

BE STRONG
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**APRIL
DAILY
DEVOTIONALS**

BY MIKE KEYES, SR



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APRIL 01 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

2 Kings 7:3 - GOD CAN ONLY BLESS WHAT YOU DO!

I have always told people that God can only bless what you do. Why? Because the life of faith is one that demands ACTION. Doing something for God is the first step towards His power, provision, protection and all the other things He promises us in His word. God can't bless what you don't do! Never forget that. Too many Christians are just sitting around, waiting for God to do something on their behalf. It doesn't work that way my friend! The Bible promises that God will bless all YOUR HAND SETS ITSELF TO DO... (Deut.28:8). He never promises to bless inactivity, or laziness, ever! That's why I especially enjoy today's verse. Here we have these four lepers, sitting at the gate waiting to die. But wait, one of them has this idea! He turns to his fellow lepers, and says: "Why are we sitting here waiting to die?" In other words, let's do something about our situation. Let's not just wait for something miraculous to happen, let's do what we can do!

You know, in my office I have a desk plaque which reads DO WHAT YOU CAN DO! And really, that's all God is requiring of us, to do what we can do, and trust Him to then do what we cannot do! So, what did God do for these 4 lepers? He blessed them AFTER they took some action. If they had just sat there they would've died for sure. But by taking some action, they created the atmosphere whereby God could work to reward them. And so, it is today. The Bible works - I know because I've worked it for almost 40 years now in full-time ministry. And the reason I know it works for me is because I've always believed in DOING something, rather than just watching, or commenting, or criticizing the people actually out there doing something meaningful for God. The Lord is never going to expect you to do what you can't do, but He will demand that you do what you can, and that's where many believers cut God off from their lives. If you don't do what you can do when the Lord asks you, why expect Him to do the things that only He can do in your life when you need Him? So, when God gives you a task of some kind, do it with all your might! By doing what you can do, like the 4 lepers in our verse today, you automatically produce an environment that God can begin to work with. Remember - God can't (and won't) bless lazy people, or people who won't commit to anything involving work or availability for the Lord!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 02 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

2 Kings 7:9 - DOING THE RIGHT THING IS ALWAYS IN STYLE

Yesterday, we looked at how these 4 lepers took matters into their own hands, and reaped the blessings of God as a result. Today, in again looking at that passage from the Bible, we hear them exhorting each other to DO THE RIGHT THING. And that's good advice for us today too. The fact is, one of the best ways to witness to unsaved people is by just being a good person and doing good things to others. It doesn't require a doctorate or graduate degree; it just requires your decision to commit to being kind and good in the Name of Jesus! Doing good, and doing the right thing is one of the best ways to witness for Jesus, and it never goes out of style! The good news is that our opportunities to be good and do the right thing are always before us, daily. We just need to open our eyes to see them and have the right measure of courage to do what is right and good for others, and for God.

Once I was in the Los Angeles airport, waiting for my flight home to Tucson, Arizona. A young mother was in the waiting area with her two very small children and had just been informed that her stand-by tickets could not be honored because the flight had checked in full. She was told the next opportunity to leave LA would be in about 7 hours, and even then, she wasn't guaranteed a seat - she could get bumped again. Well, she bolted to the phones with her two kids, and proceeded to call her mother to cry and complain about being stranded there with no money - even for lunch for her two kids. So, my friend and I, overhearing all of her conversation because she was right next to us talking on the phone, decided that something good needed to be done for her. So, we gave her a \$100 bill, and told her to go get her kids some lunch and use the change to hopefully buy a reserved seat on the plane she needed to fly on later in the day. What was this? Doing the right thing - doing something good for a person in need. And whether you know it or not, that's the real reason why prosperity is so scriptural. God blessed me with \$100, so I blessed her with the same amount just to help. When she protested because she thought the amount was too much, we kindly told her we were Christian ministers and that she should just take the money and go get lunch! We were witnessing the love of God by doing something kind and good to that young mother that day, and that's what our verse today talks about. Doing the right thing in the Name of Jesus is always the best thing you can do. Never forget - doing right and doing good are never out of style!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 03 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Mark 14:9 - GIVE GOD SOMETHING TO WORK WITH!

Our verse today talks about what we've been talking about for the past few days now. Doing what you can. Doing good. Doing the right thing. All of this is witnessing as a Christian, representing Jesus to a lost and dying generation. In this particular story, Jesus was blessed by a woman who broke her bottle of perfume and poured the contents all over Jesus just to refresh and bless Him. When the disciples protested, He rebuked them and made this statement about what the woman had done: SHE HAS DONE WHAT SHE COULD.... That's the key, right there. Do what you can, and God will do what you can't. You see, the key which enables God to work in our lives is just doing what can be done. God then takes what you have done or given and multiplies it in your life to bless others. Remember the multiplication of the bread and fish - twice? In both stories, Jesus asked people to give him what they had and when they did, He took their gift and multiplied it. In this woman's case, she had the perfume, saw the opportunity to bless Jesus, and did something to bless and refresh Him. This so impressed our Lord that He said what she did that day would be remembered forever by having it included in the canon of scripture. What made this simple gesture of kindness so impressive to Jesus? Simple - she did what she could do, and that was the point Jesus wanted to get across to the disciples and to us.

Too many times, we just sit around waiting on God, when in reality, He's waiting on us! Waiting for what? Waiting for us to DO something! When Jesus commissioned us to GO into the entire world to preach the gospel, that command had within it the implied understanding that we had to DO SOMETHING. We have to do what we can, and then trust God to do what we can't do. That's how it works. We are called "Co-laborers" with Jesus (2 Corinthians 6:1). That means we WORK alongside Him. We do what we can when He tells us to, and then He does what we can't because we've done what we could. Amen! So, give God something to work with. Give him what you have - your time, energy, availability, money or whatever, and watch Him multiply it back into your life so you can do it all over again! Praise God. Where is your bottle of perfume, so-to-speak? Are you ready and willing to give it to refresh Jesus, or someone working in His Name? That's how the blessings come, so if you want to be blessed, make sure you're active and out there doing things as led by the Spirit of God! Remember once again, God can't bless what you don't do!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 04 DAILY DEVOTIONAL 2 Kings 6:16 - YOU'RE NEVER OUTNUMBERED!

Whether you know it or not, we're at war with the devil. He hates God and hates us because God loves us so much. Since he can't hurt God directly (when he tried he got kicked out of heaven like lightning), he tries to hurt us instead, knowing it will grieve God. Well, God knows we're in a war, and the devil certainly knows it, but do you? And if you do, do you understand the odds? First of all, recognize and never forget that you're involved in a war more deadly and serious than any war ever fought from the time of Adam until now. This war is for the eternal souls of men, not for some country or piece of land somewhere. And because this warfare is so deadly and serious, you must take the time to study the Bible to find out as much as you can - not just to survive but to thrive triumphantly in Jesus!

