



## LGC Daily Devotion Guide 2011

Week 1

January 3—January 9, 2011

### I. Adoration

#### (1) Invocation

Read the following quote and write down your own New Year's prayer:

"I am the new year. I am an unspoiled page in your book of time. I am your next chance at the art of living. I am your opportunity to practice what you have learned about life during the last twelve months. All that you sought and didn't find is hidden in me, waiting for you to search it but with more determination. All the good that you tried for and didn't achieve is mine to grant when you have fewer conflicting desires. All that you dreamed but didn't dare to do, all that you hoped but did not will, all the faith that you claimed but did not have—these slumber lightly, waiting to be awakened by the touch of a strong purpose. I am your opportunity to renew your allegiance to Him who said, "Behold, I make all things new." (*I Am the New Year*, Bible Illustrator)

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#### (2) Adoration through Psalm 53

(We'll use this Psalm, not for today's Bible reading, but for the sake of focusing our thoughts on God)

- Read slowly this passage at least three times and each day gather one thought about this psalm that points to God's character and translate it into a prayer of adoration.

### II. Confession

Pause now and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you your sins and ask for forgiveness.

### III. Thanksgiving

List, one by one, things for which you should give thanks.

#### **IV. Scriptural Reflection:**

As we begin a new year, we shall be focusing on the theme, “Being Remade in God’s Image”. However, we believe that no one can really know the Lord, without knowing and being connected to His body, therefore, we shall be reflecting on what a body of Christ, the church of which we are a part, should be through the study of the relevant book of the Bible, beginning with I and II Timothy. Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day:

##### **January 3**

##### **I Timothy 1: 1-11**

I and II Timothy, together with Titus are grouped together as the Pastoral letters by Paul. The first two were addressed to Timothy in Ephesus and the last one to Titus in Crete. It is believed that Paul wrote I Timothy and Titus shortly after his release in Rome, but II Timothy would be written after his second arrest in Rome. As Paul sent Timothy to Ephesus, he desired to join him later, but the urgency of the attack on false teachers on Timothy necessitated the writing of a letter to be read in public to the church to give Timothy authority and legitimacy as the pastoral leader of the church. Therefore, I Timothy should be read in the light that some of the instructions were meant to be stop-gap measures until Paul’s personal arrival to settle certain issues more on a permanent basis.

- (1) As a younger minister pasturing a church infiltrated by false teachers, how did an introduction by Paul who commanded great respect by the believers in Ephesus (see Acts 20) in vv.1-2 do to enhance the spiritual authority of Timothy?
- (2) Why did Paul call Christ Jesus our hope? Is Jesus your hope? Why or why not?
- (3) According to Paul, what were the emphases (or devotion) of these false teachers and their teachings (v.4)? What did these emphases end up promoting?
- (4) What do “myths” and “endless genealogies” have in common? What might be some of the modern-day controversies in doctrines have in common with them? Why did Paul call them meaningless talks (v.6)?

- (5) What was the root cause of these false teachings according to Paul in v.5?
- (6) These false teachings presumably were related to the law (of Moses) which Paul cautions its proper usage. What did Paul remind them of concerning the proper usage of the law? What was the law not made for (v.9)? What then is the implication as far as the error of the false teachers are concerned?
- (7) What then can we learn from Paul when it comes to controversies concerning doctrines?
- (8) What is the main message to you today?

##### **January 4**

##### **I Timothy 1: 12-20**

- (1) Why did Paul choose to recount who he was before he launched his attack on the false teachers?
- (2) How did his conversion serve to illustrate the trustworthiness of the saying that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners?
- (3) Will you say the same about your own conversion? Why or why not?
- (4) How is Paul an example of Christ’s unlimited patience to you?
- (5) As he recounted who he was and how he was saved and chosen to serve Christ, Paul could not help but burst into adoration in v.17. Reflect carefully on this doxology. How special was it?
- (6) What reasons did Paul give for the shipwreck of faith by Hymenaeus and Alexander?
- (7) While the meaning of “handing over to Satan” is not necessarily plain to us, what can we deduce about the seriousness of their action (in delivering false teachings)?
- (8) What is the main message to you today?

##### **January 5**

##### **I Timothy 2: 1-7**

- (1) Instead of engaging in meaningless talks, what did Paul admonish Timothy to do as of the most important?
- (2) What is the essence of this prayer commended by Paul? How is this intercession tied to v.4?
- (3) Why is it so important that it should be the mark of a minister of the gospel?

- (4) Is this your regular prayer? Why or why not?
- (5) How does v.6 answer those who say all religions are the same?
- (6) What did Paul see as his mission?
- (7) What do you see as your mission today and how should you carry it out?
- (8) What is the main message to you today?

**January 6** **I Timothy 2: 8-15**

- (1) Reading between the lines of vv. 8-9, what might be the particular problems with the men and women in the church in Ephesus? Do you think these continue to be the problems of the church today? Why or why not?
- (2) The problem with the women in the church in Ephesus appeared to go beyond their appearances, but in their attempt to usurp spiritual authority over men, especially in teaching and preaching. What basis did Paul resort to in commanding women to submit? In referring to this basis, was Paul thinking in terms of the culture of the day or in terms of biblical truth?
- (3) We know that Paul did allow teaching by women (I Corinthians 11:5) and the prohibition appears to be a temporary measure until his arrival (3:14-15), still his emphasis was on submission of women to men in the church based on the order of God's creation and on the responsibility shouldered by Eve in the Fall, how then should we take it in the church today? Why?
- (4) While the meaning of being saved through child-bearing is not necessarily obvious, the admonition is clear in that women, instead of focusing on usurping equality in spiritual authority with men, should focus on several other areas. What are they and how important are they?  
(Note: it is more than clear that there are instances of female leadership blessed by the church in the New Testament, e.g. Priscilla and the two females named in Philippians 4:2, Paul's admonition is against self-usurping rather than the anointing by the Lord's Spirit, which would apply equally to men and women)
- (5) What is the main message to you today?

