

Based on the #1 *New York Times* Bestseller

JOEL OSTEEN

Daily Readings from

YOUR
Best Life
NOW

90 DEVOTIONS

for Living at Your Full Potential



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INTRODUCTION



PRACTICAL WAYS TO BEGIN LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE NOW

I WAS SEATED at a bookstore table in Chicago, signing copies of *Your Best Life Now* for a long line of patient people, when I looked up and saw two women, arm in arm, standing in front of me. One woman looked to be in her early thirties; the other was apparently her mother. Their eyes were slightly red and puffy, as though they had been crying recently.

When they told me their story, I understood their tears. They were indeed mother and daughter, but they had been estranged from each other for more than twelve years. Although they both lived in the Chicago area, they had not spoken to each other for that length of time.

Each of them had read *Your Best Life Now* and came to the store that day for an autograph. At the bookstore, they saw each other for the first time in more than a decade. They discovered that they both had changed, and they had a tearful reunion.

“Thank you for writing this book,” one of the women said. “It not only created the opportunity for our reconciliation, but it transformed our lives to the point where we were able to forgive the past and move forward. Your book changed our lives.”

What a privilege it has been for me to hear that sentence again and again as people who have read *Your Best Life Now* have spoken or written to me. They have told me how God has used that book to positively impact their lives or the lives of people close to them. Many have shared incidents in which they put the principles to the test, and discovered (sometimes to their surprise) that these biblical truths really helped them to achieve their full potential.

Others have said, “Joel, there’s just so much information in *Your Best Life Now*. Each chapter is filled with important concepts that I want to practice in my life.”

Consequently, many have expressed a desire to work through the power-packed principles more slowly, taking “bite-sized bits,” studying the scriptural foundations upholding them, analyzing these truths, and applying them to their personal situations. To help in that process, I am delighted to offer *Daily Readings from Your Best Life Now*.

A “devotional” is not meant to be an exhaustive treatment of a particular passage of Scripture;

instead, it is intended to inspire ardent love and worship of God. It's my desire that the selections I've chosen to emphasize will be keys you can use to unlock doors leading to a fuller life. This devotional extracts many of the stories and principles contained in my book and organizes them in daily doses.

Combined with an appropriate Scripture reading that sheds light on the main idea for that selection and a key Bible passage (which you might want to consider memorizing), the material is assembled in such a way as to make it ideal for your own personal spiritual growth. Each selection serves as a springboard to help you draw nearer to God and to help you overcome the obstacles that might keep you from living your best life now. A suggested prayer is included at the end of each selection to help you express your heart's desires, your prayer requests, and fresh commitments to God. Obviously, your prayers are as important to God as mine are, so don't feel confined to the suggested prayer. It is simply a place to start in your communication with your heavenly Father.

Take your time as you work through these pages. This book is not meant to be consumed at one reading or even within a few days. It is intended to be a three-month program that will give you a fresh outlook on life, establishing within you such vibrantly new perspectives, you may never be the same. Read one devotional each day for ninety days. Think about the main point of that devotional throughout the day, and allow it to be a catalyst to provoke further study, thought, and contemplation of the good things that God has in store for you. Look up and read carefully each selected "Scripture Reading for Your Best Life Now." These passages will sometimes relate directly to the principle being described, and in other instances, the Scripture reading will provide necessary background for accurately understanding the truth you are studying. It is important that you don't neglect these short portions of God's Word if you want to gain the most benefit from this book.

I'm convinced that by the end of the next three months, your life can be transformed and renewed as you allow God's Word to refresh you and to reshape your thinking, speaking, and daily activities. May this devotional book be instrumental in helping you to live your best life now!

