



Pursue what matters most in your life

The things we pursue in life have everything to do with our joy and fulfillment. While it's certainly not wrong to desire success, a better paying job or a higher standard of living, the Bible tells us that seeking after "things" and making them our priority will make us miserable in the end.

Seek is a strong word. It means "to crave, pursue, to make sacrifices to get, to go after with all of your strength and all of your heart."

I encourage you to take a moment and ask yourself, "What am I seeking? What am

I spending most of my time talking about? Where do I invest the majority of my energy?"

Romans 14:17 (AMPC) says, "[After all] the kingdom of God is not a matter of [getting the] food and drink [one likes], but instead it is righteousness... and [heart] peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

In other words, the Kingdom of God is not about us simply trying to get what we want. Instead, it's about seeking a relationship with God and experiencing true Kingdom benefits.

It's about having a greater understanding of His righteousness (our right standing with Him through Jesus Christ), His

peace and His joy in our lives. Only then will we find what we are truly looking for.

In the beginning of our relationship with God, it's all about us... and for a while, this is fine. I believe this is where we all start. We come to Him with our list of needs and desires. But eventually, the time comes for us to grow and mature.

I remember coming to a point in my life when I had a lot of "things" but realized I simply wasn't happy. After praying and asking the Lord what was wrong, He spoke to my heart and said,

"Joyce, you are too shallow, it's time to go out into the deep."

Wow. That was difficult to hear, but I knew exactly what He meant. It was time for me to

start living the "deeper life", to begin seeking God for who He is and not just what He can do for me.

You see, shallow Christians want the fruit, but they are not concerned about the roots. I love Isaiah 37:31, which says, "...take root downward and bear fruit upward" (AMPC).

Just look at nature. Large trees with thick, full branches have a massive underground root system that spreads both deep and wide. Without this support system, the tree could never weather a storm.

In the same way, we must develop deep spiritual roots before we can truly enjoy the big, full life God has intended for us.

This includes cultivating a relationship with the Lord,

finding out what He says about us in His Word, and becoming rooted and grounded in His love.

A lot of times, we come at it the wrong way. We want to have all of the benefits — more privileges, a better house, a bigger ministry, more money—before we ever establish our roots.

But without a strong foundation in God, these things can actually hurt us more than they can help.

Friends, the Lord is more concerned about your inner life than your outer life. Why? Because He knows that when you are spiritually strong on the inside, then you are able to handle any situation that arises in your life on the outside.

I think sometimes we're afraid that if we stop chasing after all of the "things," we'll never get what we want in life. But the exact opposite is true...

Psalm 37:4 says, "Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He will give you the desires and secret petitions of your heart."

As we place our focus on

God, we not only begin to experience His supernatural satisfaction and fulfillment but He even causes our desires to be in line with His plan and what's best for our lives.

Years ago, while I was praying (probably for something I wanted), the Lord spoke a life-changing truth to my heart.

He said, "Joyce, seek My face and not My hand. If you seek My face, My hand will always be open."

Matthew 6:33 says it this way: "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (NIV).

Now these are truly words to live by. I can tell you from experience that when you make God your number-one priority, He not only fills your life with His amazing peace, joy, and satisfaction, but He also gives you the desires of your heart.

I encourage you to make a decision today to pursue the One who matters most. Seek God for who He is and make your relationship with Him a priority.

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Baha'i to host community to pot luck celebration

Naw-Rúz, which will be celebrated Monday, March 20, is one of nine Baha'i holy days where work and school are suspended. It is a festive event observed with meetings for prayer and music and dancing.

Since the new year also ends the Baha'i month of fasting the celebration is often

combined with a dinner. Baha'is all over the world celebrate it as a festive day, according to local custom.

A gathering will held in the Heintz home, 875 Seventh St., from 6:30 to 8 p.m. It will be a potluck with a few songs and prayer.

For more information, call 541-590-0779.

FUUF SERVICE WILL DISCUSS PATH OF THE SACRED DANCE

Sunday March 19, at the 10 a.m. service, Denise Weatherwax-Ebner will be giving a talk entitled, "My Path to Sacred Dance."

A Sacred Dance Practitioner for 22 years, Weatherwax-Ebner teaches a class called, "Dancing with the Goddess" at the Florence Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, on the second Saturday of the month at 5:30 p.m.

This is not only the name of the class she teaches, but how Weatherwax-Ebner walks her path in life. She describes it as, "A deeply spiritual, moving meditation that helps connect oneself to the Divine Feminine

and to tune into one's own inner knowing."

Weatherwax-Ebner will be sharing her own path to discovering the Divine Feminine and how the practice of Sacred Dance has helped to shape the woman she is today.

The UU Fellowship, 87738 Highway 101 at Heceta Beach Road, is wheelchair accessible and each service concludes with refreshments and a dialogue circle to explore the questions that come up during each service.

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

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