

Coursework Devotional

“A seven day devotional for navigating the difficulties of life”

Introduction

Since 1861 Harland & Wolff, a British shipbuilding company had been the maker of some of the world's most famous ships. It was most notable for building the titanic which sank in 1912.

However, what most people don't know is that this was not the only ship that the Harland and Wolff Company built.

It specialized in building ships that were used in the First World War and was responsible for building aircraft carriers as well as naval ships. They also garnered a reputation for fixing thousands of ships. One could surmise, that Harland & Wolff really knew how to put a ship together that could withstand the difficulties of the ocean and even wars.

But as well built as the titanic was, it could not overcome the hit from the iceberg that caused it to sink on April 15, 1912.

Though the story of the titanic can be considered as over worked, there is yet another life lesson that we can learn. No matter how well we are put together we are destined to experience some great difficulties in life that will test our makeup.

Jesus told us so in John 16:33. *I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world. ESV.*

In the midst of the difficulties that we face, we are encouraged to look beyond our situations to Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith. This devotional is a way for you to connect with God through the Bible and prayer and be strengthened for your Christian journey.

Each day includes a scripture, and an encouragement based on some of the life issues that challenged me greatly. It also includes a prayer to meditate on following your reading.

I am happy to report that I found the strength in God to navigate those difficult times of my life.

My sincere prayer is that through this devotional you will be able to skillfully navigate your difficulties and bring glory and honor to God through your life.

Day 1

Develop a personal Philosophy of life!

I Corinthians 14:40

40. But all things should be done decently and in order.

Do you know why you do things the way you do? Or are you disorganized and living life in disjoint. A personal philosophy of life will help you to become a better organized person.

In this passage the Apostle Paul is addressing order in worship of the church. But the more important thing we should see is the call for believers to reflect Gods character. God himself is orderly and nothing that he has ever done represented chaos.

God is calling us to have organized lives in order to carry our purposes for him.

In order to start creating your personal life philosophy, the question you may need to be asking is what have the experiences of your life taught you about yourself? Over time, you should be taking notice of what makes you tick, your deal breakers, your likes and dislikes and the obstacles that would prevent you from accomplishing your goals. I am not saying to include every little thing about life that bothers you however; the point is for you know your capacities.

Have you ever noticed that most organized, focused and driven people are often irritable? This is because the things that are irritable to them are really indicators of their true desire to please God through their purpose. That's why it bothers them when things are not done right and with quality and excellence. It pains them to see unaddressed problems or to encounter unmet needs, or to be involved in frivolous conversations that do not lead to anything profitable.

Take some time to write all of the things down that disturb your passion and pray to God to lead you to scriptures that will help you to start creating a personal life philosophy that will keep your life on track.

There will be days of weariness, loneliness and stress but your personal philosophy is always going to drive everything you do and keep you from wandering off into fruitless endeavors, or dealing with visionless people or indulging in some sinful activity that's not pleasing to God. You will not feel as though you're just spinning your wheels and you will be able to stick with your passion and get things done.

Your Personal Life Philosophy

Use this short statement to develop your personal life philosophy or you can design your own similar one.

In life I strive to: _____

Include a scripture you have prayed to God about.

Keep your philosophy concise as you want it to be easy for you to remember, so think elevator speech. As you continue to grow in the grace and the knowledge of God, you may add or take away things but you will have created a philosophy to begin to live by.

Your prayer today: All knowing and wise Father, please help me today to discover passages in your word that will help me to remain passionate and fulfill my purpose for you.

Day 2

Build a support System!

Mark 2:5

And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. 2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. 3 And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. 4 And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. 5 And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

How many faith filled friends can you count? God did not create us to go through this life without relationship, for God himself is relational. Therefore it is so important that we have a believing circle of friends.

In this story of forgiveness of sins and healing, four men have gone to great lengths to help a paralyzed friend in his time of difficulty. Together they have carried him to the roof of a Jewish home where Jesus was preaching, taken it apart, and lowered him down so that Jesus could heal him.

When Jesus forgave him of his sins, he intentionally connected sickness with sin which was something he had not done until this particular miracle. Traditionally sin was said to be associated with sickness so if a person was sick, it was because of their sins. Nobody knows exactly what this man has done to warrant this type of sickness and his friends have actually brought him there to be healed. But Jesus knows all that we are not conscious of and he knew that just healing him would not bring him the satisfaction that he needed without the forgiveness of his sins.

Jesus honored their faith and this should not be overlooked because if Jesus honors these kinds of friends, then they are the kind of friends who should become our support systems in this life.

Though the paralyzed man's friends are unconscious of his real need, their compassion has led them to action. It was love, loyalty, hope and determination that took them up a staircase and down through a roof to Jesus.

We don't have to carry a friend for the rest of their life if we carry them to the one who can give them life. Whatever condition we are in, may we find some friends filled with faith who will believe for us even before we believe for ourselves.

Your prayer today: Dear Sovereign God, please lead me to people of faith and help me to manage my relationships well.