Joel Oster

PART ONE



ENLARGE YOUR VISION

LET'S START BELIEVING FOR MORE



SCRIPTURE READING FOR YOUR BEST LIFE NOW

Hebrews 11:8-40

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

HEBREWS 11:1 NASB

A FAMOUS MOUNTAIN-CLIMBING resort in the Swiss Alps caters to businesses that encourage their employees to hike up the mountain trails together. The goal is to build camaraderie and to teach teamwork. Although it is about an eight-hour trek to the summit, anyone with normal walking ability can ascend to the top. Each morning, the hikers gather at the base of the mountain for a pep talk before starting the climb. Usually, the group is so excited, they can hardly wait to head up the slopes, to have a group picture taken, and to celebrate their victory.

They hike for several hours before taking a break. Approximately halfway up the mountain stands a quaint alpine restaurant. About noon, the weary hikers trudge into the restaurant, peel off their hiking gear, and plop down by the fireplace to have a cup of coffee, or drink some hot chocolate, and eat their lunch. With the mountain as their backdrop, the hikers savor the warm, cozy, picturesque setting.

Interestingly, after they are full and comfortable, less than half the hikers choose to continue climbing to the top of the mountain. It isn't because they aren't able; it isn't because the climb is too difficult. Their reluctance to continue is simply because they are satisfied with where they are. They lose their drive to excel, to explore new horizons, to experience vistas they'd never previously imagined possible. They have tasted a bit of success, and they think, *This is good enough.*

God has so much more in store.

Many times, we do something similar. We have a goal to break a bad habit, to lose some weight, or to pay off our credit cards. At first, we're so excited. We're fired up and we go after it! But over time, we get lazy; we get complacent. Maybe we see a little improvement, but then we get comfortable right where we are. *Where we are* may not be a bad place, but we know it's not where we're supposed to be. We're not stretching our faith. We're not pursuing the excellence that God has

placed in our hearts.

~~“Well, Joel, I’m doing pretty well with my goal,” one fellow said. “I used to smoke two packs of cigarettes a day, and now I smoke only one.” Another person said, “I used to be fifty pounds overweight, but I’ve lost ten pounds recently.”~~

“I’m happy for you,” I told these individuals. “That’s a good start, and it took some real effort to get where you are. But don’t get comfortable. Don’t be satisfied with a little improvement. Begin believing for better progress, and press on to God’s best.”

Maybe you own a business and you’ve experienced a bit of success. Lately, however, you’ve been coasting, thinking that perhaps you’ve reached your limits. You’re not stretching your faith. You aren’t believing for an increase in your customer base or your profits. No, don’t stop halfway; go on up to the top of that mountain. Believe God for more.

Dare to step out of your comfort zone today. God has so much more in store. Keep pursuing and keep believing. It doesn’t take any more effort to believe and stay filled with faith than it takes to develop a negative and defeated attitude. Get up every day and say, “This is going to be a good day! I believe my dreams are coming to pass. God has great things in store.” When you have that kind of attitude, you are releasing God’s supernatural power in your life, and before long, you will begin experiencing more of God’s goodness.

But it doesn’t come easily. People who see their dreams come to pass are people who have some resolve, some backbone; people who refuse to settle for somewhere along the way. In the Old Testament, Abraham was one of the heroes of faith, a man with whom God established a covenant that still impacts the world today. Ironically, many years earlier, Abraham’s father, Terah, had hoped to move to the place where God later led Abraham. The Scripture says, “Abraham’s father left Ur and set out for Canaan” (see Genesis 11:31). Now Canaan was the Promised Land, and Terah had intended to lead his family to that land of abundance. But the Scripture reveals that Terah “stopped along the way and settled in Haran” (see Genesis 11:31). Why did he stop there?

No doubt it was difficult traveling with his flocks, herds, family members, and all of their possessions. You can imagine how stressful that was, not to mention what a big headache moving must have been four thousand years ago. Finally, Terah said, “I can’t go any farther. I know this isn’t the Promised Land, but let’s just settle here; it’s good enough. At least we can survive here.”

