

Northeast Church of Christ

450 Grandview Drive, Cookeville, TN 38506 • necoc.net

Volume 33 • April 4, 2010

From the Pen of Paul: *Daily*

Being true to God is an everyday affair. We must not attempt to limit it to one day a week nor to special occasions. Some only attend services on Easter, Mother's Day and Christmas. However, this is not pleasing to the Father. Notice the emphasis the Bible places on the word "daily" as it relates to duties and obligations.

Daily Prayer: "Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee *daily*" (Psalm 86:3). Paul urged the Thessalonians to "Pray without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:17). Undoubtedly this means we are to pray on a regular basis. The entertainment world even recognizes the importance of daily prayer: Charlie Pride sang, "Ere you left your room this morning, did you think to pray?" Daniel took his daily prayer life so seriously that he ended up in the lion's den. And, you cannot help but be impressed with the prayer life and examples set by both Jesus and Paul.

Daily Food: Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Give us this day our *daily* bread" (Matt. 6:11). Remembering that Jesus told Satan, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," we need to feed both the body and the soul daily throughout the year (Matt. 4:4). We are diligent to not neglect feeding the body daily; we must be just as diligent to feed our souls. This requires our next mention of the word "daily:"

Daily Study: Luke wrote of the Bereans, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word, with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures *daily*, whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11). Since the word of God is "a

lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105), we need the word daily in order to walk correctly and not wander off the right path. The Scriptures are able to make us "thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16-17). They contain "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (II Pet. 1:3). They are able "to make thee wise unto salvation" (II Tim. 3:15). God's word is "quick and powerful" (Heb. 4:12) and must be "handled aright" (II Tim. 2:15). Considering these things, and a host of others, do we dare do less than study daily from God's inspired word? And don't forget, we will be judged by it (John 12:48).

Daily Vigilance: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another *daily*, while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:12-13). Daily vigilance is required because our great adversary never relaxes his efforts. Peter urged, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:8). Many a disciple has fallen out of service, being devoured by the devil, due to neglecting to be vigilant daily. Don't let your guard down; be alert; be watchful, "lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (II Cor. 2:11).

Daily Cross Bearing: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross *daily*, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). How many of us have failed miserably in living the Christian life because we did not take this into consideration? Before we can

Continued on p. 3

“Please explain in your bulletin article how the devil works today.”

THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT THE DEVIL is at work today. All one has to do is look around and see his works taking place. If all the evil about us is not a work of the evil one, then where did it start? Who is responsible for all the heartache and heartbreak? It had to start somewhere, with someone. The Bible teaches that it began with the devil and it continues to be his work (I Pet. 5:8).

The devil accomplishes, or tries to accomplish, his evil work in a number of ways. Sometimes he works through the vilest of sinners. We are warned about evil people and their influence. “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (I Cor. 15:33). “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you” (II Cor. 6:17). There are many, many passages which teach that evil people will influence others to do wrong. So the devil works through very wicked men.

The devil works through religious people. “Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matt. 7:21-23). Notice please, that these people did many works in the name of the Lord (they were religious), and yet the Bible says that God will say on the judgment day that He *never* knew them. The reason that God never knew them is because they only obeyed the Lord's will in part. They went beyond in some things and did not do other things. Satan works through folks like

this today. We are warned about believing everything that comes in the name of religion (I John 4:1).

The devil works through disciples of Christ. Jesus once called Peter “Satan,” because the wicked one had entered into Peter's heart and was influencing him to do wrong (Matt. 16:21-23). This often happens today. Christians must be constantly aware that Satan will use them, if they will but let him. Sometimes disciples of Christ will fight a worthy and righteous cause, or talk down good works, or try to destroy good influences, thinking they are right. I truly believe good men are wrong and do not know it. Paul talks about self-deception in Galatians 6:7. We must forever be aware of such and not let Satan use us.

Sometimes Satan takes advantage of circumstances to accomplish his work. When trials and hardships come upon us, we must fight and not let these things get us down. Jesus talked about the burdens and cares of this life and how they would cause men to go astray and quit (Luke 8:14). We must learn to bear up under extreme hardships and circumstances, lest the devil gets the advantage of us.

Satan sometimes makes evil look right and men often fall for such (II Cor. 2:11). It is always good to check into a matter before we accept it. So many times people jump and then look. The sad thing about this is that they find themselves in wrong before they realize it. Be sure you know what you are doing.

Satan is no ignoramus. He is wise and crafty. He knows how and when to approach us in order that he may lead us astray. Be aware of him and his work. Do not let him mislead you.

—Malcolm L. Hill

wear the “crown of righteousness” which is to be given unto “all them that love His appearing,” we must be bear our cross. Before we can be crown-wearers, we must first be cross-bearers! And Jesus said that is to be done daily.

Daily Benefits: “Blessed be the Lord, who *daily* loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation” (Psalm 68:19). Paul tells us that He has “blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3). Like the Psalmist, we should express gratitude for these daily benefits knowing that “every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of

lights” (James 1:17). We do not need to wait until Thanksgiving Day to lump all our blessings together and give thanks. The benefits of being a Christian are given daily; so should our thanksgiving.

Add to these thoughts the fact that we seek Daily Pardon for our sins and need Daily Strength to “run the race with patience” (Heb. 12:1-2), let each of us strive diligently to make living the Christian life—being faithful to our God—a daily priority in our lives.

—Paul M. Wilmoth