The piece of good news is that **THEY THAT BE WITH US ARE MORE THAN THEY THAT BE WITH THE DEVIL**. In other words, we've got the enemy outnumbered at every turn! You're never in the minority, no matter how it may look in the natural, or how hard the devil tries to convince you otherwise. In today's verse, the assistant to the prophet panicked when he saw all the enemy soldiers surrounding his city. When he ran to inform the prophet about it, Elisha simply prayed that God would open his eyes so that he could see the true spiritual state of affairs. And then he said that marvelous statement that all of us need to remember. There are more on our side than on the devil's side. And, they're **ALWAYS** available for us, whenever we need them. The devil will try and convince you he's got the upper hand against you, but that's just another lie so don't listen to him. The fact is that we've got the Holy Spirit in us, and His presence **ALONE** makes us the dominant combatant on the field of battle. And **PLUS** having Him living inside us, we've got all those angels that God has assigned to assist us, protect us, escort us and whatever else needs to be done. So when you're going into battle, go in with an understanding of the odds. We've **ALWAYS** got the upper hand, and we're **NEVER** outnumbered! Ever!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

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APRIL 05 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

2 Kings 6:17 - OPEN YOUR EYES SO THAT YOU MAY SEE!

Yesterday, we looked at the marvelous fact that no matter how intense our spiritual battles may become, we can take heart in the fact that we're NEVER outnumbered by the enemy. We've got the Holy Spirit within us, and we've got myriads of angels at our disposal whenever we need them. And with all of that, the necessity becomes one of faith - learning to see what can't be seen with the natural eye. That's what Elisha prayed for when his assistant was struck with fear over what he saw with his natural eyes. He asked the Lord to open his eyes **THAT HE WOULD SEE!** Well, we know it wasn't his natural eyes that Elisha was praying about, because his servant was staring at all the enemy soldiers that had surrounded his city. No, it was the man's spiritual eyes - the eyes of his heart or the eyes of his spirit. The man needed to see into the spiritual realm and see what the complete picture really was. And, as it was with him thousands of years ago, so it is with us today. It's a great prayer to pray, "Lord, open my eyes that I may always **SEE WITH THE EYES OF MY FAITH.**"

One of the things that make us different as men and women of God is this right here. It's our ability to see into the spirit realm according to God's word and see things the way they really are. In other words, our view is different than that of people who know nothing about God and the reality of spiritual warfare. And that alternate viewpoint is what we need to cultivate if we're to maintain our sense of perspective, and not allow what we see in the natural to cause us to fear or doubt God. In fact, what we see with our natural eyes is always secondary to the reality and truth of the spirit world. Why? Because the spirit world came first. It's the parent world, while this natural world is just the child - a by-product of God's creative faith. What goes on in the spirit world is **MORE** real than even what's real in this world because everything in this world is subject to the laws of the spiritual world. So, next time your faith is under attack, and the devil is telling you you're outnumbered and your situation is hopeless, remember our verse today. With the eyes of faith, see what most men can't see. See into the spirit world by faith, and realize that in Christ, you are the victor, every time!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 06 DAILY DEVOTIONAL 2 Kings 6:12 - IF WALLS COULD TALK!

I think today's verse is a very telling reminder of how important it is to think before you speak! Why? Because God hears EVERYTHING! Anytime and anywhere, whatever you say is recorded and judged according to the Word of God. And, unless you repent of words spoken in opposition to God's Word, you'll answer for every one of those words someday in heaven when judgment takes place. That's an amazing thing never to forget! In today's story, the enemy king thought he had an informant among his servants because the King of Israel knew ahead of time what his next military move would be. But he was told that it wasn't an enemy informer, it was the prophet of God telling the Jewish king all he was saying in the secrecy and privacy of his bedroom! Remember that next time you're tempted to let loose with ungodly conversation in the bedroom, or anywhere else that you assume is private! God is listening, and the walls never sleep!

It's important to remember that even when we THINK we're alone, we're not! God hears everything we say, whether it is day or night, or in public or behind closed doors. The lesson to learn here is that nothing surprises God, and nothing goes on without His complete knowledge and attention! That being said, think before you speak! In public of course, but especially in private. And even when you're alone and nobody is around, be careful about what you say, even if its only to yourself! I know God has rebuked me many a time over the years because of undisciplined and unscriptural comments I've made in what I thought was a private setting. Well, it may have private and secluded as far as this world was concerned, but not from where God was standing! He knew the attitudes and motives of my heart and heard every word spoken - and judged it according to His righteous standards and holy word. In other words, I was BUSTED! That's very sobering, isn't it? It is for me my friend, and I hope it is for you too. That's why James 1:18 tells us to be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Don't practice that verse in reverse! Think before you speak and remember that God ALWAYS hears you!



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APRIL 07 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

John 17:17 - WHAT IS TRUTH?

John chapter 17 is an intercessory prayer that Jesus prayed for those with Him that night, and for us today as well. It's one great prayer, but there's a statement in that prayer that I want to look at with you today. In v.17, Jesus asked God to sanctify us through His truth, and then identified that truth as being the Word of God. Do you understand that statement? The Word of God IS truth. That's it! There are things that are TRUE and things that are FALSE, but when it comes to truth, God's Word is it. That's what truth is, nothing else. If you want to know what truth is, look at your Bible and you're staring at it. God is truth, and His Word and He are One, so that's why the Word is truth. Remember what Jesus said about Himself? In John 14:6, He said He was THE way, THE truth and THE life. He's not one way, or one facet of truth, or a portion of life, He IS all of those things and nothing else is. These are absolutes my friend, and they can't be disputed or changed.

Intellectuals will of course scoff at such absolute statements, but let them smirk, chuckle and roll their eyes all they want. Someday when they stand before Almighty God at the great white throne for their eternal judgment, they won't be chuckling anymore! You need to remind yourself that this is the standard that all else is measured by. What standard? The Word of God. Period. Hebrews chapter 1 says that God upholds all things (keeps things together) by the WORD OF HIS POWER! Notice, it doesn't say the power of His Word, but the opposite. He calls it the Word of His power! Why? Because He wants us to know His power is contained in and released through His spoken words. And that Bible you read every day is that living, breathing Word of God! Hebrews 4:12 also says the Word of God is alive, and sharper than any man-made sword! It's actually alive! Why? Because God IS life, and He and His Word are One! So, relax and enjoy God's Word. It is holding all things together and IS the truth! EVERYTHING is measured by, and is subject to, God's living Word.



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APRIL 08 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

John 17:17 - HOW SEPARATED ARE YOU?

Yesterday, we took a look at the fact that in this verse, Jesus identifies truth. God's word IS truth. It's not a portion of the truth, it IS the truth. Amen! But also, you need to be aware of what God's Word is designed to do in your life as a believer. When Jesus prayed that night, He specifically asked God to sanctify us through God's Word. The word "sanctify" simply means TO BE SEPARATED from something to something. People get all religious when they use that word, but it really just means you're being separated FROM the world, and then separated TO God. In other words, you're becoming more and more like God, and less and less like the world and the people in it. So, my question to you today is this: HOW SANCTIFIED ARE YOU TODAY? How "worldly" are you? How "sanctified" are you? When people see and hear you, what are they looking at? A mirrored reflection of Jesus, or something less than that?

The Word of God has the ability to sanctify us unto God, in ways nothing else can. The more we feed upon God's Word in our lives, the more its power to sanctify will affect and change us. That's why most Christians still act, talk and think like they did before they got saved, because they don't put God's Word first place in their lives. They don't take time to feed upon it, so it has no sanctifying effect on their lives. But the more we choose to feed upon God's word through study, meditation and reading, the more we're going to become like Jesus. So, if your mirrored reflection is something less than what it should be, get back to a regular, daily time of reading and feeding upon God's word. It will separate you unto God and keep you there!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 09 DAILY DEVOTIONAL Matthew 6:28 - TAKE A GOOD LOOK!

For years, I was a doer of this verse and didn't really know I was. I used it to teach on faith and rightly so, but I had never really realized that I was doing what this verse tells all of us to do here. Notice, that when Jesus is teaching about the life of faith, He compares His points to the beauty of a lily. He says: if you want to understand how great God is, just LOOK at the lilies in the field. Have you cultivated the habit of LOOKING at the lilies? Too many of us are too busy to stop and CONSIDER what is all around us. The beauty of the earth in all its magnificence, grandeur and intricate balance - should be used to bolster our stand in faith concerning the promises of God. And I've been doing this even when I wasn't yet born-again! I have never grown tired at looking at the beauty of a sunset, or the beauty of a rose, or climbing a mountain to be amazed at the vista of God's creation all around me. From the time I was old enough to appreciate these things, I've been admiring the beauty of God's creation all around me. What does it mean to LOOK at the lilies? Well, next time you see a gorgeous sunrise or sunset, stop and watch it, don't just take a quick glance and forget about what is unfolding in the sky above you! And yes, buy a bouquet of flowers and actually EXAMINE the flower itself - its color, shape, scent, structure, texture - everything. Then remind yourself that God DESIGNED and MADE whatever it is in creation you're looking at - it didn't just throw itself together BY ACCIDENT over millions of years of "evolution", like some self-made idiot over at the University of Higher Ignorance will tell you. Everything is thought out, planned out, created and put in motion by a God who is extremely meticulous and detailed in every respect. So, what does that mean concerning our faith?

