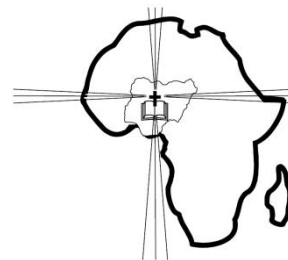


DAILY LINK WITH GOD 2015

A Daily Devotional Guide from the EYN (Church of the Brethren in Nigeria)



EYN leaders in Nigeria believe prayer is one of the most important ways to support the Nigerian people and the Church. These daily devotions were written by EYN members and published by the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria. Reading them daily is a powerful way we can be in solidarity and connect with our brothers and sisters caught in this crisis. EYN's daily devotional for 2015 will be posted a week at a time on the blog site www.brethren.org/nigeriablog, appearing mid-week for the following week. More information about the crisis can be found at www.brethren.org/nigeriacrisis.

April

Text: 2 Timothy 1-4

Brief Introduction

This month is a blessing for all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. These passages are not talking about the Easter season, but Christ has risen and He remains victorious. As we study His word, let us reflect on His salvation for the world.

April 12th Sunday 2015

Text: 2 Timothy 2:8-10

Topic: The Examples of Jesus and Paul

Paul proceeded to undergird his appeal to suffer hardship with the examples of Jesus (v. 8) and himself (vv. 9-10). Verses 8-10 form a single sentence in the Greek text, which has the effect of uniting Jesus and Paul in their respective examples. Paul replicated Jesus' example. 2:8 Jesus Christ is, of course, the greatest example of suffering hardship for a worthy purpose. Paul urged Timothy to meditate on His example too. This is the only place in this epistle where Paul arranged Jesus' names in this order (cf. 1 Tim. 6:3, 14; Titus 1:1; 2:13; 3:6). He probably did so to stress Jesus' humanity and thus His exemplary conduct. Paul may have intended his references to Jesus' resurrection and lineage to provoke meditation on our Lord's vindication and reign following His sufferings. Jesus was the culmination of a line of rulers whom God's enemies consistently opposed and persecuted (cf. Acts 7). The record of Jesus Christ was part of the gospel Paul preached and the gospel Timothy was in danger of neglecting (1:8). Paul could call the gospel "my gospel" because God had entrusted it to him.

Lesson: Are you serving as good example?

Prayer: Help us to be good examples in our action Lord. Amen.

April 13th Monday 2015

Text: 2 Timothy 2:11-13

Topic: A Popular Saying

To encourage Timothy further to endure hardship Paul cited, or perhaps adapted, a commonly accepted and used quotation that encouraged believers to remain faithful to their Christian profession (cf. 1 Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; Titus 3:8). It may have been part of a baptismal ceremony, a hymn, or a catechism. It consists of four couplets, two positive and two negative. Each one represents a condition Paul assumed for the sake of his argument to be real, not hypothetical, since each is a first class condition in the Greek text. 2:11-13 The first couplet (v. 11) is a comforting reminder that since the believer died with Christ (Col. 2:20; 3:1, 3) he or she has also experienced resurrection with Him to newness of life (cf. Rom. 6:2-23, esp. v. 8). This seems to be a better interpretation than the one that views this statement as a reference to dying as a martyr. Water baptism symbolizes the death and resurrection of the believer.

Lesson: Baptism is significant in Christian life.

Prayer: Lord, help us to deep ourselves in You. Amen.

April 14th Tuesday 2015

Text: 2 Timothy 2:14-18

Topic: Faithfulness in Public Ministry

2:14 This verse is transitional. Timothy was to keep reminding his "faithful men" of the things Paul had just brought back to his own recollection (i.e., vv. 3-13, but especially vv. 11-13). Furthermore, he should warn them against emphasizing hair-splitting controversies in their ministries since these do more harm than good (cf. 1 Tim. 1:4; 4:7; 6:4-5). In the end disputing about words seeks not the victory of truth but the victory of the speaker. 2:15 Positively, in contrast, Timothy should be "diligent" (lit. zealous) to make sure that when he stood before God he would receive the Lord's approval and not be ashamed (cf. 1 John 2:28). Most important in gaining this goal was the way he would proclaim God's truth. He must teach it consistently with God's intended meaning and purpose. "Handling accurately" (lit. cutting straight) is a figure that paints a picture of a workman who is careful and accurate in his work. The Greek word (*orthotomounta*) elsewhere describes a tentmaker who makes straight rather than wavy cuts in his material. It pictures a builder who lays bricks in straight rows and a farmer who plows a straight furrow. As Christians, we are to be faithful in all we do.

