

NOVEMBER
DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

MIKE KEYES MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

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NOVEMBER 01 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Proverbs 13:3 - GUARD YOUR MOUTH TO GUARD YOUR LIFE

The most important thing we can do for God in this life is learn to guard our mouth. Why is this so important? Because according to God's Word, EVERYTHING in this life revolves around what we say. So if you guard your mouth, you're guarding your life at the same time. Proverbs 18:21 says that death and life is in the power of the tongue. Proverbs 4:20-22 says we're to give attention to God's Word because it is life to those who find it, and health and healing to all their flesh. How do you give attention to God's Word? By putting it into your heart, and speaking it out of your mouth. Remember that! Into the heart - then out the mouth. It's not complicated, but something very few believers actually do.

If you want your life guarded from the enemy and his evil designs against you, make sure you have control of your tongue. Make sure your words are only words which repeat what God has already said, or words that agree with what God has already said. By doing that, you're not only guarding your mouth, but your life at the same time. Always remember this: THE BIBLE IS A BOOK OF WORDS ABOUT WORDS. Right from the beginning, in Genesis chapter 1, we see that everything God creates is done by speaking words of faith. And, since we're made in His image and likeness, we're designed to operate the very same way. Your words have the God-given ability to create! That's why you have to watch what you're saying, because if you don't do that, your words will actually become ammunition the devil uses against you. So do what you must to objectively analyze what's coming out of your mouth. If it's not something that gives God something to work with, CHANGE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING! Guard your mouth to guard your life!

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NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

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NOVEMBER 02 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Matthew 6:31 - DON'T USE YOUR MOUTH TO WORRY WITH!

In today's verse, Jesus gives us a golden nugget of truth never to forget. He said in essence: Don't use your mouth to express worry about anything! Yesterday we saw from Proverbs the importance of guarding your mouth to guard your life. Today, we see the same truth revealed from a different angle. If you want to guard yourself from the sin of worrying (and to worry over things IS a sin as far as God is concerned), you must make sure you're not expressing your worries with words. Notice how Jesus taught the truth. He said: "Therefore do not worry, SAYING…" Notice carefully. Don't SAY anything that amplifies your worries. Don't SAY anything that fuels your fears. You have to guard your mind, and then guard your mouth. I like the way the older King James translation renders this passage. From that translation, it says "Take no thought, saying..." How do you take a thought the devil tries to plant in your mind? By saying something out of your mouth that opens the door to him.

How do you "take a thought"? By saying something that agrees with the thought. This is what the devil tries to do to sow worry into your heart and mind. He introduces thoughts that, if accepted, will open the door to him and allow him to create a stronghold in your mind and body. This is what worry will do against you. So, don't worry! How do you fight the temptation to worry? By keeping your mind renewed to the Word of God, and not allowing your mouth to utter anything that disagrees with God's Word. Your mouth is the key here. When you're tempted to worry, guard your mouth with extra diligence and vigilance. Make sure you're not "taking" the devil's thoughts by saying words out of your mouth which reinforce the lies he is trying to plant in your mind. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. How? By using your mouth ONLY for the purpose of saying things that honor God and protect His ability to work in you and for you. So don't use your mouth to worry with! Listen to what you're saying, and if what you're saying agrees with the worries trying to gain a foothold in your life, CHANGE what you're saying!

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NOVEMBER 03 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Matthew 11:3 - DOUBTS COME TO US ALL

No matter how strong you are in faith, doubts will always come around to test you and tempt you. This is to be expected. As long as the devil is around, he'll continue to try and plant doubts in your mind about God's faithfulness in your life. In our passage today, we see John the Baptist struggling with doubts about who Jesus is. And remember, it was John who boldly announced that Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah. When Jesus came to be water-baptized, John told the whole crowd that this man was in fact the Lamb of God, sent to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29-36). So what happened after that? Doubts came in. And they were so persistent and strong, that John finally had to send a few of his disciples to ask Jesus if He was indeed their Messiah. The question was: "Are you the One, or should we be looking for someone else?"

So if a man like John the Baptist had struggles with doubts about who Jesus was, and is, then don't feel so surprised when doubts come to you in the same way! Just understand where the doubts are coming from, and who is sending them to you, and why. Satan's most productive method to destroy our faith in God is by successfully planting doubts in our minds about God's Word, and God's faithfulness. Therefore, learn to recognize those doubts when they come, and resist them in Jesus' Name. It doesn't matter if you're the greatest man or woman of faith that there is. Doubts will come against you, because the devil is still here, and "doubt" is his middle name. How was he able to successfully tempt Eve in the Garden of Eden? He introduced doubt into her mind about what God had said to her. Once the doubt had been accepted by the woman, the deception was well on its way towards sin. And that's the way he will work against you too. Once you accept and entertain his doubts in your mind, it's just a short step from there to sin. The sin of doubt leads to other sins after that, such as the sin of unbelief. So the moment you realize that doubt has come against you, raise up a standard in your life by resisting those thoughts with the spoken Word of God. Do what Jesus did when He was tempted. Three times the devil tried to introduce doubt to Jesus by using the word "if". "IF YOU ARE THE SON OF GOD..." What's the devil trying to do? Get Jesus to doubt God and His Word. And that's the same thing he'll try to do against you. So when (not if) the doubts come, rebuke them by speaking the Word of God to the thoughts trying to gain a stronghold in your mind. You can't stop the doubts from coming, but you can keep them from becoming a stronghold in your mind. As one preacher once said, "You can't stop the birds from flying above your head, but you can prevent them from building a nest in your hair!"

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NOVEMBER 04 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Joshua 14:11 - BE STRONG FOR WAR!

When Caleb made this statement to Joshua, he was 85 years old. Most people would say that a man who is 85 years old is an old man, but this man was different. This man was as strong at 85 as he was when he was 40! What for? For war! What a great example to look up to! The reason he worked at staying young at heart, physically fit and ready for battle, was because he knew he was at war. And for us today, the situation has not changed. We're still at war, and our enemy is the same one he had to contend with back then. Oh yes, there were the giants in the promised land – and they were the ones he had to physically go out and defeat on the battlefield. But behind the scenes in the unseen spiritual realm, his enemies were the same as ours. He had to defeat the devil and his demon forces back then, and we have to do the same today. And to defeat them today and every day consistently, you're going to have to get strong and stay strong! It's that simple.

Caleb is such a hero to me because not only was he radical, fanatical, passionate and strong, he was also a man of war. And even more than that, he REMAINED a man of war as he grew older physically. He didn't allow himself to get old, worn out and sickly. He stayed sharp. He told Joshua his strength was equal to the level of strength he had when he was 40, which was 45 years before! Imagine that! No wonder God said this man had "another spirit" about him (Numbers 14:24). How about you? Could God describe you like He described Caleb? It should be a goal you set for yourself. No, you won't get there overnight, but you can get there. It is possible. The Holy Spirit is living within you, and right there, you have the ability to be a man or woman like Caleb. Passionate, strong and DANGEROUS! You know that when those giants saw Caleb charging up the mountain to attack, they were shaking and quaking in fear. Well, when you put on your spiritual armor and confront the devil, is he shaking and quaking in fear over the prospect of facing you? He should be, but unfortunately in too many cases, the enemy just laughs when we say we're coming against him. Why? Because we're not ready, we're not strong, and we're nowhere near the kind of fighting condition needed to engage the enemy successfully. But you can change that. It's all up to you. You can be a modern-day Caleb, if you want it badly enough. Start today!