It means that if God can do all of this, surely, He can provide the money to your bills! Surely, He can protect you, watch over you, provide for you and in every way meet your needs. And to illustrate and amplify that point, Jesus told us to LOOK at the flowers, and SEE what is right in front of our eyes everyday. The sky and its weather patterns, the mountains in all their majesty, the oceans teeming with different types of fish, the birds of the air, the animal wild-life, insects and reptiles, the beauty and diversity of flowers and foliage - and the delicate balance of all of it - points to a God of power, majesty and magnificence. And remember the earth now is under the curse of sin, so try to imagine how gorgeous this planet was before Adam sinned, and how much more beautiful it will be again when the devil is removed from the planet and sin's curse is lifted! And guess what else? God is madly IN LOVE WITH US, and we're the crown-jewel of His creation! So, don't every doubt for one second God's ability and willingness to help in your life. When you really think about it, what a slap in His face to ever doubt His power and ability in our lives! If He can speak this universe into existence, don't you think He can provide for us? I think so! The problem is we get our eyes off the lilies! We start looking at the problem, and when we do, we forget who it is who is in love with us! Man! I mean, as I'm typing this for you today, these truths are filling my heart with joy unspeakable! What a truth to consider and never forget! So next time you're even the least bit tempted to doubt God, go find a flower, a leaf, a blade of grass, and just look at it for awhile. Feel the breeze on your face and be reminded all over again about the God of the universe - the One who loves you far more than anything else He has ever created! You are the apple of His eye! Always have been, and always will be!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 10 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Colossians 1:29 - LET GOD BE GOD!

When it comes to evangelism and fulfilling the Great Commission (Mark 16:15-20), this is one of my all-time favorite verses. Why? Because it declares the “secret” for our success in whatever we do for God in the Name of Jesus. Too many times people end up doing things for God apart from the anointing needed to get the job done successfully. But in our verse today, Paul tells us that the power, effectiveness and secrets for his success as a minister is in the fact that he lets God be God! Notice how he words this: I’M WORKING ACCORDING TO HIS WORKING..... In other words, he’s taking his hands off the wheel, so-to-speak, and letting God drive the car! This is what each of us needs to be doing everyday. If we fail to do this, we’ll end up out in front of God, working according to OUR working, and not according to HIS working. There is a world of difference between those two!

I would think that we want to succeed at whatever it is that we’re doing for the Lord, right? I mean, if we don’t care if we succeed or fail, why bother in the first place? I know in my own life and ministry, I want very badly to be successful at anything I’m doing in the Name of Jesus, but to get there, I must discipline myself to yield my will and zealousness to God’s Holy Spirit, and let Him set the pace, chart the course, and make things happen in His time and in His way. When I allow Him to operate that way in me and through me, good things happen! For starters, the pressure is off of me to perform and make things happen! When God is in control, I don’t have to worry about whether things will turn out okay or not, because He’s in charge, not me. I just have to be available and obedient, and everything else takes care of itself. When I’m working according to His working, I can just relax in Christ, KNOWING the end-result will be glorious for God! Why? Because God can’t fail, that’s why! I can fail, and so can you, but if we put our work in the hands of God, and let Him be God, the results are guaranteed! So, take a look today at what you’re doing for the Lord, and if there’s too much of YOU in the picture, its time to step back and let God be God!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 11 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Joshua 23:3,10 - LET GOD DO THE FIGHTING!

As we saw in yesterday's verse-a-day, it's important to let God do the fighting when we're involved in spiritual warfare. In this Old Testament passage, God is reminding the Jews that their victories of the past weren't the result of their great military prowess, but rather because they had enough sense to let God do the fighting! That's what it means when Paul tells Timothy to **FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH** (1 Timothy 6:12). Our job is to trust God, that's what we can do. His job is to respond to that trust (which is called faith) and do what we cannot do. This is what the Lord was reminding the Jews about that day through Joshua. Look at how the odds suddenly and dramatically tip in your favor when you let God fight for you! **ONE CAN PUT A THOUSAND TO FLIGHT!** One man can put a thousand to flight, when the one man has enough sense to let God do the fighting!

Well, how about you today? Are you able to put 1,000 to flight who are standing against you? You'll be able to if you're smart enough to let God be God in your life and allow Him the opportunity to glorify Himself in your life and situation. Let Him do His job! He can meet your needs, heal your body, provide you with a good job or whatever else you need! He can put the enemies in your life to flight, IF, you turn everything over to Him, cast all your cares upon Him, and **QUIT WORRYING!** You see, God delights in doing the **IMPOSSIBLE** for us! And that is, when you think about it, what faith is all about. I mean, if we can do things for ourselves, why do we need God's help? It's the fact that we **CAN'T** do what needs to be done, there's where God excels and gets glory in our lives. So, let God have your problem or your situation. Let Him operate in your life. Don't allow your enemies anymore to intimidate you or cause you any fear. God is your God, and He loves you! He **WANTS** to see you victorious, but He can't violate your free will. Only you can open the door to Him and let Him be God in your life. Be smart! Do that today!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 12 DAILY DEVOTIONAL Joshua 23:14 - THE RIGHT WAY TO GO!

When it was time for Joshua to die, he talked to the Jews and reminded them of all that God had done for them, and how good He had been to them. His time of departure wasn't a time of crying, mourning, sorrow or grief. Rather, it was a time of joy, anticipation and reflection, and if you believe the Bible, that's the way it should be. Should Jesus tarry, and we reach the end of our appointed days on earth, all of us will face physical death. David talked about it the same way Joshua did. He told his family and friends that he was going the way of all the earth, just like Joshua did (1 Kings 2:2). And you and I will also go the way of all the earth should the return of Jesus be delayed. And when you go home to heaven, how is your departure going to be? Triumphant? Victorious? Joyful?

For me, I'd like my departure time to be one of excitement, joy, reflection and encouragement for all those I'm leaving behind. I want to have the chance to remind all my loved ones and friends about the goodness of God, and about all that He did with me and through me while I lived on earth. To me, that's the way a Christian should physically die, with a song in his heart and victory in his mouth! Too many times, as a minister, I'm involved with funerals and pre-mature departures for believers who didn't go home the way Joshua did. For that I'm always grieved, because even though I'm happy they're in a better place with Jesus, I'm somewhat upset at the manner in which they left. So many times, people leave via untimely accidents, sickness or disease. Or if not due to some catastrophe or sickness, they still die broke, depressed, tired and defeated in life. May it not be so with me, or with you, should Jesus tarry! From the scriptures, I believe there is a right way to go home, and a wrong way. Thank God we all end up in heaven with Jesus, but what about our legacy? What about all those we're leaving behind? We should use that departure opportunity to encourage them, and to remind them of all the wonderful things God did for us in our lifetime. So, let's keep our eyes on God, and no matter when our time comes to leave earth and go home, let's purpose in our hearts to make our departure a time of celebration and triumph, for God's glory and for the benefit of those we leave behind!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 13 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Proverbs 4:24-27 - 3 AREAS TO CONTROL AND MONITOR

In today's passage, we find 3 areas mentioned which must be monitored and controlled. The first is the mouth, the second are the eyes, and the third are the feet. If you want to be pleasing to God, and qualified for every good work of ministry, you must get a handle on these 3 areas in your life. One of the most important things you can do in life is find the spiritual priorities that God calls important, then spend the lion's share of your time there in terms of study and daily application. Well, here are 3 of the most important areas you'll ever be addressing in your life! Controlling your tongue, controlling your eyes and monitoring your feet. Spend time in these 3 areas and you'll be a person who is truly maximizing your time in terms of study and ministry.

