



“Joy In Life”

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“When you don’t know what to do... LOOK UP.”

Issue 69

“KICK ME”

It may be odd and painful to find an story called “Kick Me” in a *Joy In Life* story, but don’t worry help is on the way. Let me explain, many of you have either been involved in or have witnessed the infamous “Kick Me” prank. For those of you who were fortunate enough to have missed it, by doing something important, like studying, it goes something like this.

Step 1: Take a piece of paper and write the words “Kick Me” on it.

Step 2: Attach a piece of tape to it.

Step 3: Walk up to someone, pat them on the back and attach the note in a visible spot.

Step 4: Sit back and laugh hysterically as your classmates walk up behind the person and humiliate and anger them by kicking them in the back of the pants.

It’s juvenile, but at some point we grow up and stop doing it, or do we? The truth is that most people do not; many people go out of their way to inflict pain and humiliation, and ridicule others. This is not always done intentionally and many of you who have been hurt, rejected, and ridiculed subconsciously take the sign that was placed on your back and pass it on to others, “Hurting People, Hurt People.”

How can you stop inflicting pain on those around you? You must first stop it by learning not to inflict pain on yourself.

I recently spent several hours eavesdropping on people in everyday places, specifically a department store, a doctor’s office and a restaurant. In a short period of time I had three pages of “Kick Me” signs that people had pasted on their own backs. I wont put all of them down because it would take up a lot of space and time, but here are just a few.

“I look fat in this” – “I look ugly” – “I never have any money” – “I cant afford that” – “Nothing ever goes right” – “I cant do anything right” – “I’m so clumsy” – “I’m so depressed” – “I don’t feel good” – “My mother died of a heart attack and I probably will too” – “You kids are monsters” – “My husband doesn’t understand me” – “I’ll never be able to afford to send my kids to college” - “There are no good men out there” – “What an ugly day” – “I’m so depressed” –

These are just a few of the 41 different signs which people deliberately decided to post on their backs. I can only assume that these people were getting some kind of perverse pleasure by putting themselves down and limiting any future success, by making statements like that.

What makes the difference between success in life or failure? A good analogy would be *stew*, making a successful life is much like making a *stew*, all you do is take a bunch of items, throw them into a huge pot and then allow them to simmer for a long period of time. The thing about *stew* is that it comes out only as well as the ingredients that you put into the pot, and the length of time you allow the *stew* to simmer.

You can all relate to the *stew* analogy in that whatever you put in your pot (*your mind*) and allow to simmer for a long time will definitely determine the outcome and the taste and enjoyment of your *stew* (*your thoughts*).

For example, what happens if you fill your pot (*your mind*) with resentment, unforgiveness, past mistakes, criticism, loneliness, fear, insecurity, doubt, anxiety, and let them all simmer for a long time? Well, you get bad *stew* (*your thoughts*). That makes you feel even worse than before, because now you've spent all day shopping, chopping and simmering something that is not worth eating and no one wants it because it offers absolutely no taste or enjoyment. It is totally unsatisfying, and inedible, it's just trash.

On the other hand, what happens if you take that same pot (*your mind*) and fill it full of the very best ingredients such as, forgiveness, gratefulness, faith, appreciation, understanding, sweetness, kindness, goodness and then seasoned it with love and allowed it to simmer for a long time? Well, you would get a wonderful and delicious pot (*your mind*) of enjoyable *stew* (*your thoughts*). The aroma and the enticing smell of your *stew* (*your thoughts*) will draw others to you and encourage them to enjoy it with you.

BOTTOM LINE: Here it is, If you like spending your time eating bad *stew* alone or take pleasure in inviting others to eat bad *stew* with you, then fill your pot (*your mind*) with a bunch of junk and let it simmer for a long time. However, if you're tired of eating alone and not enjoying your *stew*, then start by filling your pot (*your mind*) with all of the wonderful and fresh blessings that each and every new day has to offer.

“IF YOU DON'T LIKE YOUR STEW, CHANGE THE INGREDIENTS”

SUMMING IT UP: Friends, I would say you would do your very best by filling your pot (*your mind*) with thoughts that are true, and noble, reputable and authentic, compelling and gracious-the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise and not things to curse. Stop giving permission to others to define who you are or what you will become. At any time, please feel free to remove the “*Kick Me*” sign from your back and forgive those who have kicked you, but most importantly stop kicking yourself, forgive yourself and begin to walk confidently down the hallways of life into a bright and promising tomorrow.

(ENJOY YOUR STEW)

Listen to Yourself!

When your eyelids open, what's the first thing you say? Is it a positive word? When you lay your head on the pillow, what's the last thing you say? During the day what do you talk about? Listen to yourself; words have the power to change everything around you. Wake up and say, “God loves me.” During the day, praise whenever possible. When you go to bed, be thankful to God for today.

WORDS HAVE CREATIVE POWER!

Death and life are in the power of the tongue. Proverbs 18:21

POSITIVE WORDS PRODUCE POSITIVE RESULTS

Our job is to let you know how much God loves you.

We would really appreciate your comments and prayer requests.

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