

This Draining Mindset Robs You of Enjoying God's Abundant Blessings

We've all heard plenty of warnings not to live in the past—licking wounds, nursing hurts or reliving mistakes. We know we can't change our histories, and by spending too much time caught up in them, we only rob ourselves of the enjoyment of today.

Living for When

But there's another place we spend much of our time. We're not warned of it nearly as often, though it's equally as depriving. It's the future. With minds filled with hopes, dreams and even fears, we obsess about what's to come, which tends to turn the present into an obstacle to get through on the way toward a better day. In doing so, we live our lives on hold, waiting for a certain situation or person to come along before we allow ourselves to be satisfied. We say things like:

- When I graduate, then I will have achieved something.
- When I get married, then I will be complete and happy.
- When I have children, then I will have a legacy worth living for.
- When I get to that level in my career, then I will have arrived.

If God has planted any of these desires in your heart, then absolutely pray and work toward them. But don't live for them. By this I mean, don't make them an idol. If education, marriage, children, a career or any other future goal is your benchmark for arriving, then you will possibly miss out on what God wants to teach or do through you in this season.

Israel's Lesson

As I explore in my book, *Activating the Power of God's Word*, this is a lesson that Israel had to learn. God made them some remarkable promises, but when everything didn't happen in the way or time they expected, for years they found themselves discouraged, depressed and unsatisfied. Eventually, however, they made a crucial decision to rejoice in where they were. "This is the day that the Lord has made," they boasted. "We will rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps. 118:24). We must understand that their declaration here isn't so much a reflection that their situation had suddenly changed but that they changed their perspective about their situation. Their newfound decision to be thankful for the day was key to their present joy. And it's the same for you and me.

A Declaration for Today

There are lots of joys to be experienced in this present moment. You can do things now that you can't do at other stages of life—when you have a spouse, children or a higher-responsibility job. Don't waste this moment wishing for another. The notion that you aren't happy or whole until you arrive at a certain situation only robs you of appreciating what God has given you today. So declare this with me: "This is the day the Lord has made; I will rejoice and be glad in it!" {eo}

Kyle Winkler equips people to live in victory. His mobile app, *Shut Up, Devil!*, is the No. 1 spiritual warfare app; and his book, *Activating the Power of God's Word*, uncovers 16 strategic declarations to transform your life. Kyle holds a Master of Divinity in biblical studies from Regent University. Get daily encouragement from Kyle on Facebook and Twitter.