

How to have a Great Day

every day

By Dave Batty

How did your day start this morning when you woke up? Was it the persistent buzz of your alarm clock that jarred you out of your sleep? Was it the blaring horn of a truck or the siren of an emergency vehicle?

So did it start as a great day for you? Or did this day start with problems? Were you refreshed or still exhausted?

After being awake for 5 minutes did you say, "I can see this is going to be a bad day!"

What would it take for you to be able to wake up and say, "I know this is going to be a great day!" Would you have to be at your favorite vacation spot?

Would it be a great day for you if you could wake up and have in the bank half the money Bill Gates has? Dream on—because that's all it will ever be for most of us—pure fantasy!

- ❖ **What part does God have in me having a great day?**
- ❖ **What is my part in making sure I have a great day?**
- ❖ **What part do problems have in robbing me of having a great day?**

So back in the real world—where you are living today—what will it take for you to start the day with the confidence that this will be a great day?

I believe the choice for you to have a great day is primarily in your own hands. It has little to do with how other people treat you today. It has little to do with how much or how

The power to have a great day is in your hands.

little money you have today. It has little to do with the problems that you are facing today.

Having a great day today has much to do with what is going on in your head and your heart. But it takes much more than positive thoughts to have a great day—it also takes specific actions—your actions.

Having a great day does not require you to possess a magic wand, and with one sweeping motion make everything beautiful. That's just more fantasy.

Having a great day is rooted in reality—your reality. There are a series of steps you can take which will make this a great day for you.

The power to choose

First, to have a great day today, you have to believe you have the power to choose. Your choices at the moment you wake up can have a major impact on the rest of your day. If you only react to what happens in your day, then you can easily believe your day is being controlled by others. But if you say, "I will choose how I live today," then you can begin to see the power that is in your hands today.

So what is the next step to having a great day? As soon as you wake up, make a choice to enter the presence of Jesus. This happens in your head, not by physically going to a special place of prayer.

Enter the presence of Jesus

This daily discipline of entering the presence of Jesus may seem simple, but for some of us, it will be a huge challenge. Why? Because we already have a routine on what we do every morning when we wake up.

Even before you get out of bed, or the very first thing you do after you set your feet on the floor—enter the presence of Jesus. Force your mind to focus on what Psalm 118:24 says, "This is the day the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it." (New Living Translation)

"Wait a minute!" you protest,

"I'm not a morning person! I need a cup of coffee before I can wake up."

God truly does have a sense of humor. He has given some of us the gift of being a morning person, and others the opposite.

It may be much easier for a morning person to start the day actually having real thoughts. But the reality is—we all have a brain. Your brain is a muscle. Some of us need to exercise it a little more. We need to get our brain in shape!

God's promises

To have a great day we have to (1) start with the belief that we have the power to choose, (2) enter the presence of Jesus, (3) begin to talk to God and ourselves about what God's promises are for this new day.

Psalm 118:24 says, "This is the day the Lord has made." That declares the reality that I can build on. This new day is not here by chance—God made it for me!

The writer of this Psalm goes on to describe the reaction he chooses—"We will rejoice and be

glad in it." It's a choice—the power is in your hands.

If you don't feel like rejoicing and being glad one minute after waking up—then you are beginning to grasp the reality of how difficult this challenge can be. Don't let your past determine your response this morning. Even if you have never done it before, start today—"I will rejoice and be glad in it."

You say, "I don't want to be a hypocrite—I don't feel happy when I wake up." You can give orders to yourself. You can tell yourself what to do—even if you don't feel like it.

The power of my actions

Having a great day is more than thinking your way into it. It also requires you to act your way into it.

What you may need to do is make a big sign which you put up in your bathroom so when you get up in the morning—you see the orders you have given yourself to use to begin this new day.

What should these new orders for the day include?

Start by quoting to yourself the promises of God.

"Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus."
(1 Thessalonians 5:18 New Living Translation)

It's not about feeling thankful—it's about choosing to respond with words. Say, "Thank you God, for this new day. Thank you for allowing me to wake up. Thank you for the rest. Thank you for the clear mind You have given me. Thank you for—" Just keep going with the things for which you are thankful.

Remember—your brain is a muscle. It may take a lot of exercise to get it in shape.

2 Chronicles 16:9 says, "The eyes of the LORD search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him." (New Living Translation) You can stand on this promise that God will strengthen you to meet all the challenges this day will bring.

Start the day by acknowledging that this is the day God has made, and you want His blessing on your life for this day. This is one step in the right direction for having a great day.

You also need to schedule time to read the Bible and pray each day. This daily discipline will help you start the day with God.

Fighting the depression

But it takes more than right thoughts and quoting a verse in the Bible to have a great day. We have to begin to walk in obedience to the commands God has given us in His word. We have to put to practice in our actions God's principles for living in the reality where He has placed us.

Some people face each new day

Overcoming the issues that rob us of having a great day

What can you do about those old negative habits that have been part of your life for so long?

You may need a strategy to keep from going back to those old ways. One young man made a list of 30 reasons why he did not want to go back to an old sin pattern in his life. Every morning when he got up, he would read this list out

loud to himself as a way of reminding himself that today, he was again committing himself to the new way of living God has for him, and reinforcing to himself that he was not going back to the old way.

