

A selection from Interior Freedom, by Jacques Philippe

Chapter II: The Present Moment
Part VI of VIII

6. LIVE, INSTEAD OF WAITING TO LIVE

Our present life is always something good, for the Creator has endowed it with a blessing he will never cancel, even though sin has complicated things. “God saw that it was good,” the Book of Genesis tells us. For God, “seeing” means not merely taking note but actually conferring reality. This fundamental goodness of life is also expressed by Jesus: “Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?” (Matthew 6: 25).

Sometimes, though, it isn't worry that causes us to focus on the future, but the hope of something better or happier. It may be a very specific event, like a reunion with someone we love or coming home after a long, tiring journey. Or it may be less well-defined: the time when things will go better, circumstances will change, life will be more interesting. At present, we tell ourselves, we don't really have a life, but later we will “live life to the full.” There is nothing wrong with that, but it does contain a certain danger. We may spend our whole lives *waiting to live*. Thus we risk not fully accepting the reality of our present lives. Yet, what guarantee is there that we won't be disappointed when the long-awaited time arrives? Meanwhile we don't put our hearts sufficiently into today, and so miss graces we should be receiving. Let us live each moment to the full, not worrying about whether time is going quickly or slowly but welcoming everything given us moment by moment.

To live today well we also should remember that God only asks for one thing at a time, never two. It doesn't matter whether the job we have in hand is sweeping the kitchen floor or giving a speech to forty thousand people. We must to put our hearts into it, simply and calmly, and not try to solve more than one problem at a time. Even when what we're doing is genuinely trifling, it's a mistake to rush through it as though we felt we were wasting our time. If something, no matter how ordinary, needs to be done and is part of our lives, it's worth doing for its own sake, and worth putting our hearts into.

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