

MOVING UP HIGHER  
with  
*Joyce Meyer*



I've been robbed! That is one of the first revelations I had after I started diligently studying the Word and realized I wasn't living the life Jesus died to give me. At first it made me mad, but it was the truth I needed to hear to help me begin an amazing transformation to a life I can honestly say I now enjoy. For many years before this, I was a Christian but I wasn't serious about my walk with God. As a result, I was miserable. I didn't have any real peace or joy, and I felt guilty most of the time. Thankfully, God showed me through John 10:10 that I didn't have to be miserable and I could have abundant life in Christ. But I needed to change! I remember asking God to show me what I needed to do to become the person 2 Corinthians 5:17 (AMP) said I should be: "...A new creature [reborn and renewed by the Holy Spirit]..." Have you ever thought, "If I'm so new, why do I act like the 'old me'?" Well, becoming a "new creature" from the inside out is a process that takes time. When we accept Christ as our Savior and we're born again, we receive the nature of everything God is in seed form. 1 John 3:9 (AMP) says, "God's seed [His principle of life, the essence of His righteous character] remains [permanently] in him..." Seeds have to be watered and take root before they can produce fruit. And the

fruit of having life in Christ is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). It's the ability to deal with challenges and overcome them by God's grace so others will see Christ in you and want what you have.

The key to experiencing this life is identifying how the enemy works in our lives to steal what God has given us.

**Religion That Robs Us**

In John 10:10, Jesus tells us we have an enemy—the devil—who wants to keep us from God. But when you read the whole chapter, you see that Jesus is talking about the system of religion, which is perpetrated by the devil. Because the last thing the devil wants you to know is how much God loves you and how a personal relationship with Christ gives you access to everything he's stolen from you.

When I realized that God loves me unconditionally and that He has a plan for my life, it helped me understand that He wanted an intimate, personal relationship with me. I discovered that the Christian life is not about religion but relationship. Because religion is a thief that keeps us from becoming transformed into the image of Christ.

Now, when I say "religion," I'm not talking about going to church; it's important for us to go to good churches where the Word of God is taught and we can grow spiritually. I'm talking about a performance mentality that says it's what we do that determines whether God approves of us or not. A religious attitude says, "If I just pray

more or read the Bible more or do more good things or go to church on a regular basis...then God will be happy with me." It gets us on a treadmill of feeling obligated to do certain things to please God.

Relationship with God is based on the truth about His love for us and tells us who we are in Christ. We learn how much God loves us and that it's because of what Jesus did for us on the cross—through the sacrifice He made—that we have what we need to be everything God created us to be.

It's good for us to pray, read the Bible, go to church and do things for others to make their lives better. But it's important for us to do these things as a response to what God has done for us, not to get Him to love us. Salvation is God's gift to us, and we show our love for Him by the way we live for Him. That's relationship, not religion.

Having new life in Christ is so amazing because through it, we become the home of God. His Spirit comes to live in us and work with us, bringing restoration and wholeness to every area of our lives. Then, as we learn to follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit, we can receive everything God has for us and take back what belongs to us!

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For more on this topic, order Joyce's four-teaching CD series How to

Survive Change. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, *Enjoying Everyday Life*, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting [www.joycemeyer.org](http://www.joycemeyer.org). Ladies, join Joyce Meyer for the 35th Annual Love Life Women's Conference September 21-23 in Saint Louis, MO. For more information, go to [www.joycemeyer.org/lovelife](http://www.joycemeyer.org/lovelife).

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. She has authored more than 100 books, including *Battlefield of the Mind* and *20 Ways to Make Every Day Better* (Hachette). She hosts the *Enjoying Everyday Life* radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit [www.joycemeyer.org](http://www.joycemeyer.org).

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IN MEMORIAM

**Milton Bedortha 1928-2017**



Milton Bedortha, 88, of Cottage Grove died Dec. 28, 2016 of heart disease.

He was born Nov. 3, 1928 in Eugene to Chester and Gladys (Durlfing-er) Bedortha.

He graduated high school and worked as a logger and heavy equipment operator, served in the U.S. Navy, and was a member of the Elks, Moose, Masons and VFW.

Survivors include his children, Joseph of Cottage Grove, Mike, Cindy and Angela, and a brother, Clifford. He was preceded in death by his wives, parents, and a brother, Wallace.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, Aug. 26 at 2 p.m. at the Elks Lodge in Cottage Grove at 755 N. River Road. A private inurnment is pending. Arrangements under the care of Yuma Mortuary and

Cremation, Yuma, Arizona.

**John Battles 1955-2017**

John Battles was born in Cottage Grove in 1955 and died in Lewiston, Idaho on Aug. 10, 2017. He was preceded in death by his father, Bill Battles, and brother, Paul. Survivors include his mother, Willa, brother, Bill, and three sisters, Sandra, Judy, and Bonnie. Cards and reminiscences can be sent to John's wife, Joyce Finley, at 2026 Ripon Dr., Lewiston, Idaho 83501.

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