

God Heals

GETTING THROUGH DEPRESSION AND
ANXIETY WITH SPIRITUALITY



Introduction

Depression and anxiety are two of the biggest health problems in the western world today. If you're reading this, you probably know the pain these mental health problems can cause. Even if you haven't experienced anxiety or depression yourself, you likely have a family member, spouse or friend who is a sufferer.

It's no coincidence that as society has turned away from spirituality, depression and anxiety have become more commonplace. The deep peace and joy God offers us can't be replaced by the short-term fixes our consumerist culture offers.

However, although our faith helps us deal with mental health problems, being a Christian does not make you immune from suffering with depression and anxiety. When Christians feel down, they often feel guilty too, as they feel a true Christian shouldn't experience despair or worry. The Bible is full of examples of righteous people who experienced stress, despair and suffering, so there's no reason to feel guilty about feeling down.

While it doesn't always feel this way at the time, painful emotions are often an opportunity to strengthen our faith and make positive changes in our lives. In this short ebook, we've compiled six articles and essays about dealing with and overcoming stress, anxiety and depression with God's help.

We hope you find the strength and encouragement you need to cope with whatever life throws your way.

Dealing with Depression

Depression is something that many of us go through at one time or another. Even Christians can go through times where they feel very down and can't seem to get out of it. There are usually two causes of depression: physical and spiritual.

In this article we are going to look at spiritual depression and the weapons that God has given us to fight it. If you feel that your condition is physical, then please seek professional advice. This blog post is not meant to take the place of a doctor's advice, but to give you some tools to help fight it.

First of all let's clear something up, God does not want you depressed and that is not how He created you. He created you to "have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" John 10:10b.

What Are the Causes Of Depression?

If you weren't created to be depressed, then what causes it and what can do about it?

Fear

Scripture makes it very clear that fear brings torment and it tries to kill things like faith, hope and love in our life. Long periods of fear or fear that has been suppressed for a long time can lead you to feel depressed.

Unforgiveness

When we refuse to forgive people for the things that they have done, it gives that hurt power in our lives to keep hurting us. Over time those hurts become a heavy weight that bears down on you everyday and causes depression.

Many times we don't want to forgive because the hurt was caused by abuse and it was so bad and so hurtful that people think it is easier just to keep it inside instead of having to relive it to forgive it.

Sin

If there is a sin in your life that you know that you are supposed to let go of, but are stubbornly refusing to do so, you will feel depressed because of the battle that is going on inside of you.

Guilt

Many times we feel guilty because of things we have done and feel unworthy to come before God for forgiveness. Long periods of guilt can cause depression.

The devil

The devil loves it when Christians are depressed and down because then they are not doing anything for God. He will constantly whisper things in your ear and remind you of all the reasons why you should be depressed. He will encourage people to attack you to keep you down. He will try to arrange circumstances to keep you from hoping.

You Are Not the Only One

Many times we feel guilty for feeling depressed and think that we are the only ones feeling that way, which makes us feel even more depressed.

Many people in the Bible have felt depressed, including:

- Cain
- Abraham
- King Saul
- King David

- Elijah
- Job
- Jonah

You are not alone and you are not the only one who struggles with this, and once you realize this you have overcome a major hurdle. Please know that you can fight this; you can choose to do something about this. It might be one of the hardest things you do in your life but God wants to help you feel better. Listed below are some awesome weapons that God has given you to use in the fight to lift you from the pits of despair.

The Word of God

Find Scriptures that apply to your situation and place them around your house. Read them every day out loud. In the Bible it says, “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God” (Romans 10:17). When you speak the Word, it builds your faith to believe that God will help you.

Prayer

Pour your heart out to God and ask Him to help you. God always listens to our prayers.

Worship

Find songs that worship God and encourage you. Play them all the time; sing to them. Worship has the amazing power to lift you up and the devil will not hang around long in the presence of worship.

