

Life With God In Recovery

Moving from Surviving to Thriving



All our lives God has pursued us with His love but we were too busy living life in our own way to stop and listen to Him. Sometimes it's only after a season of dysfunctional lifestyle and addiction that we are willing to hear and respond to the call of God on our lives. Walking in the ways of God means discarding our plans and welcoming the plans that God has prepared for us. Because of our selfish and self-centered former ways, we are often slow to respond to God's direction and sadly spend large chunks of time surviving when we could in fact be thriving. As we intentionally seek God's will for our lives, we will find that it is God's desire that we thrive and not simply survive in recovery.

His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. (2 Peter 1:3-4 NIV)

We can fill our hearts and minds with the hope of a new way of life, even though it might now seem impossible for us to achieve. As we allow God to do in us what we cannot do for ourselves, a new and pleasing way of life will come about. God will make everything beautiful in our lives as we continue to seek Him in all our ways.

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NIV)

Humans are unique from everything else God created. Humans have a spirit and God wants to bring us to life in our spirit so that every other part of our human experience is authentic and blessed. It's in our spirit that we experience God's goodness, and find safety, security, love and caring from God. Out of that place of feeling loved and protected by God, we will make life-giving choices that are reflected in our behaviour. God is prepared to come and give life to our Spirit today if we will simply invite Him in and

let Him show us a new way of living. This is what we were created for.

Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me. (Revelation 3:20 NIV)

One of the slogans we hear often in recovery is, “progress not perfection”. One area where it is significant to progress in, is being grateful and appreciating all that we have, rather than fretting about what we do not have. There will always be some things that are right and good in our lives and some things that are yet to be sorted out. Some days we will wake up feeling energetic and other days we’ll wish we could just pull the blanket over our heads and turn over. Things aren’t so different around us each day but what makes life full and rich is that we are conscious of the grace that God is pouring into our lives day by day. It’s a good practice to intentionally record in a journal or speak out our gratitude for life’s daily blessings. This discipline will help us see our lifestyle in recovery as thriving, rather than just surviving.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever. The Lord is for me, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me? (Psalm 118:1,6 NLT)

Someone has said, “You look the best when you wear your smile. There is no beauty like the one that comes from inside you.” Mother

Teresa got it right when she said, “A joyful heart is the inevitable result of a heart burning with love.” Joy is a gift from God. Joy results when we surrender every part of our lives to God and entrust every detail to His care. Joy bursts forth when we know we have no confidence in ourselves or anything else, but wholeheartedly trust in the Lord.

Taste and see that the Lord is good. Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him! (Psalm 34:8 NLT)

It's up to us to call on God when we are in trouble so that we can move beyond surviving to thriving. Even in times of illness or hardship, God is our refuge and strength. Giving up on God should never be an option. God invites us to live in dependence on Him, resting in the ultimate security that He provides. People are joyful when they follow the instructions of the Lord and live a life of integrity. There is nothing to dull their spirit when their faith is in God alone.

We often get discouraged when things do not work out as we think they should. We find ourselves unable to communicate with God, to hang in there, to believe God, to trust, to hope, to grow. At times like these we need to stop what we are doing and ask ourselves, “How is God teaching me to thrive in this situation? When we acknowledge that God is still teaching us, we will be assured that He is at work in the thing that concerns us and our peace will return.

God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. Be still, and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world. (Psalm 46:1,10 NLT)

In order to move from a lifestyle of surviving to one of thriving we must empty ourselves of anything that keeps us from living totally dependent on God. We have to peel back the layers that might include denial, deceit, unfaithfulness, lying, cheating, stealing, anger, impatience, hate, lust, and self-pity. True joy and satisfaction comes when God looks down and says: "Well done, my child. You have not just survived but you have thrived."

Questions For Discussion and Reflection

1. Am I thriving or just surviving in my life?
2. What difference does the word of God or the advice of healthy friends make in my thriving?
3. What gratitude discipline have I built into my life?
4. Do I make space for joy even in imperfect circumstances?
5. What do I need to let go of so that I may thrive with God regardless of my circumstances?

Heavenly Father, Thank you for inviting me to live beyond just surviving. You want me to thrive and be filled with joy and purpose.

Forgive me for the times I've stepped away from Your truth about a situation and followed my own understanding. I turn to you again and acknowledge that You are the source of life. You are my hope. You know the ongoing direction I need for a rich and productive life. I choose to listen to You. I choose to follow your principles. I turn my will and my life over to Your care and ask You to show me how to live life to the full. Give me the ability to welcome success and flourish in Your grace and truth today. AMEN