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April '24

HOW TO
HAVE A
HAPPY
AND
GOOD
LIFE!

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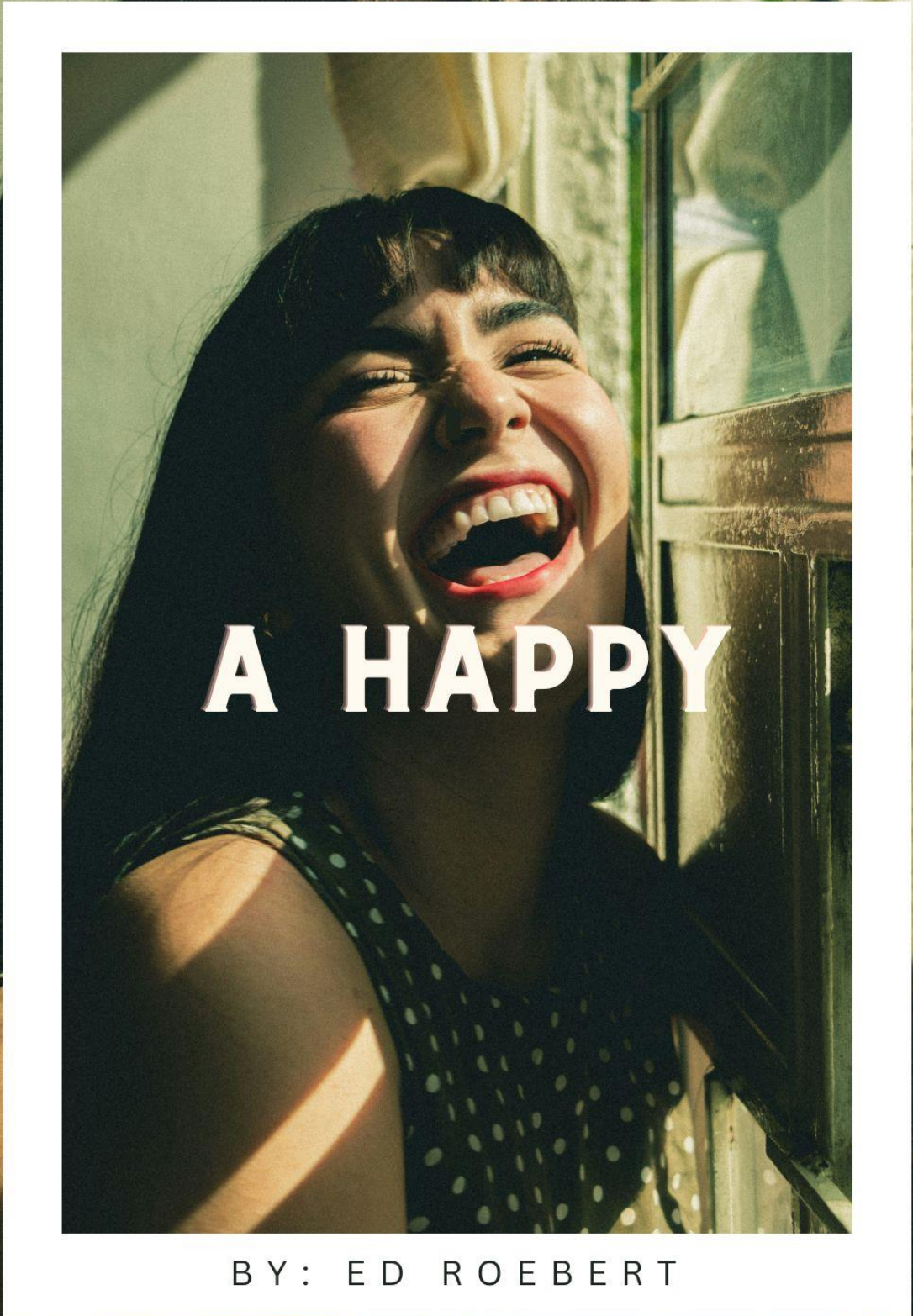
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HOW TO HAVE



A HAPPY

BY: ED ROEBERT

AND GOOD LIFE!



SCRIPTURE READINGS:

1 Peter 3:10-12

'If you want to enjoy life and see many happy days, keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from telling lies. Turn away from evil and do good. Search for peace, and work to maintain it. The eyes of the LORD watch over those who do right, and His ears are open to their prayers. But the LORD turns His face against those who do evil.'

Psalm 34:12-15

'Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies. Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are attentive to their cry.'

Does God want us to have a happy and good life? Yes!

Somehow this message has become blurred in the eyes of so many Christians! Why? Well, may I suggest that this crept in during the legalistic dark ages. Ever since that time there have been streams that have believed that God's people must operate under legalistic rules and it has become generally accepted that to be a Christian means hardship, sacrifice, poverty, difficulty, etc. This is not God's idea. This is mankind's twisted and warped idea.

John 10:10b

'...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.'

As a result, the church has greeted this message with opposition and even resentment. For so long they've twisted God's Word and browbeaten God's people that the church now suffers from an inferiority complex!

