*DAILY DEVOTIONS*

October 26 - 31

God Will Provide

**Monday, October 26 Matthew 6:31-34**

*“He will give you everything you need”*

The basis of our trust in God is confidence in his sovereignty. We believe that God is the primary actor on the stage of history. We trust his wisdom, believing that he is holding back the end, the final judgment of history, for the sake of his work of grace which includes providing for our needs. When we are truly kingdom members, having been born into the kingdom by the Spirit, it follows that our highest purpose is the kingdom of God and to live righteously. This concentration on doing God’s will is the positive answer to worry, but it is also and primarily a direction for positive action as a lifestyle.

But even in reading verse 33 the tendency to worry emerges, for we ask about the meaning of the clause, “all these things will be added to you.” We wonder how material these things are, a reaction which exposes our materialism. The passage calls us to seek first the kingdom and leave the secondary matters to his care. Jesus concludes by saying that we are to live one day at a time. The problems of each day are sufficient for the present.

*May our thoughts be dominated, Lord, by living rightly in your kingdom. Amen.*

**Tuesday, October 27 2 Corinthians 8:1-7**

*“They gave themselves first to the Lord”*

Few people are more attractive than those individuals who find happiness in generosity. It is unfortunate that so many of us seem to find it hard to associate the two words “enjoyment” and “giving.” Because ours is a society that is preoccupied with getting, we often fail to experience personally the truth of Christ’s words: “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). In 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, Paul gives us insight into both the motivation for and method of giving that can by joyful.

Paul tells us that joyful giving flows from the gift of self: “They gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God’s will.” A missionary was talking with the chief of a primitive tribe. The chief tried to impress the missionary with gifts of animal skins and precious stones. But the missionary said, “My God does not want the chief’s animal skins or precious stones. My God want the chief himself.” Then the chief smiled and said, “You have a very wise God, for when I give him myself he also gets animal skins and precious stones.”

*Lord, I give you myself. Show me what to give to your kingdom. Amen.*

**Wednesday, October 28 Matthew 10:37-39**

*“If you give up your life for me, you will find it”*

Giving rightful place to family presumes giving obedience first to God, which will then enable a person to honor appropriately one’s father and mother, sons and daughters. Jesus’ statement about family is in line with his call to give priority to himself above all else, even one’s dearest loved ones. To take up one’s cross is a metaphor that means to take up God’s will for one’s life, in the same way that the cross was the Father’s will for the Son’s life. Taking up God’s plan for one’s life will result in gaining true life as Jesus’ disciple.

Jesus is talking about our relationship to himself: (1) to be worthy of Christ we are to put him first in all family relations; (2) to be worthy of Christ we are to take up his cross and identify with him; (3) to be worthy of Christ we are to choose him and his life rather than selfishly trying to preserve our own way of life. When the *Titanic* sank in 1912, in the office of the Cunard Line in New York City there was a board listing names of passengers in two columns headed “saved” and “lost.” In the end, that’s what it will come down to.

*I give up the things of this world, Lord, so I may gain eternity with you. Amen.*

*DAILY DEVOTIONS*

October 26 - 31

God Will Provide

**Thursday, October 29 Romans 12:1-2**

*“Let God transform you by changing the way you think”*

GIGO is a computer programming term that refers to “Garbage In, Garbage Out.” If you put bad information into a computer, you will get bad information out of it. Our brains are like computers. They gather and store a lot of information about thousands of things. But if we only get our information about finances and possessions from the internet, television, movies, and other worldly sources, we will be getting “garbage in.” This will result in “garbage out” in our financial lives. We will make poor financial decisions, indulge in impulse purchases, and waste money chasing after things that really can’t bring lasting satisfaction and joy.

God has a better way. He wants us to intentionally train our brains to think his thoughts on giving and material possessions. His Word can reprogram our brains to experience his will and his ways in these important areas of our lives. Then we will break out of the financial bondage of worldly thinking about financial matters, and begin to experience God’s peace, wisdom, and guidance.

*Teach me your ways, Lord, so what I have will bring me joy. Amen.*

**Friday, October 30 Luke 14:31-33**

*“No one can become my disciple without giving up everything for me”*

Jesus warns us to count the cost of being his disciple. To give up everything for him in order to follow him seems a strange message. What we need to realize is that if God and His Kingdom are to be of ultimate importance in our lives, then all other loves must become far less by comparison. To “give up everything for me” does not mean getting rid of everything. It means considering “everything” to be of such limited importance that we will gladly use it however God directs.

Jesus calls us the salt of the earth. Salt has two important qualities. It flavors and it preserves. When you and I live without attachments other than to our Lord, then we can use what God has blessed us with to flavor others’ lives – at home, at work, in the church, everywhere! We become the preserving element, those who use what they have been given by God to champion his love, justice and mercy despite the corrupting influences of the world.

*Heavenly Father, may the salt of my life “season” the lives of others. Amen.*

**Saturday, October 31 1 Chronicles 29:10-16**

*“Everything we have has come from you”*

David offers a prayer of thanks to God for enabling him to complete the necessary preparations to build the temple. First, he offers praise to God in general terms for his greatness and faithfulness as Creator (vv. 10-12). Then, David expresses the gratitude of all the people using the collective “we” (v. 13). The prayer next points out the nation’s past experience of God’s gracious help in their time of need, and how all that they have is a gift from God. Therefore, how can they claim any glory for giving back to God what he has given them (v. 14)?

The expression “aliens and strangers” (v. 15) is used to remind the people of the wanderings of their patriarchs and matriarchs in the wilderness, and their status as slaves in Egypt. They had no rights and were utterly dependent on God for their security and physical well-being. David returns to the temple construction materials (v. 16) and reiterates that their availability is due to God’s graciousness and goodness.

*Lord, I worship you as the God who provides me with all that is good. Amen.*