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Joshua 14:8 - NEVER MIND WHAT THE PEOPLE SAY!

When you decide to be like Caleb, a man or woman of war, you're going to encounter multitudes of Christians who will try and talk you out of your decision. The devil will use them to try and discourage you from trusting God and believing for the miraculous. This is what was going on back in Caleb's time, when he and Joshua were giving Moses and the people their intelligence report about what they saw in the Promised Land. There were 12 spies who went over to spy out the land, but only 2 gave a good report of faith. 10 gave an evil report of doubt and unbelief. And in today's verse, Caleb reminds Joshua about that many years later, as Joshua is going about the task of dividing up the Promised Land for the Jews to live in. Caleb says that even though he was surrounded by people who, with their words of fear and doubt, made the hearts of the people melt, he WHOLLY FOLLOWED THE LORD. And today it will be no different for you if you decide to be a Caleb for God.

Why will it be no different? Because you're still facing the same enemy he faced, the devil. His tactics have never changed from then until now. He still works to use ignorant, faithless, confused, shallow, weak and double-minded Christians to do his dirty work. Christians who are being used by the devil ignorantly work in the name of Satan (usually without even knowing he is using them as he is) to discourage the minority of us out there who have actually committed ourselves to doing something of significance for God in this life. So when you come along and demonstrate the kind of wild, passionate faith that Caleb had, expect the born-again weaklings to come out of the woodwork, trying to discourage you from trusting God and believing for the impossible. Trust me when I tell you, they're EVERYWHERE, and you'll meet them quickly the moment you decide to move from being just average or mediocre to somebody significant for the body of Christ. When they surround you with their words of doubt, unbelief and caution, do what Caleb did. CHOOSE to completely and without reservation, follow the Lord. That's what Caleb meant when he said he WHOLLY followed the Lord in spite of all the doubt and unbelief around him. We must do the same today.

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NOVEMBER 06 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Joshua 14:10 - STILL GOING AND GOING AND GOING!

There has been a certain TV commercial advertising Energizer batteries that has become a cult classic of sorts. Although it doesn't appear very often anymore, people still remember and refer to the message it conveys about the dependability of their batteries. Do you remember it? It features a small bunny rabbit with a drum, beating the drum as he encounters situations where other batteries are failing for a lack of power. The tag line talks about the fact that when using these batteries, they just keep going and going and going! Well, that's a perfect description of Caleb here in today's verse. God gave him a promise at the age of 40. And at the age of 85, he could still recite and quote the promises to Joshua – word for word! He was not a feeble, worn-out old man. He was strong and full of youthful vitality. In other words, as he got older, he didn't get older, he got wiser and stronger. What an example for us today.

Caleb said that God had KEPT HIM ALIVE all those years between ages 40 and 85. Why? Because God knew He had made a promise, and when God makes a promise, He WILL honor his promise no matter what. As long as the one He promises to is in faith and fully trusting God, God will move heaven and earth to fulfill promises made, even if it means supernaturally keeping someone alive in the desert for more than 40 years, as it was in this case. And if you show God you have that same kind of spiritual tenacity, He'll do for you exactly what He did for Caleb. He'll protect you, empower you, strengthen you, prolong your days, and KEEP YOU ALIVE until the promise has come to pass! If God did it for Caleb, He'll do it for anyone who stands their ground in faith because He is no respecter of persons. He plays no favorites when it comes to this sort of thing. Caleb, year after year out in the desert, just kept going and going and going - just like the Energizer bunny! He refused to wither away with regret and bitterness. He stayed sharp, strong and alert, even while watching all the unbelieving Jews die off one by one in the wilderness. In like manner, God will strengthen you to keep going and going and going – even when surrounded by doubt, unbelief and fear. All He needs is your faith, and complete trust in His faithfulness. If he has that from you, that's all He needs. So don't be like the multitudes of Christians who faint and wilt in the wilderness of life. Be like Caleb and the Energizer bunny, and just keep going and going and going in God's power and might. Your faith will see you through to victory!

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NOVEMBER 07 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

John 1:50 - WHAT DO PEOPLE SEE IN YOU?

What do people see when they see you? I mean, when they see you do they see the works of God in manifestation? Do they see the Holy Spirit at work in your life? Do they see the power of God flowing in and through you? Christians, like most everybody else in the Western world, take a lot of time at the start of each day to dress up, put on make-up, and do all the other things we do to make ourselves "look" right in our own eyes, and in the eyes of others. But what about the real you - the spirit man inside? Are you paying as much attention to how he looks to yourself and to others, and especially to God?

Jesus, in our verse today, told His disciples that if they continued to hang around with Him, they would SEE greater things. That's the way it should be with all of us if we call ourselves Christian. It's God at work in us and through us that people should be able to see. Is this the way it is for you? When people see you, do they see Jesus in you? That's what our Lord told His disciples just before His arrest, crucifixion and resurrection. He told Philip that when they were looking at Him, they were looking at God the Father (John 14:9). Does that mean God the Father and Jesus are one Being, or one Person? NO! Some would say that, but that's not at all what is being said here. Jesus is simply telling Philip, and us, that God is so at work in Him, and so dominates everything Jesus says and does, that to look at Him is to look at a mirrored reflection of God Himself. So, when people see you, do they see Jesus in you? Can you say, like Jesus did, that he that sees you sees Him? If you're like most believers, probably not! Well, you can't change the past, but you can do something about the future. As time goes by, will people see greater works of God in you and through you? Only you can determine whether they will or won't.

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NOVEMBER 08 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Mark 5:36 - IGNORE WHAT PEOPLE SAY TO YOU!

Today's verse is a great reminder to ALWAYS take God at His Word, and NEVER listen to what the people have to say about it! Read this verse from the New International Version. When servants from Jairus' house came to inform him that it was too late and his little girl had already died, this verse says that Jesus IGNORED WHAT THEY SAID, and quickly spoke words to encourage the father to keep believing and trusting God. I like the way that is worded in the NIV. He IGNORED the negative report. He IGNORED the declarations of fear, death and defeat. He IGNORED those who surrounded Him with an evil report. Instead, He SPOKE words of faith, and immediately re-established an atmosphere of faith between Himself and Jairus. When you find yourself surrounded with words of doubt, unbelief and uncertainty about God's ability in your life, IMMEDIATELY move to re-establish your atmosphere of faith. Speak the Word of God out loud, so you can hear it. Romans 10:17 says faith comes by HEARING, and HEARING by the Word of God.

When you speak God's Word in response to a bad report, or in response to someone's comments that seek to destroy your faith and trust in God, you're using your faith as the shield it's described as in Ephesians chapter 6. In that passage, the Bible tells us to take the shield of faith, which is the Word of God. How is that shield used? By SPEAKING words which agree with what God has already said. In that way, you can successfully move past all the doubters that forever seek to surround you with words of death and doubt. Learn to ignore them, as if they aren't even there! Just fix all your attention on what God has said, and never mind about what anybody else says to the contrary. If they get offended with you when you do that, don't be surprised. They will probably get angry, or hurt, or offended at you. They did when Jesus did it, so they'll do it when you follow the Lord's example. So what if they do? You're not ignoring them for their benefit, but for your own! Your primary responsibility is to stay in faith, and to do that, you're going to have to learn to ignore those around you who don't speak faith the way you do. You don't have to be mean to them, but you will have to ignore them! Keep your eyes and ears inclined to God's Word, and nothing else. In doing so, you successfully use your faith as the shield it was designed to be in situations like the one in our story for today. The only Words that matter are God's Words! Never forget that!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

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NOVEMBER 09 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

John 17:16 - YOU DON'T BELONG HERE!

