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DEVOTIONAL

for Men

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All Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

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INTRODUCTION

You've probably picked up this book of devotions for men because you were drawn to the fact that it features the King James Version of the Bible. If so, you're one of the millions of Bible lovers who still prefer the beauty and classic rhythms of this four-hundred-year-old translation of the Bible to the many new translations or paraphrases of God's Word.

The "Authorized" King James Version of the Bible was the result of King James I of England's direction that a translation of the Bible be readied for the Church of England. Seven years later, after the painstaking work of more than fifty qualified men, the new Bible was published—not as the King James Version or Authorized Version (that designation would come two centuries later) but as the more cumbersome *The Holy Bible, Conteyning the Old Testament, and the New: Newly Translated Out of the Originall Tongues: & with the Former Translations Diligently Compared and Revised by His Majesties Speciall Comandement*.

It should be noted that all the translators were well aware of the gravity of their task. All were university graduates—many from Oxford and Cambridge. With precision, they diligently crafted the monumental book that has served generation after generation of Christian believers.

Some of the fans of the KJV include Pulitzer Prize-winning author Eudora Welty, who has written, "How many of us, the South's writers-to-be of my generation, were blessed in one way or another, if not blessed alike, in not having gone deprived of the King James Version of the Bible. Its cadence entered into our ears and our memories for good." Indeed, she speaks not just for those from the American South but for fans of the KJV here and abroad, not all of whom were religious people.

Even skeptic and Nobel Prize winner George Bernard Shaw sang its praises.

The translation was extraordinarily well done because to the translators what they were translating was not merely a curious collection of ancient books written by different authors in different stages of culture, but the word of God divinely revealed through His chosen and expressly inspired scribes. In this conviction they carried out their work with boundless reverence and care and achieved a beautifully artistic result...they made a translation so magnificent that to this day the common human Britisher or citizen of the United States of North America accepts and worships it as a single book by a single author, the book being the Book of Books and the author being God.

The great British statesman Winston Churchill opined, “The scholars who produced this masterpiece [the King James Bible] are mostly unknown and unremembered. But they forged an enduring link, literary and religious, between the English-speaking people of the world.”

Today, the King James Version of the Bible remains extremely popular, standing firm against the plethora of additional translations. In fact, it is still the second-best-selling version, after the New International Version.

If you still remember the Scriptures you memorized from the KJV in your youth and can’t quite see the advantage of the sometimes awkward phrasing of newer versions, I think you’ll find solace, support, and guidance as you enjoy time with the Lord and with His Word, the King James Version of the Bible.

A MAN'S EYES

I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes (PSALM 101:3).

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness (MATTHEW 6:22-23).

A man's eyes take in many sights on any given day. But some of those sights can lead a man into sin if he doesn't police his vision. An envious eye may reveal a covetous heart. A critical eye may indicate prejudice. A roving eye may harbor adulterous desires. Every Christian man must determine that he will "set no wicked thing" before his eyes. Rather, he must affirm that his eyes be singularly focused on light, not the darkness of sin.

"Our eyes, when gazing on sinful objects, are out of their calling, and out of God's keeping." —THOMAS FULLER

LEARNING TO ENJOY SILENCE

Be still, and know that I am God (PSALM 46:10).

The presence of the Lord is everywhere but is better perceived in stillness. The world around us is geared toward noise, activity, and ambition. To be still and know that He is God requires that we make time for stillness.

Perhaps in prayer we have told God we want to hear His voice; we want to know how to make wise decisions, but we sense no reply. Is it because we find listening to God in silence uncomfortable? We reason that we should be up and about *doing* rather than sitting still in silence.

All the while God has answers to our every question, but He wants us to seek the answers in communion with Him—often *silent* communion. The riches from God's treasury are often mined from silent canyons, not amid the clamor of busyness.

Be assured, if we will not search out stillness, neither will it search us out.

"There is hardly ever a complete silence in our soul. God is whispering to us well-nigh incessantly. Whenever the sounds of the world die out in the soul, or sink low, then we hear these whisperings of God." —FREDERICK W. FABER

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you (JOHN 15:12).

How do we love others? Basically, we're *there* for them. We learn to know them as we would like to be known by them. We engage them by drawing out their history. We open a line of communication that allows them to trust us as friends, not just acquaintances.