Your Church Family

You were never meant to deal with this alone. It doesn't matter where you are from, your gender, background or any other thing like that, you need your brothers and sisters in Christ to pray for you, to keep you accountable and to love you. There is amazing strength that you receive when others are standing and fighting this battle with you.

Forgiveness

When you forgive someone you are not freeing them from what they did. You are freeing yourself from the power that person has over you because of what they did. Forgiveness frees you to live your life unaffected by what others do and can lift the weight of those hurts off of your shoulders.

Some Other Practical Things you can Do

Not only has God given us spiritual weapons but practical things we can do as well like...

Eating Right

While foods high in sugar and fat are generally called 'comfort foods', they can often make you feel low and less than comforted. When you eat a lot of sugar you experience a sugar high which might help to make you feel better for a little while, but the sugar low afterwards will leave you more depressed and craving more sugar which starts the cycle all over again.

Not Getting Any Exercise

Even a short walk in the fresh air will help you feel better. Exercise is well known to increase the chemicals in your brain that cause happiness.

Don't Hang Around Negative People

The last thing you want to do when you are depressed is to hang around people who constantly say negative things. It only brings you further down. Find people who will lift you up and hang around with them.

Don't Watch the News

Very few things in the news are positive and by watching it you are only reinforcing negative things which make you more depressed.

Spiritual depression can be fought. You do not have to live with it everyday, but the choice is yours. I know right now it may seem like you can never conquer it, but God will help you if you let Him. It may take some time, but it can be done.

Just don't give up!

I Can't Take Much More: Relieving Stress Through God

Stress. Just the word makes you tense up. Why must we be so stressed? We go to church. We read the Bible. We love God and those around us. We pray. We try our best to live as good and faithful followers of God. So, the better we live and the more we follow Jesus, the easier our life will get, right? Not necessarily. One thing God never promises is an easy existence. He promises a much better life if you follow Him, but He never says that it will be easier.

Some question why a powerful, loving God would allow such pressure and negative influences to be placed on his followers in the first place. There are many reasons for stress. One is that we sometimes bring it on ourselves. We overschedule. We're impatient and want things done yesterday. We have a hard time saying no. Or maybe we procrastinated until too many things came due at the same time. Either way, we did it to ourselves. Then, we complain when we get stressed out and have a bad day. We blame anyone but ourselves for allowing this to happen to us.

However, not all stress is our fault. God sometimes uses stress as a way to strengthen us. It's much like forging steel or battle hardening a soldier. It's easy to put on a uniform, learn tactics, recite the right words, and believe in patriotism in times of peace. On the battlefield, though, you really learn what you're made of. You learn what you can and can't do. You become confident and strong. You learn how to survive and overcome your enemies in the real world, not just on the pages of a book. You learn how to use the resources around you and who around you will help. Then, the next time you go to battle, you're more prepared. Your belief in your country and your ideals are more ingrained, and not just something you learned to recite on command.

Living for God is no different. You are a soldier for God. If your faith is never tested, how will you ever really know your true level of commitment? Is it really "faith" if you never have to rely on God to help you through? Every time you exercise that faith muscle, you are making your resolve and your relationship with God that much stronger. You learn how to use resources around you like your Bible and your fellow believers. You learn how to rely on God and prayer. You learn just how little you are in control, and how mighty God

really is. You gain a much deeper appreciation of His love and protection. You also gain a much deeper appreciation for what He has given you. It's like the old saying goes: There is no light without the dark.

1. Learn to Say No

We'll never get rid of stress, but there are some coping mechanisms that God provides in order to relieve it. First, learn time management and self-control. Know your limits. It's tempting to try to do everything for everyone. We put pressure on ourselves to be the perfect spouse, parent, child, friend, employee, and colleague. By spreading ourselves too thin, though, we are actually being counterproductive. We get stressed out. We forget things. We have to compensate at the last minute. We get frustrated and tired. We neglect ourselves.

We may even begin to resent others because we do so much for them and feel like we aren't getting enough in return. Then, whether done passive-aggressively or blatantly, we take out these frustrations on those around us. The steam builds up until we have to let off a little pressure – and good luck to whomever is near us at the time. That's no way to treat innocent bystanders. Learn to say no and stay within your limits. Don't set yourself up for failure.