Have you ever heard somebody say that to someone else? YOU DON'T BELONG HERE, GET OUT! What are they saying when they say something like that? They're saying "you don't fit in here", or, "you are not like we are". Well, Christians (like you and me) need to always remember that while living on earth, we're really out of place. We don't "fit", and really, we're not supposed to! Yes, Jesus has come to take back the keys of authority from Satan, and yes, He will return to establish the original plan and purpose of God for humankind on earth. But for us today, now in this time before our Lord's return, recognize that you don't fit! You don't belong here! The only reason why God allows us to stay here on earth is because we're commissioned to evangelize the world, representing him and sharing the good news of salvation (Mark 16:15-18). Too many times, it's the opposite that happens. Christians become so worldly and carnal, they become just like the sinners and unbelievers. They think, talk and act just like people who don't know Jesus. But in our verse today, in the midst of that great prayer He prayed, Jesus makes this statement to God about us. He said to God, "Father, they are not of this world, in the same way I'm not of this world". Is that how you see yourself today?

Something is terribly wrong if Christians find themselves wanting what sinners want, acting like sinners act, and talking like sinners talk. Of course we need to be wise in our evangelistic dealings with people, but at the same time, we shouldn't blend in so well that nobody can identify us! People who know you should know what you believe, and should know you're a Christian. They should know by what you do, by how you talk and by how you live your life. I'm not talking about being some kind of spiritual prude, who is out of touch with reality. Those kinds of Christians are missing the whole point of what they're here to accomplish in this life. We're to mingle amongst the unbelievers in such a way that they WANT what we have, while at the same time, keeping ourselves pure, sanctified and undefiled from the world's ways. But no matter what goes down with you in your life, always remember that in essence, you don't belong here! You're a citizen of heaven, and are just visiting planet earth to get a job done for Jesus. Your priorities should be upon heavenly things (Colossians 3:1-5), not earthly things. You shouldn't be talking, acting, planning and living like people who don't know Jesus. You should be different, and that's a good thing. Sinners should know who you are, and why you're different from them. Not to drive them away, but to entice them to come in and enjoy the free gifts that come with salvation. You're not like everybody else, so don't try to be! You're in this world, but you're not of this world. There is a big difference between the two.

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

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NOVEMBER 10 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Daniel 3:17-18 - NO MATTER WHAT, GOD WILL COME THROUGH FOR YOU!

Sometimes when you talk and teach about faith, the "Doubting Thomas" types like to quote this passage right here. Folks who don't understand faith like to highlight the word "if" in these verses, to supposedly support their contention that its okay to put an "if" in your declarations of faith towards God. That is not at all what these 3 Hebrews were telling the King, and that is not at all what they were showing about the life of faith. What they WERE telling the King, and us, is that no matter what the enemy throws against us, we KNOW that God will never leave us, and we KNOW that He WILL deliver us! Not maybe, but for sure! That's true faith! There is no "if" in our declaration of God's power, or His ability and willingness to use that power to bring us to victory, every time. They were saying, in essence, that IF you throw us in the fire, God will deliver us. And, IF you don't throw us in the fire, God will still deliver us! And IF our God chooses to take us home to heaven at this time, that's still victory, and we're not bowing to your golden image! The emphasis here is not on what the King does or doesn't do, but rather, upon God's power to deliver those who choose to stand their ground in faith. Their usage of the word "if" is not a badge of doubt about God's ability. Rather, it's a declaration of their faith, AND God's ultimate sovereignty. God is sovereign, isn't He? Of course, but He's also given us authority on earth, and that is why He searches to and fro (back and forth), looking for people to show Himself strong to (2 Chronicles 16:9).

History is full of examples of people unwilling to yield their faith in God, in the face of torture, hardship, persecution and even death. They basically said the same thing the 3 Hebrews said to the King in our verses today. No matter what you "threaten" me with, I'm not backing down! I'm trusting God, and I believe He WILL come through for me. That's it! That's the true life of faith. And, if I do end up in heaven through all of this, where's the defeat in that? After all, what are you going to threaten me with, heaven for all eternity? That's hardly a threat my friend! The "if" we use in our declarations of faith isn't about God's ability, or willingness to use his ability for us. Rather, it's about whatever the enemy, or life in general, throws against us. If we're attacked that's fine, because as far as we're concerned, God is able, and more than willing to protect us and deliver us. If we're not attacked, that's fine too, because God is still God no matter what. Either way, we still have a job to do for Him in the Name of Jesus. If that's your attitude today, you're on the right track! If it isn't your attitude, change it! You might be facing some kind of "fiery furnace" today in your life, like the 3 Hebrew children. So what? The issue is not the fiery trial's ability to wreak havoc in your life. The real issue is your decision to believe that God's love for you, and His exceedingly great and precious promises, are more than enough to deliver you in victory from whatever test or trial you're facing today. So choose to believe in God - and do it now! When the 3 Hebrew children were in fact thrown into the fire, God protected them and when they came out, they didn't even smell like smoke! And you too, can come through your fiery furnace victoriously, without a trace of fire or smoke on you! Take heart my friend. No furnace of fire is too hot for God!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 11 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Daniel 3:15 - WHO IS THE GOD WHO CAN DELIVER YOU?

King Nebuchadnezzar asked the 3 Hebrew children a question. "WHO is the God that can deliver you from my hand?" I'll tell you who He is! He's the One who, from Genesis to Maps, consistently shows Himself strong to ANYONE who dares to trust Him and believe His Word. Old Testament or New, God is a God of power and might! In fact in 1 Corinthians 4:20, Paul told the Corinthians that the kingdom of God is not in word (carnal intellectualism), but in power (supernatural miracles). People love to intellectualize God, and that's such a waste of time! God is God, and that's it! He has the power to interdict into this natural realm, and LOOKS for places to demonstrate it. And your faith, and mine, should NEVER be placed in some intellectual acceptance or understanding of God. That will never work my friend! So when you're facing your fiery furnace, as these 3 Hebrew children were facing theirs, you need to know how to answer that same question. Who IS the God who can deliver you from the impossible mess you're facing today? He's the miracle worker! He's the One who split the Red Sea (Exodus 14:13). He's the One who held back the river Jordan so His people could cross on dry ground (Joshua 3:17). He's the One who caused the walls of Jericho to fall down flat (Joshua 6:5). He's the One who holds all things together by the word of His power (Hebrews 1:3). He's the One who says that nothing is too difficult for Him (Genesis 18:4). He's the One who brought Jesus into the earth as a Man (Luke 1). And, time and space could not suffice to list or mention all that God has done for those whom He loves, and guess what? He loves YOU!

So, ask yourself. Who is my God to me? Who is He when the going gets tough? Who is He when everybody says it's impossible for me to be victorious? When the enemies of my soul gang up on me, and try to convince me that there is no way, who is my God to me? Its time we Christians stood up and quit listening to the King Nebuchadnezzar's of this world! When they try to taunt us, ridicule us, and laugh in our faces, its time to stand up and say, "You know what? My God is ABLE and WILLING, therefore my God WILL bring me through to victory! So it doesn't matter who you are, or what you say to the contrary. I'm in covenant with Almighty God, and NOTHING you say or do can change that!" Tell that to those who surround you with doubt, fear and unbelief. It might seem strange for you to say that if you're not used to it, but try it on for size, and I'm sure you'll get to like the sound of it!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

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NOVEMBER 12 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Matthew 9:12 - WHY DO YOU EAT WITH SINNERS?