I wonder how many times we do the same thing. We have a big dream in our hearts—we’re going to excel in our careers, excel as parents, excel in our walk with God. We get started, but then things get difficult, and achieving our goal doesn’t happen as quickly as we had hoped. Perhaps, similar to Abraham’s father, we say, “Let’s just settle here. It’s not really what we wanted, but it’s good enough.”

Don’t fall into that trap. You are made for more than good enough. Look yourself in the mirror and say, “I am not going to settle for mediocrity. Things may be difficult. Nothing may be going my way right now, but I’m going to keep pursuing God. I’m going to trust God to help me expand my horizon and keep believing for all that He has for me. I’m going to make it all the way into my Promised Land.”

Maybe like Abraham’s father you’ve already settled halfway, and you’ve gotten comfortable in that spot where you are. I’m challenging you to pull up your stakes, pack your tents, get your belongings, and start moving forward. Enlarge your vision! You may have had a delay, but that’s okay; you can begin again this very day. You simply need to focus on your goal, set your course, and have the attitude, *I’m not going to settle for a little love and joy, a bit of peace and contentment, or for a small helping of happiness. No, I’m going to reach my full potential in God. I’m going to start living*

Today's Prayer for Your Best Life Now

Father, I'm excited to begin this new journey of faith with You. Please help me to develop a fresh vision for my life, to believe You for better days ahead, and to know that You will continually expand my horizons as I trust You to do more in and through my life.

HAVING A POSITIVE VISION



SCRIPTURE READING FOR YOUR BEST LIFE NOW

Genesis 15:1-6

The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness.

MATTHEW 6:22-23 NASB

GOD CREATED YOU as a visual being with an incredible imagination. Your eyes take in four million bytes of information every second. The moment input reaches your brain, that data is processed, forming a 3-D color picture in your mind.

Your imagination is extremely powerful. If I write the words “big black dog,” you don’t simply see the words; your mind shows you an image of that animal, a picture that is drawn up from your mental computer memory banks. In the same way, each of us has a picture of ourselves in our imaginations. That “self-image” is similar to a thermostat in a room. It sets the standard at which you will function. You will never consistently rise higher than the image you have of yourself, and you will never accomplish things that you don’t first see yourself accomplishing.

Unfortunately, many people have a negative vision for their lives. They don’t see themselves rising higher or overcoming their obstacles. Consequently, they’re limited by their own vision.

The Bible says your eye is the lamp of your body. Obviously, that is not talking about your physical sight; it’s talking about what you see through your eyes of faith, your *spiritual* vision. It’s talking about the type of image you’re keeping in front of you. God is saying, in effect, if you focus on your problems, on what you can’t do, or if you think you’ve already reached your limits, then that image of mediocrity will keep you stuck right where you are. It’s not because God doesn’t want to promote you; it’s simply because you are focused on the wrong things. You’re developing the wrong images in your mind.

On the other hand, if you can learn to look at life through your eyes of faith and start seeing yourself rising to new levels—seeing yourself accomplishing your dreams, receiving more, giving more, loving more, and enjoying life, seeing your family serving God—you’ll experience God’s blessings and favor.

We produce what we continually keep in front of us. If you keep an image of success in your mind, you’re going to move toward success, but if you see yourself as barely getting by, your marriage

getting worse, your health going downhill, then most likely your life will gravitate toward those negative situations.

It's a simple truth that you cannot give birth to something you have not first conceived. You must conceive it on the inside through your eyes of faith before it will come to pass on the outside. Your vision, what you see, has a tremendous impact in your life. We need to quit allowing our imagination to keep us beaten down to where we don't think we can do anything. Instead, let's start allowing God to use our imaginations to build us up, to help us accomplish our dreams. In other words, keep things in front of you that you want to see come to pass.

Your imagination is like a canvas. You can paint on it any kind of picture you choose through your thoughts, attitudes, and what you decide to focus on. Don't let doubt or fear paint on your canvas. Don't let "impossible" or "can't be done" thoughts blur the colors on your canvas.

