

FIVE-MINUTE
DEVOTIONS
FOR
MEN



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To you—the man reading this book

Statistics tell us men don't read. Therefore,
because you break the stats, you're to be complimented.
You're a reader!

And even more than a reader, you're a man who wants to
become more like Jesus. This can happen in many ways,
but I've found that one is a willingness to read,
apply, and grow.

So my prayer is that, as you read these devotions,
the Spirit of God will build you into a better man—
and if you're married, a better husband, and if you're a dad, a
better father—and more conformed to
the image of Jesus Christ.

May these daily nuggets enrich your life.





BE THANKFUL AND CONTENT IN ALL THINGS

*Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me,
bless His holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget none of His benefits.*

PSALM 103:1-2

Two of the greatest words in the English language are *Thank you*. That's why when their children are still very young, parents begin teaching them to say "Thank you." When someone gives them a gift or a compliment—and before they can even utter the words—they jump right in with, "Now, what do you say?"

But as we grow from childhood to adulthood, we often forget our manners and hold back from expressing our appreciation to someone who does us a service.

It's the same way with God. He loves to hear that we're thankful for all He bestows on us. He is the provider of all we have. In Ecclesiastes 2:24–25, we read, "There is nothing better for a man than to eat and drink and tell himself that his labor is good. This also I have seen, that it is from the hand of God. For who can eat and who can have enjoyment without Him?"

Thankful hearts give thanks. As I've grown older, I've looked back over this short life and realized that God has been faithful all along the way. He's always provided for all our needs. Not necessarily for our wants, but always for our needs. That's

totally in keeping with the words of 2 Peter 1:3: “His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.”

The password for entering into God’s presence is two words: “Thank You.” In his writings, Paul told us to be content in all situations (Philippians 4:11). When we’re restless and find ourselves discontented with our lives and situations, it’s accentuated when we don’t have a heart that readily gives thanks. First Thessalonians 5:18 says, “In everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

Let’s not take anything for granted. Let’s be thankful and content in all things.



Today’s Action

Evaluate the thankfulness of your heart. How can it be improved?

Prayer

*Father God, don’t let me forget to always be thankful
for what You do for me. You are a gracious God
who continually pours out blessings on my life.
Thank You for everything—big and small. Amen.*



GODLY HONOR

*Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking.
Are you able to drink the cup that I drink?"*

MARK 10:38

Many times we ask God for things without realizing the price to be paid if we receive them. James and John asked Jesus if they could sit at His right and left, not realizing the cost of that request. They wanted the honor of sitting close to him, but they had no idea a cross had to be borne along with that honor.

We pray to God and ask to be the best husband, the best worker, the best baseball player, the best salesperson, or the best father without taking time to figure out what cost our request will make on our lives. Great requests or supplications with shallow motives can turn out to be overwhelming when God answers them. And great requests or supplications with stately motives for God's grace may often be granted, but not in the way we might expect.

Godly honor is not lightly won. We must be ready to pay the price in time, trials, sacrifice, love, or money.



Today's Action

Before you ask God for something, make sure you realize what the cost might be.

Prayer

Father God, thank You for making me aware of the cost of serving others. Help me take time today to count the cost of being one of Your disciples—and then give You praise for allowing me to serve You. Amen.



ALWAYS OR USUALLY?

*[Love] always protects, always trusts,
always hopes, always perseveres.*

1 CORINTHIANS 13:7 NIV

It's hard for us mere mortals to adequately understand the word *always*. In today's culture, we don't completely realize what this kind of commitment means. When we say always, don't we usually mean sometimes...or most of the time? But always really means eternal and everlasting. Knowing this, can anyone commit to always?

When Scripture says always, it means always—never changing, dependable until death. And so I'm challenged by what Paul says love always does:

- It protects.
- It trusts.
- It hopes.
- It perseveres.

I so want my life to be defined by that kind of love. I want to be a man who's known for his word. And I often advise others, "Just do what you say you're going to do." As we grow older and look back over life's journey, may we know that love and what it encompasses is indeed the true victory of life.



Today's Action

Tell your family that, with God's help, you'll always love them.

Prayer

Father God, give me the strength and perseverance to—without hesitation—truthfully say I'll always love my family. Amen.



WE ARE THE PRODIGALS

*While he was still a long way off, his father saw him
and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son,
threw his arms around him and kissed him.*

LUKE 15:20 NIV

This part of the prodigal son parable is one of the most moving scenes in the whole Bible. I can picture the father, with his accelerated heartbeat, seeing his wayward son approaching home after he'd squandered his inheritance money and was forced to slop pigs to survive.

This story reflects our heavenly Father, who runs to us when we're desperate, at our rope's end after experiencing the pitfalls of life and in pursuit of the true meaning of life. In our search, we may not have reached rock bottom like this son did, but all of us have tried to find purpose in making our own way.

The prodigal tells his father he's not worthy to be taken back as a son, but that doesn't prevent the father from loving him, forgiving him, and bringing out the very best upon his return. This is the way our heavenly Father treats us and welcomes us back—with open arms.



Today's Action

Forgive someone for something you've considered unforgivable.

Prayer

*Father God, thank You for forgiving me while
I was walking in sin. Amen.*



RULES FOR LIVING

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart
and with all your soul and with all your mind
and with all your strength.*

MARK 12:30 NIV

We are a culture of independence:

“Let me do my own thing.”

“I know what’s best for me.”

“Don’t tell me what to do.”

But Mark 12:30, a rule for life, gives us the boundaries in which to live. J. Wilbur Chapman stated, “Anything that dims my vision of Christ or takes away my taste for Bible study or cramps my prayer life or makes Christian work difficult is wrong for me, and I must, as a Christian, turn away from it.”¹

Review your lifestyle to evaluate how you’re doing with your choices of late. Are they drawing you closer to our Lord or sending you farther away from Him? Do you still have the same hunger for God’s Word you used to? Do you still have quiet times with Him? Are your prayers as fervent as before? Do you still enjoy spending time with other believers?

If the answer to any of those questions is no, guess who’s moved away. Follow God’s rule for living, and remain close to Him.



Today's Action

Evaluate your choices to determine if they glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayer

*Father God, help me be honest in my self-appraisal,
and may my choices honor You. Amen.*



RELEASED FROM DARKNESS

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.

ISAIAH 61:1 NIV

The good news of Christ is freedom. We who are captives to the hard things of life can be set free—no longer bound by our own prisons. Our Scripture today—and through verse 3 of Isaiah 61—gives many examples of God’s provision:

- He binds up the brokenhearted.
- He proclaims freedom for the captives.
- He releases prisoners from the darkness.
- He comforts all who mourn.
- He bestows a crown of beauty instead of ashes.
- He gives the oil of gladness instead of mourning.
- He gives a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.
- He calls us oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord.

Why? For the “display of His splendor” (verse 3 NIV). We no longer need to look at the dark side of life. William R. Alger said, “After every storm the sun will smile; for every problem there is a solution, and the soul’s indefensible duty is to be of good cheer.”² Our glass can be half full when others see it as half empty. When we rely on God, we’re released from the darkness and into the light.



Today's Action

Take a negative and turn it into a positive.

Prayer

Father God, may others see me as an oak of righteousness, and let all that happens to me be a display of Your splendor. Amen.