

Live in the now

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Great blessings come from living in the now. As Paul said, “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” (II Corinthians 6:2)

It is tempting to live in the past or dream of the future instead of doing today. Past moments can be warm and satisfying. It is certainly right to cherish our achievements and value the good that has occurred in our lives. But the true value of pleasant memories is to act as a foundation upon which we can continue building today. Constantly driving by and admiring a completed house built last spring does little toward rapid progress on the house you’re building today. It may be helpful to revisit a completed project to remember how a particular detail was accomplished. But since each day unfolds fresh inspiration, shouldn’t we push forward in our thoughts and actions striving for better methods?

Progress doesn’t mean pressure. What we learned yesterday should enable us to do today’s work with more confidence. As confidence grows, we can begin to seek out creative approaches to improve the quality or outcome of our tasks. This is true at home as well as work. A natural result of focusing on the now is improved circumstances, increasing harmony, gentle progress.

Sometimes painful memories haunt us. We seem unwilling captives of past experiences. It is vital for our health and well-being to break the habits of thought that continually return to painful situations. First we must make the changes necessary to ensure that the unhappy situation doesn’t repeat. If we did something wrong, we must face ourselves squarely, admit the mistake, and radically change our thought and actions. Like David with Bathsheba (II Samuel 11,12). His lust, willfulness, and pride resulted in the death of Uriah and Bathsheba losing her child. When he awoke to his errors, he admitted them, accepted God’s judgment, changed his ways, and never again strayed from God’s commandments. The past was done. He went on.

What if we seem trapped by past hurts due to another? You are not helpless. You have the ability to live in the now. Now you can express your Godlike nature. Now you can pray for wisdom and think and act differently. You are not destined to relive the past forever. Breaking the bonds of fear, disappointment, guilt may take more than a paragraph in any article. But you can be free mentally and physically. Don't be paralyzed into inaction.

Thinking of the future by setting goals and considering consequences is good. But drifting along dreaming of great success, mental imaging, flights of fancy are excuses for lack of real action. It is better to do one right thing now. Mental conversations with people who are not there, outlining how plans will work not only waste time but are self-deceptive. While we are dreaming, real opportunities pass by unseen. In the extreme, mental dreaming and planning become a substitute for action. Live in the now. Set goals. Then focus on doing. Take the actions required to work toward a goal. Don't dream it. Do it.

Now is the time for right thinking and right acting. Now is the day of salvation. Let's not live as if good is in the future or the past. God is pouring forth abundant good today. Let's not miss today's good. If we live in the now, we will have less to regret tomorrow and will be one step closer to our goals. To feel a greater sense of peace and happiness, live in the now.

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