Instead, take out the paintbrush of faith, the paintbrush of hope, the paintbrush of expectancy and begin painting a bright future on the canvas of your heart. Understand: The kind of mental picture you paint is the goal toward which you will move. That image will set the limits for your life. If you want to change your life, you need to change the picture you're painting in your mind.

In the Old Testament, God told Abraham he was going to be the father of many nations. What's so unusual about that? Simply this: At the time God said this, Abraham didn't have any children, and he was very old, as was his wife, Sarah. In the natural, it was an impossible situation. But God gave Abraham some unusual instructions. He said, "Abraham, go outside and look up at the stars, for as many stars as you can see, that's how many descendants you are going to have" (see Genesis 15:5).

Why did God tell Abraham to go out and look up at the stars? God had already promised Abraham he was going to be a father.

God knew it wasn't enough for Abraham simply to hear it; he needed to get a picture of it in his mind. God wanted Abraham to have a visual image, to see it in his imagination. So every night when Abraham went outside and looked up, he was reminded of God's promise to him. Even though it didn't come to pass for twenty years, Abraham saw himself as the father of many nations; he saw it through his eyes of faith. He conceived it on the inside, in his heart. Abraham painted that picture on the canvas of his mind, and eventually God brought it to pass.

Maybe the reason you are not experiencing God's best, the reason you may be stuck in a rut, is simply because your *vision* needs to be improved.

Abraham saw himself as the father of many nations; he saw it through his eyes of faith.

"Well," you say, "I've got a lot of problems. I'm really in debt," or, "I'm really lonely."

Fine, start seeing yourself the way you want to be. You may be in difficulties, you may be struggling, but don't let that image take root. Paint a new picture. Start seeing yourself rising out of your troubles. Start seeing yourself as more than a conqueror.

Maybe you have a lot of strife and division in your heart. You and your spouse are having a hard time getting along. Instead of giving up on that marriage, look through your eyes of faith and start seeing your family living in peace and harmony. Change what you're seeing, and you will change what you are producing.

Today's Prayer for Your Best Life Now

Beginning today, I will lift up my head and start to get a new image in my mind of the tremendous potential that You have poured into my life. Help me, Father, to paint a new picture on the canvas of my imagination, to live with faith, seeing with my spiritual eyes not just what exists today, but the life that is possible because of You.

DEVELOP A BETTER PICTURE



SCRIPTURE READING FOR YOUR BEST LIFE NOW

Mark 8:14-25

You have eyes—can't you see? You have ears—can't you hear? Don't you remember anything at all?

MARK 8:18 NLT

RECENTLY, A MIDDLE-AGED man told me, “Joel, I always knew I was going to get diabetes. My father had it. My grandfather had it. It’s been in my family line for generations.” He told me that from the time he was a teenager, he had known the day was coming when he’d hear the doctor give him that dire diagnosis. He was expecting it. He already saw himself with diabetes, and, unfortunately, he got exactly what he predicted.

Some people might think he got diabetes because he didn’t have faith. No, I hate to say it, but his faith was working just fine. Do you know your faith can function negatively just as easily as it will function positively? If your family has a long history of sickness and disease, don’t sit back and see yourself the same way. “Well, I guess this is my lot in life.”

No, you—more than anybody else—need to start developing a new picture. You need to see yourself as strong, healthy, and living a long, satisfied life. You can be the one to break that curse of ill health. But the first thing you must do is change the image you have of yourself on the inside. Get new vision. Make sure your eyes are filled with light.

That is what my mother did back in 1981, when she was diagnosed with terminal cancer and the doctors gave her only a few weeks to live. In my book *Your Best Life Now*, I told the story of how Mother prayed, believed, and quoted aloud passages of Scripture related to healing every day. But Mother didn’t just pray. She didn’t just quote the Scripture. She also put up pictures of herself all over the house—pictures taken previously at happy times in her life, when she was healthy. She put pictures in the kitchen, the living room, even in the bathroom. Everywhere she went, she saw those images of health and happiness.