What we'll be doing for the next few days is to take a look at these 3 areas of life and see what they mean, and how we can become more proficient in each of them. Remember, the book of Proverbs is a book of wisdom, so if you want to be wise in God's eyes, you should devote a significant portion of your time to study in these 3 areas of your life. I know in my own life, the problems I've encountered along the way have almost always come back to a problem I'm having in one or more of these 3 areas right here. Either I'm not controlling my tongue like I should, I'm not supervising my eyes and keeping them on the spiritual things of God, or I've allowed my feet to take me in a direction that is not the direction God wants for my life. In effect, I'm out of position and vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy. So today, how do you stack up objectively in these areas of your spiritual growth and maturity? Are you consistently in control of your conversation? Or, has your mouth become a weapon the devil is using against you? Are you keeping your eyes focused on spiritual things that are above? Or, are you looking at all the temporal things that deal with this life? And finally, where are you going? What is the direction of your life today? Do you have that inner reassurance of knowing you're exactly where you need to be, doing exactly what God expects of you? If you haven't addressed these issues yet in your life, there's no better time to start doing it than now! Your mouth, your eyes and your feet. 3 of the most important areas to control and monitor in your life!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 14 DAILY DEVOTIONAL Proverbs 4:24 - CONTROL YOUR TONGUE!

Yesterday we began a review of what Proverbs identifies as 3 of the most important areas in your life. Your mouth, your eyes and your feet. Let's talk today about your mouth first, since it's the first one listed here in Proverbs 4:24-27. If you know anything at all about the Bible, you know it is a book of words about words. From the very first chapter in Genesis, to the last chapter of Revelation, the Bible is a book about MOUTH MANAGEMENT. There is so much in the Word of God on the importance of words, we could easily spend years on this topic of study alone. So, what can I say in one daily devotional today? In short, I will say that unless we get control of our tongue and use it for God's purposes, we will forever be our own worst enemy! And, as long as our tongue remains undisciplined to the Word of God, we're forever vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy. Proverbs 18:21 says it best. **DEATH AND LIFE ARE IN THE POWER OF THE TONGUE!** That's about as "all-encompassing" as it can be, no? Death and life, and everything in-between, are in the power of our tongue! That places an extremely important premium upon the words we speak, doesn't it?

I encourage you to study and read the book of James, and especially the third chapter, paying close attention to verse 2. If you can control your tongue, you can control **THE WHOLE BODY!** If you take time to discipline your conversation, you will actually be subduing and controlling your body's carnal tendencies at the same time! Remember your body is still dead to sin, and as such, it still wants to go on sinning just like it did before you got saved. Therefore, you have to control it, and one of the best ways to do that is to control your tongue! Your body will follow your tongue, so if you're having troubles with your flesh, take a look at what's coming out of your mouth in terms of conversation. In most cases, that is where the source of all our problems can be found. Getting back to our verse today, notice the words used. The Bible talks about a **FROWARD** or **DECEITFUL** mouth, and **PERVERSE** lips. Friend, as far as God is concerned, anything coming out our mouths that disagree with His Word is perverse (warped and twisted), froward (unruly and obnoxious) and deceitful (hiding the verbal destruction that is taking place in your life). In my own life, I know my mouth has been the culprit in most situations where I find myself struggling to live victoriously in Jesus. You could probably say the same thing! So let's recommit, once again, to making this a top priority in our lives. Think before you speak, and if you've allowed your conversation to become negative and unscriptural by habit, make the decision today to change that! Your world will be a better place for having made such a decision!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 15 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Proverbs 4:25 - WATCH THOSE EYES OF YOURS!

The second thing we're to pay attention to in Proverbs 4:24-27 deals with our eyes. And I'm not just talking about people looking at other people with sexually impure thoughts here. I'm talking about a much bigger picture, dealing with how you see life, see your world, see God at work in you and through you, and yes of course, how you see other people, especially those of the opposite sex. Your eyes are the windows to your soul my friend, so to get control over your soul, you've got to get control over your eyes. Keep your vision focused on spiritual things and your life will be a little bit of heaven on earth! Focus your eyes on the carnal things of this world, and you'll struggle until the day you die. It's that simple. When this verse tells us to let our eyes look STRAIGHT AHEAD, what is God telling us here? He's telling us to keep our eyes focused on Him, and Him alone. Not to let our eyes drift away from God, and over onto things of the world, things that empower the devil or things which energize the flesh. You need to know that whatever you look at the most, that is where your priorities and overall direction in life will be. If you're constantly eyeballing the temporary things of this world, whether it be possessions or people, you're going to have a hard time staying on track with God. That's why the eyes are one of these 3 areas that require our constant attention.

The devil is constantly trying to get us distracted with the things of this world. Why? Because he is the god of this world's system, and as long as he keeps your eyes focused on things in that realm, you're subject to his rule and control, which is of course what he wants. And here's another thing never to forget about your eyes, they're NEVER SATISFIED! No matter what pleasure you give your eyes today, in terms of carnal enjoyment, your eyes will want more of the same tomorrow. It's the nature of the flesh, so don't let that surprise you. As an example, if you start eyeballing people beside your spouse in a sexual way, giving them the once over many times over, you can expect that urge to grow proportionate to the amount of time you let your eyes do such things! The more you feed the beast, the more food it will require! So keep yourself out of trouble and stay focused on things of the spirit. When you look at other people, learn to see them as neutral spirits, not as men or women, old or young, attractive or ugly, fat or thin, or anything else. See them as spirits, either saved or unsaved, and that's it! See them through spiritual eyes, and in doing so, you cut off an opportunity for the devil against you. See your financial prosperity merely as a means to finance the Great Commission (Mark 16:15-20). Don't see your money as a means to continue to buy more possessions and toys for yourself. And see your job as a means to help God win souls at your workplace, and a method whereby He can channel money into your pockets to help finance the business of evangelism. It's all a matter of looking STRAIGHT AHEAD, and not looking to the left or the right! Stay focused and stay prioritized with your eyes. Look ONLY upon the things of God, and never mind the other stuff!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 16 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Proverbs 4:26 - WHERE HAVE YOUR FEET BEEN TAKING YOU?

The third area of monitor and control consistently in life is our feet. This isn't talking about your physical feet per se, but rather, the direction of your life, and the path you're taking right now. So many times, we find ourselves in trouble with God because we've allowed ourselves to get off track and off course. God has a plan for each of us, and it's a perfect plan. That plan also requires a journey, which starts on the day we get saved, and continues until the day we die. Our life is a journey, and we need to stay on course and on track, otherwise we're going to find ourselves out of position concerning the perfect will of God. And when that happens, all kinds of not-so-pleasant things take place! Our health begins to suffer. Our finances begin to dry up. Or, even if we have health and more money than ever before, if we're out of position our lives will ALWAYS be out of sync with God. There will be that inner gnawing that nothing can take away except God! You know, it's been said that the most miserable person on earth is the backslidden Christian. I think that's true. When you're not where God wants you to be, you're unsettled in your spirit, and restless concerning the things of God. That's not a place of rest or peace, but a place of turmoil and uncertainty.

