



# FAITH matters

July 10, 2023

*"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." – Jesus*  
*"The glory of God is man/woman fully alive." – Saint Iranaeus*

These quotes are two of my favorites. God created us in God's image. That means God intends for us to be whole people with lives that are full and meaningful.

How fully alive are we as human beings? Being fully human involves how we live each day physically, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. If we ignore an area or over-emphasize one of the areas over another, our lives will be out of balance.

Unfortunately, it is not easy to find and maintain that balance. Living life is like playing golf – one part of our 'game' or another is often out of whack. It takes focused attention and constant effort to make each essential element the best it can be. Everyone struggles to do it. We look back on our lives and see times when we were healthier or stronger in one area or another. We look forward and dream of someday 'getting it altogether.' The desire to be whole never leaves us and rightfully so – it is God-given.

I encourage you to spend a few moments reflecting on how fully alive you are today:

- *Physically:* Have you eaten nutritious food? Did you get enough rest? Have you exercised your body?
- *Emotionally:* What feelings are you experiencing? Are you content, anxious, enthused, depressed, hopeful or what? What is the source of those feelings? Have you expressed and received love?
- *Intellectually:* What thinking have you done? What reading have you done? Have you exchanged ideas with someone?
- *Spiritually:* Are you aware of God's presence in your life? Have you read the Bible? Have you prayed? Have you showed compassion? What has inspired you?

In other words, have you glorified God by being fully alive?

Summer is a good time to seek the balance God intends us to have. For one thing, hopefully, we have a little more free-time from our work or other obligations – if only because the days are longer! It would be good to use the gift of that extra leisure time to increase your overall well-being. I hope these practical suggestions will encourage you to join me in becoming more fully alive this summer:

- **Establish the habit of reading scripture *first thing every morning*.** Get up 15 minutes earlier if you need to. Start by reading a psalm (there are 150 to choose from – more than one per summer day) or read one or more of the gospels.
- **Go on a prayer walk.** The rhythm of walking is very conducive to prayerful contemplation. If it is in the morning, spend time contemplating the scripture you read. At other times, choose a phrase or a verse of scripture and repeat it silently. At other times, just allow your heart to be open to God.
- **Listen to your body and pay attention to what it really needs.** When it is hungry for food, feed it something nutritious. When it is tired, rest. If it is thirsty, drink water instead of something else. (That's one of the single most important things to do health-wise.)
- **Find a buddy to walk or work out with .** A friend and I walked for an hour every morning for 5 years. It was important physically plus very therapeutic emotionally.

May you have a fully alive summer!

~Written by Rev. Margie Osborn



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