



# Pause With Purpose

...to refresh

...to grow

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Life Coaching  
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## The Good Life

Near our home stands a three-story building. It once was a humble, one-story cement block building with a flat roof. Several years ago, its owner built a two story addition onto its block walls. The old roof became a second story floor, and the whole building took on a grand, new appearance. Recently, however, one of the original block walls began to show signs of stress. Cracks and a slight bulge indicate that the beautiful transformation years earlier may have put the basic foundation of the building at risk.

We often see this same phenomenon taking place in the lives of people. People achieve fame and fortune, only to fall prey to the excesses made available by the "rich and famous" lifestyle. Wealth and opportunity are obtained, yet after the initial rush, hearts still break, souls remain hungry, and lives feel hollow. Addictions, depression, broken relationships, suicide ... what are these doing amidst "the good life"?

Perhaps it would help to glance back at the idea of "the good life". For years, the media and society in general have shaped our understanding of good living.

Television programs celebrating the lifestyles of the "rich and famous", the opulent homes of the elite, and the largest yachts afloat have fostered the belief that the good life is based on wealth, possessions, position, prestige, beauty, popularity and power. Yet, as noted earlier, such characteristics fail to protect those who possess them from the pain and struggle of life. In fact, they frequently increase it.

How interesting it is to compare this social perspective of "the good life" with that of people who have faced their own presumptive death, and survived. Many of those who survived the crash landing of the US Airways jetliner in the Hudson River ("Miracle on the Hudson") report a profound change in their basic values and approach to life. Three changes repeatedly noted are:

1. a change of focus from achieving the next great accomplishment, to enjoying and appreciating the gift and power of every present moment.
2. a change from chasing after the values promoted by society, to actively appreciating and experiencing the love relationships they share with family and friends.
3. a change from living for self, to living to serve others.

These three values - appreciating each moment of life, relishing in the love of close relationships, and focusing on serving others rather than just self - form a radically different perspective of what creates "the good life." This good life doesn't depend on wealth or achievement, and is available to anyone humble and mature enough to appreciate its nurturant power and life-embracing joy.

As we close out one year and enter the next, let's pause long enough to consider what really feeds our heart and makes our life meaningful. While fame, fortune and achievements can be wonderful blessings, let's make sure our foundational values and needs are identified and met so we have the strength to handle blessings such as these with humility, wisdom, graciousness and self-control.

Honoring our inborn need for meaningful relationship likewise makes the strength and joyful fulfillment of the true "good life" available to those with limited means and multiple life challenges. For when hearts are fed with the balm of love and support, the weakness and inadequacy of society's perspective becomes starkly apparent.



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## CONTACT INFORMATION

Your thoughts and comments are warmly welcomed. I would also be happy to share with you more about life coaching and how it can assist you to be your best, personally and relationally, at home and at work.

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## Spirituality and the Good Life

It is often said during funerals that the deceased lived "a good life". While the exact meaning of this phrase varies, it typically refers to a productive life lived on a respectably moral level with few, if any, major crises. Such a life is indeed admirable, but it can also be sadly limited in scope, focusing solely on an earthly existence.

While *the* good life may well include a life well lived, it implies much more than that. For the good life to fulfill its true meaning, it must not only focus on embracing the human relationships that feed our heart, but also a spiritual relationship with our Creator God that feeds our soul. Such a life highlights not just what we are able to accomplish, but moreso, what our God is able to accomplish within and through us.

Consider, for example, the "fruits of the Spirit" - those character qualities produced by God's presence within us:

"love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control"  
(Galatians 5:22)

Such is the evidence of *the* good life - one lived in close relationship with our loved ones and with our God.



"This - this was what made life: a moment of quiet, the water falling in the fountain, the girl's voice ... a moment of captured beauty. He who is truly wise will never permit such moments to escape."

- Louis L'Amour

"Maturity begins to grow when you can sense your concern for others outweighing your concern for yourself."

- John MacNaughton