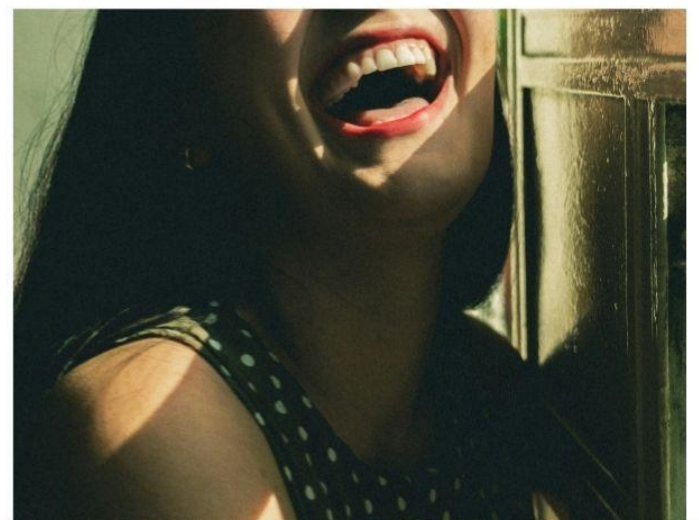
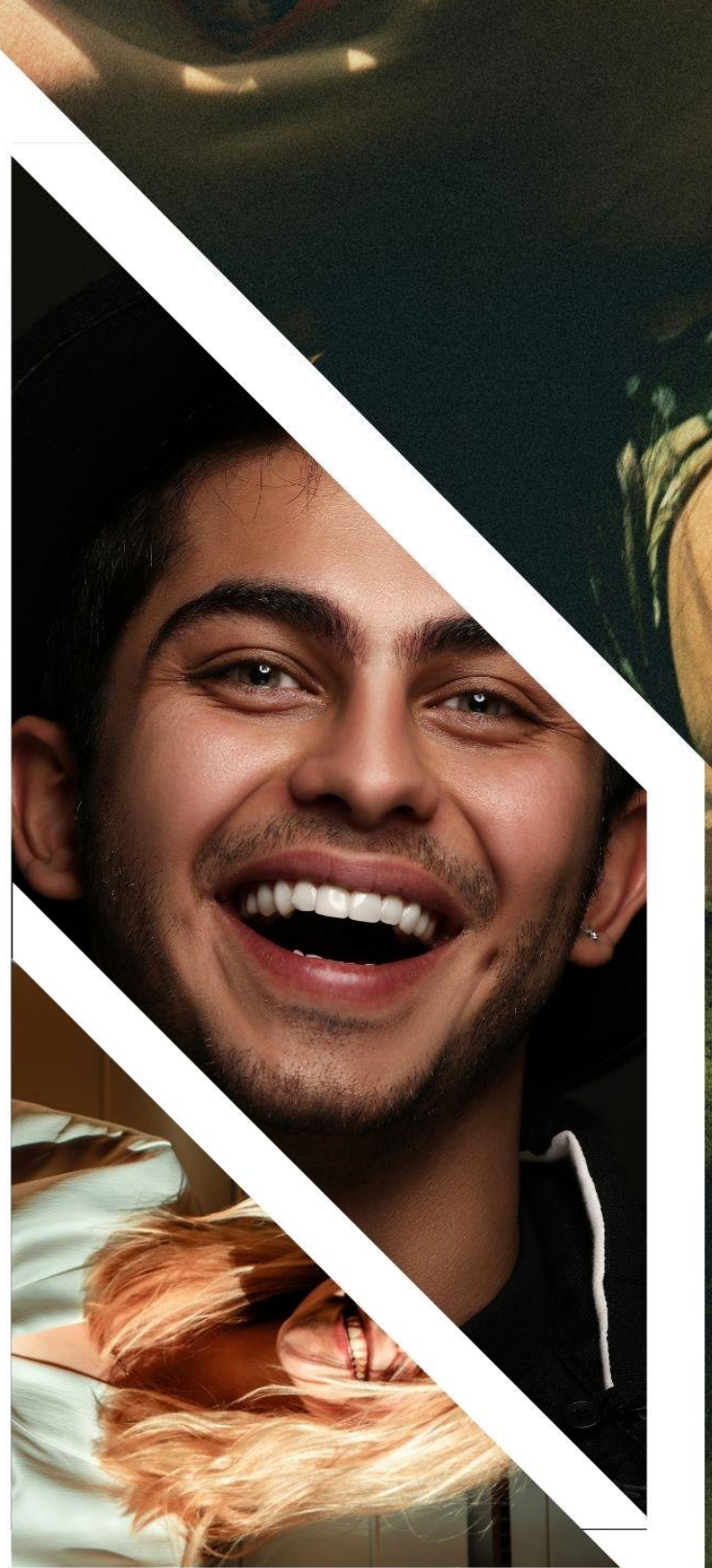
We are not an inferior people!

We are God's people, the greatest people on earth! – The apple of His eye. People who enjoy His provision, His protection, His eternal priesthood and intercession and His power. So let us... Believe God, Believe His Word and Believe His promises. Don't believe the pessimistic prophets of the enemy. Remember, 'The thief cometh not but for to steal, to kill and to destroy!' 'I am come that...' Don't have the 'I'm hanging on' mentality! Let me share with you a typical example of what the world has done to twist Scripture:

Mark 8:34

'And when He had called the people unto Him with His disciples also, He said unto them, whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.'

For us to take up our cross is to fulfill and take up God's purpose for us in being here. God's purpose for us being here is for us to be the admiration of the nations Balance is important! Preach the cross and the resurrection! A careful study of scripture always brings in the balance. This is true of our scripture! We have been called to live a happy and a good life, because we have the life of God living in us!





GOD PLANS FOR US TO HAVE HAPPY AND GOOD LIVES!

1 Peter 3:10a

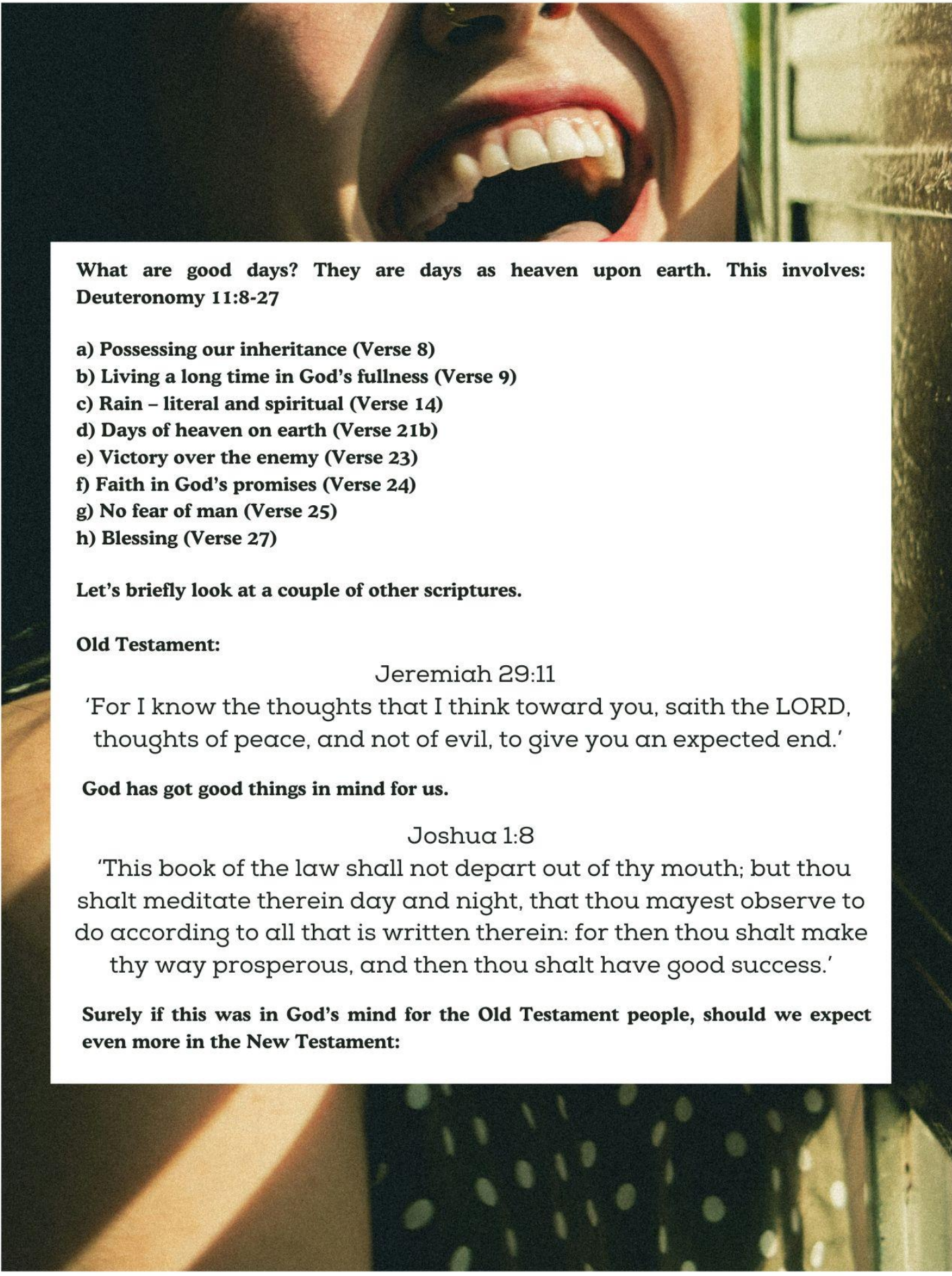
'For he that will love life, and see good days...'

