

Become a Better You

7 Keys to Improving Your Life Every Day

Keep Pressing Forward

You have made us for yourself, Lord,
and our **hearts** are **restless** until they rest in you.

--St. Augustine, 354-430 CE

I'm **pressing on** to the higher calling of my Lord.

--Bob Dylan

Don't stop thinking about tomorrow,
Don't stop, it'll soon be here
It'll be **better than before**
Yesterday's gone, yesterday's gone.

--Christine McVie

Christ in you the **hope** of **glory**.

--Colossians 1:26-27

I'm successful, I'm powerful, I'm happy, I'm handsome.

--Evan Baxter

The most basic paradox of [hope] is that it increases as the situation grows more desperate.
Perhaps a better way to put it is that **hope** does not live from objective evidences.

It **gains strength as evidence piles up against it**.

--Edward Farley

I knew that what I was called to do was to **plant seeds of hope in people's hearts...**

I feel like **my message** is to **let people know** that **God is a good God**,
that he's **on their side**. And that no matter where they are in life,
no matter what's happened that he's still **got a great plan for them**.

--Joel Osteen

- **Recap & Report** (questions, books, name tags, Brian Regan, under pressure)
 - Last week
 - Brian Regan, lost luggage, & the essentials
 - Sum of Better You & the last class
 - Where I'm at/Why I'm here (2 questions in the new year) & my friend Steve
 - Joel's key insights:
 - **God** is with us, for us, and **in us** as the power and glory of life abundant (God's part)
 - We have a **hope** that can amplify and activate the abundant life (our part)
 - Abraham (anything wonderful) & Elisha (eyes to see more for us)
 - Hope conquering cynical laughter and blind fear
 - Hopes for 2008 (your homework in an envelope)
 - Hope, Life, Power, & Glory

- **JOEL’S NUTSHELL POINT – KEEP PRESSING FORWARD:**

*God has placed in all of us both a longing for divinity (to be like God) and the very things we need to live the abundant life. As we **recognize** this deep truth and **trust** God, we undo the lies and destructive life patterns in our lineage that keep us from God’s best—even as our new attitudes and choices accumulate to create a generational blessing. God’s power and gifts are present in us and are activated in our lives by faith that recognizes God’s goodness, receives God’s mercy, and **expects God’s best**. We are “**pressing on** to the higher calling of our Lord!”*

- Hope is “positive expectation in the face of negative evidences”

Reading Schedule

Week One January 13	<i>Introduction</i>
Week Two January 20	<i>Keep Pressing Forward</i> Chapters 1-6
Week Three January 27	<i>Be Positive Toward Yourself</i> Chapters 7-10
Week Four February 3	<i>Develop Better Relationships</i> Chapters 11-15
Week Five February 10	<i>Form Better Habits</i> Chapters 16-19
Week Six February 17	<i>Embrace the Place Where You Are</i> Chapters 20-24
Week Seven February 24	<i>Develop Your Inner Life</i> Chapters 25-27
Week Eight March 2 (if necessary)	<i>Stay Passionate About Life</i> Chapters 28-31

More Summary detail on the first section:

Chapter 1: Stretching to the Next Level

God has placed a desire for more, for a better life *and* the gifts, treasures, power, potential, promises, presence, and possibilities to achieve the abundant life within us all (God's part).

When we reject the lies of the enemy and recognize and focus on the promised good things that God is doing in us, we can trust God and expect blessings and favor—a better life—to materialize (the promise is activated by acknowledgment of God's goodness and trusting expectation for God's blessings).

Chapter 2: Give Your Dreams a New Beginning

Letting go of the past and making room for the new thing that God is doing starts in our thinking (quit dwelling on the past and encourage yourself, speaking positive words). "...God wants to restore you, to encourage you, to fill you with His hope. He wants to resurrect your dreams. He wants to do a new thing" (22). We let go by (1) disciplining our thoughts and words (quit dwelling on the past); (2) dwelling in a positive environment conducive to growth (no negative people). "And remember, God is on your side. He loves you. He's for you" (31).

Chapter 3: The Power of Your Bloodline

Focus on and recognize what God has placed within you (spiritual DNA). You are made in the image of God. You can live the abundant life now by "tapping into God's power inside of you" (41). Christ in you is the hope of glory. You have the same power in you that raised Christ from the dead (see Ephesian's passage from week one handout)—the power to let go, get up, and stand strong. God with us and for us also means God in us powerfully [the power in you greater than the curse—unleashed by faith and hope]. So the recognition, affirmation, and declaration of God's image/power/DNA, goodness, and promise of life **in us** breaks the curse and unleashes blessings.

Chapter 4: Breaking Free from the Strongholds of Your Past

We are free to choose life under the blessing (or the curse). While generational curses/strongholds/negative life-style patterns of behavior and experience under the curse form in our lineage, God's power in the present and future (power of the promise of life) means more than the patterns of the past. Our "generational choice" through God's indwelling power is stronger than the strongholds and curses we have inherited.

Chapter 5: The Generational Blessing

Our choices accumulate and form our heart and mindset creating "Equity" in our generational account. We can store blessings and have an enduring house, passing on a pattern of well-being to our children and our children's children.

Chapter 6: Discovering Your Destiny

Fulfill your destiny by living your calling (where your passions and dreams, pleasure and the world's need meet (deep gladness/deep need come together). God's purpose for you is revealed where your gift "makes room for you."