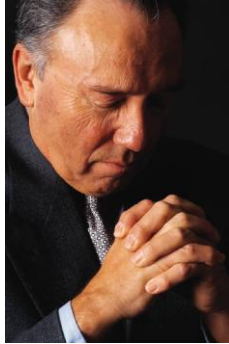


**December 13, 2009**  
**"DEPENDENCE ON GOD", *Daily Disciple*, page 356**



**PSALM**

- <sup>3</sup> Since you are my rock and my fortress,  
for the sake of your name lead and guide me.
- <sup>4</sup> Free me from the trap that is set for me,  
for you are my refuge.
- <sup>5</sup> Into your hands I commit my spirit;  
redeem me, O LORD, the God of truth.

(Psalm 31:3-5)

**MEDITATION**

“Prayer allays the passions, promotes the virtues, and harmonizes all the powers and faculties of the soul. It subdues the human will and makes the will of God the supreme law of the universe.”

(Robert Milligan, *A Brief Treatise on Prayer*, pages 19-20)

**SCRIPTURE**

<sup>3</sup>But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. <sup>4</sup>We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we command. <sup>5</sup>May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.

(2 Thessalonians 3:3-5)

**PRAYER**

“Faithful Lord, my rock, fortress, and refuge, protect me from harm this day. Mold my will to yours. May I keep your commands this day, by the power of your Holy Spirit. Direct my heart to your love and steadfastness, through Christ. In the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

## Digging Deeper: Finding out, discussion and sharing

1. This devotional message focuses on our dependence upon God.
2. Read Psalm 31 and answer the following questions:
  - a. What would you say the major theme of this Psalm is?
  - b. As David begins to pen this Psalm, what two things in verse 1 does he ask God to do for him?
  - c. Why does David employ the images of “rock” and “fortress” to describe God? What is he trying to say about God? Can you think of two contemporary images that would convey the same message today?
  - d. David asks God to lead and guide him upon what basis?
  - e. Read again Psalm 31 and see if you can decipher what David is asking God, “Free me from the trap that is set for me.” What do you think that trap was? What might it be for us today?
  - f. This entire Psalm is often called a Psalm of Refuge. Compare verse 5 with Luke 23:46. Does knowing this entire Psalm help you understand Jesus’ agonizing plea on the cross? What is Jesus pleading for?
  - g. Go back through this Psalm and highlight the reasons that David feels he needs refuge.
  - h. How does David express his trust in God?
  - i. What has God already done for him?
3. In Robert Milligan’s meditation, he points out that prayer allays (moderates) the passions. In what way do you think this is true?
  - a. How does prayer promote the virtues?
  - b. What virtues are important for your Christian life and your family?
  - c. How does prayer subdue the human will?
  - d. Where does your own will need to be subdued the most?
  - e. Read Philippians 2:5-11. Discuss how Jesus’ model of emptying himself helps us understand humility and how our own human will can be subdued.
4. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:3-5.
  - a. Why is it important for us to be reminded often that “the Lord is faithful”?
  - b. Do we pray that the Lord will strengthen and protect us from the evil one?
  - c. Verse 5 is a powerful prayer-wish that Paul writes for his readers. Do you remember the old prayer phrase: guide, guard and direct? Here Paul’s wish is that the Lord would direct their hearts into God’s love and Christ’s perseverance.
  - d. Why would we want to pray that today?
  - e. Actually, the entire paragraph (2 Thessalonians 3:1-5) is Paul’s prayer request for his fellow believers there.
    - 1) What does he desire that they pray for him?
    - 2) What does he want to be delivered from?
5. In the prayer offered at the end of the devotional lesson, the petition asks for God to protect us from harm this day.
  - a. Is this something that we pray for every day?
  - b. What is the type of harm that occupies our thinking and often becomes a source of worry for us?
6. Share with your group a time or event in your life where you really understood what it meant to depend on God in prayer.