TLB: 'If you want a happy good life...' AMP: 'For let him who wants to enjoy life and see good days...' This seems abundantly evident that God has made it possible for His children to enjoy life and have good days! What do you understand by enjoying life and seeing good days? – Being exceedingly poor or rich does not necessarily make for enjoying life and seeing good days! (Balance: enough to give some away so as to meet great needs.) God's plan for us to have a good life. Not sowing our wild oats – a good time serving God. God wants to bless His children. Let me illustrate this from the Old Testament:

Deuteronomy 11:18-21

'Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land the LORD swore to give your ancestors, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.'





What are good days? They are days as heaven upon earth. This involves: Deuteronomy 11:8-27

- a) Possessing our inheritance (Verse 8)**
- b) Living a long time in God's fullness (Verse 9)**
- c) Rain – literal and spiritual (Verse 14)**
- d) Days of heaven on earth (Verse 21b)**
- e) Victory over the enemy (Verse 23)**
- f) Faith in God's promises (Verse 24)**
- g) No fear of man (Verse 25)**
- h) Blessing (Verse 27)**

Let's briefly look at a couple of other scriptures.

Old Testament:

Jeremiah 29:11

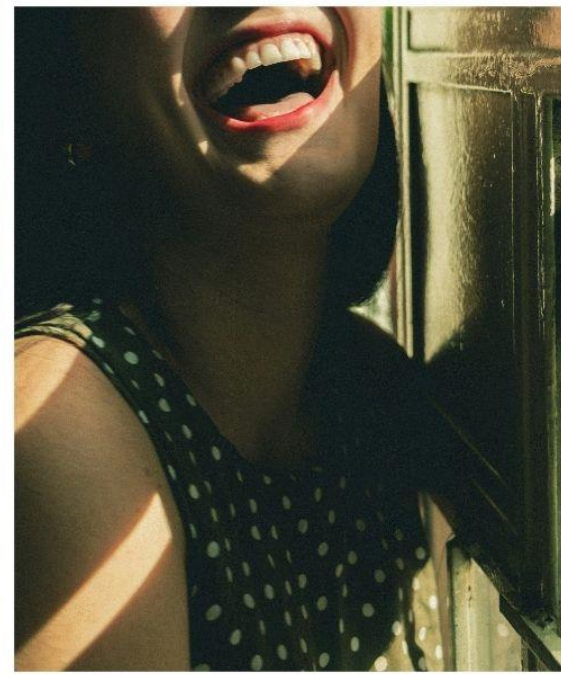
'For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.'

God has got good things in mind for us.

Joshua 1:8

'This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.'

Surely if this was in God's mind for the Old Testament people, should we expect even more in the New Testament:



New Testament:

John 10:10

'The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.'

God plans for us to have happy and good days! That's just like God! But there is a price ticket!

WE HAVE A PART TO PLAY!

1 Peter 3:10-11

'For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.'

Here Peter puts five requirements on us, as being essential prerequisites to enjoying life and good days!

Requirement No. 1: 'Let him refrain his tongue from evil.'

Control your tongue! It works this way: – Influence comes through the mind, settles in the heart and finds expression through our words. If we are going to experience these good days and have a wonderful life, then we are going to have to bring our mouths into captivity. We are going to have to control the things we say. To control the tongue, you need to start by controlling the mind! (Then the heart and then the tongue!) A man who enjoys life and sees good days has his tongue reigned in! Remember, if we have our tongues in control we can have our entire beings in control! Don't speak anything that isn't fair, advisable, good, beneficial or useful. This is the pattern to enjoying life and seeing good days! One of the ways in which we undermine the good days is because of the negativity that flows out of our mouths.

Requirement No. 2: 'Let him refrain...his lips that they speak no guile.'

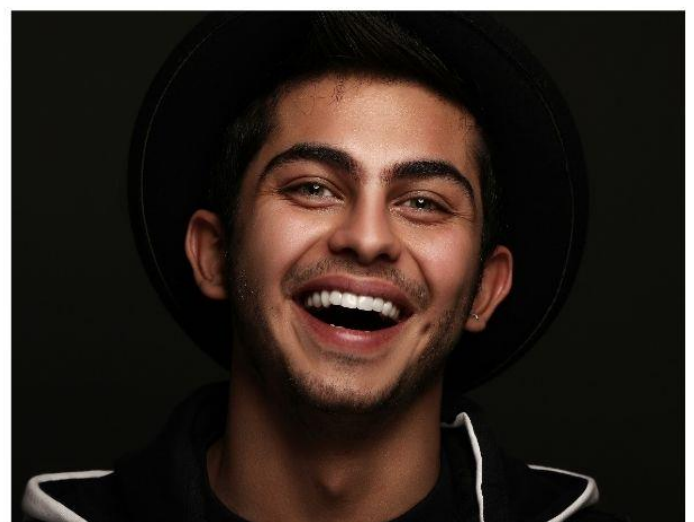
This is very closely associated with Requirement No. 1. 'Guile' – means a bait, snare, deceit. It has to do with craft, deceit, and subtlety! If we want to see good days, we have got to keep our lips and our tongues from speaking evil and anything that is not appropriate. This is the gateway to loving life and seeing good days! A man whose mouth is breaking him down the whole time isn't going to experience a good and happy life. Requirement No. 1 and 2 both have to do with our speech!