Temptations do come—we have to make plans in advance to defeat the enemy.

with anxiety, or discouragement, or fear, or depression. The reality is you become what you feel. If you allow fear to rule your heart, you will react in your thoughts with fear, and soon your actions will follow along, and you will be acting in fear.

The same with depression. If you wake up feeling depressed and you start thinking from that point of view, it feeds the depression. You put on your glasses of depression, and everything you see in your new day is seen through the view of your depression. Instead of having a great day, you end up with another day of depression.

If you are going to break these negative cycles of depression, anxiety, fear, or anger, you have to choose to begin your day with a different pattern of thinking. You may have to force yourself to say, "This is the day that the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it. Right now I feel depressed, but I choose to reject that feeling, and force myself to concentrate on the wonderful blessings of God that He has put in my life today." And then begin to repeat those blessings, and act out 1 Thessalonians 5:18 which says, "Be thankful in all circumstances." (NLT)

The importance of problems

So what does a great day look like? It's not one which is problem free. Problems are a reality for each one of us. God uses problems to teach us the lessons He wants us to learn. If you react with anger and frustration every time a problem comes your way, you are missing the opportunity to have a great day.

A great day is one where you see a problem, welcome it, because you know God is going to give you the

strength and the wisdom to respond to it the way He wants you to. James 1:2-5 makes this very clear—problems provide an opportunity for God's power to be at work in our life.

Andre Crouch wrote a song "Through it all," where he proclaimed God's truth—"If I'd never had a problem, I wouldn't know that He could solve them. I'd never know what faith in God could do." Having

Begin each new day with a passion to do your best for God. Our world needs people with a passion to follow God.

a great day is seeing God at work in your life!

Having a great day comes from the realization that when I am weak, God will be there with me to give me strength. He will make up for all my weaknesses. Paul learned that lesson in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. This is one of God's promises for you that will help you have a great day.

Paul talked about lessons to be learned from other problems, when he pointed out that these problems came into his life so he would not rely on himself, but on God. (2 Corinthians 1:9)

By now some may be saying, "This all sounds good, but it doesn't work for me. I don't wake up with joy. My day starts hard, and gets worse as the day goes along."

If you are weak, it's OK to admit it. God already knows. Question is, what are you going to do about it? Are you going to stay weak for the rest of your life? Or are you

going to do something about it?

Nehemiah 8:10 says, "The joy of the Lord is your strength." (NIV) God has joy for you—His joy will give you strength. So where is the magic wand for instant joy?

That's the challenge. We have to build joy strength in our lives. It starts with saying, "Lord I believe. Help me with my unbelief. Help me with my weakness. I want to get stronger."

What you need to do is get in shape! If you have not been running at all, it is probably impossible for you to go out today and run 10 miles without stopping. Why? Your body is not in shape—you haven't practiced. But if you practice daily, in a few months you could likely do this.

Having a great day starts the night before

Having a great day is made a whole lot easier if you start the night before. First—get to bed early enough to get a good night's rest. Discipline yourself to go to bed in peace. Before you go to sleep, reflect on the promises of God. If something is troubling you, give it to God. He's going to be up all night anyway.

If you wake up during the night, don't count sheep. Instead, use it as a time to quietly pray to God. Begin with thanks—thanking Him for all He has done for you. As you spend time in His presence, you will make great use of your time. God will give you rest, so give all your cares to Him.

But you respond, "Dave, you don't know me. If you knew me, you wouldn't be saying that." Perhaps, but often the biggest block to achieving something is our own unbelief.

Developing joy strength takes time—it doesn't happen in one day. But you can choose to look at each situation in your day, and say, "Thank you Jesus, for allowing this in my life today. Thank you for being here to help me today." To begin with, it may be very difficult. But as you stand on the promises of God, and walk in obedience to Him, He will help you.

The more you discipline yourself to be thankful, the more you will develop joy strength in your life.

When you get in shape physically, you feel better, you feel more confident.

When you get in shape on the inside, with joy strength, and fix your eyes on following Jesus throughout the day, you will feel better. But more important than your feelings, you will be doing better.

Ephesians 2:10 says, "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (NIV) As you go through the day, doing what God wants you to do, you can have the confidence that your life is worth living, because you are doing what God created you to do.

At the end of the day, you can put your head on the pillow and reflect on the day with a new sense of peace. You can end the day with the same promise you started with: "This is the day the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it."

How to have a great day every day Discussion Guide

The following questions can be used for your personal reflection on this topic, or it can be used as a guide for a group discussion. If this is used in a group setting, please understand that you are not required to disclose the specific details of past sins, failures, or personal experiences.

1. On a scale of 1-10, what kind of a grade would you give yourself on how you typically start your day? _____
10 = a really great start to a great day 1 = a difficult start
Explain your choice.
2. Read Psalm 118:24. How big a challenge is it for you to start your day with joy?
3. Read Psalm 59:16. Do you have a regular time for personal devotions (prayer and Bible reading) each day? Typically when do you do this? In the morning? In the evening?
4. How often do you find yourself praying to God about your daily activities? How easy or hard is it for you to connect with God about your daily routine activities?
5. As you reflect on your life for the past 1-2 years, how often would you say you have a great day?
 Daily 1 day a month
 More than 1 day a week Less than 1 day a month
 1 day a week Rarely/never
6. Read James 1:2-5 and 2 Corinthians 1:9. What impact do problems have on ruining your day?



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