2. Get Your Priorities Right

Secondly, make sure you have your priorities straight. Make sure that what you are doing is in line with what God wants. If not, you're asking for trouble. Plus, it's not enough to do what's right. You have to decide sometimes what's more important and what can be let go. God clearly spells out in the Bible what things you should focus on first. Spiritual well-being, spiritual education, family, academic education, financial well-being, and the home are all at the top of that list, although not necessarily in that order.

Spending time helping your child do homework is more important than decorating for the school pageant. Taking time to discuss with your husband a question about the Bible is more important than trying to squeeze in an hour more of work done before tomorrow's deadline. I didn't make the rules. Just know that if you don't follow God's rules, you're setting yourself up again for failure.

3. Ask For Help

Third, ask for help. It seems so simple and obvious that it needn't even be mentioned. The fact is that many of us are just not programmed to let others see our doubts and weaknesses. The thing we fail to realize is that asking for help is not a weakness. It's simply a smart utilization of time and the resources around us. Every great manager and leader learns to do this.

Lean on God. He says in the Bible that He promises to help you through anything you could possibly encounter. However, He can't help you if you refuse to believe He has the ability to do so. Read your Bible. It's full of advice and calming words of encouragement.

Pray. Ask others to pray. For some reason, this powerful tool is often forgotten. Prayer is our direct line to God. He even tells us in the Bible that anything lifted up in his name is a sweet sound in his ear. The more that pray, the sweeter the sound becomes. Of course, you can also ask those around you for help.

Have the Right Attitude

Lastly, attitude can make or break you sometimes. Stress can often be alleviated just by how you start your day. If you have unreasonable expectations, you've already placed too much pressure on yourself, creating a stressful environment before you've even begun. If you resent your work, anxiety is inevitable. I'm not saying you have to always whistle while you work. Sometimes you have to do things you don't want to do. I'm just saying that

starting with the right attitude helps lower your stress level. The lower the level when you begin your tasks, the lower your stress level will be when you finish.

A good attitude is often contagious. When others around you are in a better mood, they're easier to work with, and things run more smoothly. Again, it lowers your anxiety level. Plus, when you try your best to have the right attitude, it pleases God. He tries to help you keep that attitude by offering you clarity. Sometimes it's only when we have the right attitude that we're able to see the forest for the trees, knowing what's really worth getting worked up about and what won't even matter miles down the road.

Stress can take many forms for many reasons. Sometimes it serves a great purpose, and sometimes it's just downright harmful. There are ways to lessen its impact, though. One way to defeat your enemy is to know your enemy. Know where stress can come from. Know why God allows it. Know what resources you have to help you through it. Learn to say no, set the correct priorities, lean on God, pray, ask for help, and try to have the right attitude. You'll make it. You'll be just fine.

Finding Hope When Things Aren't Going Your Way

There was once a young boy that was playing little league baseball. Sitting in the dugout, he was watching the game with rapt attention, focusing on all the things that were taking place on the field, because he knew that every moment on the field would have a great impact on the game's final outcome, and like a child, he wanted to win—badly. A man that was walking by stopped at the dugout and asked the young boy, “what’s the score, son?” to which the little boy answered “eighteen to nothing. We’re down.”

The older man let out a low, slow whistle through his teeth and responded, “Whew, I bet you’re discouraged!”

“Why should I be discouraged,” the little boy asked. “We just got in to bat!”

What would it be like if we all had hope like that little boy? To see through the seemingly dark moments in life, and to still have hope. To realize that we have the bat, and good things will happen when we have the bat.

In the first book of the classic children’s novel series, “The Chronicles of Narnia” by C.S. Lewis, the Pevensie children had found their way into the magical land of Narnia through a wardrobe in an old professor’s house during World War II. While eating supper with some kind beavers, they found that the younger brother, Edmund, had left their company, and gone to betray them to the tyrant who ruled the land, the White Witch.

