
LIFE & HOW TO LIVE IT

invitations for everyone

BE HERE NOW.

“You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment” --Jesus (Mark 12:30).

“Commit every particle of your being in all things, down to the smallest details of your life, eagerly and with perfect trust to the unfailing and most sure providence of God.” -- St. Albert the Great (1193-1290)

JEAN-PIERRE DE CAUSSADE (1675-1751) *The sacrament of the present moment*

“Let us love, for love will give us everything.”

“Over and over again, we must live from minute to minute. The past is past, the future is yet to be. There is nothing we can do about either, but we can deal with what is happening moment by moment.” “Embrace the present moment as an ever-flowing source of holiness.”

“If we have abandoned ourselves to God, there is only one rule for us: the duty of the present moment.”

“The present moment holds infinite riches beyond your wildest dreams but you will only enjoy them to the extent of your faith and love. The more a soul loves, the more it longs, the more it hopes, the more it finds. The will of God is manifest in each moment, an immense ocean which the heart only fathoms in so far as it overflows with faith, trust, and love.”

“Jesus Christ, after his resurrection, surprised the disciples when he appeared before them in disguise, only to vanish as soon as he declared himself. The same Jesus still lives and works among us, still surprises our souls whose faith is not sufficiently pure and strong. There is no moment when God is not manifest in the form of some affliction, obligation or duty. Everything that happens to us, in us, and through us, embraces and conceals God's divine but veiled purpose, so that we are always being taken by surprise and never recognize it until it has been accomplished. If we could pierce that veil and if we were vigilant and attentive, God would unceasingly reveal himself to us and we would rejoice in his works and in all that happens to us. We would say to everything: 'It is the Lord!' And we would discover that every circumstance is a gift from God; that human beings, frail creatures though they are, will never lack anything; and that God's unceasing concern is to give them what is best for them.”

“All will be well if we abandon ourselves to God.”

“To discover God in the smallest and most ordinary things, as well as in the greatest, is to possess a rare and sublime faith. To find contentment in the present moment is to relish and adore the divine will in the succession of all the things to be done and suffered which make up the duty to the present moment.”

“Those who have abandoned themselves to God always lead mysterious lives and receive from him exceptional and miraculous gifts by means of the most ordinary, natural and chance experiences in which there appears to be nothing unusual. The simplest sermon, the most banal conversation, the least erudite books become a source of knowledge and wisdom to these souls by virtue of God's purpose. This is why they carefully pick up crumbs which clever minds tread under foot, for to them everything is precious and a source of enrichment. They exist in a state of total impartiality, neglecting nothing, respecting and making use of everything.”

HENRI NOUWEN (1932-1936)

“No sooner had Jesus come up out of the water than he saw the heavens torn apart & the Spirit, like a dove, descending on him. And a voice came from heaven: ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; my favor rests on you.’” Matt 3:16-17

Yes, there is that voice, the voice that speaks from above and from within and that whispers softly or declares loudly: “You are my Beloved, on you my favor rests.” It certainly is not easy to hear that voice in a world filled with voices that shout: “You are no good, you are ugly; you are worthless; you are despicable, you are nobody—unless you can demonstrate the opposite.” These negative voices are so loud and so persistent that it is easy to believe them. That’s the great trap. It is the trap of self-rejection...Self-rejection is the greatest enemy of the spiritual life because it contradicts the sacred voice that calls us the “Beloved.” Being the Beloved expresses the core truth of our existence....

Though the existence of being the Beloved has never been completely absent from my life, I never claimed it as my core truth. I kept running around in large or small circles, always looking for someone or something to convince me of my Belovedness. It was as if I kept refusing to hear the voice that speaks from the very depth of my being and says, “You are my Beloved, on you my favor rests.” That voice has always been there, but it seems that I was much more eager to listen to other, louder voices saying: “Prove that you are worth something; do something relevant, spectacular, or powerful, and then you will earn the love you so desire.” Meanwhile, the soft, gentle voice that speaks in the silence and solitude of my heart remained unheard, or at least, unconvincing...

Aren’t you, like me, hoping that some person, thing or event will come along to give you that final feeling of inner well-being you desire? Don’t you often hope: “May this book, idea, course, trip, job, country, or relationship fulfill my deepest desire.” But as long as you are waiting for that mysterious moment, you will go on running helter skelter, always anxious and restless, always lustful and angry, never fully satisfied...Well, you and I don’t have to kill ourselves. We are the Beloved. We are intimately loved long before our parents, teachers, spouses, children, and friends loved or wounded us. That’s the truth of our lives. That the truth I want you to claim for yourself. That’s the truth spoken by the voice that says, “You are my Beloved.”

Listening to that voice with greater inner attentiveness, I hear at my center that says: “I have called you by name, from the very beginning. You are mine and I am yours. You are my Beloved, on you my favor rests. I have molded you in the depths of the earth and knitted you together in your mother’s womb. I have carved you in the palms of my hands and hidden you in the shadow of my embrace. I look at you with infinite tenderness and care for you with a care more intimate than that of a mother for her child. I have counted every hair on your head and guided you at every step. Wherever you go, I go with you, and wherever you rest, I keep watch. I will give you food that will satisfy all your hunger and drink that will quench all your thirst. I will not hide my face from you. You know me as your own as I know you as my own. You belong to me...wherever you are I will be. Nothing will ever separate us.” Every time you listen with great attentiveness to the voice that calls you the Beloved, you will discover within yourself a desire to hear that voice longer and more deeply. It is like discovering a well in the desert. You want to dig deeper...*{Life of the Beloved}*

BEGIN WITH A MICRO-PRAYER IN THE MOMENT

Step 1: Ask God to be revealed.

Literally, just ask, “God, please reveal yourself to me.” It’s that simple. Ask God to help you feel his presence. Ask God to stand by you.

Step 2: Cultivate gratitude.

Give thanks for something specific. What small gift from God comes to your awareness?

Step 3: Pay attention to your thoughts and emotions.

What we think and feel changes throughout the day. Take notice of those shifts. Whatever is going on inside you, God is present. Take notice of the good, the difficult, and the boring.

Step 4: Choose something that’s happening right now, and pray about it.

Take a brief moment and offer today’s experiences as a prayer to God. Tell God how you’re feeling--honestly.

Step 5: Ask, Where is God for me today?

No matter what you’ve experience throughout this day, ask the question, *Where has God been in a particular moment?* This question is enough to change any moment, any event, into a minute of grace.

Step 6: Bless the future moments.

As you go through your day, ask God to guide your journey. God knows what you need even before you ask. God wants to bless you.