We have a responsibility to God, and to the world He loves. Paul said it this way: "I am a DEBTOR, to Greeks, barbarians, wise and unwise (Romans 1:14). In other words, he knew he OWED them something, and for us today: we OWE the world something too. What do we owe them? The truth. The Gospel. The Word of God. This is something most Christians have forgotten. They've become too wrapped up in their own little world, and have become totally selfish and self-centered. The Pharisees were like that in Jesus' day. That's why they couldn't understand why Jesus hung around with tax collectors and sinners. They couldn't understand because they had forgotten their purpose. Most Christians have forgotten their purpose too. Have you?

Ask yourself the same question as the one found in our verse today. Why should you eat with tax collectors and sinners? Or for us today, why try to rub elbows with unbelievers who don't know what we know about Jesus? Because we owe them the truth about life and death, heaven and hell, and the consequences of judgment and the rewards of righteousness. Do you look for opportunities to share the truth about Jesus? Do you even care? Do you pray and believe God for His Spirit to touch a person's heart so they will really listen to the things you've got to say? That's what we OWE them - the truth! We have the God-given responsibility to share Jesus with the world, and its called the Great Commission (Mark 16:15-20). Do you understand your purpose? Do you realize WHY you're on earth? Do you understand WHY you didn't just get transported to heaven the day you got saved? Do you eat with sinners? Do you mingle with those who don't know the truth? Not to be like them, but to show them the way out of sin and darkness. Do you make yourself available, AND DO THEY KNOW YOU'RE AVAILABLE? If you can't answer these questions correctly, wake up and get with the program! Its time! The world in your areas of influence needs to hear!

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NOVEMBER 13 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Acts 10:33 - YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY!

This story from Acts is one that brings tears to my eyes almost every time I read it. It underscores to me how awesome and important our responsibilities are to spread the Gospel into the entire world. If you read the whole passage leading up to our verse today, you see to what great lengths God went to orchestrate Peter's availability, so that Cornelius and his household could hear the Gospel and get saved. I want you to understand how important you are to God when it comes to evangelism. Cornelius says it best when he says to Peter, "…now we are all present before God, to hear all things that God has commanded you." What "things"? Things pertaining to eternal life! When the angel appeared to Cornelius and told him to fetch Peter, he told him that Peter would speak words by which all he and his household WOULD BE SAVED (Acts 11:14)! Imagine that! The words that lead men to eternal salvation come from OUR MOUTHS! What can possibly make you more valuable and important to God than that?

Friend, you have something to say to the world around you! Are you saying it? Are you sharing words by which people may respond in faith to get saved? For Cornelius and his household, they owe their salvation to Peter's sermon. Of course we know Jesus saved them through His death and resurrection, but they wouldn't have had the faith to believe in Jesus unless Peter had delivered the message first. That makes Peter VERY important, doesn't it? Well, it's the same for you and me today. Are there people waiting to hear all things that God has given you to speak? Yes, there are! You may not even know who they are right now, or where they are right now, but rest assured, you are the answer to someone's prayers. They just haven't met you yet, and heard you preach or share the Gospel with them. So, realize how great a responsibility you've been given by God, and don't neglect that responsibility in any way. As it says in 1 Peter 3:15, ALWAYS BE READY to give an answer to those who want an explanation about what you believe and why. God is, right now, working behind the scenes to arrange meetings with you and others, in the same way He arranged a meeting between Peter and Cornelius and his household. Why? Because as an Ambassador for Christ, you HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY! So, say it, and don't ever apologize for sharing Jesus! It's your job, your responsibility and your life's message, so do it!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 14 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Romans 1:21 - PROTECT YOUR ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

For the next ten days, as we enter into the Thanksgiving holiday season here in the USA, we're going to highlight the topic of THANKFULNESS. In today's verse, God shows us that in the times in which we live, one of the signs we will see among people (saved and unsaved alike) is an unthankful attitude. If you look around, you can see it everywhere today. People have a "you owe me" kind of attitude, and that's NOT what God wants for His children. You can understand if unbelievers have that kind of mentality because they're governed by selfishness and don't know any better. But for Christians, it should be the opposite! Of all people on earth, we should be the most grateful and the most thankful EVERYDAY! Maintaining an attitude of gratitude protects us from sliding into a mindset that is unhealthy and reprehensible in the sight of God. If you read a few verses farther, you see that when these people let an unthankful heart take root within them, God eventually had to give them up to their FUTILE THOUGHTS and DARKENED HEARTS. May it not be so with you and me!

An unthankful, ungrateful heart opens the door to a mind governed and controlled by futile thoughts, and a heart that is called dark. On the other hand, being continually thankful for the things you have RIGHT NOW from God, keeps your heart bright and your mind in focus. When you spend your time thanking God for everything you already have, you won't allow the devil to come in and plant seeds of discontentment over things you don't have, whatever those "things" may be. If you keep reading in Romans chapter 1, you see an ungodly progression down the road which ultimately leads to perversion, sexual sin, and a basic rejection of God's goodness and grace. Where did this procession towards ungodliness begin? With an unthankful heart! So Christian - beware! As we approach our annual Thanksgiving holiday, take time to stop and reflect upon ALL the many blessings you have right now in Christ. Concentrate on those things, and as you do, you'll begin to see that whatever it is that you don't have pales in comparison to all the things you already have thanks to God's goodness, mercy and grace.

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 15 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Psalms 107:21,22 - OH THAT MEN WOULD GIVE GOD THANKS!

In our second daily segment leading up to the Thanksgiving holiday, today's passage comes from Psalms 107, which is actually an entire Psalm devoted to the importance of giving God thanks. I'm highlighting these two verses, but if you read the whole Psalm, you see this theme reoccur from beginning to end. David, by the Holy Spirit, is imploring his listeners (remember the Psalms were originally songs sung to the Lord) to always excel at the giving of thanks. Look at how it's worded in verse 22. LET MEN SACRIFICE THE SACRIFICES OF THANKSGIVING TO GOD! Do you excel in offering sacrifices of thanksgiving to God? Most believers don't. I hope you're not one of them.

The constant giving of thanks is one of the best ways children of God can remain humble, prioritized and focused concerning spiritual things. The more you say "thank you" to God, the more often you remind yourself of His goodness in your life, and how much you ALREADY have in comparison to most people in the world today. As a missionary, I sometimes get very short with people who gripe and complain about how "hard" it is to live in the USA. I'm thinking to myself: Have these people ever taken a trip beyond our borders into the third world? I'm not talking about some cruise somewhere, or some vacation to some resort either. I'm talking about going out into the cities, slums, garbage dumps and sewage ditches of the world, to see how millions upon millions of people "live", if you care to call it living. If you've ever done it, you know that it only takes one trip like that to set yourself straight about how blessed we are in the USA. The fact is, on your WORST DAY as an American, you have far more right now at your disposal than 90% of the rest of the world has, or even dreams about having. So, instead of spending time grumbling about how difficult things are for you, start being a doer of this Psalm. And start to excel in offering the sacrifice of thanksgiving to God. And remember this: even if you live under the bridge, eat dog food and push a shopping cart around with all your possessions inside the cart, if you're Christian, you're still RICHER than the richest unbeliever in the world. Why? Because you have eternal life, and they don't. Someday they'll lose it all when they die, but even the lowliest Christian pauper receives a King's welcoming when they die and go to heaven! Read Luke 16:19-31, and let God's Word remind you about being thankful, everyday!