The remaining Pevensies and the beavers could have easily lost hope at that point. You see, the White Witch wanted the four children dead because they were there was a prophecy that was many years old, saying that two human boys and two human girls were the only ones who could kill the White Witch. All that would have to be done to prevent the prophecy from coming true would be for her to kill Edmund, and she would rule the land forever.

Of course, that didn’t happen. The beavers and the remaining Pevensie children kept hope, and raced to the Stone Table, where they would meet the one true king of Narnia, the

Great Lion, Aslan, who of course rescued Edmund, but would not have if the kids had lost hope.

It's hard to keep hoping when all hope is lost. Imagine for a moment how the disciples must have felt, knowing that Jesus was hanging on the cross. Imagine further how hopeless they felt the day after. They had travelled with this man for three years, placed their hope and trust in him, only for him to be brutally executed. Not one of them thought that he would be coming back; they all thought that their time with him was up. He was dead, was not going to come back, and now they would all be fugitives for having followed him. These men had given up their lives, families, and incomes to follow him, and now he was gone. But of course, that is not the end of this story either. The next day, Jesus was resurrected from the dead, proclaiming victory over sin and death... praise God for that!

When Jesus appeared to the disciples after his resurrection, in John 20:22, the Bible says that he "breathed on them," and told them, "receive the Holy Spirit." My belief is that in doing that, he was opening their eyes, and showing them what God did when he first created man. Just outside the Garden of Eden, God formed Adam from the dust of the earth, and the Bible says that he *breathed* the breath of life into him. It is my belief that God did not create mankind to be separated from Himself, but that he created Man to constantly breathe in His presence, dependent on that presence for life. When Jesus *breathed* on the disciples, he was giving them life that was no less vital than the breath that fills our lungs.

In John 15:5-8, Jesus says, "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples."

Just like a vine branch cannot live without being connected to the vine, we as Christians cannot continue in this life unless we are connected to Jesus. Just like a vine branch that is separated from the vine withers and dies, our spiritual lives will wither and die if we do not

keep it connected to the one who gives it life, Jesus. Just like when He breathed the breath of life into Adam's nostrils, and when he breathed on the disciples on the first Easter, he has breathed on us, filling us with his Holy Spirit, which is that constant companion who keeps us connected with the vine, Jesus.

This is what hope in this life is: To have the filling of Christ, and to bring glory to Him. The truly great news is that we have hope for more than just this life. In 1 Corinthians 15:19, Paul told the Corinthian church, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable." Why would he say this? Because we not only have the blessings that come with being in Christ in this life *now*, we also have hope for *after* this life.

It is my hope that you will join me in praying that God would breathe on us, filling us with his Spirit, and showing us the fulfillment of life by being connected to the vine of life, his son, Jesus Christ. When we have that relationship, we can have hope in all things, even when we are down 18-0. With Jesus, we always have the bat, and can always have hope.

5 Life-Changing Benefits of Silence

Many people feel overwhelmed these days. The ongoing demands of the modern world have led to new levels of stress.

When life seems to never stop, it can be good to build a moment of silence in your day. It can be as simple as turning off your phone, sitting on a chair, and focusing on the sound of your breathing for just five minutes.

Building those moments of silence might empower you throughout the day. It's a set time you can take for yourself without feeling guilty. It's not so long that you can't fit it in, and not so short that you won't recognize the benefits.

For anyone who feels overwhelmed at some point throughout the day, we have found five life-changing benefits of silence.

Taking a Moment of Silence Helps your Thinking

The first of five benefits of silence is that it is good for the brain. In fact, studies show that practicing moments of silence literally grows the brain.

Because moments of silence allow you to think with more focus, they help grow your cortex, the part of your brain where your real thinking takes place.

Practicing silence can also improve your memory. Because your memory partly depends on how often you think about something, thinking things over in silence helps create patterns in your brain that you also use for your memory. It's a way of training your brain to remember better.

When we're silent for a moment, we allow our brain to focus and work without getting distracted by a lot of impulses. Because your brain is always developing, focusing your brain will also train it.