Tragically, many Christians never get themselves back on track, and therefore spend their entire lives wandering around in their own private "wilderness", like the Jews did back in the Old Testament. How do you avoid such a predicament? By doing what our verse today tells us to do. By **PONDERING THE PATH** of your feet. What does that mean? It means we constantly monitor the course and direction of our lives, making sure we're always on track and on course for God. It's so very easy to get off course, because there are so many things the devil uses to distract us. But if we are constantly monitoring our lives and the path we're on at any given time, the distractions become easier to see and avoid. It's important to understand that getting "off track" happens very slowly in most cases. It's so subtle you don't even know its happening because the devil is very good at disguising his plans against us. But always reflect on the overall direction of your life, and daily ask the Lord to help you recognize and follow His perfect will for your life, in general and specifically day by day. Keep this trap of the enemy always before your face, and you won't end up 10 years down the road, wondering how you got so far away from God's plan and purpose for your life!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 17 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Matthew 11:11 - GREATER THAN JOHN THE BAPTIST?

One day Jesus made a remarkable statement about you and me as children of God in the New Testament. When talking to the crowds about John the Baptist, Jesus said the LEAST of all the New Testament saints was greater than this great prophet of God! Imagine that! This is certainly not how many believers view themselves, but that is how God sees us! You see, as anointed as John was, he was still living in the Old Testament. He hadn't been born again yet. He was a servant of God, but not a child of God. That's the difference between all those great men and women of faith in the Old Testament, and people like you and me in the New Testament. The difference is that the Holy Spirit now lives inside us; we've become temples of the Holy Spirit. This is something those Old Testament servants of God could never have.

So imagine; if somebody like John the Baptist could do all he did for God, what do you think our potential is now that we're saved and the Holy Spirit is living inside us? The sad fact is that so many Christians have bought into the devil's lies for so long; they actually think its NORMAL to be beat up, defeated and living in lack and sickness all the time. But if John the Baptist, and others like him, could do such great and mighty things back then, certainly we can do much more! After all, it was Jesus who said the LEAST person in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John the Baptist ever was! As far as God is concerned, you're greater in potential than any of the Old Testament saints ever were. You need to change the way you think about yourself and start seeing yourself the way God sees you. GREATER is He in you than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4). So don't accept mediocrity, compromise and lack any longer. Be great for God! You have it within you - all of God's power and potential is within you because the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is within you. And He's there to empower you and make you as great as you can be in Christ. So, take these truths, and choose to believe them and act on them. John the Baptist has nothing on you!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 18 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Psalms 89:1 - ANNOUNCING GOD'S FAITHFULNESS!

One of the best ways to control your tongue is to create good verbal habits in your life. And one such habit can be found in today's verse. The Psalmist tells us to **MAKE KNOWN** the faithfulness of God. That means we announce it, share it, tell others about it - and keep doing it all the time. Why? Well, for starters, we announce it because it's true! Thank God He is faithful to us and to His own Word. Thank God you can bet your life on the faithfulness of God and His promises. Thank God He and His word never change! But secondly, announcing His faithfulness helps remind **YOU** of that fact, and there's no better time to do that than when you're in the middle of some spiritual crisis. When all of hell seems arrayed against you, that's the perfect time to begin proclaiming the faithfulness of God.

Whatever promises from the Bible covers your present situation, stand on those promises no matter what. God is faithful. And don't just believe that in your heart, but **SAY IT** to yourself, and **SAY IT** to others around you. Faith comes **BY HEARING** God's Word (Romans 10:17), and there's just two main ways you can hear God's Word. First, if someone else proclaims it to you (like me, the preacher), or, if you declare it to yourself. The good news is you don't have to wait to find someone else to preach about God's faithfulness to you - you can do it for yourself **ANYTIME** you need to. And like I said at the beginning of today's devotional, if you cultivate that habit by doing it **ALL THE TIME**, you won't even flinch when facing impossible situations or circumstances. You'll just continue doing what you've been doing, which is announcing the faithfulness of God. A few years ago, God had me put together a message which listed 9 things to remember about God for the coming year. The first of the nine was this truth right here: **GOD IS FAITHFUL!** My friend, in a world where you're surrounded with unbelief, skepticism, doubt, double-mindedness and all of that, you need to **KNOW** that God is faithful! He won't let you down. He won't leave you in the lurch. He won't abandon you, leave you, forsake you or hurt you - ever! Oh, praise God! What a great thing to announce to the world, and specifically, to yourself! So do it now, and do it throughout the day, and do it until Jesus comes! Make it a habit to always proclaim the faithfulness of your God. Remember, He's not just God overall, but He's **YOUR** God today, and forever!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 19 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Psalms 147:15 - THE WORLD'S FASTEST SPRINTER!

The world's fastest sprinter is not a man or woman running on some track field somewhere. It's the Word of God! God's Word RUNS SWIFTLY! Its already way ahead of where you are going, and it will be waiting for you when you get there, wherever "there" may be! Why? Because God and His Word are ONE! You cannot separate God from His Word. God is only as good as His Word, in the same way you're only as good as your word. If your word is no good then you're no good! Your reputation rests upon the integrity of what you say, and that comes from God. So, when we read statements like the one in Psalms that says the "steps of good men are ordered of the Lord" (Psalms 37:23), you need to know that's because of God's Word running swiftly ahead of you. Listen friend, nothing surprises God in your life! People sometimes talk and preach like God is surprised with things we do, or with things that happen in our life. Not so! God sees the end from the beginning, that's why His Word is out there running swiftly ahead of you, always making a way, preparing a pathway to victory for you.

This should bring a great sense of relief, comfort and excitement to you! Imagine this with me for a moment. Right now, as you read this daily devotional, God's Word is hard at work out there ahead of your life, orchestrating things, arranging things, positioning people, whatever will be needed to usher you along on a victorious road towards heaven. That's what God's Word is doing for you RIGHT NOW. It's running swiftly ahead of you, preparing the way that you should go. God's Word is not lagging behind, waiting to see what you're going to say or do in order to respond. No! God's Word is out ahead of you, running faster than any track star, ordering your day and building God's hedge of protection around your life for the future. Oh Halleluah! What joy that brings to my soul! Friend, you can't outrun God's Word! God is faithful, as we saw in yesterday's devotional, and His Word runs swiftly and faithfully ahead of you, making your way straight and secure. Praise God!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 20 DAILY DEVOTIONAL Psalms 147:16 - LET NATURE REMIND YOU!

Because I'm an Apostle in the body of Christ, my ministry is mobile in nature. I'm always traveling, going from place to place and church to church to strengthen the body of Christ. I wrote this particular devotional in Cheyenne, Wyoming, on a Sunday morning, where I was scheduled to minister that weekend. During the night a winter storm came in and dumped about 6 inches of snow on the town. As I looked out my hotel window at the beauty of the fallen snow, it reminded me all over again about how nature declares the glory of God, and the faithfulness of God. Genesis 8:22 talks about the seasons of the earth, and the principles of seedtime and harvest time. As long as we live in this dispensation, the seasons will come and go on time and on schedule. What for? To give glory to God, and to remind each of us of His greatness, sovereignty and faithfulness to all generations.

