



God Loves Me To Life



It's the beginning of a new year and God is calling you and I to think about life. The gift of our life is valuable to God. The new year ahead is filled with hope because God promises to be with us, to lead us, and to help us face what comes.

It's fearful to face an unknown time, such as the year ahead, alone. We already feel pressures and worry about what's coming next. It's wonderful to know that God never intended us to deal with it on our own. We were created to live in relationship and experience loving care in every set of circumstances. We were created to live as children of a loving Heavenly Father.

So much of our life experience takes place apart from God, either because we didn't know God was there for us or we chose to deal with our circumstances on our own. God is not surprised when things don't work out for us in those times. He tells us in the Bible, "**apart from me you can do nothing.**" (John 15:5) No matter how hard we try we'll fail.

So, as we begin this new season of our life, if we feel like a failure, our first move is to turn to God and tell Him we're sorry for trying to live without Him. It's time to admit to God that we just can't do it alone. It's like trying to run a car with no gas. We can turn the ignition again and again but all we'll do is drain the battery. We can push the car and try to get it started but it just won't go. There's nothing wrong with the car. It is simply made to operate with gas in the tank and without gas, it can't do anywhere. We need to get a red can, fill it with gas and pour it into the gas tank of the car. Then a simple turning of the ignition and the engine will turn over, ready to take us where we need to go.

How do we fill our lives with what we need in order to get to where we need to go in life? We need to fill ourselves with God. We need to find out and tell ourselves who God really is and what God has promised us. We need to start praying and asking God to help us live in relationship with Him and His truth. We need to organize what we do around God's loving promises to be with us and to care for us.

God knows us and is interested in what happens to us. **O Lord, you have searched me and you know me You are familiar with all my ways.** (Psalm 139:1,3 NIV)

God really cares about my experiences, my feelings, and my circumstances. **The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases. He redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion. He satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.** (Psalm 103:8, 3-5 NIV)

Many of us have the impression that God just has a list of wrongs that we've done. He's never satisfied no matter how hard we try. He's impatient that we're not who He wants us to be and He's often angry and punishing. Nothing could be further from the truth. **The Lord is patient with us, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.** (from 2 Peter 3:9 and Hebrews 13:5 NIV)

As we face the new and unknown before us, we sometimes don't dare to trust God and put our faith in Him because we think God has a long list of "don'ts" and a harsh list of "shoulds". We think that if we follow God, He'll take all the fun out of life. The devil has done a great job of deceiving us because the truth is **"The thief (the devil) comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I (Jesus) have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."** (John 10:10 NIV)

It's time to find the life we've always wanted. It's time to leave the disappointment and despair behind. Our loving Heavenly Father stands ready today to help us face our unknown future with hope and real help. Will we accept His offer of a loving and caring relationship? Will we let God help us as a father provides for and protects his children? Our job is to get to know this loving God and then to trust and obey Him so he can bless us and care for us. A child who pouts in the corner, who has a temper tantrum in the middle of the floor, or who runs off to do their own thing, is not available to the loving hug of a caring parent. Will I let God love me to life today?

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. What have I been doing that is like trying to start a car that has no gas in the tank?
2. What lies about God have I believed? What new truth will I begin to tell myself?
3. Which kind of child am I? What do I need to change so God can love me to life today?