

# Stop Striving

**Striving is all about what you can do on your own**

**What do we strive for?**

- Success
- Achievement
- Perfection
- Excellence
- Greatness
- Glory
- Victory
- What we think is best for us
- Our dreams
- Our goals
- Something better than what we have
- Progress
- Happiness
- Fulfillment

What other things do you strive for?

These are positive outcomes, so why stop? It is when we try to do these things on our own that they become detrimental.

### **Striving breeds:**

- Jealousy
- Comparison
- Independence
- Isolation
- Pride
- Arrogance
- Greed
- Selfishness
- Alienation of those close to you
- Inability to trust others
- Discontentment
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Despair

*John 15:5 "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing."*

**WE CAN DO NOTHING WITHOUT GOD!**

What do you think it means that we can do nothing without God?

So why do you try to do things on your own before trusting God to help?

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Proverbs 3:5-6*

## Examples of people trying it on their own

- Abraham tried to have a child by his own means instead of trusting God. God brought Abraham the son that he was promised.
- Jonah did not follow God's direction to go to Nineveh and ended up in a whale. He eventually went to Nineveh and repentance brought that city into relationship with God.
- Saul was directed by God to fight the Philistines, yet he stood there day after day too scared to fight, yet David obeyed the Lord and found success against Goliath.
- Paul in the New Testament thought he was doing what God wanted in dealing with Christians, but once Jesus revealed to him the truth, he then became a missionary and won many souls for Christ
- The prodigal son went off on his own and realized that things were much better even for his father's servants, so he returned home.
- Peter, in an attempt to save Jesus from arrest, cut off a soldier's ear, but Jesus healed it and was arrested.
- Gideon chose an army to fight for the Lord, but God told him to reduce it. When it was down to 300 men, that is when God told them exactly what to do, and the victory was theirs
- Lot's wife knew not to turn back, but she did and was turned to a pillar of salt while the rest of the family was safe.

Time and time again all throughout the Bible we see examples of people going their own way and the results of it, and how trusting in the way that God shows you to go brings success and victory.

*"Trusting God does not mean believing he will do what you want, but rather believing he will do everything he knows is good." — Ken Sande*

Why do you think God does not give us everything we want in life?

## **Striving and Surviving VS. Trusting and Thriving**

- Striving puts you into survival mode; when you are trusting God, you shift into Thriving mode.

### **So, how do you go from Striving and Surviving to Trusting and Thriving?**

1. You need to trust God more than you trust yourself.
2. Believe that God wants good things for you and He has a plan.
3. Follow God's direction and instruction in your life. This comes from God's Word The Bible and from God speaking directly to you.
4. God created us to depend on Him, when we venture out on our own we are not equipped for it and find ourselves stressed, frustrated and anxious.
5. Surrender your plans to God.

*"For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. Jeremiah 29:11*

### **Results of Trusting God Completely and surrendering everything to him**

1. Contentment in your circumstance, no matter what it is, knowing that where you are now is not where you will end.
2. You are able to rest in the fact that God is in control over everything, and His plans for you are good.
3. You no longer feel the weight of our burdens because we have given them to God.
4. You experience less frustration, stress and anxiety because you are not carrying things instead you've given them over to God.
5. You are able to live in the moment not being overwhelmed with the circumstances in your life.

*Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28*

*Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you. 1 Peter 5:7*

What worries, cares or burdens are you weary from carrying?

What can you give to God today to make your load just a bit lighter?

*“Faith doesn't come in a bushel basket, Missy. It comes one step at a time. Decide to trust Him for one little thing today, and before you know it, you find out He's so trustworthy you be putting your whole life in His hands.” —*

***Lynn Austin***

## **Activation**

### **Do you truly trust God?**

We are constantly striving to better ourselves, our circumstances and our lives. Yet this is not how we were created to experience life. We were created to experience life dependent on God. So when we strive to achieve everything on our own without him, we find ourselves frustrated, anxious and stressed.

So many people have told me that it is hard to trust in God. They find it easier to trust themselves. My question for tonight is this: who is more worthy of trust, you or God? The answer every Christian is trained to say at this point is God. Do you really believe it though?

To truly trust God enough to surrender everything to Him, you need to KNOW and BELIEVE He is trustworthy. This only comes through relationship. So for the next 5 or so minutes I want you to ask God to show you why you can trust Him. It may be pictures He brings to your mind, or words, scriptures, or you may even hear a whisper. Listen and watch carefully. Write down what you hear or see.

### **3 Keys to Remember**

1. Striving to do things on our own without God can end up with us feeling frustrated, stressed and anxious.
2. Believing that God has a good plan for you is essential in trusting him! When you can put your complete trust in God and surrender, you will feel more secure and assured.
3. We find rest when we trust God with the outcome. we no longer feel the weight of everything on our shoulders and know he has taken it all on his.

*"Faith isn't the ability to believe long and far into the misty future. It's simply taking God at His Word and taking the next step." — Joni Erickson Tada*

*"The more you go with the flow of life and surrender the outcome to God, and the less you seek constant clarity, the more you will find those fabulous things start to show up in your life." — Mandy Hale*

*What fabulous things are you hoping to see in your future?*

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