MKOMI

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 16 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

2 Chronicles 32:24,25 - OTHERS SUFFER WHEN YOU'RE NOT THANKFUL

Today is our third installment in our series leading up to the Thanksgiving holiday. Here in today's passage, we find a situation all too common among people today. We're in a jam, facing impossible problems, and have no way out. We go to God with the worn-out promise: "God, if you get me out of this mess just this one more time, I promise, I'll never do this again." Have you ever prayed a prayer like that? I have, and I bet you have too. In our moments of desperation and despair, we cry out to God for help and deliverance, promising Him that if He gets us out of the jam we put ourselves in, we'll never again make these mistakes again! Ha! I've broken those kinds of promises so many times I would need a calculator to keep count! So have you, and so did Hezekiah the King. In his situation, he was facing certain death from his illness, and cried out to God for healing. What did God do?

Heal him - completely and totally. And how did Hezekiah repay the Lord for this? The Bible says he DID NOT REPAY GOD FOR THE KINDNESS SHOWN TO HIM. In other words, he was ungrateful, and unthankful.

But as bad as that is, notice what it says after that. THEREFORE, the anger (wrath) of God was looming over not only him, but over all of Jerusalem and Judah too! That means a lot of innocent people were in danger of experiencing God's wrath and judgment because of Hezekiah's pride, which manifested through an ungrateful and unthankful heart. Friend, realize with me today that if you choose to be ungrateful to God for all the times He's bailed you out of the messes you got yourself into, you not only jeopardize yourself, but a lot of people around you! People like your spouse, children, loved ones, family, close friends and neighbors, people like that! Christians need to know that an unthankful heart becomes a spiritual poison affecting not only the one exhibiting it, but many innocent people within that person's area of influence. For Hezekiah, his area of influence included the city of Jerusalem, and the nation of Judah. So, they were unknowingly dragged into the situation Hezekiah created with his own unthankful heart! Think about that for a moment! Do you want your loved ones penalized because of your pride and ungratefulness towards the goodness God has already extended to you? I doubt it! Therefore, guard your heart, and don't make the mistake Hezekiah made. This Thanksgiving holiday season, examine your heart and make sure you harbor no pride, ungratefulness and unthankfulness towards God. Your loved ones will thank you for it!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 17 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Luke 17:17 - GOD EXPECTS YOU TO BE THANKFUL!

Where are the other nine? That question from Jesus to His disciples clearly shows us that as far as God is concerned, He EXPECTS us to say "thank you" when He moves in our lives to bless us and answer our prayers. If you study this story carefully, you can see that at no time did Jesus specifically tell the 10 lepers to come back and give thanks once they had received their healing. He never said a word to them about it. All He told them to do was go and show themselves to the priests. While on their way to do that, they received their miraculous healing, all 10 of them! What happened after that? Nine of them just kept going, and only one, who wasn't even a Jew, came back to say "thank you". And when he did, Jesus was obviously pleased with his gratefulness, and equally upset with the others who didn't come back to say "thanks". If you had been one of those 10 who got healed, would you have been the one to come back and say "thanks", or would you be like the other nine who didn't?

If you look around at people today, even Christians, you'll find the proportionate number of those who say "thanks" to God are about like the percentages we see in today's story. For every one who is actually thankful, and takes the time to say so, there are nine others who don't bother. They just take God's goodness, grace and mercy for granted. I hope you're not one of those! I know if my own life, I've failed God many times along the way, but one thing I'm not, is ungrateful and unthankful. God is my witness when I tell you there isn't a day that goes by where I'm not saying "thank you" to God for something, and in most cases, for all kinds of things. Lord, thank you for the day, because its your gift to me. Thank you God for your mercy and forgiveness, which is new every morning. Thank you God for blessing me with a beautiful wife who loves both you and me, and for children I'm proud of in everyway. Thank you Lord for giving me a nice home to live in, a dependable car to drive, food in the cupboard and clothes in the closet. Thank you Father, for my health, and healing whenever I need it. On and on I go, and I love doing it! I believe God is very pleased with me when I do that, and He will be with you too if you do it. And personally, I believe that because of that kind of grateful heart, God is not nearly as quick to judge me when I disappoint Him with sin, broken promises or disobedience in some fashion or form. So be like the one healed leper who came back to say "thank you". You'll please God, and you'll strengthen your own level of appreciation for every good and perfect gift that comes down from God to you.

MKMI

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 18 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

2 Timothy 3:2 - UNTHANKFULNESS IS A SIGN OF THE TIMES

We're continuing to lead up to the Thanksgiving holiday by looking at the power of having a thankful heart. Today's verse shows us Paul admonishing and instructing Timothy about the signs to look for that indicate the end of the age - what we like to call the end-times. Looking at the list, we see that being UNTHANKFUL is one such sign included on the list. Look at the world around you today, and you can readily see this kind of attitude everywhere. You see it with big situations and with little situations too. Open a door for a woman and let her precede you through ahead of you, and you might or might not get a thankful acknowledgment. Give up your seat on a bus to let a woman sit down, and sometimes they won't even say a word to thank you. Its not just women either, men do it just as much. Offer some form of thoughtfulness and kindness to anyone, man or woman, and they may or may not say "thank you". For me, I thank my parents for showing me the way years ago when I was under their authority at home growing up. They taught me, and showed me, how to stay thankful for even the smallest of gestures of kindness towards me. I have endeavored to continue that through my adult life, and ESPECIALLY with my walk with God. How about you?

When was the last time you went out of your way to say "thank you" to someone for something they did to make your life a bit better or brighter? A kind word, a smile, a hug, a gift certificate to some theater or mall, a bouquet of flowers, something? Remember, the ungrateful, unthankful, you-owe-it-to-me attitude is a sign of the times, so make sure you're not a poster-child for such an attitude! If anything, I want to go OVERBOARD with acts of kindness. If anything, I want to OVERDUE my expressions of being appreciative and thankful. What's wrong with that? I'd rather be labeled as someone who goes over the top to express my thanks, than to be labeled as an ingrate who doesn't appreciate things that are done to me or for me. If a pastor does something to help me in ministry, I make sure he gets a written letter expressing my thanks. If they decide to support us monthly, they get several expressions of thanks from me and my wife. That's not being a brown-nose, it's simply being thankful, and it's the right thing to do. People don't have to be kind you know, so when they are, make sure you let them know you're thankful! You go a long way towards maintaining a soft, pliable heart before God and men when you do, so do it and do it often. Don't be included in the list mentioned here in our verse today. Be different. Be thankful!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 19 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

1 Thessalonians 5:18 - GOD DEMANDS THAT YOU HAVE A THANKFUL HEART!

If you love God, you want to find and keep His will for your life, right? Well, as we continue with our pre-Thanksgiving holiday study of thankfulness, understand that having a thankful heart is part of God's will for you, and for all of us. In short, He EXPECTS us to be thankful, and stay thankful, all the time. To do that, you're going to have to train yourself to be a grateful, thankful person. For some of us, that's not too hard. For others, it's extremely difficult. For me, I've always tried to show my thanks and appreciation for kindnesses extended to me, and been amazed at how others seem to lack the common sense to do the same in their lives. Frankly, I just don't understand people who take the kindness of others for granted. There are plenty of them out there, but I just don't get it - especially when we're talking about how good God has been to us each and every day. I don't understand the fact that in many cases, you've got to really work to stir up people to do what is right, namely, be thankful to God for the goodness He showers us with daily.