Requirement No. 3: 'Let him eschew (shun) evil.'

Eschew means to turn aside from something undesirable. To turn or bend away from it. Have done with evil! Therefore, it means to turn aside from evil! Evil word Evil actions Evil thoughts Evil attitudes! This is the gateway to loving life and seeing good days!

Requirement No. 4: 'Let him...do good.'

This is the positive side of it. Paul's letter to Titus gives us a glimpse of what this involves!





Titus 3:1

'Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.'


May I suggest that being subject to principalities and powers (government) is part of what the Bible calls, 'good works.'

Titus 3:8

'This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.'

I see God saying that if we are going to step through that gateway into abundance of life, then one of the things that we will have to do will be to do good. To do good starts with submitting myself to government. It is to submit yourself to church government and it is for us to be submitted to family government. It goes further, not only not to do wrong, but to do the right thing and be a blessing. In plain language, this is a reference to practical Christianity being lived out towards the government, the family, the church and the world around us.





WHERE YOUR JOURNEY BEGINS

Requirement No. 5: 'Let him seek peace and pursue it.'

The meaning here includes: Having harmonious relationships between each other. Having harmonious relationships with other nations. Pursuing a relationship with God. Pursue it... Run after it with the intention to catch it! With Jesus living in us and then allowing God's life to be released through us, we can fulfill all of the requirements. If we obey God's Word, we can expect to enjoy life and see good days! In the Old Testament those who obeyed were blessed and saw good days. In the New Testament those who obey also are blessed and see (enjoy) life and good days!

THE LORD IS LOOKING FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP US ENJOY LIFE AND SEE GOOD DAYS!

1 Peter 3:12

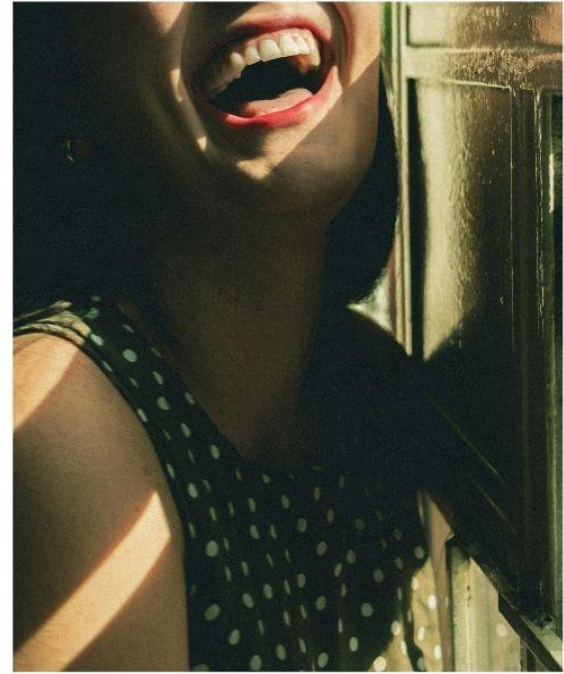
'For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.'

God is looking for opportunities to bless you, looking for opportunities to give you a wonderful life. His eye watches over us. His ear is waiting to hear. He longs to answer your prayers. 'You have not because you ask not.' He loves us and He is concerned about us. This is the privilege of the righteous. 'For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous.'

2 things to note:

- (1) We are righteous in Jesus Christ.**
- (2) We should therefore be careful to live righteously!**

By God's grace, that righteousness that you have in Christ is beginning to be seen. As the life of God is released through you, you will enjoy life and see good days.



The call is from God to live the most wonderful life ever. It's a call to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

2 Chronicles 16:9

'For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him.'

Conclusion

God's plan for His people, both in the Old Testament and the New Testament, is to enjoy His good plan for their lives. You have a part to play. Do your part and He certainly will do His part!

A FORWARD APPROACH



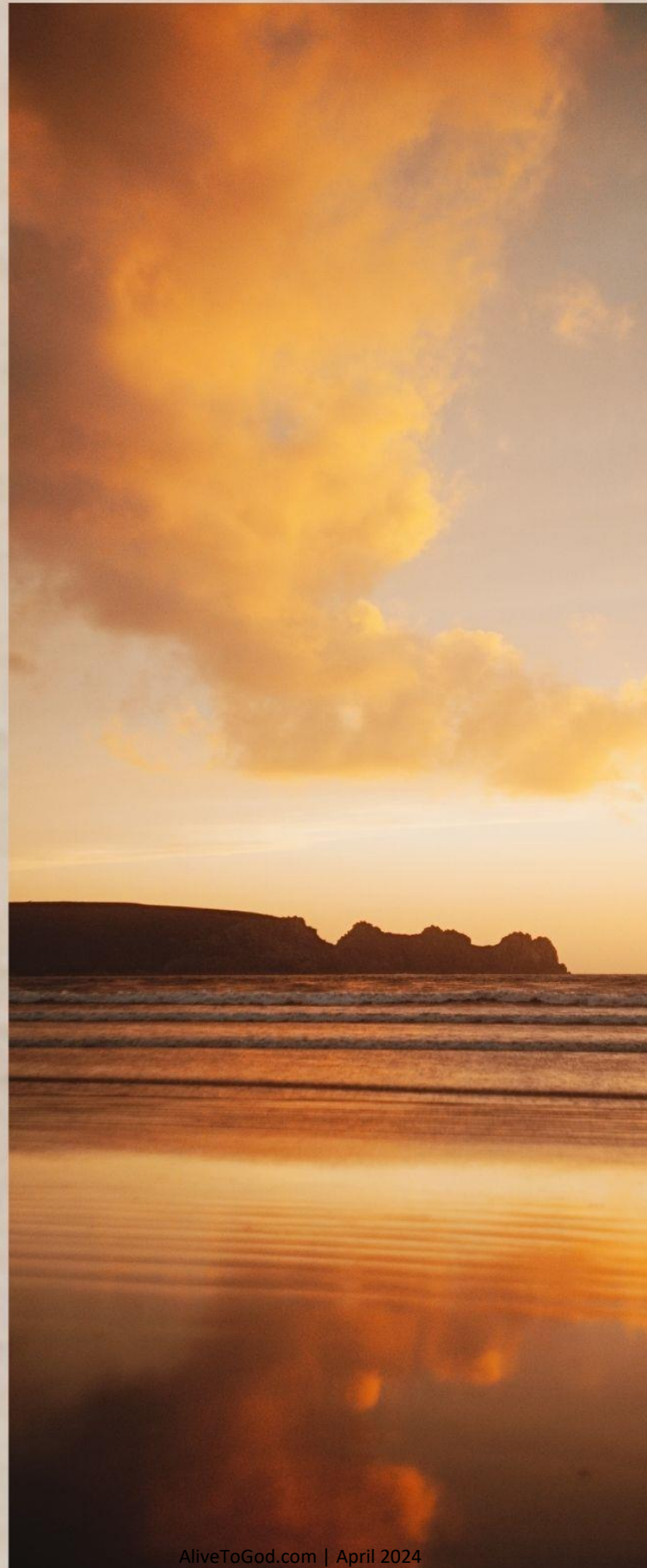
KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL LIFE (KEY 11)