Just as the falling snow is a part of winter, so should God's power and Lordship be a part of your life daily. You know, as I looked down at the people in the parking lot that morning, brushing the snow off their cars, I didn't see anybody shaking their fist at God, angrily asking Him about why there is all this snow on their cars! No, everybody in this part of the country automatically KNOWS that when winter comes, snow comes with it. They can count on it, it's nothing to be surprised about. Well, God's faithfulness is the same for us spiritually. When you pray and ask for an answer or take a stand in faith and exercise your spiritual authority over the devil, the victorious results shouldn't be anymore of a surprise to you than for people in Wyoming to wake up and see snow all over the ground in winter. Why? Because just like the 4 seasons in the temperate climate zones of the earth, God has set in motion certain spiritual laws that work and are as normal and predictable as any winter snowstorm in Wyoming! So next time you see something in nature that you just take for granted, like spring following winter, and summer following spring, and fall following summer, remember the faithfulness of God, and be reminded all over again, like I was on that snowy Sunday in Cheyenne, that God is sovereign, and nothing the devil says or does can interfere with God's love for you, or His plans for your life. God is totally in control. Amen!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 21 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Proverbs 4:22 - GOD'S HMO

In the society today in which we live, HMO's are a part of life. A large percentage of America's population is under somebody's HMO's coverage for health insurance. Arguing the pros and cons of such a system will go on until Jesus comes, but one thing must never be overlooked by the Christian in all of these debates and arguments. God has His own HMO, and its light years better than any HMO down here on earth. His HMO is His Word, and we become members of that HMO through simple faith in the promises of God on the subject of healing. This HMO doesn't require any monthly premiums either, Jesus paid all our premiums once for all when He died on the cross and rose from the dead. No premiums, no deductibles, no fighting with HMO reps who deny your claims - none of that my friend! God's HMO is open and available to all men all the time for any reason. No claim will be denied for any reason! That's pretty good, no?

I sometimes marvel at people who take the doctor's word as gospel and do whatever he or she says to the letter. But those same people, many times, will doubt God's Word and question whether they need to do what God says they should do in His Word to obtain healing. If the doctor told them to take pills 5x's a day at certain times, they'd make sure they do exactly what they're being told to do. But ask them to feed on the healing verses 5x's a day (or even just one time a day) from God's Word and listen to all the excuses and reasons why they can't. You know, if you don't pay your premiums on time, and pay your deductibles when you have a medical charge, the earthly HMO will not even consider honoring a claim from you. So why is it we think we can just do any old thing when it comes to God's directions in His Word, but still expect Him to jump through hoops to heal us when we need it? That's called spiritual ignorance my friend! If you want to take advantage of God's HMO, then do what He says to do. What is that? For starters, read and do Joshua 1:8. That one verse right there, if people actually did what it says to do, would eliminate 90% of their problems and health issues. But they don't do what that verse says to do, so they struggle along with their aches, pains, sicknesses and diseases. How sad! But I'm persuaded of better things concerning you! You can be a part of God's HMO anytime you want, and you can stay as long as you want - just follow the guidelines and you're in! No payments necessary! The payments were made more than 2,000 years ago on a cross by the Son of God. All you have to do now is accept that finished work in your body, and the healing and health promised you are yours in Jesus' Name.



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 22 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Romans 7:23 - OUR WAR WITHIN

Every Christian fights an internal war every day. It's the war between our born-again spirit, and our not-yet-born-again flesh. No one is exempted from this, not you, not me, not anybody. As long as we live on earth in these bodies and we haven't died and gone to heaven, or Jesus hasn't yet come back, we'll have to control the sinful desires of the flesh. This is what Paul was writing about in our verse today. And I don't know about you, but the fact that this great man of God had carnal struggles just like I do is a great source of comfort and encouragement to me! You know, people tend to deify people like Paul, but in reality, they were no different than you and me. They had their "ISSUES" to contend with, no different than anybody else. So next time you fall prey to some sinful desire or action of the flesh, don't despair! Run to God, ask Him for forgiveness according to 1 John 1:9, and purpose in your heart to do better with the Lord's help. Don't look back! You can't change the past, so don't let the devil condemn you over the past mistakes! (For more extensive teaching about this, buy my book entitled *ADVANCING UNDER FIRE*. It's available online through our website or as a digital book from Amazon, iTunes or Nook).

Once you've asked Jesus to forgive you, He does. And from that point, just move on and purpose in your heart that with God's help, you'll do a better job of controlling the flesh. Even Paul was doing this. If you read chapter 7 from Romans, you can see him describing the on-going struggle he's been having with his carnal tendencies. And this is the war within that ALL of us fight on a daily basis. Your flesh NEVER wants to obey God, ever. Why? Because it's still dead-to-sin. God hasn't re-created it in the same way He re-created your spirit man when you got saved. Thank God we have His promise that one day our bodies will be changed, but for now, our job from the Lord is to control the flesh and keep it under subjection to our spirits. Basically, for Christians, our spirits want to follow God and our flesh doesn't, and therein lies the daily conflict we all face. The flesh wants to do 3 things in this life: EAT, SLEEP and SIN! And, as I've said before, understand that your flesh is a deadly enemy, and is NEVER satisfied with what you give it today. It will always want more tomorrow until it has ultimately killed you. So be alert and be aware of the war that is raging within you right now. Don't worry, God has given you all the tools and weapons to successfully fight that fight, but recognize it IS a fight!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 23 DAILY DEVOTIONAL Proverbs 22:3 - ANTICIPATING THE ENEMY

In yesterday's devotional, we talked about the war within all Christians. It's the war between our born-again spirits, and our still dead-to-sin bodies, what we commonly call our "flesh". Today I'd like to give you one technique to use in this on-going, daily fight against the carnal desires of our flesh. It's found in our verse today, and basically, its learning how to ANTICIPATE your enemy. What does that mean? It means that once you understand the nature of your enemy the flesh, you should begin to take note of its tendencies and areas where it is more prone to dominance against you in your life. For example, if you're a man, you might have real problems with lustful eyes. Some men have this problem, others don't. Or, you might have an alcohol addiction or habit, where whenever you're around a bar, or with people drinking alcoholic beverages, you're feeling the "urge" to join in. Some people have this problem, others don't. If you're a woman, you might have real emotional challenges during your monthly menstruation. Some women have this problem, others don't. The point is this, you know yourself better than any one else (except God of course), and you know the areas where your flesh has had control in your life. Therefore, according to today's verse, if you're a "prudent" man (or woman), you're going to develop the habit of looking ahead and to the best of your ability, anticipate areas where your flesh is going to try and rise up against you.

Once you become adept at anticipating these potential areas of temptation, you can start waging warfare within before those temptations ever actually present themselves to you. How do you do that? By SPEAKING the Word of God out of your mouth, quoting verses which will help renew your mind and keep your flesh in subjection to your spirit man. You can also just refuse to go to certain places or locations, knowing they are hotbeds of temptation for you. And finally, you can spend time WORSHIPPING and PRAISING the Lord in prayer. That one alone has such power in it! Personally, over the years, I've found that when I see a potential area of temptation on the horizon, if I take time to worship the Lord and just wait on Him in His presence, I'm much better at guarding myself from the temptations when they do show up. So, if you've had difficulty with winning the spiritual war within, make it a point to start doing what our verse today tells us to do. Anticipate evil, foresee temptation, and launch your pre-emptive strike against your flesh in the Name of Jesus!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 24 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

1 Samuel 16:7 - DON'T JUDGE OTHERS!

When fighting your good fight of faith against your flesh, never fall into the trap of judging others as they fight their fights of faith alongside you. Over the past few days, we've been talking about spiritual warfare, and the importance of controlling your flesh, which is your enemy. In today's verse, we see the selection process concerning the King of Israel at that time in the Old Testament. The prophet Samuel was sent to Jesse's house, and asked to see all of his sons. During this selection process, Samuel makes this classic statement in defense of his selection of David over his other brothers, which we would all be well to remember. God is the ONLY one qualified to judge people, because only He can see into their hearts. That's why you can't go around pointing fingers at everybody else, commenting on their struggles, as if you've got no problems of your own to deal with! This is one of the prime sources of religious hypocrisy, and Jesus hated it when He was here on earth. You should hate it too and run from it like the plague.