Making time to be silent, even for five minutes a day, will soon benefit the most important organ you have: the brain.

Silence Benefits Your Creativity

Another benefit of silence is that it allows you to think differently. Silence is a way of getting rid of the many impulses we get on an ongoing basis. Because we're slowing down and really focusing on the moment, our brain gets a chance to ignore the immediate concerns and think on a higher level.

Creativity is one of the ways this higher level thinking is used. It is not a coincidence that so many moments of inspiration take place at a time when we're away from immediate impulses: in the shower, the bathroom, or in bed right before we fall asleep.

It is because we're silent and slowing down in those moments that creativity gets a better chance to break through.

Another form of higher level thinking is that it's easier to think long term. Most people decide to quit their jobs when they're on a vacation. Because they're away from the distractions that dictate their everyday lives, they can suddenly see a different way of handling the future.

Daily moments of silence can bring the same benefits. The practice of silence will allow you to take a step back and look further ahead.

Silence Helps you Process Emotions and Make Better Decisions

Not only does silence help you think on a higher and more creative level, it also allows you to take a closer look at your emotions.

When you take the pressure off and take the time to consider your feelings, you will get a better grip on them. By taking time to question yourself, you may discover why you feel what you're feeling, and maybe even what you can do about it.

Those moments of getting closer to yourself also mean that it can be good to have short moments of silence in your relationships. Taking a moment to step back might keep you from reacting reflexively, letting you really examine what is best in the situation or relationship.

When you have to make a difficult decision, this benefit will prove even more effective. Because of the combination of high-level thinking and the slow emotion processing that comes from taking a moment of silence, this technique will also allow you to make better life decisions.

Examine how you feel about the different outcomes, what the long-term consequences are, and how much control you can have in the situation.

Silence Can Build Resilience

The power of silence can also help you to settle down a bit. Like a small pond in the rain, our mind is always getting new impressions and impulses. Building moments of silence in your everyday life will allow you to take it all in and settle again.

Taking a daily break and using that moment to calm back down in silence can help you get through the day much better and reduce overall stress.

Many people experience some form of stress throughout the day. Many techniques show the benefits of building a moment of silence in your day.

Like taking a nap, silence can help you restore balance and recharge you to feel better suited for what the day may bring.

The Power of Silence for your Health

Maybe one of the most important benefits of silence is that it's good for your overall health. Remember when you were told to count to ten? Taking a moment of silence in your day is one way to extend this old idea into your overall life.

The daily practice of silence has been shown to have positive effects on blood pressure, mental health, and reduces stress.

Stress is the body's way of dealing with pressure, and too much stress will turn your body into overdrive. People who are under a lot of stress see the effectiveness of their immune system go down, their sleep quality lessen, and their digestive system function poorly. Silence helps battle stress and the symptoms that come with it.

Silence also helps promote hormone regulation and keeps plaque from forming in arteries, two simple effects that will have a profound long-term effect on your health. Keeping your arteries free prevents heart diseases over the long run, giving the daily practice of silence an even clearer benefit.

Getting Rid of Bitterness

Bitterness is defined as anger and disappointment at being treated unfairly. Bitterness usually occurs when we feel that someone has taken something away from us and that we have no power to get it back. It means that you're constantly being hurt by a memory and holding on to the memory in a way that makes it hard to let go of it.

Bitterness is characterized by negative, critical attitudes, and an unforgiving spirit. Anger is the root of bitterness, and it's one of the most destructive emotions of all.

The most famous Bible verse on bitterness is from Ephesians and says, "Let all *bitterness*, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." Not only does it make us unpleasant to be around, it can be the start of even worse emotions.

Getting rid of bitterness before it turns into something worse is not just good for you, but for everyone around you.

Sometimes we can understand why people are bitter. Sometimes people have been treated unfairly and it's natural to take some time to get over that. But a lot of people also know someone who never made it out of that time. They are still stuck in their bitterness, and it has affected their personality.