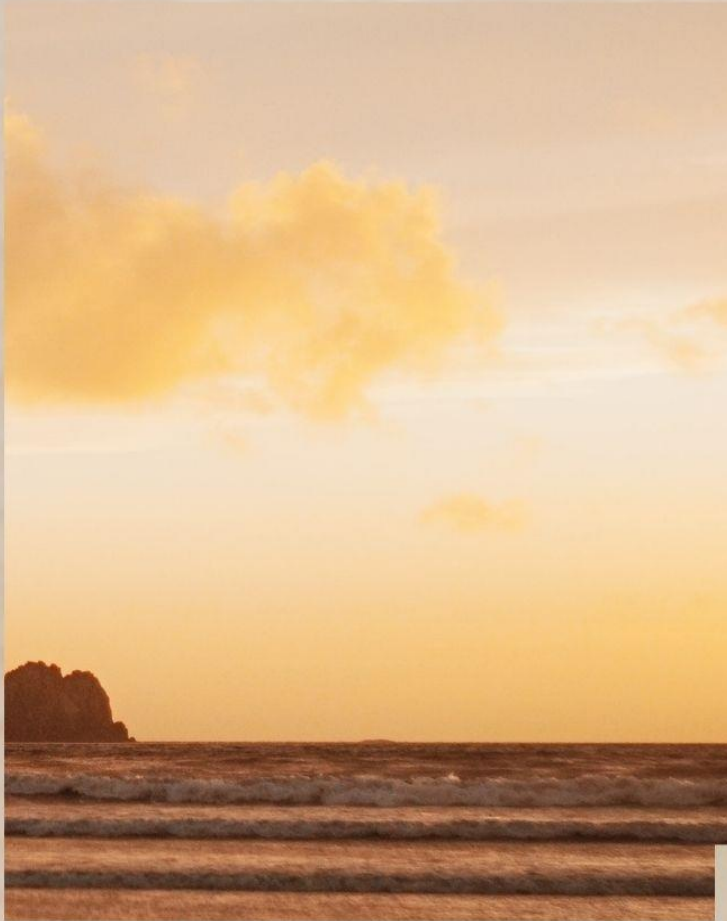
BY: ANDREW ROEBERT

One of the greatest keys to success in life is the ability to be able to go forward into what lies ahead and away from the past with its success or failure. How often we live in the past. It is a difficult concept because our only frame of reference is the past and yet our past can become our biggest hindrance. I know a lady who lived during the Second World War and it had a profound effect on her. As a result of living in a time when nothing was available, everything had to be kept - just in case. Although she never suffered lack, she could not shake this 'in case' attitude. In the process she spent her life hoarding things, most of which she never used or enjoyed. When it came time to move to a retirement home, most of the things had to be disposed of by relatives, much to the heartache of the lady! It is so easy to live in the past and in the process our past (however good or bad) can rob us of our present and future freedom

THE REAR VIEW MIRROR

Our past successes and our past failures can be our biggest hindrance. I once heard a story of an older accomplished motor racing driver who was busy training a new potential driver. As they got into the racing car, the older driver taught the younger man a valuable lesson. Before even starting the car he reached up and grabbed the rear view mirror and ripped it off, throwing it out of the window. He said what is behind you is behind you and you will never win a race if you are preoccupied with what is going on behind you or in your past. You win a race by looking forward towards the goal. That was all this new driver needed to be concerned about. In a sense this lesson applies to our everyday life. When we drive a car we cannot continually be focused on what is going on in the rear view mirror. This is sure to land us in an accident. We have to focus on what is happening ahead. How much time do you spend looking in the rear view mirror of life? We need to be radical. We need to rip out the rear view mirrors of our lives. We need to stop focusing on the little we can see through the rear view mirror and start looking through the windscreen, which is many times the size of the mirror and is the window on all that lies ahead.





FORGET THE FORMER

The Bible is pretty radical on the advice it gives us as to how much focus the past should receive.

Isaiah 43:18

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.

It sounds a bit radical, but perhaps that is what God wants us to do. It is another way of saying: 'get rid of the rear view mirror!' This forgetting the former things includes not looking back. When we look back we look back at good times, regrets, joys and disappointments. I want to encourage you to deal with what you can deal with, put right what you can put right and begin to move forward. God wants our futures to be brighter than our pasts.

Jeremiah 29:11

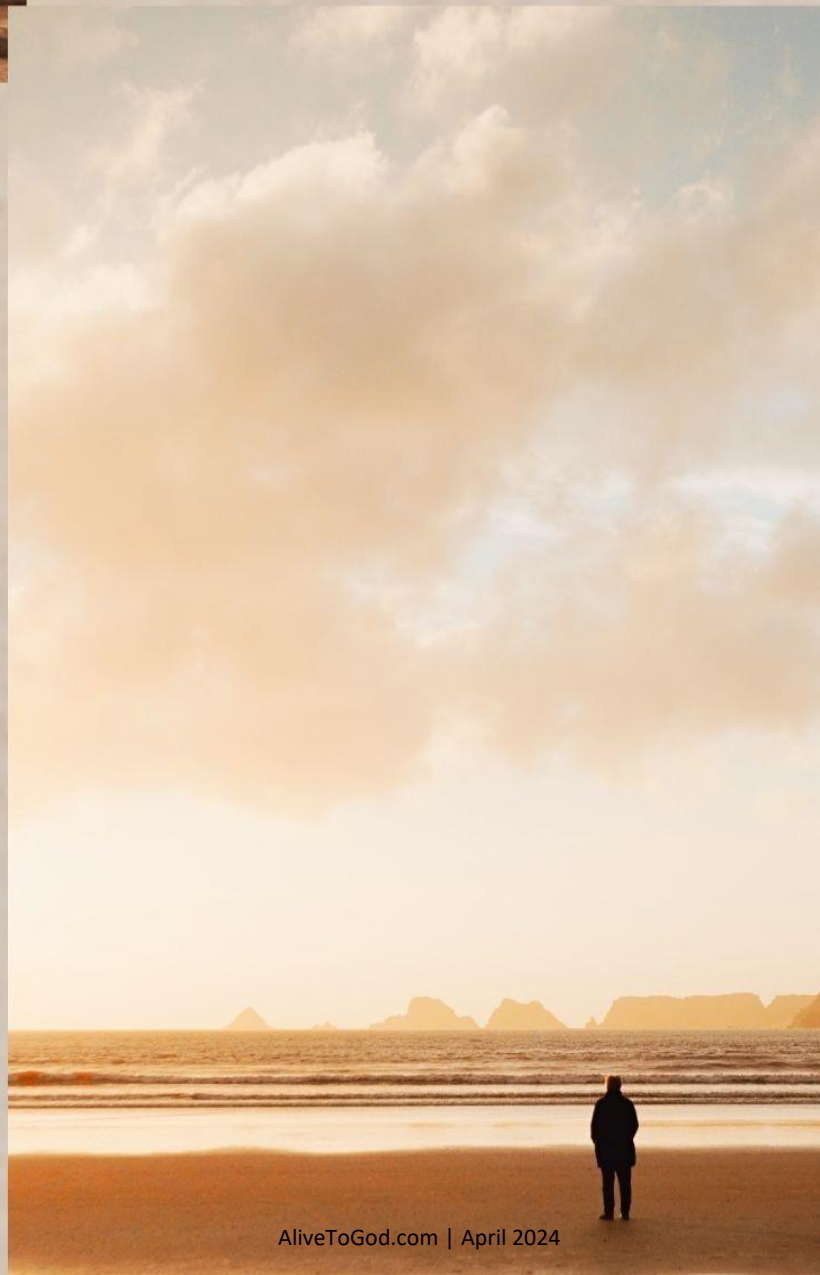
I know the thoughts and plans that I have for you, says the Lord, thoughts and plans for welfare and peace and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome.