Throughout the Bible, God warns His people against doing this - judging others. That's not our place my friend, it's God's place and His alone. We're supposed to judge DOCTRINE and LIFESTYLE, not people. If people embrace and teach false doctrine to the tune of denying the Lordship of Jesus, then of course, we're to judge that and stay away. Also with lifestyle, if people choose to live lives of sensuality and promiscuity, then we judge that and stay away. But never are we to judge the people themselves, and never are we to set ourselves up as judge, jury and executioner. That's not our place because we're not qualified to do that. We can't see into people's hearts - only God can, and He judges righteously according to the MOTIVES and INTENT of the heart, which are things you and I can never see from where we stand on the outside. No, my friend, our job is to mind our own business, and tend to our own "P's" and "Q's"! Our fight of faith against our flesh will keep us plenty busy until Jesus comes, so we're to do just as Jesus said - avoid commenting on the speck we see in somebody's else's eye, while ignoring the plank of wood stuck in our own eye! People love to do this, and it is so destructive and divisive within the body of Christ. Instead of trying to damage or destroy folks who are struggling with areas of the flesh, we should be doing all we can to help them recover themselves! Do you see believers doing that on a regular basis? Not hardly! There's an old saying that's true: CHRISTIANS ARE IN THE ONLY ARMY THAT SHOOTS ITS OWN WOUNDED. If I'm talking about you, don't let that be you any longer! Just concentrate on getting your own act together and pray that others do the same. That's it!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 25 DAILY DEVOTIONAL John 8:11 - DO YOU CARRY A BAG OF ROCKS?

One of the most destructive traits within the body of Christ is our inability to forgive others. And from this preacher's perspective, its one of the most damaging and hypocritical expressions of carnality and immaturity out there for the world to see. Sadly, more often than not, it's the "religious" people who are guilty of doing this, or the "spiritual" ones (or so they think of themselves) who are the worst offenders. But whenever I'm tempted to judge others for the sins they've committed, no matter what sin it may be, God always brings me back to our story today, which in my opinion, is one of the most powerful stories in the entire New Testament. If any encounter embraces and reveals the loving and merciful heart of God, its this story right here. I won't go into details, time would not permit in today's devotional, but I encourage you to study and read this passage slowly and prayerfully. And then ask yourself this question: HOW MANY ROCKS HAVE I BEEN THROWING AT OTHERS?

Frankly, I am fed up and so exasperated with so-called Christians, who think it is their life's business to run around judging everybody else's habits, lifestyles, preferences and yes, even failures or sins! Who do they think they are? God? Jesus? What rights have they to pass judgment on someone's else's failures or sins? NONE! Why? Because of exactly what Jesus told the religious hypocrites the day they dragged that women out into the public and tried to use her to destroy His ministry. He said, basically, if anyone in that crowd that day was totally free from sin, they then would have the right to throw rocks at the woman caught in adultery. In other words, mind your own business sinner, because your life isn't any better than hers! Remember that as far as God is concerned, sin is sin, and there is not distinction in the act itself. Oh yes, of course, certain sins carry more consequences socially, and even emotionally, but spiritually, it's not that way at all. Example: we all live under the curse of sin on this planet because thousands of years ago, Adam ate a piece of fruit he wasn't supposed to eat, and look at what happened after that one sin? He didn't rape 10,000 women, slaughter millions of innocents in holocaust-style fashion, didn't cheat on his wife, didn't extort money from others, etc. He just disobeyed God once, by eating a piece of fruit, and WHAM! Judgment! Well, its time for us to grow up and stop throwing rocks at others. We have plenty of things in our own lives that are sinful and out of order before God, so why not concentrate on fixing our own lives, and let God take care of the others around us! Yes, the New Testament talks about certain people being judged and removed from the church fellowship because of sin, but you must read that story in context to the rest of the New Testament, and in the context of our story today. Jesus did NOT condemn, or look down His nose, at this adulterous woman. He simply said, I don't condemn you, just don't do this kind of thing anymore. And that, my friend, is the heart of God, and the crux of the New Testament teaching about mercy, forgiveness, divine patience, and a host of other things that religious people know nothing about. So, get rid of your rocks my friend! Concentrate on YOU, and never mind the others. God sees everything, and nobody gets away with anything. Vengeance is His, He will repay in due time, and due season! You just exhibit the same loving, caring, merciful heart Jesus displayed that day when the adulterous woman stood before Him! You protect yourself when you do that, because Jesus said that with what measure you judge others, it will be used against you! (Matthew 7:1,2)



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 26 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Luke 10:24 - WHAT A TIME AS THIS!

The day in which we live is unlike any time before it. It's both exciting and terrifying at the same time. And we Christians have the privilege of living in the time of all times, the end of this great age! Jesus said many great men and women of God longed to see the day in which Jesus came and lived on earth, but how much more exciting is this time, when His triumphant return is so close at hand? When Jesus came the first time, it was for the purpose of being our sin substitute on the cross and ushering in the New Testament. When He returns, He's coming back as the triumphant Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, not the lowly servant born in a stable! And that's our time! Yes, it's stressful, dangerous and challenging, but at the same time, this is the most exciting time ever to be alive since Adam! Why? Because where sin abounds, grace does MUCH MORE abound! As the world around us falls apart in fear and uncertainty for the future, we Christians should be at the top of our "game," so to speak. Now more than ever, we must be the strong leaders we're meant to be, and the strong and accurate witnesses we're supposed to be for the Lord Jesus. So don't live anymore with worry being your constant companion! Rise up and beyond that, and understand the times for what they really are, from God's viewpoint and not your own!

I thank God I live in this day and age! Yes, sin is rampant and all around us, but when has it ever not been? Each successive generation from Adam has had their fair share of sin challenges, and even though the pace of life has increased dramatically over the past 40 to 50 years, God is not taken by surprise one bit! He's firmly in control of everything, and will see His perfect will done on earth, as it is in heaven. So instead of doing what many Christians do, which is to always major on the negative and live in fear, flip that around and look at the future in a positive, spiritual sense. We're on the edge of the most dramatic event ever seen by man, the return of Jesus to earth as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. And when He comes back, I want Him to find me at my post, alert, spiritually awake, ready and eagerly watching for His return. In that kind of mindset, God will use you to turn cities upside down! Lives upside down! Nations upside down! That's what I'm talking about, that's what our lives in this day and age are supposed to be all about. We have so much technology at our disposal now, and ALL of it, from God's viewpoint, is to be used to get the gospel out to the world. It's challenging to stay ahead of the techno curve, but exciting at the same time. It keeps you young! Hahaha! I don't know about you, but I'm not planning on getting older, just more mature and seasoned in the techniques of spiritual warfare! So look up my friend, you're redemption draws near, and you're living in the most thrilling times ever imagined by the great men and women of God of yester-year. Praise God! This is our time, for the glory of God!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 27 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

John 10:19 - DIVISION HAPPENS!

Don't try to be friends with everyone. Just try to be pleasing and obedient to the Lord and let everything else work itself out! Too many of us think it's our "mission" in life to be friends with everybody around us, but that's not the picture painted in the New Testament. Jesus wasn't friends with everyone, so, if we act and talk and think just like Him, why would we ever think we'll be friends with everyone? The fact is my friend, more people are going to HATE YOU than love you in this life, but that's okay. As long as Jesus loves you, and is pleased with your life, no one else's opinion matters. In our verse today, we see that everywhere Jesus went, there was DIVISION among the people. That's to be expected, not something to be surprised about. If you take a stand for righteousness, some people are going to love you for it, and many others are not. And as the return of Jesus draws closer and closer, the battle lines will become more and more distinct. My job in this life is to obey God, just like what Peter told the Pharisees and Sadducees in the early days of the New Testament church (see Acts 5:29). If you don't like me for it, I can't help that. I'll stand someday before the Lord, and be judged for the life I've lived, and all my critics and persecutors won't be there! They won't be there for your judgment either, so don't worry about them!