Mother could easily have looked in the mirror and gotten depressed. She could have let the wrong image take root. After all, she weighed only eighty-nine pounds. She was weak, emaciated, and her skin had already turned a deathly color of yellow. But instead of dwelling on that image, Mother put up pictures in which she was vibrantly happy. I recall that in her bathroom she had a picture of herself

wearing a pink cowboy hat and riding a big brown horse during a family vacation in Montana. Every time she went into that bathroom, she saw herself happy, healthy, and enjoying life. In the kitchen, she placed pictures from her wedding. In the den, she hung other photos that portrayed her as happy, strong, healthy, and living life to the full.

She refused to dwell on the negative diagnosis; she didn't focus on her sick body. She looked out through her eyes of faith, and she saw herself the way she wanted to be. Externally, she was weak and feeble, but internally, on the inside in her heart and mind, she was strong, determined, and healthy. She refused to let that weak, defeated image take root. Instead, she insisted on seeing herself as the victor and not the victim. God, in His goodness, totally healed her. She became what she saw and to this day, more than twenty years later, she's as healthy as she can be. She could even get on that big horse again if she wanted to.

Friend, you, too, will produce what you keep in front of you. What kind of pictures have you placed on the walls of your mind? Do you see yourself getting stronger and healthier? Do you see yourself rising higher in life, accomplishing your dreams?

At my house, all around me I have pictures of things that inspire me. I like looking at beautiful sunsets. I like seeing eagles soaring in the sky. On my desk at home I have articles and letters people have written to me that have spoken faith into my life. I have pictures of our family when we were having fun together. I have a photograph of my dad and me going down the Amazon River. I like to put things in front of me that remind me of good times in the past, while expanding my vision for better experiences in the future.

In your home or office, put things up that build your faith. Put out photos that bring back good memories. Put pictures on the wall or on your desk that show you living life to the full. When you look at those pictures, don't just go by them and say, "I wish I was still that happy," or, "I wish I could still fit in that size dress," or, "I wish I still had that much hair."

No, let the image of victory take root. Get it on the inside. For many people, it helps to decorate their walls with Scripture verses. On the bathroom mirror or where you get dressed, place Scriptures such as "I can do all things through Christ" or "This is the day the Lord has made." On the refrigerator, remind yourself, "I am more than a conqueror," and "God always causes me to triumph." At the back door, place the truth "God's favor is surrounding me like a shield," or "Goodness and mercy are following me today." Put up things that build you up spiritually, keep you filled with faith, and help you to have a big vision for your life.

What kind of pictures have you placed on the walls of your mind?

Don't get stuck in a rut. Nothing may be going right for you today, but start seeing yourself rising out of it. See yourself overcoming that addiction. Envision yourself getting that promotion. Let that new image sink deep down inside you. To produce it on the outside, you must first picture it on the inside.

Today's Prayer for Your Best Life Now

Father, please help me to take down the negative pictures in my mind and to replace them with faith-filled photos, special memories, and images of hope for a tremendous future. I believe

You want me to enlarge my vision, to expand my horizons, and to engage in a life that will have eternal significance.

IT'S TIME TO ENLARGE YOUR VISION



SCRIPTURE READING FOR YOUR BEST LIFE NOW

Matthew 9:16-17

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

ISAIAH 43:19 NIV

EARLY IN OUR marriage, Victoria and I walked through a beautiful, partially constructed home in our neighborhood. After viewing the house, Victoria said, “Joel, one day we’re going to live in a home just like that!” Visions of our bank account and my income at the time filled my mind. It seemed impossible to me that we’d ever work our way up to a home like the one we had toured. I didn’t want to discourage my wife, but I didn’t want her to live with unrealistic dreams either, so I replied, “Victoria, I don’t see how we could ever afford something like that.”

But Victoria had much more faith than I did. Before long, by speaking words of faith and victory, she convinced me that we could live in an elegant home like the one we saw. I started believing that God could bring it to pass. We kept on believing, too, seeing ourselves living in that beautiful home, even while we continued living in our original home.