PRESS ON!

Each day presents its own opportunities and options. Having a forward approach means we keep on pressing on. Hurdles and obstacles are part of life. We have to move through what we are facing and press on, knowing that God has got wonderful things in store for us.

Philippians 3:14

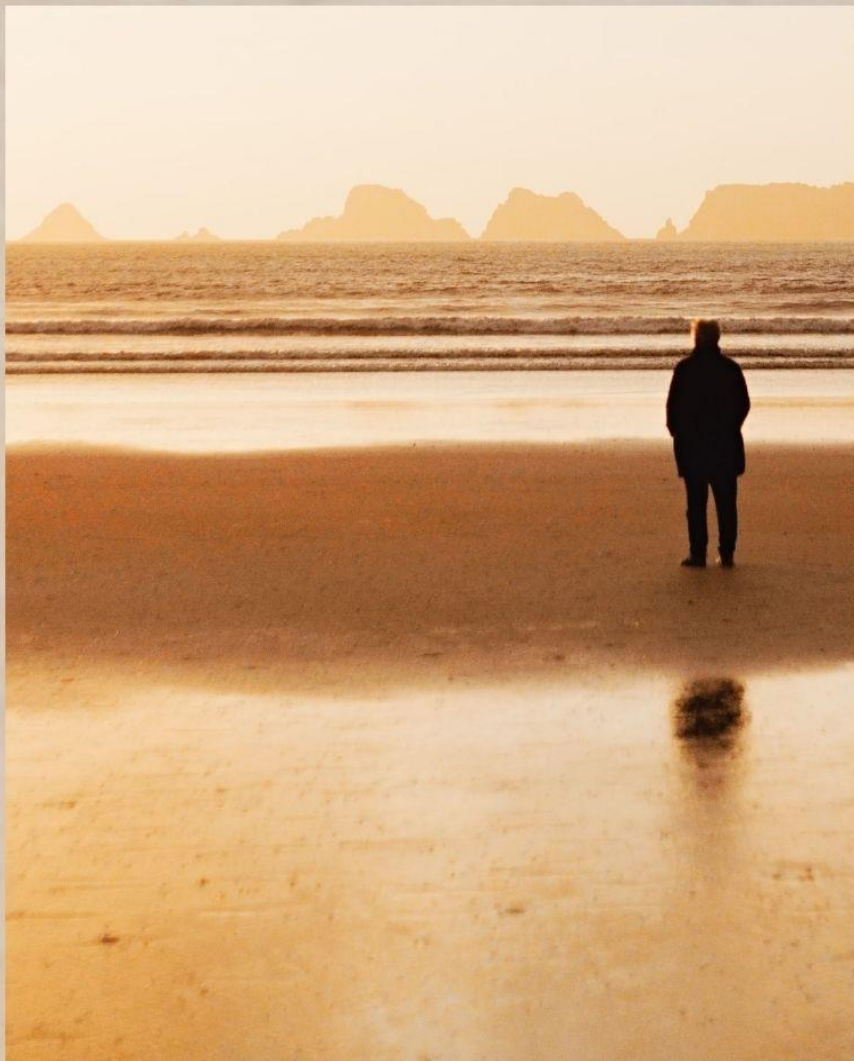
I press on towards the goal to win the [supreme and heavenly] prize to which God in Christ Jesus is calling us upward.



2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Pressing on speaks of determination and perseverance. These are things that God wants to see in our lives and things that God rewards.



REACHING FORWARD

We need to have a 'reaching forward' attitude. This attitude includes the ability to embrace the new and the things that lie before us. The Bible tells us that God has set before us an open door, but it is no good staring at the door or camping at the door. We have to move through the door into the next thing that God has got for us. I have seen people who have camped at an open door of opportunity for so long that when they eventually decide to move through the door, it has closed. We should be asking and keeping on asking, we should be seeking and keeping on seeking, we should be knocking and keeping on knocking and we should be reaching forward and continually reaching forward. Reaching forward or taking ground (possessing) is part of the life God has for you! This applies to all aspects of our lives.

Philippians 3:13

one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead.

The challenge is to let this become the one thing we do!

FORWARD APPROACH



THE THINGS THAT ARE AHEAD

What exactly is lying ahead? The answer is we just never know. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. Here are however three things:

1. Open doors!

Revelation 3:8

See! I have set before you a door wide open which no one is able to shut!

2. Different things.

Philippians 3:13

one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead.

3. New things.

Isaiah 43:19

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

4. Unlikely things.

Isaiah 43:19

I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.

DON'T LOOK BACK

This aspect of looking forward to what may lie ahead and not focusing on the past is the key to enjoying success. It needs to become our goal and our aspiration. Something we strive for and towards. This needs to be a daily focal point so that we do not fall into the trap!



Philippians 3:13

**But one thing I do [it is my one aspiration]:
forgetting what lies behind and straining forward
to what lies ahead.**

The Bible actually gives a stern warning to those who live and constantly keep looking over their shoulder to the past.

