

Joyce Meyer Reveals the Greatest Life Lesson She's Ever Learned

If you've heard my testimony, you know I experienced abuse from my father throughout my childhood—mental, emotional and sexual abuse. Then, for years after I left that situation, I continued to live with a constant sense of guilt and condemnation that caused me to be a miserable person who was usually angry about something and very difficult to get along with.

But eventually, God helped me to overcome the hurts and wounds from the past and He miraculously restored my soul. It's been a long journey getting to where I am today and it hasn't been easy, but I can honestly say it's been worth it. God has done such an amazing work in my life that I don't know how to tell it all!

One Scripture verse that has been truly life-changing for me over the years in my journey to wholeness is Psalm 27:4. It says: "One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek, inquire for, and [insistently] require: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord [in His presence] all the days of my life" (AMPC).

The foremost thing we need to learn is to keep God first in our lives. Psalm 27:4 is talking about seeking *God*, and not just the blessings He can give us. Now, there is nothing wrong with asking Him for the things you want and need, but they should not be your focus.

God loves us and wants to show His love to us. But He wants to have a personal relationship with us that goes deeper than us just coming to Him when we need something or have an emergency.

I remember when God spoke to my heart that if I would seek Him as if I was desperate all the time, I wouldn't find myself in desperate circumstances as often. The truth is, we really are desperate for God all the time, whether we realize it or not.

I've discovered that when you have God Himself, you have everything you will ever need! It's all about learning to seek God's face—who He is, His presence—and not just His hand, or what He can do for you.

So ... what are you seeking?

The word *seek* means you crave, pursue or go after something with all of your might; you require something as a vital necessity in your life. The question is, what are you seeking? What do you believe is really vital to you? In other words, what do you think you absolutely have to have in life?

Most of us start our relationship with God when our lives are in a mess, and we come to Him because we recognize that He is the only one who can help us get out of it. When I got serious about my relationship with God and started studying His Word, I had so many issues—my life was a mess! And at times, I wondered if I would ever be able to work through them all.

I know what it's like to hurt so badly you don't think you can go on unless something changes. Sometimes all we feel we can pray is, "God, if I don't get a breakthrough in this area of my life, I don't think I will make it!" But what we really need to pray is, "God, if I can't have more of You, I don't think I can go on. I'm hungry for more of You, and no matter what my circumstance is, I just need more of You!"

Evaluate what you're really seeking.

If you want to determine honestly if God is first in your life, then ask yourself this question: "Is God first in my time?"

Think about the way you spend your time. If all of the things you want to do crowd Him out, then He's not your first priority.

I remember years ago when I was so frustrated and felt overwhelmed by everything I "had" to do. As I prayed for God to help me, I realized that I was trying to work Him into my schedule, rather than working my schedule around Him. But once my time with Him became my first priority, then everything else became more manageable and enjoyable.

You know, we can be as close to God as we want to be. The key is putting time into our relationship with Him. I recommend that you spend time with God first thing in the morning, but if that doesn't work for you, at least take a few minutes to focus on Him and give Him your day before you get caught up in the busyness of everyday life.

Matthew 6:33 says, "Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need" (NLT). God wants to show His love for you by meeting your needs and giving you the desires of your heart that line up with His will for you.

As you make the transition from "God, what can You do for me?" to "God, how can I know You more and what can I do for You?" you'll discover greater peace, joy and fulfillment in knowing Him. And you'll move forward in the life He has planned for you! {eo}