Where Bitterness Comes From

The happiest people are often not the people who've had the easiest lives. How you get through the hard times is much more important than how many hard times you see in your life.

Bad things will happen, sometimes even unjust things. It's in how you deal with those troubles that can mean the difference. Getting rid of bitterness will help you move past the injustice and hard times that you've gone through, and help you towards a happier future.

So, what causes bitterness? Bitterness is caused by several things, like hurtful actions that were done to you, hurtful attitudes towards you, and hurtful words people have said to you. Bitterness is when you feel hurt because of what someone else has done that you could not prevent.

Bitterness is very destructive and can be emotionally scarring. It can take control of your life and dominate your thinking. It makes you vulnerable to make poor decisions and think destructive thoughts that not only affect your body, but also your soul.

Bitterness comes in different ways, and sometimes can look like anger, hate, jealousy, frustration, and dissatisfaction. If you don't deal with it, you can have bodily symptoms like sleeplessness, depression, anxiety, ulcers, headaches, tension, fear, and even heart-attacks.

It will not be easy to get rid of all bitterness and the anger that can come with it, but it is worth giving it a try. After all, your bitterness will stay with you if you don't deal with it.

If it helps, see your progress as a fight against the bitterness. The harder you try, the bigger your chance of beating it in the end.

There are different ways of dealing with anger and bitterness. Eliminating bitterness up front is one of the easiest way of overcoming all the hate, jealousy, and anger that may come with bitterness. Getting rid of bitterness is also one of the most powerful tools of self-improvement.

Ways to Get Rid of Bitterness

Forgive

In order to eliminate bitterness in your life, you need to learn to forgive.

Forgiveness is surrendering our desire for revenge. Revenge simply means the desire to hurt someone for having hurt us, and forgiveness means letting go of this desire. Forgiveness gives us the opportunity to stop the hurt and start the healing process.

Most of the time it takes a long time for forgiveness to really happen but the beginning is always the same. It starts with a desire to forgive, even if you don't feel ready to really forgive someone. You can't get rid of bitterness before you have decided to want to forgive, even if this takes a long time.

Stop Recalling Past Events

When we get hurt, we always have a tendency to relive the past events over and over again. In fact, negative emotions are often a lot stronger, so our brains remember them much better than the memory of positive emotions.

Although it's recommended that we should share our troubles with others, the temptation to repeat the same thing can cause even more hurt to ourselves.

It is important to talk through your problems, but only when you keep a future goal in mind. In time, it will be easier to forget about the past and focus on the future.

Make a Healing Plan

Bitterness can make you do things you know you'll regret later. To avoid letting bitterness get a hold of you, it can help to make a plan. Writing down what you really want to happen in your life can help you look into the future and determine what you need to do (and what you should avoid doing) to move towards your healing.

Writing down a plan can also help when you feel overwhelmed later on. You can look back at what you are going towards, and sometimes it can also be helpful to realize how far you've come already.

Getting rid of bitterness will take quite some time, and sometimes it's good to see the small steps forward you've already taken.

Seek Professional Help

If you've tried all means to get rid of your bitterness, then you should consider seeking professional help. By seeking professional help, you will be able to see the possibilities that your bitterness has blinded you to. You will also be guided through the healing process and learn how to not be bitter and angry.

Getting rid of bitterness doesn't happen overnight. It isn't easy, and it's not something that will go right the first time. A lot of other things are involved, too: forgiveness, happiness, and self improvement. These aren't easy things, but if you take the first steps towards a happier future, your hard work will make your life better in the end.

The Joy of the Lord Is Your Strength

Difficult Times / The Valley

We all go through difficult times. Sometimes it only lasts a day; sometimes it lasts years. Sometimes it's something minor; sometimes it's losing a loved one. Whatever the case may be, we should never falsely believe that we're alone and that nobody can understand us.

First, there are others in the world who are hurting and who have gone through similar things, maybe not the exact thing, but similar. Second, even if no one else on earth has experienced what we have, God can empathize with us. God is all love and empathy. **No one can empathize like God can, and he cares about every little thing that affects us.** Just as a father hurts when his child hurts, God hurts when we hurt.