Of course, the Bible says that if at all possible, live at peace with all men (Romans 12:18). But if push comes to spiritual shove, you must NEVER back down for the sake of protecting a "relationship" or "friendship" with other people. Stand your ground and remember always that division is just a part of the total evangelistic package. In fact, Jesus plainly said that His purpose in coming was NOT to create unity (which is what everybody loves to say we need today), but instead, to create strife and division, even among family members (Luke 12:51-53). So, never mind trying to please all men everywhere. And, don't cave in emotionally when people come against you because of who you are, and what you stand for. Just move on and concentrate on finding the smart ones out there who still have a working brain! Truly intelligent people are the ones who accept Jesus as Lord and Savior of their lives, the rest are just folks who are educated beyond their intellect! Be friendly always, and to the best of your ability, return good for evil, as the Bible instructs us to do. But, don't let your day be ruined just because somebody doesn't like you! It's a part of being a Christian. And one last thought here today: if you have no one persecuting you, saying all manner of evil against you, or doing their best to destroy you, something is WRONG with your spiritual testimony! Why? Because persecution is always proportionate to your level of outreach and activity. The more you do, the more you'll be attacked and shot at. The less you do, the less you'll be attacked and persecuted. Think about it, and if nobody is persecuting you for being a Christian, you need to make some serious adjustments!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 28 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Acts 11:14 - HOW IMPORTANT IS GOD'S WORD?

When the angel talked with Cornelius in today's verse, he told him to call for Peter so that Peter could give him words by which he and all his household **WOULD BE SAVED!** My question today to you is this: do you really understand how important God's Word really is? I'm sorry to say that most Christians don't really have that understanding, and that's a tragedy. God's Word is the most powerful weapon on earth. No weapon formed by man can stand against it, and no devil can withstand its power either. When God's speaks, His word is **LAW**, and it **WILL** come to pass no matter what anyone says otherwise. That's why you must place a premium on the study of God's Word. You must make time and take time each day, to feed your spirit with God's word. It brings salvation, life, healing, health, prosperity, favor, deliverance, protection, and anything else you want or need in this world. That's why the angel told Cornelius to have Peter speak the Word of God to him and his household. The angel knew what many believers don't know. He knew that God's Word has got within it the inherent power to change lives and re-create the spirits of men! Wow! What power, and the good news is that this power is readily available to you, and anyone else if they want it!

God's Word carries within it the power and ability to change and create things. When Cornelius and his household heard Peter preach it, he and his household got saved, exactly as the angel had said. Why? Because God's Word is what He uses to create with. **EVERYTHING** on this planet, and the universe itself, was created with words - God's Word. And that Word of God still has the same creative power when you speak it out your mouth in simple faith. Romans 10:17 says that faith comes by hearing God's Word. Faith is the force God uses to create with, and the force is contained inside God's Word. When God's Word is spoken, the force of faith is released and put to work. That's how God created everything in Genesis chapter 1. **HE SPOKE!** Nothing was done by the Holy Spirit until God said something, and once said; the force of faith in God's Word was released and put to work to create everything you now see in this physical universe. The Bible is not just another literary work my friend. It is **ALIVE** (Hebrews 4:12)! When you feed your spirit with that Word, the life within it literally impregnates your spirit with God's life and power! That's why the devil works so hard to keep that Word away from you. He doesn't care if you spend your entire life sitting in church or attending some service somewhere. Just so you don't start feeding your spirit with God's Word! That's what he is afraid of. So once again, let me encourage you to make time, and take time, feeding your spirit with God's Word daily! Read it, study it, and meditate in it! If you eat 3 meals a day physically, at least feed your spirit the same number of times! The more you do it, the stronger and the more faith-filled you will become!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 29 DAILY DEVOTIONAL Acts 9:19 - GET STRONG! STAY STRONG!

In today's verse, we see Paul on the road to physical recovery. He's been fasting and without food for a number of days, and now, he's at the table to eat and regain his strength. I like how the Holy Spirit worded this phrase in today's verse. He says that Paul was strengthened AFTER having some food. And as true as that is for our physical bodies, how much truer is it for our spirits on the inside? Just like our bodies need food to stay alive and maintain a healthy level of strength, so to, our spirits need constant feeding to stay strong in the Lord. And where do we find the "food" to feed our spirits? It's your Bible, God's word! First Peter 2:2 talks about Peter "feeding" his congregation with the pure milk of the word. Why? That they may GROW thereby. First Corinthians 3:2 talks about Paul "feeding" his congregation with the same milk, which is the word of God. And finally, Hebrews 5:12 is a rebuke from Paul to other members of his church congregation, for failing to move on from the MILK of the word to the MEAT of the word. Why does the Holy Spirit use such terminology? It's simple. Our spirits need to be fed in order to grow and become strong in the Lord. The "food" to do that is God's word.

This will explain to you why so many Christians are weak in faith, weak in courage, weak in commitment, weak in diligence, weak in prayer, weak in just about everything spiritual. Why? Because they've been starving their spirits ever since they got born-again, and as a result their spirit man on the inside is about as emaciated and "near-death" as they could possibly be! I pray that is not you today! I pray you're the exception to that rule. I pray you've been diligent to feed your spirit-man with God's word DAILY! Imagine if Christians fed their spirits as often as they jam food in their mouths all day long! What spiritual giants we'd see roaming the land in the Name of Jesus! The vast majority of Christians feed their bodies many times a day, and feed their spirits a few times a year, and then wonder why life is such a struggle for them! Now here's the real good news you need to know: you can overeat physically and get fat, but you can NEVER over-eat spiritually! In fact, the opposite is true! The more you feed your spirit, the LEANER and STRONGER it will become for the glory of God. The opposite is true for your flesh! You're supposed to regulate your caloric intake physically, otherwise you'll gain weight. Not so with your spirit man inside. He CAN'T gain weight in an unhealthy sense. He can become bigger and stronger, but not in an unhealthy way. He'll look like those lean, trim, muscular athletes you see in the Olympics. And that's what God wants for you, and me, and all of us in Christ. So, get busy and alter your diet! Start taking time to feed your spirit man consistently everyday. Get strong! Stay strong!



APRIL DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

APRIL 30 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

1 Peter 2:2 - DECIDING TO DESIRE GOD'S WORD

In this preacher's opinion, the greatest weapon God has given man on earth is the gift of FREE WILL. We can make choices. We can make decisions. God won't force His will on any of us, and Satan can't force his will on any of us either. We have the God-given power of choice. And here in today's verse, notice carefully the word "desire" as Peter writes to his church members. He says "AS NEWBORN BABES, DESIRE THE SINCERE MILK OF GOD'S WORD." He tells his people to desire something. What should they desire? God's word. Time spent meditating and feeding upon His word, that's what they are told to desire. How about you? Is that a daily desire of yours? If not, you need to change your list of "desires" and put this at the top.

You see my friend, only YOU can choose what your desires in life will be. And guess what? What you decide is your desire, that's where you'll spend the lion's share of your time, talent, effort and money. So again, I ask you, how badly do you desire time spent each day with God's word? The reason so many of us Christians never spend much time in God's word is simply because its not that important to us - we've got other things we desire to do with our time and money. But from the time you wake up each day, you are a creature making choices! What to eat, what to wear, where to go, what to do. To a certain extent, some of those choices are set because of having a job and having to adhere to job-related or work-related schedules. But what about the "free" time? What then? Again, I say to you, if you reach the end of the day, long after you've gone home from work or school - and you've not spent any time with God and His word, then your desires are out of order. DECIDE today to DESIRE God's word DAILY. Ask for the Lord's help in this, and He will give it to you. Ask Him to put within you a burning desire and an unquenchable love for God's word in your heart, and it will be so. And then, ACT on your prayer, and MAKE TIME each day for the feeding of your spirit with God's word. You'll be stronger, leaner, more focused and living with a much greater sense of purpose and spiritual clarity. Only good can come from that!