**January 7** **I Timothy 3: 1-7**

It is important to note once again that these were stop-gap measures that Paul was putting in place until he personally arrived. These qualifications for elders, apart from teaching (v.2), are not really spiritual qualifications, but those applicable to leadership in any decent secular society. As a result, they are really basic, minimum qualifications that are easily visible to all. The real spiritual qualifications are mentioned in chapter 4.

- (1) Paul said, when someone sets his heart on being an elder or overseer, he desires a noble task. Why is that the case? Under what circumstances might this statement not be the case?
- (2) The underlying qualification appears to be "beyond reproach", and Paul went on to list areas in which to measure it. Let's consider each of the areas mentioned in vv. 2-7, asking
  - a. Why is it so important to being an overseer?
  - b. What does the failure to meet this criterion mean to the person and the church?
  - c. Do you meet this qualification?
- (3) Given the above, how may you pray for the leaders of the church?
- (4) What is the main message to you today?

**January 8** **I Timothy 3:8-13**

(Note: at the time of the early church, many of the apostles were considered overseers being pastors and spiritual leaders of the local church, while deacons occupied more an administrative role. Today, many names and titles are being used, but most church polity still distinguishes between spiritual and administrative leadership.)

- (1) Although, deacons appear to occupy less of a spiritual role than overseers, they are, none the less, leaders representing the church of God. As such, these basic, minimum and visible qualifications are required of them. Again, reflect on each of these areas listed in vv.8-13 and ask the following questions for each:
  - a. Why is it so important to being a deacon?
  - b. What does the failure to meet this criterion mean to the

person and the church?

c. Do you meet this qualification?

(2) What is the main message to you today?

### **January 9**

### **I Timothy 3: 14-16**

- (1) For Paul to feel the need to write this letter before his actual arrival, how urgent do you think the problems of church in Ephesus was facing? By recalling what you have read so far, what were the problems of this church?
- (2) Paul now defines what a church is in v.15. What are the implications of this definition?
- (3) How does it affect your view of and your participation in your local church, as a result of this definition?
- (4) Why did Paul burst into a doxology in v.16 upon considering what a church was?
- (5) Why did Paul call it a mystery of godliness? What or rather who is it?
- (6) Note that in the original language each line of this doxology was in passive voice, meaning it denotes total humility of the one who is God. Consider each of these lines and consider
  - a. Why is it a mystery?
  - b. Why is it so great? (Remember, each line is about the God who willingly submits Himself)
- (7) What is the main message to you today?

## **V. Meditative Reflection**

This week we shall continue to reflect on the ‘Nine Marks of a Healthy Church’, beginning with its Preface.

### **January 3**

Please refer to the Preface to the New Expanded Edition of “Nine Marks of a Healthy Church”, ‘Ten Years of Nine Marks’ by J. Harris. (Page 12, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph.)

### **January 4**

Please refer to the Preface to the New Expanded Edition of “Nine Marks of a Healthy Church”, ‘Ten Years of Nine Marks’ by J. Harris. (Page 13, from the 1st paragraph.)

### **January 5**

Please refer to the Preface to the New Expanded Edition of “Nine Marks of a Healthy Church”, ‘Ten Years of Nine Marks’ by J. Harris. (Page 14, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph.)

### **January 6**

Please refer to the Preface to the New Expanded Edition of “Nine Marks of a Healthy Church”, ‘Ten Years of Nine Marks’ by J. Harris. (Page 14, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph to Page 15, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph.)

### **January 7**

Please refer to the Preface to the New Expanded Edition of “Nine Marks of a Healthy Church”, ‘Ten Years of Nine Marks’ by J. Harris. (Page 15, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph.)

### **January 8**

Please refer to the Preface to the New Expanded Edition of “Nine Marks of a Healthy Church”, ‘Ten Years of Nine Marks’ by J. Harris. (Page 16, 1st paragraph to Page 17 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph.)

### **January 9**

Please refer to the Preface to the New Expanded Edition of “Nine Marks of a Healthy Church”, ‘Ten Years of Nine Marks’ by J. Harris. (Page 17, 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph )

**VI. A Time for Silence**

You have mediated much today with your intellectual faculty today. Now have a moment of silence (the length is up to you, 5 or even 30 minutes), and ask God quietly, “Lord, is there any important message from you today that I might have missed? Show me, your servant is listening?”

**VII. Supplication**

Use the following chart to cover people and ministries that you want to remember before the Lord:

	Your family	Other people	Church Ministries	Other Ministries	City & World	Others
Sunday						
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wed						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						

**VII. Benediction**

“Live this year in Christ’s presence, remembering He is near and will sustain you as you serve in His name.” In Jesus name. Amen.  
(*Guide to Prayer*; adapted)