

Finding Joy in Your Everyday Life

John 10:10 (AMPC) has been one of my favorite scriptures for many years. It says, "The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)." This verse clearly shows us that God wants us to enjoy our lives—in abundance, to the full, until we're overflowing with joy!

I remember when God gave me the revelation that it's His will for me to enjoy my life. It was life-changing because I used to be a miserable person who was emotionally unstable and couldn't be happy unless I got my way most of the time. Because of the abuse I had experienced throughout childhood, I was insecure, angry and didn't trust anyone. But once I started seriously studying God's Word, I came to realize that He didn't want me to live this way. I could be healed and whole in my mind and emotions, and I could learn how to really enjoy my everyday life.

Now when I say God wanted me to enjoy my everyday life, I'm talking about doing ordinary life with calm delight and a smile on my face (see John 15:11). It's about not dreading the daily responsibilities you have to do whether you like it or not, things like cleaning the house, mowing the grass, going to work and the list goes on and on. And it's not a "working for the weekend" mentality or an attitude that says "I'll be happy get to go on vacation" or "the kids are back in school" or "I get that promotion" and so on.

It seems today that most people believe they have to wait for their circumstances to change before they can enjoy life. But the truth is you can make the decision to enjoy your ordinary life and make it extraordinary, regardless of your

circumstances.

Doing Life with God

One of the ways you can take ordinary life and make it extraordinary is to learn to do every single thing you do with and for God. We make a mistake when we separate our sacred life from our secular life. We can be just as close to God in the grocery store as we are at church. And He wants us to do everything we need to do WITH Him.

It actually adds an edge of excitement when we let God be involved in everything we do. He's everywhere, all the time, and He's just as interested in the routine, mundane tasks of our lives as He is in the more "spiritual" things we do.

It's amazing to realize that God wants to have fellowship with us—He wants to spend each day with us. Don't just settle for seeking Him once a week at church or when you're in a desperate situation. Decide that you are going to enjoy your everyday relationship with God!

The Truth About Real Joy

The abundant life Christ offers goes deeper in our hearts than the way we feel about things. It's an amazing thing when we learn how to have the peace and joy only God can give in every area of our lives instead of the type of enjoyment that's just based on emotional excitement.

The joy of the Lord is much greater than simply feeling happy. It brings peace and contentment to your soul, even when your circumstances are difficult and don't make any sense. Nehemiah 8:10 says, "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

This kind of joy makes the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday routine enjoyable. And since most of life is Monday through Friday, we need to enjoy it!

The World Can't Give It to You

In John 15:11 (NIV), Jesus says, "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." The Amplified Classic translation says "that your joy and gladness may be of full measure and complete and overflowing." In the ten verses leading up to this one, Jesus is talking about abiding in Him because that's the key to living with His joy.

Abiding means "to live, dwell and remain in"; it's not just visiting once a week at church. It's having a personal relationship with Christ, being one with Him and doing life together. The truth is apart from Jesus; we can do nothing of real value but with Him, we can bear much good fruit (John 15:5).

God wants to abide with you every day, all throughout the day. He doesn't just want you to seek Him when you go to church or when you're desperate. His desire is to have a personal relationship with you so you can experience His presence in everything you do. That's when your everyday life is really enjoyable!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's three-teaching CD series Joy and Enjoyment. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting .

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