James 1:17 says that EVERY GOOD GIFT and EVERY PERFECT GIFT comes from God in our lives. Not most of them, but all of them. Whether it be God directly blessing you in some way, or indirectly blessing you through others around you, I encourage you to develop the HABIT of being thankful. All of the time, everyday under all circumstances. And that includes those times when things haven't been going as well for you as you might want. Even in those times, its God's will that you remain thankful. For what, you ask? For everything you ALREADY HAVE. Stopping to show appreciation to God for what we already have will help us go through those times when we're under attack, or when things aren't working out like we want. And remember, the man who wrote the book of 1st Thessalonians was Paul, who experienced a level of intense persecution in his lifetime the likes of which few of us know anything about. He was the one who said to be thankful to God in all things. So if he can say it and do it, so can you and me! When you're tempted to grumble and complain about your problems, stop and reflect on all you've already got from the hand of God, and it will help you deal with those issues and moments when things aren't working out the way you want. Example: are you saved? You can start and stop right there, and be thankful for your salvation for the rest of your life. Even if you lose everything else, if you have Jesus in your heart, you're blessed more than most on this earth. You've got an eternity with God in heaven ahead of you, how about that? Shouldn't that put a smile on your face, and joy back in your heart? BE THANKFUL!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 20 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Psalms 119:62 - WHAT ARE YOU DOING TONIGHT AT MIDNIGHT?

As we continue to examine the importance of being thankful in this Thanksgiving holiday season, consider with me today the life and attitude of King David in the Old Testament. I enjoy reading after this man because of not only his valor, strength, passion and love for the Lord, but also, for the fact that throughout his life, he remained a grateful and thankful man concerning the things he had been given from God. And personally, I think that's one of the reasons why he's called a man after God's own heart. In the midst of triumph, tragedy or turmoil, he stayed grateful, humble and thankful. I think that is one reason why he was so mightily used by God, and under his reign, led Israel to the crescendo of world influence and power. And no verse sums this fact up better than our verse today. What was he doing at midnight? Giving thanks to God for all the blessings and goodness extended to him. When? At midnight!

How many Christians do you know who get up and spend time at midnight just thanking God for His goodness and blessings? David did, and God loved every minute of it! He'll feel the same about you if that's the kind of gratitude you joyfully express to Him in prayer, praise and worship. Are you so overwhelmed with God's kindness, favor, blessings, provision, protection, and everything else, that you just have to rise out of bed in the middle of the night to say "thank you"? Most of us are so into the pillow, we wouldn't even get out of bed if the house was on fire, much less to kneel by the bed and lift our hands to say "thank you" to God. And David was the King, not just some insignificant peon. He had all the power, prestige and recognition a King could expect and enjoy, yet he knew it all came from God, and he wasn't ashamed to openly, or privately, express his gratitude towards the Lord. This holiday season, I want to encourage you to develop that kind of grateful, thankful heart. You can never go wrong by being so grateful you're out of bed at midnight, praising and thanking God for His blessings in your life. For me, many, many times I've laid in bed, eyes open, wide awake, just looking at the ceiling fan above our bed, praising God and thanking Him for all I have in my life. If you don't do this, I pray you will begin. The more you express your thanks to God, the more you're going to appreciate the blessings you already have.

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 21 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Deuteronomy 28:47,48 - THE ABUNDANCE OF EVERYTHING!

The 28th chapter of Deuteronomy is a great chapter to read and study. It will list the blessings of the covenant we have in Christ through Abraham, and it also will list the curses that come upon people when they choose to disobey God and live in sin. God makes a statement in this chapter that Christians would be well to remember and understand. Listen to what God says here. BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T SERVE ME WITH JOY AND GLADNESS FOR THE ABUNDANCE OF EVERYTHING...you will serve your enemies! So my question is this: if you consider yourself a servant of God in Christ, how are you serving Him? With joy and gladness over the ABUNDANCE of everything you already have? I'll let you think about that one for awhile! What happened to the Jews when they forgot to say "thank you" to God? They were turned over to their enemies! Children of God should be ALWAYS overflowing with joy, ALWAYS! Why? Because of what they just got from God? No! Because of what they have gotten from God from the day they were born until now! And right about now, someone always crops up and wants to tell me about how terrible their youth was, or how abused they were as a child, and all of that. I hate to burst your pity-party bubble my friend, but guess what? On your worse day, you STILL have tons of things to say thank you for from God! Like what, you may ask? I'm glad you asked!

Are you alive? Thank God for that! Even if you have suffered abuse and endure abject poverty, are you able to breath and make choices? Thank God for that! Millions in the world don't have even those simple things. If you're alive, able to breath and can make intelligent choices, thank God for it! What about people born in closed countries, who have never heard about Jesus like you? Or have never had the freedom to choose Jesus like you? Or have any opportunity at all to better themselves by living in a free country like you? Okay, maybe you have suffered, and I don't minimize that in the least. But you CAN rise above all of that, and thank God that you've got the ability and freedom to choose! Many millions in the world don't have even that. Instead of feeling sorry for yourself for the rest of your life, rise above that and take control of your future. And when you do, don't forget to thank God for the power of choice He gave you, and the opportunities presented to help you, or the people sent your way to assist and help as much as possible. Anything less than that in terms of attitude opens you up to the enemy, and trust me friend, he WILL take advantage of your poor, ungrateful attitude. Don't give him that opening! Stay appreciative, and thankful. No matter what!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 22 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

1 Corinthians 15:57 - SEAL YOUR VICTORIES BY GIVING THANKS!

Did you know I was born on this day, Thanksgiving Day, in 1951? I was! I am the ultimate turkey, no doubt! The supreme example of white meat! Today's my birthday! Yippee! Happy Birthday to me! Happy Birthday to me! Feel free to sing along with me if you'd like! Have a piece of my cake, won't you? I'm such a blessed man, you have no idea! I thank God he's given me such a rich, fruitful, meaningful, purposeful life. I'm so thankful to God that He's selected me and called me into full-time ministry, given me a godly, beautiful wife and sweet, loving children. I'm so thankful I have the opportunity to help you and bless you as a minister of God! So much has been given to me by God. I could spend years just praising Him for all that I've already got, much less for what I'm going to be receiving as I continue to serve Him with joy and gladness (Deuteronomy 28:47). Giving thanks for what you have protects what you have! Did you know that?

Every victory I've ever had, and every battle ever won in my life since finding Jesus, I owe it all to Him. And even before I got saved, I thank Him for keeping me alive until I could come to my senses and get saved. And I believe, with all my heart that the more you say "thanks" for all that has already been given, the more you position yourself for the victories yet to come! Oh yeah! Don't ever stop thanking God for the blessings you have in your life. Every reason to smile, every reason to rejoice, every reason to leap for joy, it has all come from God, so be quick to say thank you! The quicker you are to say thank you, the quicker you are to shore up your spiritual defenses against the hordes of ungrateful, unthankful people surrounding you everywhere, everyday. Selfish people major in ungratefulness, and unthankfulness. Christians should know better. Even when you sin, thank God for His mercy! His forgiveness! His patience with you! So much to say thank you for! Don't waste another minute! Let your life, from this moment on, be one of thanksgiving and gratitude. And, please feel free to send me birthday greetings huh? I am thankful I can be a blessing to you! You are one of the many gifts that God has given to me in my life. I appreciate you!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 23 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Colossians 3:17 - DO EVERYTHING WITH THANKSGIVING FOR JESUS

What a great statement! WHATEVER YOU DO, do all in Jesus' Name, GIVING THANKS as you do it! Ask yourself if you do this on a regular basis? Most Christians don't, and they don't do it to their own hurt! Whatever you're doing today for Jesus, do it in an attitude of gratefulness and thankfulness! First of all, thank God He picked you, and called you to work for His cause, in the Name of Jesus. It's so awesome to think that God, the creator of the universe, the one who upholds all things by the word of His power, CHOOSES to work with the likes of you and me in ministry! Whoa! If that doesn't get your engine roaring, what could?

