

# We Are Exactly Where We Are Supposed to Be

Philippians 4:12-13

12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13 I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

Many of us, perhaps, most of us, have at least a grain – an irritating speck - of discontentment in our hearts. We question; we look back over our lives and measure how far we've come and how far we have yet to go to reach some point that we have constructed for our attainment. And in these comparisons we sometimes berate ourselves that we have done enough; we have gotten far enough; we aren't there yet and we aren't good enough.

What we haven't grasped is that life is a journey. It's not like getting into a car and going somewhere. Our journey is not about going anywhere; it is about seeing, discerning, awaking, and becoming aware. Jesus knew this was important and many of his parables are about seeing and finding: the parable of the lost coin, the lost sheep, the lost son; finding the treasure. He references lamps as metaphors for clarity of vision and awareness.

Christ is constantly guiding us, speaking to us, but we are not aware enough to hear the words and feel the guidance. God's presence, love, strength, light, and peace surround us at all times yet we are often not awake enough to experience all the joy that awaits us.

Our journey to the awareness of Christ, and therefore all the promises of God is fraught with challenges – as it must be. Without the challenges, lessons, strength and trust that we develop along our journey we cannot recognize, appreciate, or become aware of that we are a Child of God.

We may not like where we are, but we are exactly where we are supposed to be. We are a Child of God and a Child of Man, just like Jesus, and we are gradually becoming aware of our spiritual nature and how it fits with living in a physical world.

Our difficulties are present because we are not yet aware enough to realize that they really are not difficulties at all. Things just are: they aren't good, they aren't bad. They just are, and they belong. They are part of this world and a part of us.

We are infinitely complex and comprised of awesomely beautiful light and miserable darkness. It is our awareness of the Light that guides our choices toward what is good.

But we are not saints yet; at least I am not yet St. Patrick of the Jolly Clan. We are exactly where we are supposed to be facing the obstacles and challenges we need, experiencing the joys and blessings we need. God doesn't throw challenges at us; they develop from our choices, and God will use the results of our choices as teaching tools – to help us remember that there is another choice available.

The suffering and pain we experience can be friendly reminders that we aren't done yet; our thinking is not clear yet; our choices, reactions, and behaviors are not yet finely tuned enough...yet.

We are supposed to feel tired; we are supposed to feel defeated and stuck, because these are temporary situations awaiting our awareness to grow. Sometimes the situation will change as we become more aware of our choices and our pain is relieved.

At other times, our awareness is great enough that even if the situation doesn't change our feelings and reactions to the situation change so that the pain is relieved.

Every little step we take, every stumble and graceful move we make is part of our journey. We are not failing; we are not unworthy. Every painful moment breaks us down, but then grow stronger; just like a muscle. We are growing, succeeding, transforming, learning, becoming, awakening, and making the appropriate changes necessary at our own pace.

Christ encourages us to go within for guidance first, then to our worldly teachers. In this manner, we learn to trust our spiritual natures.

The journey is all about seeing rightly. But sometimes our thinking blocks our vision. We can easily and unknowingly fall into mind traps that impedes our awareness.

One is called Catastrophizing. This is where we interpret everything in the darkest, most negative way possible. The lump we feel is definitely cancer. The boss just walked by without smiling. I must be getting fired. Mary didn't respond to a question I asked her. She must be leaving me. It doesn't matter that I asked her the question for the other room and that she was watching the television. When we are in this mindset everything is a catastrophe, and this thinking leads to depression, stress, anxiety, and panic.

I think we've all done this at some point in our lives. It is a mental trap that hinders our spiritual wakefulness and steals our joy.

Another is