How to find joy in every part of life

John 10:10 has been one of my favorite scriptures for many years. It says: "The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)" (AMPC).

This verse clearly shows us that God wants us to enjoy our lives-in abundance, to the full, until we're overflowing with joy!

I remember when God gave me the revelation that it's His will for me to enjoy my life. It was life-changing because I used to be a miserable person who was emotionally unstable and couldn't be happy unless I got my way in most circumstances in my life.

Because of the abuse I had experienced throughout childhood, I was insecure, angry and didn't trust anyone. But once I started seriously studying the Word of God, I came to realize that He didn't want me to live this way.

I could be healed and whole in my mind and emotions, and I could learn how to really enjoy my everyday life.

Now, when I say God wanted me to enjoy my everyday life, I'm talking about doing ordinary life with calm delight and a smile on my face (see John 15:11).

It's about not dreading the daily responsibilities you have to do whether you like it or not, things like cleaning the house, mowing the grass, going to work, and the list goes on and on. And it's not a "working for the weekend" mentality or an attitude that says "I'll be happy when… I get to go on vacation" or "...the kids are back in school" or "...I get that promotion" and so on.

It seems today that most people believe they have to wait for their circumstances to change before they can enjoy life. But the truth is you can make the decision to enjoy your ordinary life and make it extraordinary, regardless of your circumstances.

Doing life with God

One of the ways you can take ordinary life and make it extraordinary is to learn to do every single thing you do with and for God. We make a mistake when we separate our sacred life from our secular life.

We can be just as close to God in the grocery store as we are at church. And He wants us to do everything we need to do *with* Him.

It actually adds an edge of excitement when we let God be involved in everything we do. He's everywhere, all the time, and He's just as interested in the routine, mundane tasks of our lives as He is in the more "spiritual" things we do.

It's amazing to realize that God wants to have fellowship with us — He wants to spend each day with us. Don't just settle for seeking Him once a week at church or when you're in a desperate situation.

Decide that you are going to enjoy your everyday relationship with God!

The truth about real joy

The abundant life Christ offers goes deeper in our hearts than the way we feel about things. It's an amazing thing when we learn how to have the peace and joy only God can give in every area of our lives, instead of the type of enjoyment that's just based on emotional excitement.

The joy of the Lord is much greater than simply feeling happy. It brings peace and contentment to your soul, even when your circumstances are difficult and don't make any sense. Nehemiah 8:10 says, "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

This kind of joy makes the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday routine enjoyable. And since most of life is Monday through Friday, we need to enjoy it!

The World can't give it to you

In John 15:11, Jesus says, "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." The Amplified translation says "that your joy and gladness may be of full measure and complete and overflowing." In the 10 verses leading up to this one, Jesus is talking about abiding in Him, because that's the key to living with His joy.

Abiding means "to live, dwell and remain in"; it's not just visiting once a week at church. It's having a personal relationship with Christ, being one with Him and doing life together.

The truth is apart from Jesus, we can do nothing of real value, but with Him, we can bear much good fruit (John 15:5).

God wants to abide with you every day, all throughout the day. He doesn't just want you to seek Him when you go to church or when you're desperate. His desire is to have a personal relationship with you, so you can experience His presence in everything you do.

That's when your everyday life is really enjoyable!

Soroptimists seek applicants for award

Soroptimist International Club of Florence (SIF) is seeking applicants for its annual "Live Your Dream Award."

This award is for a single women who is head of household and wants to further her education. The funds are given directly to the individual to offset living expenses while attending school.

Last year, SIF gave $1,000 to a local woman whose application was then forwarded to the Soroptimist International of the Americas (SIA) Northwest Region to be included in a pool for an additional award. The Florence woman was selected to receive an additional award of $1,500.

The application period is open through Nov. 15.

The application can be found on the SIA website at www.soroptimist.org/liveyourdreamawards.html, then click on the Live Your Dream link. This page gives more information about the award.

If there are any question about the award or filling out the application, call Nancy Bosket (SIF member) at 541-902-7250.

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Photos of loved ones sought for 'Light up a Life'

PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Hospice is seeking photos of community members' loved ones who have passed away.

These memories will be featured at the 21st annual Light Up A Life Ceremony in a memorial slide show.

This annual ceremony will be held from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10, at the Florence Events Center.

The event will include an opening prayer, introduction of the Peace Harbor Hospice team, ceremonial reading of the names of those who have passed and music performed by Strings of Compassion.

The evening will conclude with the lighting of the holiday tree and Menorah.

There is no cost to attend and refreshments will be served after the ceremony.

Family and friends are all invited to share in remembrance and compassion for those who have passed.

Light Up A Life is the only fundraiser held by PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Hospice. Stars can be purchased in memory of a loved one and will be hung on either the holiday tree or placed on the Menorah table.

All contributions to Light Up A Life remain in Florence to benefit programs and services offered through Peace Harbor Hospice and the community it serves.

Because any photos used will be shown to a public audience, a signed release form will be needed. Families can visit the Hospice office at 2230 Kingwood St. to pick up a form, which should be signed and returned with the photograph no later than Nov. 30.

Signed release forms and photographs can be mailed to PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Hospice, 400 Ninth St., Florence, OR 97439, or dropped off at the hospice office.

Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed from noon to 1 p.m.

To learn more about Light Up A Life and Peace Harbor Hospice, contact Christopher Huntingdon at 541-997-3418.

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Unitarians discuss season of atonement

Sunday, Oct. 9, from 10 to 11 a.m. at the Florence Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, the Rev. Dr. Ruth Miller will lead the worship service titled, "New Year, New World: A Season of Declaration and Atonement."

Miller reminds us, "We're in the Jewish High Holy Days; Yom Kippur is this week, and Jewish families all over the world are coming together to share this sacred time."

Miller will draw on scripture and lived experience to show how this ancient tradition of releasing debts, obligations and resentments as a way to connect more fully with the divine offers us powerful insights and tools for our own spiritual journey.

The Fellowship is located at 87738 Highway 101 at Heceta Beach Road and is wheelchair accessible.

Each service concludes with refreshments and a dialogue circle to explore the questions that come up during each service.

For more information, visit florenceuuf.org or call 541-997-2840.

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This year we will also be featuring local Men in Business too!

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Women in Business will run on
October 15 - Deadline: October 13
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