Luke 9:62

Jesus said unto him, no man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back (to the things behind), is fit for the kingdom of God. But one thing I do [it is my one aspiration]: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead.

THE GOAL

God is not looking for 'rear view mirror' focused people. God is looking for those who will step forward, confident that God is already there. We need to fight the good fight and win.

2 Timothy 4:7

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.

We need to run the race and to finish the course. We need to get to know God better and enjoy all He has for us. He will not disappoint us!

Hosea 6:3

Oh, that we might know the Lord! Let us press on to know Him! Then He will respond to us as surely as the arrival of dawn or the coming of rains in early spring.

The promise is that as you and I press on, God will respond and arrive in our lives. Let us not always be looking in the rear view mirror of our lives, but let us grab hold of today and make the most of it, trusting God with the big picture and He reveals it to us bit by bit and with each step we take!

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE



SAY ABOUT PARENTING?



BY: GOTQUESTIONS.ORG

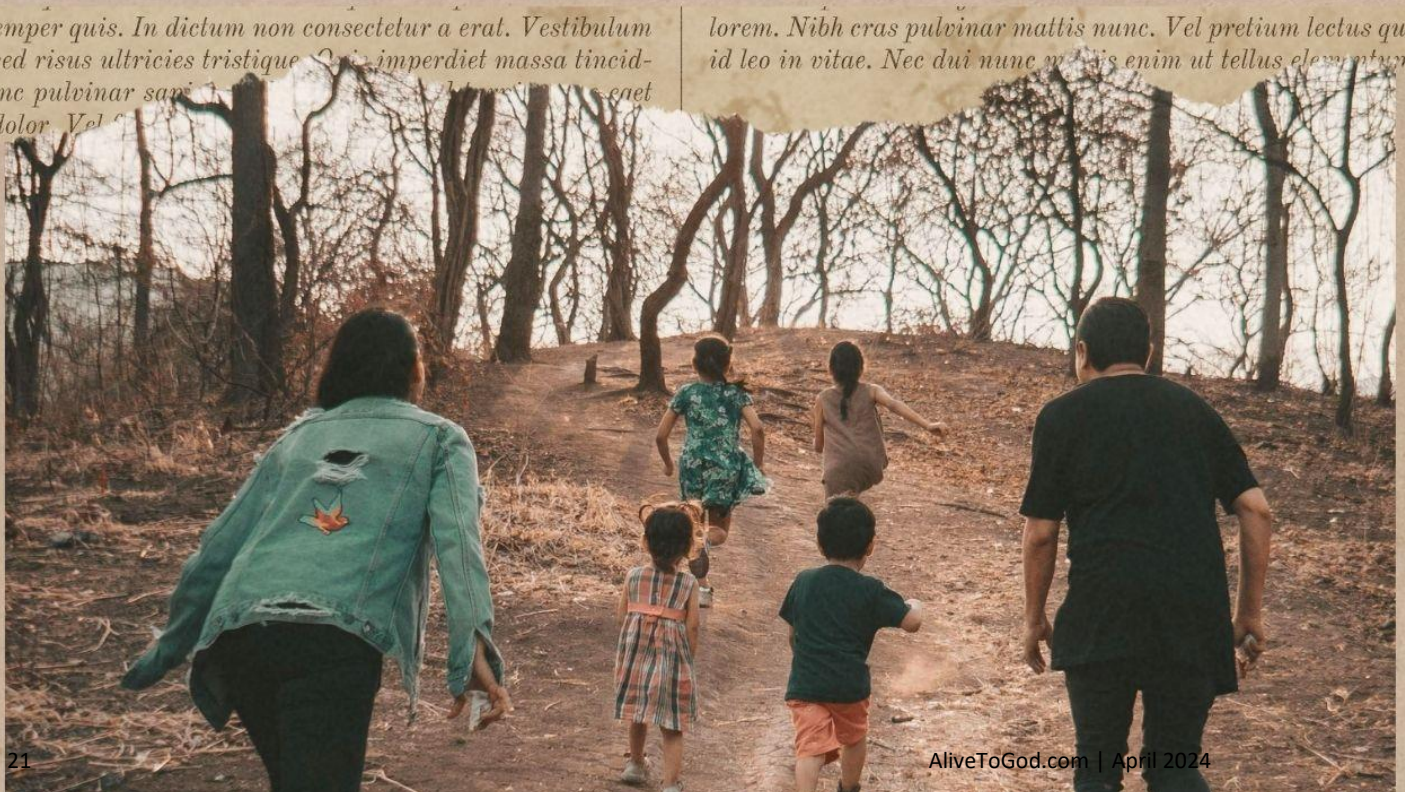
Procreation is central to God’s plan for families and the world, as seen in His command to Adam and Eve, “be fruitful and multiply,” a directive that is repeated to future generations (Genesis 1:28; cf. 9:1). Expanding on this theme, the Bible declares that children are a blessing from God (Psalm 127:3–5), thereby making parenting a sacred responsibility. To this end, Scripture provides fathers and mothers with moral principles and practical instructions—from explicit commands to wise guidance—for raising their sons and daughters.

God designed parenting to occur in the context of a family, the foundation of which is marriage. The Bible defines marriage as a lifelong, monogamous covenant between one biological male and one biological female (Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:7). Heterosexual marriage not only makes procreation biologically possible, but through the complementary pairing of a man and woman, children experience the full breadth of the image and likeness of God that He imprinted on humanity’s two genders when He created them (Genesis 1:26, 2:18; cf. Ephesians 5:22–33).

While God designed parenting to occur within the context of a child’s biological family, adverse circumstances sometimes require the support and care of adoptive parents or legal guardians. An example of this is seen in the story of Esther. After her parents died, her uncle “Mordecai took her as his own daughter” (Esther 2:7, ESV). In such situations, adults other than a child’s biological parents get to experience the blessing of raising children.