Lesson: Continue to be faithful.

Prayer: Lord, help us to be faithful in Jesus' name. Amen.

April 15th Wednesday 2015

Text: 2 Timothy 2:19

Topic: Faithfulness in Personal Life

Even though some in the Ephesian churches were upsetting and being upset, the universal church itself had stood and would continue to stand firm (Gr. perfect tense; cf. vv. 20-21; Isa. 28:16 LXX; 1 Cor. 3:10-12; Eph. 2:20-22; 1 Tim. 3:15; 6:19). The witness (seal) to this was the truth contained in two passages from the Old Testament (Num. 16:5, and Isa. 52:11 or possibly Num. 16:26; cf. Joel 3:5). The first passage assures that God differentiates between His faithful servants and those who are unfaithful. The second calls on those who choose to identify themselves with the Lord to abstain from wicked behavior. Seals in New Testament times indicated ownership, security, and authenticity. Are you among the faithful?

Lesson: Be faithful in and out of season.

Prayer: Lord, You are our help. Teach us to be faithful. Amen.

April 16th Thursday 2015:

Text: 2 Timothy 2:20-21

Topic: Honor the Lord

Paul employed a different illustration to emphasize the same point. In the church there are individuals who honor the Lord as a result of their dedication to follow His truth. These people are useful to the Lord in His work because their commitment to His Word prepares them for His service. However there are also Christians who because of their lack of commitment to God's truth bring dishonor on Him while they seek to be His instruments of service (e.g., false teachers). If someone avoids the defilement of this second group (v. 16), he or she can be a member of the first group (cf. Rom. 9:21). The major argument for identifying the "large house" as the church is the context. Paul was speaking of faithful and unfaithful Christians (cf. 1 Tim. 3:15).

Lesson: Do not dishonor the Lord.

Prayer: Help us to honor you our redeemer. Amen.

April 17th Friday 2015

Text: 2 Timothy 2:22-26

Topic: Summary Applications

Paul urged Timothy to run away from the attractive desires that appeal especially to the young. In view of the context he was probably thinking of the desire to argue, to develop a unique theology, to make a reputation for oneself by being doctrinally innovative, and the like. All of these are desires that the individuals Paul warned Timothy to avoid indulged in. Nevertheless "youthful lusts" is certainly a broad enough term to include sexual passions as well (cf. Gen. 39:12). In contrast, Timothy should run toward the goals of right behavior, faith in God, love for all people, and peace with his fellow committed brethren. Other Pauline virtue lists with more than three items are in 3:10; 2 Corinthians 6:6-7; Galatians 5:22-23; and Colossians 3:12-15. Run away from any evil as a Christian.

Lesson: Do not entertain evil.

Prayer: Help us to flee from evil Lord Jesus. Amen.

April 18th Saturday 2015

Text: 2 Timothy 2:24-26

Topic: Promotion of Peace

Such behavior is inappropriate for a servant of the Lord. He or she must promote peace and unity among the brethren (cf. 1 Tim. 1:5). The emphasis in the word translated "able to teach" in the Greek (*didaktikos*, cf. 1 Tim. 3:2) is on the teacher's ability to bring out the best in his students rather than on his knowledge. He must also gently correct the erring with a view to their restoration to correct doctrine and correct practice. Thus they may escape the devil's trap and be able to do God's will again. When we follow and correct others genuinely, peace will reign.

Lesson: Be agents of peace.

Prayer: Prince of peace, give us peace. Amen.