One of the greatest gifts God has given parents is the ability to comfort their children when they are hurting. Being able to hold them and rock them and tell them it will be okay is a blessing. Not being able to do this is torture. God feels the same way. He wants to be able to hold us and whisper words of encouragement to us. He wants to cover us with his love and peace like only He can. When we don't let Him, we're not only hurting ourselves, we're hurting our Father.

God's Intricate Plan

You may be thinking, "That's great, but why can't he prevent the bad stuff from happening in the first place?" This is a question that people have been asking since the beginning of time. Why does God allow some things and not others? Why do bad things happen to good people? Is God causing this to teach us, or is He just letting it happen for another reason?

Every situation is different, so there is no perfect answer, apart from this...

We are the creation and He is the creator. We aren't meant to understand everything. In fact, if you think about it, it's a good thing that we can't understand God's whole intricate

plan. First, if we could understand it, we'd be thinking about it all the time, and the whole point is to not have to worry about it. Knowing God is in control of everything allows us to let go of the reins, sit back, and enjoy the ride with faith in our captain.

Second, think about this: **Do you really want the God of the entire universe, the One we put our faith and trust in, to have a plan that is so simple a human can understand it?**

Seriously, think about it. If God's plan was simple enough for us to understand, than would we really be any better off than if we just followed our own plan?

God's intricate plan has been compared to a tapestry, which is quite fitting. He weaves all of us into one giant tapestry across nations and over time. Every one of us working together to form one, beautiful picture.

But have you ever looked at the back of a tapestry? It's not so pretty, and it doesn't usually look like much. For the most part, all we get to see is one tiny section of the back of this tapestry. Close-up it may look ugly and messy, and it probably feels that way at times. **If we were able to see through God's eyes, though, we'd see a beautiful picture with each thread serving a purpose.** We just have to trust that God is who He says He is – all-powerful, all-knowing, and, above all, loving.

The Abundant Life

Believe it or not, God wants us to have an abundant life here on earth. It's not just heaven that He cares about. He wants us to live abundantly now. John 10:10 says, *I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.* What's hard for us to grasp, though, is that an abundant life doesn't mean a carefree life with no problems.

God's version of an "abundant life" may not be loads of money and a fancy house. It may be, but that's not for us to decide. We don't know what's best for us. God does. In fact, oftentimes what we think is best for us is the very thing that would hurt us in the long run.

We don't know what that abundant life looks like for sure, but we do know that it is filled with joy, love, and peace, even amidst trials. Sometimes it is the very trials we hate that help us to wake up enough to receive those things from God.

God wants us to be free of worries, stress, and frustrations. The only way we can be free of those negative things is by trusting in God and letting Him lead us to where He wants us to go. It may not be on our timetable, and we may have to go through rough patches to get there, but He is leading us there. In the meantime, we can still rest in His all-encompassing peace and never-ending grace.

The Secret to Strength

We all need strength to get through life's trials. Knowing they serve a bigger purpose in God's plan can only help us to an extent. We need God's strength while we're in the trenches of our day-to-day struggles.

Nehemiah 8:10 says, *Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.* This verse shows us the secret for getting God's strength. It's through the joy of the Lord that we get strength. So what are we to do? Simple. Bring God joy. Ask God to reveal to you how you can best bring Him joy, and do that. As you do this, you will receive His strength.

If you're not sure where to start, just spend time with Him. God desires to spend time with us, so when we fellowship with God, we bring Him joy. As we spend more time with Him, we'll be able to recognize His voice and know further what He wants us to do.

Faithworks Centre

Faithworks Centre is located just a few minutes outside of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. The Centre is dedicated to reaching out to the larger community and help them build their faith.

Services are held every Sunday at 10.30 am, and prayer meetings are held every Thursday at 10:00 am.

Find out more at our website: <http://faithisland.org>

Find us on Facebook here: <https://www.facebook.com/faithisland>

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