1 Peter 2:2 _____
c. Psalm 119:9-11 _____

3. According to Psalm 119:97, a Christian should _____ God’s Law (Word) and should _____ on it all day long.

4. Hebrews 4:16 says that the Christian should come _____
 "unto the throne of grace" through prayer. Why? _____

5. What promises about prayer are found in the following verses?
 a. James 4:8a _____
 b. John 15:7 _____
6. Why did Jesus command us to pray? (Matt. 26:41) _____

7. How often should we pray? (I Thess. 5:17) _____

8. What do we see Jesus praying about in Matthew 14:19? _____

- What should this teach us? _____

Achiever Questions

1. Along with God's promises to answer prayer, He gives us conditions which He expects us to meet. Find the conditions for answered prayer in each verse listed.
 a. Mark 11:24 _____
 b. I John 5:14-15 _____
 c. I John 3:22 _____
2. What will the Christian who studies God's Word receive?
 a. Psalm 119:98-100 _____
 b. Psalm 119:165 _____

MEMORY ASSIGNMENT

Books of the Bible: I John, II John, III John, Jude, and Revelation

Verse: John 14:6

“Jesus said unto him. I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

Achiever’s Verse: John 3:36

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENT

1. Have “devotions” at least five days this week and record your progress in the “Devotional Diary.” (Be prepared to share at least one blessing you received from God’s Word this week.)
2. Spend at least three minutes in prayer each day this week and keep a record of your prayer time on your “Prayer Log” sheet.