Several years later, we sold our property, and after a series of successful real estate deals, we were able to build a house just like the one we had viewed. Hard work, determination, diligence, and some sound business wisdom all affected the process. But I don’t believe it ever would have happened if Victoria had not talked me into enlarging my vision.

The Scripture says that God wants to pour out “His far and beyond favor” (see Ephesians 2:7). God wants this to be the best time of your life. But if you are going to receive this favor, you must enlarge your vision. You can’t go around thinking negative, defeated, limiting thoughts. *Well, I’ve gone as far as my career will allow. Or, I’ve had this problem for so long; I guess it’s just a part of me.*

God wants this to be the best time of your life.

To experience God’s immeasurable favor, you must start expecting His blessings. You must conceive it in your heart and mind before you can receive it. If you will make room for increase in your own thinking, God will bring those things to pass. But God will not pour fresh, creative ideas an

blessings into old attitudes.

~~Centuries ago, wine was stored in leather wineskins rather than bottles. But new wine always required new wineskins, since the leather lost its elasticity as it aged. If a person poured new wine into an old wineskin, the effervescence of the new wine would cause the container to burst and the wine would be lost.~~

When Jesus wanted to encourage His followers to enlarge their visions, He cautioned them, “You can’t put new wine into old wineskins” (see Matthew 9:17). Jesus was saying that you cannot have a larger life with restricted attitudes. That lesson is still relevant today. The good news is, God wants to fill your life with “new wine,” and He wants to give you new “wineskins,” new concepts, in which to contain it. But you must be willing to get rid of your old wineskins. Start thinking bigger. Enlarge your vision and get rid of the old negative mind-set that holds you back.

God says, “See, I am doing a new thing! . . . Do you not perceive it?” (Isaiah 43:19 NIV). Today, God is ready to do a new thing in your life. It pleases Him to promote you; He wants to increase you, and to give you more. But notice, God asked the question “Do you not perceive it?” In other words, are you making room for it in your own thinking? Are you believing for increase? Are you planning to excel at your job? Are you believing to be a more effective leader or a better parent?

It’s time to enlarge your vision.

Today’s Prayer for Your Best Life Now

Father, I am ready and willing to start believing You for more good things in my life. Help me get rid of those old attitudes that would limit my vision and cause Your work to be stifled in me. I will believe for better!

PROGRAM YOUR MIND FOR SUCCESS



SCRIPTURE READING FOR YOUR BEST LIFE NOW

Mark 8:31-38

Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

COLOSSIANS 3:2 NASB

PROGRAMMING YOUR MIND for success doesn't happen automatically. Each day, you must choose to expect good things to happen to you. When you get up in the morning, the first thing you should do is set your mind in the right direction. Say something such as "This is going to be a great day. God is directing my steps. His favor is surrounding me. Goodness and mercy are following me. I'm excited about today!" Start your day with faith and expectancy, and then go out anticipating good things. Expect circumstances to change in your favor. Expect people to go out of their way to help you. Expect to be at the right place at the right time.

Perhaps you are scheduled to give an important presentation, and you are really hoping to snag the big contract. Don't be surprised if you hear a voice whispering in your mind, *You don't have a chance. This is going to be a lousy day for you. Nothing good ever happens to you. You might as well not even get your hopes up.*

Don't listen to such lies! God *wants* you to get your hopes up. The Bible says, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for" (Hebrews 11:1 NKJV), and one definition of that sort of hope is "confident expectancy." We can confidently expect the favor of God. Start anticipating doors of opportunity to open for you. Expect to excel in your career. Count on rising above life's challenges.

God usually meets us at our level of expectancy. That's why, in many ways, your expectations will set the boundaries for your life. Jesus said, "According to your faith . . . be it done to you." One translation puts it simply, "Become what you believe" (Matthew 9:29 THE MESSAGE).