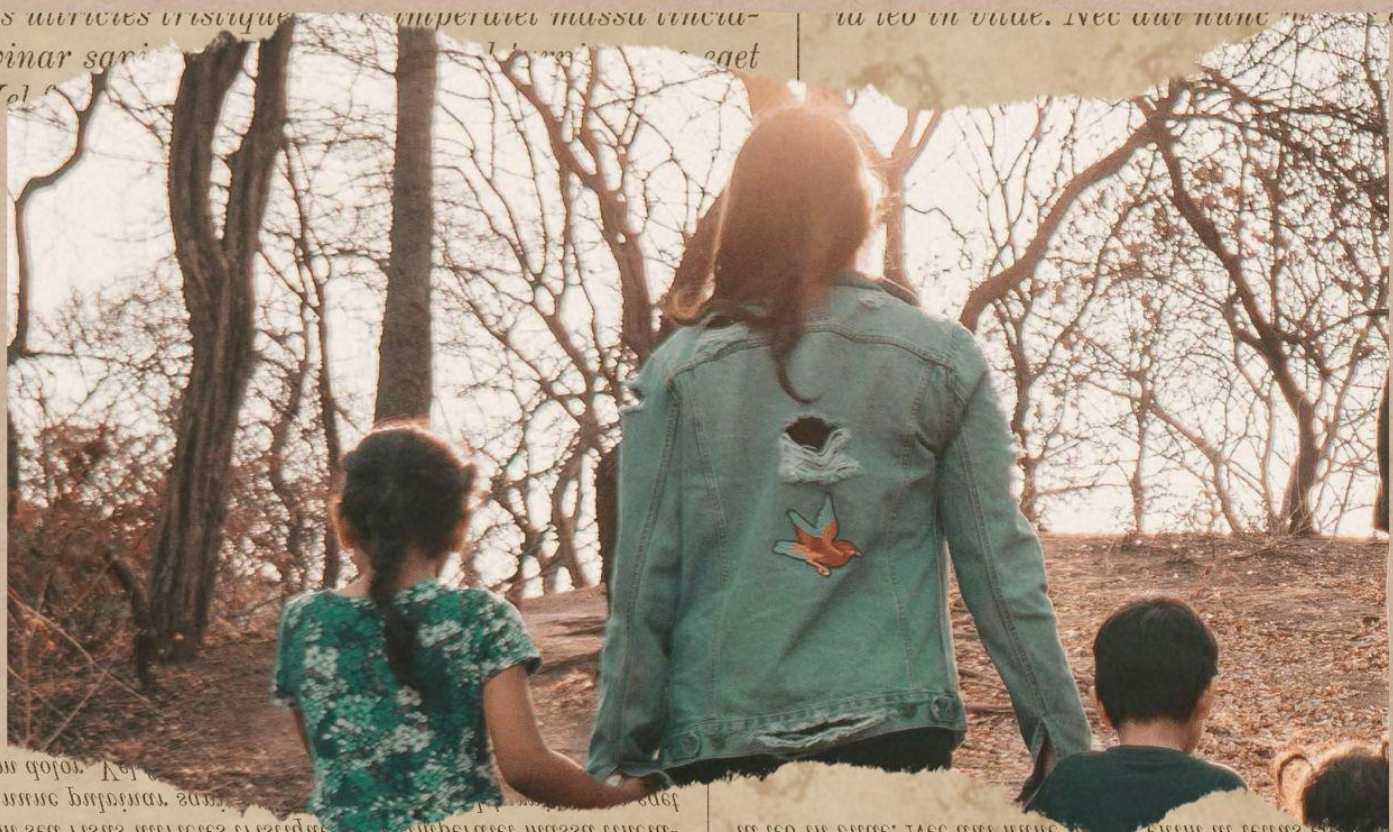
Whatever the makeup of the child’s family, biblical parenting starts with modeling faithfulness to God in a winsome manner to their children (Exodus 12:24; 13:8). A father and mother’s relationship with God should be so evident that it solicits questions from their children (Exodus 12:26–27; Deuteronomy 6:20–25; Joshua 4:6–7). With this aim, parents can follow the examples of holy fathers in the Bible like Joshua, whose devotion to God characterized his household, and holy mothers like Hannah, whose persistence in prayer shaped her child’s identity and purpose in life (Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:11).



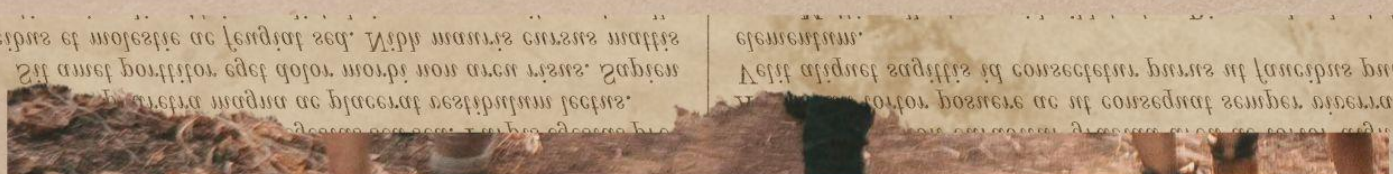


In addition to parents exemplifying faith in God, the Bible emphasises the crucial role fathers and mothers have in directly teaching their children to follow Jesus. The Bible assigns parents the primary role of discipleship (Matthew 28:19; John 8:31; Psalm 78:4). This implies that, while others such as Sunday school teachers and youth pastors, can support a child’s faith, God obligates parents to undertake the primary discipleship role in their sons’ and daughters’ lives (Deuteronomy 6:6–9).

In practice, discipling children starts with teaching them about God. Deuteronomy 6:7 commands parents to continuously teach God’s words in their home: “You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise” (ESV; cf. Deuteronomy 31:12–13; Proverbs 31:6). Similarly, in the New Testament, fathers are told to raise their children in the “instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). Given that children, like their parents, possess a sinful nature, it’s crucial for fathers and mothers to avoid intentionally provoking their children to sin and to guard against accidentally doing so (Ephesians 6:4; cf. Matthew 18:6).



God also assigns parents the task of teaching their children how the Bible applies to life. Understanding the relevancy of Scripture not only edifies a child’s faith, but also forms character, values, priorities, and decisions. Applying the Bible cultivates integrity (Proverbs 15:27), humility (Proverbs 16:19), and purity (Proverbs 20:9). Also, as children gain more independence, parents should work to protect their children from making decisions that could have long-term negative consequences (Numbers 30:2–15).



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Furthermore, disciplining children is pivotal to biblical parenting (Deuteronomy 8:5; 2 Samuel 7:14; Proverbs 13:24), and a lack of it negatively impacts a child's future (Proverbs 19:18). Yet biblical discipline is not merely punitive but formative. Discipline is designed to refine a child's behavior, mirroring God's loving discipline of His people (Hebrews 12:6).

Other aspects at the heart of biblical parenting include emotional nurturing, physical provision, and keeping children safe. First, godly parenting is rooted in love, expressed through heartfelt emotions such as compassion (e.g., Psalm 103:13). Second, responsible parents provide essential needs, like food and drink, to their children (Proverbs 31:13-14; 1 Timothy 5:8). Third, parents are tasked with protecting and defending their children, ensuring their safety (e.g., Deuteronomy 22:14-15).

To carry out the responsibilities God has given them, it's important for fathers and mothers to develop a fervent prayer life (e.g., 1 Samuel 2:1-10; Luke 1:46-56). While the work of raising children is challenging, with God's help, parents can experience the blessing expressed in Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it" (ESV).



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