

“Finding Joy In the Journey”

Life is a journey, taking us down paths we've never walked before and constantly moving us forward in new directions. And like most journeys there are always a few bends and bumps in the road. That's why it is so important to stop every once in a while and assess where you are going and how you are handling the trip.

The key to enjoying life is to prioritize and focus your thoughts on God and the promises He has given you in His Word.

[Philippians 3:13-14](#) "...I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us." (NLT)

Some steps to take to living a more fulfilled life:

First: Let go of some excess baggage.

Have you ever done a lot of traveling? Let's say you took a winter ski vacation and then planned a warm weather trip soon afterwards. For the winter trip you would need to pack ski equipment, heavy jacket, gloves, hat, and a sundry of cold weather items. But for the warm weather vacation you would take light weight attire, along with some sunscreen, beach towel and maybe a straw hat.

Now my point is this, it would certainly make sense to unpack your suitcase after your winter trip, before repacking for the warm weather trip. If you don't you will end up carrying quite a bit of excess baggage with you on your journey.

We can apply this same idea to our personal lives. God may want us to deal with some personal issues such as; unforgiveness, anger, disappointment, etc. before we can move ahead in our lives. And since we will all experience some disappointments in life it is important that we don't carry the emotional baggage from our past relationships and experiences into our current and future involvements.

We need to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to us if there are any emotional strongholds which might be holding us back from living a joyful life. Then make a conscious decision to deal with these issues and to change.

Second: Take responsibility for your life.

You will either grow or be stunted by problems. Which will it be? Don't allow temporary setbacks to keep you from enjoying the full and joyful life that God has for you. Develop a healthy mindset, dealing with problems from a position of faith and trust in God, and by allowing Him to do a work in you.

[Psalm 97:11](#) "Light is sown for the [uncompromisingly] righteous and strewn along their pathway, and joy for the upright in heart [the irrepressible joy which comes from consciousness of His favor and protection]." (AMP)

Third: Determine the will of God for your life.

God has the answers for you if you take the time to seek Him. When you spend time with God in prayer, bible reading and worship, His plans and purposes for your life will become clear.

[Psalm 16:11](#) “You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; (NKJ)

[Ephesians 5:17](#) “Don't live carelessly, unthinkingly. Make sure you understand what the Master wants.” ™

Fourth: When you discover the direction God has for you, stay focused, don't waiver off course.

[Hebrews 12:13](#) “And cut through and make firm and plain and smooth, straight paths for your feet [yes, make them safe and upright and happy paths that go in the right direction],

Fifth: Take the time limits off of the situation. Learn to trust God to bring about the desired results in His time. Allow the Holy Spirit to strengthen and encourage you.

[Psalm 94:19](#) “In the multitude of my [anxious] thoughts within me, Your comforts cheer and delight my soul!” (AMP)

[Ephesians 3:16](#) “May He grant you out of the rich treasury of His glory to be strengthened and reinforced with mighty power in the inner man by the [Holy] Spirit [Himself indwelling your innermost being and personality]. (AMP)

Sixth: Give of yourself.

Give of your time, talents and finances to help others in need. Focusing on the needs of others will often bring a new perspective.

Enjoy today: Work on changing your attitude. Reflect on where God has taken you from. Appreciate the blessings and the work of God in your life. Don't look at what you don't have, rather be grateful for what you do have. See the glass as half full.

[Philippians 4:4](#) “Rejoice in the Lord always [delight, gladden yourselves in Him]; again I say, Rejoice!” (AMP)

Questions:

1. What are some examples of things that we carry around that hold us back from living joyful and fulfilling lives?
2. How do we find the will of God for our lives?
3. What are some of the things that can distract us from pursuing the will of God once we know what it is?
4. Give some examples of people in the bible that waited on God for the fulfillment of His promises? How did they handle the wait?
5. What can we do to develop a more positive attitude that gets us out of the rut of focusing on lack and into the mindset of faith and expectation?