

The Devil Steals Your Purpose When You Give Way to This Lie

Sometimes life paralyzes you and prevents your next step. The tragedy is that when you shrink from moving forward, you set yourself up to fear change and accept stagnation. Do you know people who avoid change and allow challenges to put them in a box? They feel safe and content as long as everything stays the same. They feel threatened when anything changes. Then they wonder why life seems to pass them by.

I can tell you that this is not what God intended. If the Creator of the universe could breathe life into us and speak the world into existence, don't you think He wants greater things for us than we could even imagine?

Of course He does! If the enemy can keep us bound by fear, he will successfully steal our purpose. How else can he oppose God and destroy the deliverer in each of us?

At the same time, we oppose ourselves. When life doesn't go according to our plans, we see it as a signal to hit the brakes, which is how paralysis begins. But does that make any sense? Do you know anyone who has never experienced pain? I don't. Everyone has suffered loss, whether it involves marriage, finances, jobs, children or health. So should everyone quit moving forward?

Face it: Pain touches us all. How you deal with pain makes all the difference. You can become intentional, overcome your trauma and refuse to be robbed of life's pleasures. Or you can settle for just existing from day to day—going to work, making dinner, watching TV and going to bed. You can live that kind of life in your sleep because you are not present. You no longer think about the joys of life. You don't notice the flowers blooming or children laughing. Gone is the

anticipation of anniversary dinners, career promotions and graduations. You don't allow yourself to hope because you think all hope is lost.

Emotional paralysis occurs for many reasons. You might learn to tolerate your pain rather than deal with the root causes. This leaves you numb to those you should be calling to account—those who create havoc in your life. Maybe your own decisions have triggered your current circumstances, and you bury your pain by “just living with” whatever befalls you.

There is a better way. Even if you do not know the way out of your troubles, you can walk in forgiveness and repent of the choices that have caused you pain. You can find biblical examples of how to take up your bed of affliction and walk.

As long as blood is running through your veins, you will have bad days and tough seasons. Storms will come and wreak havoc in your life. You might even go from one storm to another and wonder why. The good news is that every storm runs out of rain sometime. Your storm is at most a season, not a life sentence. That does not mean hellacious storms won't sometimes pile on. You don't just lose your job; the car breaks down too. You don't just get divorced; your doctor finds a tumor at the same time.

This is what I mean when I say Satan can't take you out, so he'll try to wear you out. When that happens, you must step back and take stock. Ask yourself questions such as, “How did I get here, and why? Did I refuse to see what was on the horizon? What changes must I make?”

This is also the time to welcome God into your situation. Ask Him to show you where you need to make adjustments so you can break generational curses and other negative patterns. Generational curses are real, but when you receive Christ into your heart, He lives inside you. So the same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in you and will set you free from

bondages that try to imprison you.

But you cannot be healed of the pain you ignore. You have to deal with whatever has devastated you. Hiding behind a mask and a fake smile will not ward off your restless nights. If you want to be free, honesty is the best policy.

Often, the things you tell yourself cause your greatest heartaches. Without realizing it, you can treat what you say as a binding commitment. I'm talking about pronouncements such as "I'll never love again" or "I'll never break free of that person's influence over my life," You choose whether to make those statements, but you can also choose to renounce them.

Recognize your untreated pain, and recognize your strength, which comes from the Lord. He said that He will never leave nor forsake you. (See .) He does not walk away from you. He is with you no matter how lonely you feel. Don't allow your past denial of your pain to negate your relationship with Jesus Christ. That relationship cannot be measured against your earthly relationships. We are broken vessels, and we will continue to fail. However, failure is not defeat until you quit trying. Decide to leave negativity and illicit relationships behind you. Determine that you will no longer admit unwelcome intruders into your life to hijack your faith and rob you of your peace. It is time for your pain to be healed.

✘ *Adapted from When Your Bad Meets His Good—Find Purpose in Your Pain by Kimberly Jones-Pothier, copyright 2018, published by Charisma House. Motivated by her personal testimony, Kimberly shares how she let God turn her mess into a message. Her book will help you move past your pain and dark season toward your best days ahead.*

Prayer Power for the Week of Jan. 13, 2019

Thank the Lord that He never leaves you nor forsakes you no matter what circumstance you find yourself facing. Ask Him to

reveal areas where you may be in denial and to show you the truth that needs to be faced so He can bring healing and restoration. Thank Him for this new year and the opportunities He is giving you in it. Continue to pray for worldwide revival, for our leaders and allies, and the peace of Jerusalem. Read Hebrews 13:5.