Jesus was with His disciples for a good three years. Daily they saw His love toward others as He healed the sick, fed the multitudes, and in the grandest display of love, died on the cross for the sins of all. This tells us that love, above all, is sacrificially giving to others freely.

Love, then, isn't hard. It's thinking of others in the way Jesus thinks of us.

"If we do not love one another, we certainly shall not have much power with God in prayer." —D.L. MOODY

FORGIVEN AND FORGIVING

Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you (EPHESIANS 4:32).

The man who thinks he has no need for forgiveness is a lost man. The Christian man is one who has seen the true depth of his sin toward God and toward others. Forgiveness is a primary need if he is ever to experience God and restore fellowship with a person who needs his forgiveness.

A regular inventory of our relationships should reveal if there's an offense toward God or others that we must make right. When we see an offense either against us or toward another, it's time to allow our hearts to become tender and exercise forgiveness, confession, and even restitution, if necessary. A forgiven Christian man has removed a heavy burden indeed.

"To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you."—C.S. LEWIS

THE THOUGHTS OF A GODLY MAN

For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he (PROVERBS 23:7).

For most men, our thoughts are often random, wandering here and there based on external circumstances. We sometimes forget that our thoughts are the sum total of who we are. Take away our thought life and we are just an empty shell.

God cares about our thoughts. He would have us daily submit our minds to Him and center our thoughts on His will. Far too often the thoughts of an undisciplined mind take us in directions we don't want to go. Every man must identify the recurring thoughts that turn into temptations and reroute them to the mind's recycle bin. Evil or negative thoughts must be replaced by creative thoughts that are positive and God-affirming. For most men, this involves retraining our brains, and with the Holy Spirit as our Helper, we can learn to think rightly.

"Imagination is the hotbed where this sin is too often hatched. Guard your thoughts, and there will be little fear about your actions."—J.C. RYLE

NATURAL EVANGELISM

Though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! (1 CORINTHIANS 9:16).

God calls every man to share the good news of the gospel in whatever way he is gifted to do so. For many, some ways of evangelism seem forced and unnatural, but a gifted man will find creative and effective ways to simply share with others. The problem many men have is they don't look expectantly for God to open the door of opportunity to share the gospel.

Ask God to bring the right person who needs to hear about Christ your way and respond naturally as to how God has worked with you. Let nothing feel forced; simply share and follow up with private prayer for the person in need.

"The question of speaking to souls is a question of personal love to the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not say you have no gift for it. Do you love Christ? If so, you will never lose an opportunity of speaking a word for Him." —G.V. WIGRAM

EDIFYING THE CHURCH

Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church (1 CORINTHIANS 14:12).

The word we translate as “church” literally means “called out” ones. And within the church of God’s “called out” ones is a love every Christian man must have. For to love Christ must also mean to love His bride. And every man has some gift to bring to edify his fellow believers. The work may be small or large, but whatever the task, God has appointed it to be accomplished.

Have you discovered how God wants to use you and your spiritual gifts to edify your fellow believers? Be zealous of spiritual gifts and pray for an understanding of the way God plans to use you. Don’t shrink back from giving to the church, for in giving, you will also receive.

“A spiritual gift is a supernaturally designed ability granted to every believer by which the Holy Spirit ministers to the body of Christ. A spiritual gift cannot be earned, pursued or worked up. It is merely ‘received’ through the grace of God.” —JOHN MACARTHUR

RESISTING THE ENEMY

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you (JAMES 4:7).

Every Christian man is Satan's target. This brutal enemy has plans to render men ineffective in their personal life—and in their spiritual life. However, no man is left unguarded by God in the battle. Safety is found in submitting entirely to God and resisting the specific influences Satan has devised to take you down.

Resisting must begin with the very first hint of temptation. If we don't resist early, we're more likely to fall into Satan's trap. The best warriors have learned how to identify their enemy and defeat him. So must every man. Be strong in the Lord. Submit to God. Resist the enemy at every turn—and watch him flee.

“Many men have no heart to resist a temptation. No sooner does Satan come with his solicitations—but they yield. . . . He is a valorous Christian who brandishes the sword against Satan, and will rather die than yield. The heroic spirit of a saint is never more seen than in a battlefield, when he is fighting with the red dragon—and by the power of faith puts the devil to flight!” —THOMAS WATSON