Your expectations will set the boundaries for your life.

Some people tend to expect the worst. Other people feel so overwhelmed by their troubles, they have difficulty believing that anything good could happen to them. You hear them saying things such as "Oh, I've got so many problems. My business is in trouble. My health is going downhill. How do

you expect me to get up and say this is going to be a good day, when I have this big mess on my hands?"

Friend, that's what faith is all about. Start believing that good things are coming your way, and they will!

What are you expecting in life? Are you anticipating good things or bad things, significance or mediocrity? Don't allow your circumstances or feelings to dull your enthusiasm for life and imprison you in a negative frame of mind. Starting today, expect things to change in your favor. Expect to experience the goodness of God!

Today's Prayer for Your Best Life Now

Thank You, Father, that You want me to get my hopes up, that You want me to start expecting good things to happen in my life, rather than worrying about what evil might come upon me. Where my faith is weak, please help me to grow stronger so I can trust You for more and have what my faith expects.

SEEING WITH YOUR SPIRITUAL EYES



SCRIPTURE READING FOR YOUR BEST LIFE NOW

2 Kings 2:8-15

Blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.

MATTHEW 13:16 NASB

IN MY BOOK *Your Best Life Now*, I tell the story of Brian, a man in his late forties who felt as though everything in his world was falling apart. One day, a friend who cared enough to level with Brian told him, “I love ya, buddy, but you need to quit focusing on all the negative; stop looking at everything you’ve lost and start looking at all you have left.” Brian’s friend challenged him, “Start believing that things are going to change for the better, not because you deserve it, but simply because God loves you that much!”

The friend’s words resonated with Brian, and he took the advice to heart. By incorporating some of the key principles I shared in *Your Best Life Now*, he established fresh patterns in his life. Brian reprogrammed his mind, breaking those old negative habits and developing an attitude of faith.

Within a matter of months, his situation began to turn around. He stopped focusing on what he didn’t have, on what he had lost, on his past mistakes and failures. Instead, he started dwelling on the goodness of God. He filled his mind with thoughts of hope, faith, and victory. He developed a fresh vision, expecting things to change for the better. And sure enough, that’s what happened!

Remember, your actions will follow your expectations. Low expectations will trap you in mediocrity; high expectations will motivate you and propel you to move forward in life. But raising your level of expectation is not a passive process. You must actively think positive thoughts of victory, thoughts of abundance, thoughts of favor, thoughts of hope; good, pure, excellent thoughts.

The Old Testament prophet Elijah experienced numerous miracles, and his understudy, Elisha, witnessed many of them. As Elijah neared the end of his life, he asked Elisha what he would like to have from his mentor.

“I want a double portion of your spirit,” Elisha replied boldly.

Interestingly, Elijah didn’t rebuke his underling. He simply responded to Elisha, “You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so” (2 Kings 2:10 NASB). In a literal sense, Elijah was telling Elisha, “If God allows you to see it, you can count on your request being granted”; but we can’t help but wonder if Elijah was also

saying, “If you can see it, then you can *be* it. If you can visualize it in your heart and mind, seeing it through the screen of God’s Word with your ‘spiritual eyes,’ it can become a reality in your life.”

God is extremely interested in what you see through your “spiritual eyes.” If you have a vision of victory for your life, you can rise to a new level. But as long as you have your head down, with your gaze on the ground instead of on God, you run the risk of moving in the wrong direction and missing out on the great things God wants to do in and through you. It’s a spiritual principle as well as a psychological fact: We move toward what we see in our minds.

We move toward what we see in our minds.

What do you see when you look into your future? Do you see yourself getting stronger, healthier, and happier? Is your life filled with God’s blessings, favor, and victory? You must begin to see it, if you truly hope for it to come to pass.

Today’s Prayer for Your Best Life Now

Lord, please help me to see with my “spiritual” eyes, seeing not merely those things that currently exist, but those things that can become realities in my life.

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