Thank Him for that honor, and that privilege! For me, ministering to you like this is an honor and privilege beyond description for me. I'm so humbled and so awestruck that He would ask me to do my best to impart life-changing truths to you. I'm so thankful! So grateful! Over the years, so many times I've just cried and fell on my knees to thank God that He would choose to use me - ME! Do you feel that way about the work He's asking you to do? You should! Helping people find salvation in Jesus, or come closer to God afterwards, is the greatest work a man or woman can do on earth. Thank God for ANYTHING you're doing in His Name to fulfill the Great Commission. ANYTHING!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 24 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Romans 1:21 - YOU WILL LOSE WHAT YOU'RE NOT THANKFUL FOR!

One of the most important truths you need to forever remember is this: YOU WILL LOSE WHAT YOU'RE NOT THANKFUL FOR! It's a very dangerous thing to take God's goodness for granted. It opens the door to the enemy, and believe me, if you open a door to him he WILL take advantage of the opening! How many times, over the years, have I sat and listened to someone in counseling, crying and lamenting the fact that because of their mistake of taking some loved one for granted, that someone isn't there for them anymore. Husbands lose wives this way, and vice versa. Parents lose their children this way too. Christians lose the blessings and provision of God this way as well. The day you start taking your blessed life for granted, that's the day you start yourself on a journey you don't want to take, ending up in a place you don't want to be! It's a journey to heartache, regret, tragedy, sadness and emptiness. Hear me when I tell you, you don't want to go there! So how do you prevent that tragic journey? Stay thankful! For everyone and everything given to you from God. Its so easy, people miss it because it's so obvious.

This Thanksgiving Day holiday, take time to seek out and TELL people how thankful you are for their love, their help, their concern and their availability. Don't EVER ASSUME they know it, TELL THEM! Tell them in whatever ways you can, with words, flowers, gifts and other expressions of appreciation. And above all, get down on your knees and start taking time to thank God for all the blessings you enjoy from Him in life right now. Believe me, if you start to add up all you've got from the hand of God, you're going to be busy thanking Him for a long, long time! Failure to do this puts you in a position to LOSE the blessings, LOSE the favor, LOSE the people God has sent into your life to bless you and help you succeed. I'll say it again for emphasis: YOU WILL LOSE WHAT YOU'RE NOT THANKFUL FOR! Maybe not right away, but sooner or later, what or who you take for granted will be lost. Even if the people themselves remain in your life, you'll have lost their respect, their trust, their love, their intimacy - whatever. Learn to say "THANK YOU", over and over, and never get tired of doing it. When you sit down around the Thanksgiving meal this year, look around at who's with you at the table. Appreciate each one of them, and then lift your eyes to heaven, and whisper a prayer to God, and tell Him you see and appreciate all the blessings these people have been to you in your life. What if you don't have good memories to reflect back upon? Then thank God you're able to see them with the eyes of faith, and start to appreciate them for even the little things. You might find they're not so bad after all! Take no one for granted my friend, especially God. If you've been doing that, its time to stop! What better time to do that than now, during our Thanksgiving holiday season!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 25 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Ephesians 5:3,4 - REPLACE THE WORKS OF THE FLESH WITH THANKSGIVING

As we savor another Thanksgiving Day holiday season, I want to encourage you today to understand how powerful your life of thanksgiving really is. Take the spirit of the season, and work to carry it on from now until the end of your life! Be a thankful person. Be grateful always. Show appreciation at every turn. Look for opportunities to show gratitude, appreciation and thanks. When you do that, you're really fulfilling a directive given through Paul to the Ephesians' church. Today's passage shows you what this directive is. Notice the words in verse 4: "but rather..." That means we're supposed to stop doing something, and instead do something else. We're supposed to change and make an adjustment. What is the change and adjustment we're to make? We're to exchange the list of ungodly activities for the giving of thanks! That's what God was telling them, and what He's telling us today too. Instead of living in filthiness, with lots of crude conversation and sexual misconduct, we're to exchange all of that for a lifestyle of thanksgiving.

You see, the more time you spend thanking God for the blessings you're enjoying daily, the less prone you're going to be to yield to the lusts of the eyes and flesh. I know this is true by experience. By cultivating a lifestyle of thanksgiving, I'm ever aware of all the goodness that God has showered on me. And because of that daily awareness, I'm never an easy target for the devil. Why? Because when he tempts me with something, I can immediately and objectively assess the threat through the perspective of gratitude and thankfulness. As the temptation comes to me, I begin to lift my hands to God in praise, thanking Him for His love, His provision, His mercy, His grace, His forgiveness, everything! The more I do that the less of an allure the temptation has against me. Try it, you'll see it's true for you too! That's what Paul was telling the Ephesians, and what God is telling all of us. Rather than letting our flesh have its way, spend time giving thanks to God for all you've got. So don't give in to sin, to the flesh and to the lies and temptations of the devil. Fight back, and one of the best ways to do that is by offering up thanksgiving to God, as often as you can!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 26 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Luke 4:29,30 - THE PROTECTING POWER OF LOVE

Over the years, I've continued to be intrigued by passages like the one we're looking at today. Jesus was being taken (by force it would seem) to the edge of a cliff, where the crowd was intent on throwing him off to kill him for the sin of blasphemy. But right at the edge, Jesus just turned around, walked right through the crowd, and went His way. I think that's just amazing! As far as we can tell from the story, the crowd was taking Him by force, and they weren't going to stop until they had thrown him over the cliff. So how is it that He just turns and walks away, and they do nothing to stop Him? I believe it's because Jesus walked in love to such a degree, no man could harm Him or stop Him from His ministry assignment. The good news for us is that same love is within us now, and if we develop it like Jesus, we'll enjoy the same kind of Divine protection.

This didn't just happen this one time either with Jesus. Many times it says in the Bible that people would try to kill Him, arrest Him, or try to do Him bodily harm. But each time they COULDN'T do what they intended, until Jesus Himself let them when He knew it was time for prophecy to be fulfilled. Let me emphasize the key word here. His enemies COULDN'T touch Him, COULDN'T harm Him, and COULDN'T murder Him. They wanted to, but they couldn't because God's power was protecting Him. That same protecting power of love is available to each of us, if, we cultivate the love walk like Jesus did. The key word there is the word "if". It's not up to God, but up to us. The love of God is already shed abroad within us by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5). But that love has to be developed. It has to be exercised. That's why you should meditate in passages like 1 Corinthians 13:1-8. Say them to yourself daily, and let that confession begin to get down on the inside, down into your spirit. Then when you encounter unlovely people (like Jesus did in our story today), you'll have the desire and ability to walk in love towards them. When you do that, God's power surrounds you like a shield, just like it did for Jesus. Let love be the protecting power it was designed to be in your life!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 27 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Proverbs 27:2 - WHO IS PRAISING YOU?

