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Deuteronomy 5-9

"When Life is Good, Don't Forget God"

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When the forty years of wandering in the wilderness were drawing to a close, God began to prepare the people to go into the Promised Land. Deuteronomy means "Second Law," not because it was another Law of God, but because it was a representation of the same commandments, given to a second generation of Israelites who had grown up in the wilderness. These second-generation Israelites were about to enter into the Promised Land, the land of Israel, which God had provided for them. This retelling of the Law came with a warning.

In this passage of Deuteronomy there was a warning against forgetfulness – not the forgetfulness that comes with old age, but the kind that comes from a having and living the good life. God told the Israelites that they were about to enter into and experience the "good life." They were crossing over the Jordan River into a land that was spacious and fruitful; the land that God had promised on oath to their forefathers 500 years earlier.

During the previous 400 years the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt, other pagan people occupied this Promised Land. God promised to go before the children of Israel and drive out these people so that when the Israelites entered the Promised Land, they would inherit a fully furnished land with large flourishing cities. They were going to live in houses filled with good things they did not have to provide, wells they did not have to dig, and vineyards and olive groves they did not have to plant.

It's hard to grasp something like this, but imagine if Loudoun County was built just as it is today, with homes, schools, theaters, restaurants, businesses, and farms. Imagine God displacing the "Loudounites" and giving the land of Loudoun to you and your descendants as your new homeland! And then, as you step into all this and begin enjoying the good life, you received God's warning, "Don't forget me!" This is the same

message God gave the children of Israel, as they prepared to enter into the Promised Land. He reminded the Israelites, according to [Deuteronomy 6:11b-12](#): *“When you eat and are satisfied, be careful that you do not forget the Lord, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.”*

It’s sad but true; the harder life is, the more and more we tend to move toward God. On the other hand, the better life is, the more we tend to forget the Lord. Hardship has a built-in motivation that takes us deeper in our walk with God. No one has to tell us to pray more or read our Bible more or to stop sinning, because hardship makes us want God more. God has no problem using hardship to bring us into a closer walk with him, but his ultimate goal for us is not to afflict us into dependence. No, he is our Father, and a father disciplines his kids when they need it. With the Lord, discipline is not a first priority; it’s a last resort!

Ideally, a father loves to bless his kids and provide for them, take care of them and protect them, and give things to them.¹ But, God says, “When I do all these things for you and life is good, don’t forget me!” This is the dominant theme in [Deuteronomy 8](#). It is important to remember, however, to look at it like an American; like someone whom God has blessed. It is important to put ourselves in the story and see how it challenges us. If God, as our father, loves to take care of his children in wonderful ways, how do we maintain a close walk with Jesus when life is good?

In this study, Pastor Gary shares five practical principles to help us not forget God when we are living the “good life.”

Be Grateful To God For All He’s Done

1. In [Deuteronomy 8:10](#), the Bible reminds us of the importance of giving God praise for all he has done.
2. Praise is most often associated with music and worship, however, this particular Hebrew word for “praise” literally means, “to bless as an act of adoration.”
 - a. One way that you show God adoration is to be thankful for all he has done.
 - b. Don’t take God’s goodness for granted. Praise him and thank him for everything.

Stay In The Word

3. In [Deuteronomy 8:11](#), the Bible reminds us of the importance of staying in the Word.

¹ [James 1:17](#)

4. It is important to read the Bible so you won't fail to observe his commands, his laws, and his decrees.
5. God's laws are intended, not to spoil your fun or your life, but to save your life, which is why over and over again in the book of Deuteronomy, the people were instructed to obey God's commands that it might go well with them.²

Stay Humble

6. In [Deuteronomy 8:12-14](#), the Bible reminds us of the importance of staying humble.
7. Abundance and affluence can be a two-edged sword, because not "needing" anything is both a good and a bad thing!
8. Someone once said, "Humility is something we should constantly pray for, yet never thank God that we have."

Remember Where You Have Come From And How Far God Has Brought You

9. In [Deuteronomy 8:15-16](#), the Bible reminds us that we should be careful to remember where God has brought us.
10. Moses reviewed the previous forty years of wandering with the Israelites, and it's important for us to practice this principle, too.
 - a. No matter how successful you become, you should never forget your roots or where you came from, and you should never lose sight of God's grace and mercy along the way, because you did not get there on your own.
 - b. If you lose sight of what the Lord has done for you, you will become full of self-righteousness and forget the Lord.

Remember That Everything You Have And Everything You Have Accomplished Is By God's Grace, Not The Result Of Your Talent

11. In [Deuteronomy 8:17-18](#), the Bible reminds us that God is the source of all we have and all we have accomplished.

² Examples include: [Deuteronomy 10:12-13, 10:28](#).

12. We are not that smart, talented, or wonderful; but God is, so we should never forget God!
13. With blessing comes responsibility, the responsibility of never forgetting God!

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read [Deuteronomy 6:10-12; 9:1-6](#) to provide an overview for this study.
3. Discuss with you group how we, as Americans, can make sure not to forget God as we live lives of relative comfort.
 - a. Discuss times in life that when this has been a struggle or when the goodness of life hindered your dependence on God.
 - b. Discuss how God has developed a reliance on him in times of hardship or challenges.
4. Discuss the importance of humility in maintaining a focus on the Lord.
 - a. Discuss the quote, "Humility is something we should constantly pray for, yet never thank God that we have."
5. Discuss Pastor Gary's point that we should be conscious to never forget where we've come from.
 - a. What does this look like practically?
6. Discuss with your group how to keep the next generation from forgetting the Lord.
7. How can we make sure that they focus on the Lord, even when growing up in a life of comfort? Is there an importance in making sure they see how other people in the world live?
8. Close your time in prayer by asking the Holy Spirit to help each person: never forget God when they are living the "good life."