Have you ever been around people who constantly praise themselves? Aren't they obnoxious? They're so full of themselves, its nauseating to be around them. Here in Proverbs, the Bible says we should never praise ourselves, but instead, let the praises come from others. So today, ask yourself this question. Where does the praise come from in your life (if at all)? From you or from others? If it's from you, you need to stop, because that's nothing more than the sin of pride in manifestation. If it's from others, just thank God that you're able to be a blessing to somebody else, and remain meek and teachable before the Lord.

Proverbs 25:27 says that if you seek your own glory, its not glory at all! In another verse found in Proverbs, it says that if you've acted foolishly in lifting yourself up, put your hand over your mouth (Proverbs 30:32)! That's good advice for all of us indeed. So if there are any accolades to be handed out, make sure you're not the one handing them to yourself! Always remember, God sees everything, and even if others don't see or appreciate you, God does. And He'll reward you openly someday in heaven, in front of everyone else. So don't sweat it down here. If people praise you, fine. Thank God for making you a blessing to others, and move on. Don't stay there and let that praise go to your head. After all, remember that Jesus is the vine, and we're only the branches. Without Him we are NOTHING, and can do NOTHING!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 28 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

2 Corinthians 3:5 - YOUR SUFFICIENCY IS FROM GOD

"In this day and age, the spirit of pride is rampant everywhere. At every turn, it seems we're confronted with pride in some fashion or form. People make lots of money writing books about how they ""did it"". How they made their millions, or how they succeeded at life. Well, that's fine as long as you keep everything in proper perspective. Success is something promised from God - he promised it very plainly in Joshua 1:8. However, as we begin to grow, succeed and prosper, we must always remember that our ultimate sufficiency is from God - not from ourselves. And that was the message Paul was sharing with the Corinthians in today's passage. He was reminding them that whatever they had, did, achieved or accomplished in life, their abilities came from God, not from themselves. If you forget that, the pride that leads to a fall is only a breath away!"

"I believe there is a scriptural balance to be found and understood in the Bible. There is a God side, and a human side to every conquest or victory. Basically, as I see it in Scripture, God promises to do what we can't do - if we get out there and do what we can do. It's a divinely ordained partnership. God and man working together. But even when we're "out there" doing whatever for God, we must always remember that even the things we're working with, such as our intelligence, or our physical talents, or our education - all of that originally came from God too - so at the end of the day, man basically has no room to boast about anything! Paul talks about that in Galatians when he told them that if he was going to boast about anything, the only thing worthy of boasting would be what Jesus did for us through the cross (Galatians 6:14). So as you go about your daily affairs, always remember that your sufficiency comes from God. The word "sufficiency" simply means ability. Our abilities come from God - so be sure to give Him the credit for ANYTHING and EVERYTHING you accomplish in this life. Do what you can do (Mark 14:8), but even so, do what you do with the constant awareness that Jesus is the vine, and we're only the branches (John 15:5).

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 29 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

2 Corinthians 4:13 - THE SPIRIT OF FAITH

"If you want to be pleasing to God, you're going to have to learn about faith. Hebrews 11:6 says without faith, you CAN'T please God. It didn't say it would be difficult to please God without faith, it said it would be impossible. So that makes faith a very important subject in the Bible! And when learning about faith, you must understand the spirit of faith, which is described in our passage today. The spirit of faith defined is this: we believe with our heart, and we speak what we believe out of our mouths. Notice what Paul tells the Corinthians. HAVING BELIEVED, WE THEREFORE SPEAK.. Notice the order here. We believe first, and then we speak second. And notice also, that the speaking is directly influenced by the believing! That's why Paul said it this way. The word ""therefore"" appears twice in the verse. And each time it appears, its there to show us that WHAT WE SAY IS WHAT WE BELIEVE. In other words, when it comes to exercising the spirit of faith, you're always going to say what you believe. Whatever you believe in your heart - that is how you're going to speak - according to what you choose to believe.

"That's why it's usually pretty easy to locate someone's beliefs. Just listen to them talk, and you'll be able to find out what they believe, and what they have faith in. Why? Because that's the way God put us together. He made us in such a way that we are going to express our beliefs with what we say. That's why there's so much to say about communication in the Bible. Salvation, and everything else promised from God, comes to us in this way. We believe with our heart, and then we speak with our mouths. That's how you received Jesus as Lord, right? Romans 10:9-10 confirms it. With our heart we believe, and with our mouth we confess UNTO salvation. Believe with your heart, then confess with your mouth UNTO whatever Jesus had made available to us through the cross. So, when you're learning about faith, and how to be pleasing to God through faith, remember the spirit of faith, and what that spirit is all about! Believing with your heart, and then speaking with your mouth. If you believe God's Word, then SAY SO! What does it say in Psalms 107:2? LET THE REDEEMED OF THE LORD SAY SO! Are you one of the redeemed? Then say so! Learn to use your mouth to voice your faith!

NOVEMBER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

BY MIKE KEYES, SR

NOVEMBER 30 DAILY DEVOTIONAL

2 Corinthians 4:16 - THE OUTWARD MAN AND THE INWARD MAN

"It's interesting to read the Bible and find out how God has made us, and how he views us. As an example, we are a tri-partite being. We are spirits, possessing souls, living in bodies. Spirit, soul and body. 3 parts to our being, or our essence (1 Thessalonians 5:23). The Bible also talks about the 3 classifications of people on earth. There are Greeks, Jews and the Church of God (1 Corinthians 10:32). The Greeks represent the Gentiles - people who aren't Jews and not yet saved. The Jews represent God's chosen people from the Old Testament, and the Church of God represents the body of Christ in the New Testament - all those who have accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior - being previously either a Jew or Gentile. Then we have our verse today, which describe man as having an "outward" man, and an "inward man". The outward man is our flesh and blood body. The inward man is our spirit, which also possess our soul. Sanctification is the process of subduing the outward man, and keeping him controlled and under the dominion of the inward man. To be more sanctified simply means to have more of the body under control to the real you, which is your inner man, or your spirit-man on the inside. And no matter what you do about your outward man, it will grow old and perish one day. You can't change that fact, no matter how hard you try or want to! So you must find the proper balance between the two "men", the outward and the inward. This is where many Christians have messed up, which is why they have such struggles with their flesh, or why they are so weak spiritually.

"The outward man will perish, this is true, but that doesn't mean he is to be neglected. You can, and should, do many things to prolong your life and extend your life physically. Proper diet and exercise will go a long way towards giving you a long, enjoyable and fruitful life, but only YOU can make that kind of decision. God won't do that for you - you must do it for yourself. The problem with many of us is we over-emphasize one or the other, and that's when we open ourselves up to the enemy, who is always looking for a way into our lives. Its true, the inner spirit-man, is eternal and more important than your outward man. However, if you just concentrate on your inward man only, you're going to open up an avenue of attack for the enemy against your outward man. And vice versa - if you spend your time taking care of the outward man while neglecting your inward man, you'll also have given the enemy an opening which he will try to use against you. You must balance the two. Build up your spirit man absolutely! But don't neglect the outward man either. Feed your spirit man with God's Word daily, and eat right and exercise regularly too. Take care of BOTH, the outward man and the inward man, and in doing so, you'll be able to close off many avenues where the enemy has previously been able to come in against you. You are a spirit living in a body. Understand that, and take care of both. It's your responsibility - so be strong and do it!"