

# We're Living For Jesus

1 Corinthians 8:6

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There is something in chocolate that is satisfying and leaves us craving more. There is something in cigarettes and e-cigarettes that is satisfying and leaves us craving more. There is something in marijuana that is satisfying and leaves us craving more. That is true of cocaine, heroin, oxycontin. This can be said about beer, wine, vodka, bourbon, and whiskey. Many people, lots of people seek out anyone of these things to help with their distress, their discouragement, their pain, their emptiness. We know this.

I'm using these known addictive items to make a point. Whatever it is, people are looking for something to help them through their present situation, a past trauma, or a future anxiety. Whatever they take it becomes an idol.

We can all say that we take something to get through a situation, a trauma, or an anxiety. Whatever the situation, we take whatever. Whatever might be playing in a sport or watching a sport. Whatever might be a hobby, a craft, or buying a craft. Everybody deals with their daily situations, a trauma, or an anxiety in whatever way they can.

Some people attack, attack, attack. Others retreat, retreat, retreat. Then there are those who ignore, ignore, ignore, followed by procrastination, putting it off, and making excuses. Have I left out your whatever coping mechanism, stress relief, problem solver? Whatever it is you've got one for whatever the situation.

I have to tell myself, and I'm telling you this morning, that whatever you are going through, let Jesus go through it with you. Whatever you are using to cope with your situation, let Jesus be the whatever as you cope with it.

***1 Corinthians 8:6 (NLT) But for us, There is one God, the Father, by whom all things were created, and for whom we live. And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were created, and through whom we live.***

**Sinners may have their idols, but we live for Jesus.** Everybody is living for something. The ancient people of Corinth were worshiping idols. The food they offered as a sacrifice was eaten as they worshiped or sold in the open air market. Anyone who bought meat at the market may not know if the meat had been offered to an idol. Sinners and believers could be eating meat that was used as an act of worship to an idol. Sinners didn't care whether they were eating sacrificial meat. Followers of Jesus might be concerned that they were eating meat that had been given as worship to an idol. Some believers might feel that if they ate that meat they were part of that idol worship. They would consider their activity as a sin against Jesus. No follower of Jesus would want to sin against Him.

See the dilemma? So, scripture says there is only one God and Lord. Therefore, idols are nothing. They are in fact only wood or metal or stone. Which really means the meat is only meat. Eating it would not be a sin. It's not what we eat that makes us a sinner, it's what we worship that determines if we are sinners or followers of Jesus.

Worshiping an idol makes a person a sinner. Worshiping Jesus demonstrates our love for Him. If we aren't living for Jesus then it's all very empty. Worship includes our acts of praise and thanks. Worship includes our acts of kindness and mercy toward others. Worship includes our thoughts, ideas, beliefs, and attitudes.

Scripture has made it clear that a person who hates their neighbor is not following the commands of Jesus. The person who thinks about another person's spouse with lust is not living for Jesus. The individual who is plotting revenge isn't letting Jesus live through their life.

Whatever is filling our minds, capturing our emotions, consuming our energy has the potential to be unfaithful to Jesus. Jesus is either all consuming in our lives or He isn't. There cannot be one or the other. Money, possessions, sports, entertainment, hatred, revenge, judgment, laziness or whatever keeps Jesus from living through you is a sin. Ouch! That includes everything, right? That could be whatever, right?

What is our hope? Jesus is our hope. Jesus is our salvation. Jesus is our peace and the power to overcome whatever. Everything else is emptiness. Whatever comes between you and Jesus is useless.

**We might decide that we're the one god, but we exist for Jesus.** We like to think that the sun revolves around us. I've mentioned this before that sin is best described as selfishness. Since everything that was created by Jesus exists for Jesus, than He is the center of all things. Jesus is the only one who gives life. When we put ourselves in a place that is more important than Jesus we are selfish. Jesus is still the center of life, the purpose for life.

You might think that I'm making a big deal about nothing. But we would not exist if not for Jesus. We live and breathe as a result of Jesus' desires. He loves us and has created us because He wants us to have life.

We have a gazillion desires throughout each day. But we can't create anything to satisfy those desires. We demand that our desires be met. We view ourselves as the reason for our own existence. We want Jesus to exist to meet our needs.

There are two simple words in 1 Corinthians 8:6 – for and through. Both words point to Jesus. Everything Jesus created was for Him. Our minds, regardless of the century in which we live, can't comprehend anything that isn't for us. We go to the grocery for us. We have a car for us. We participate in sports for us. Our hobbies are for us. Our house is for us. Our job is for us.

We work to put a roof over our heads, clothes on our backs, and food on the table. We have progressed as a culture that we now work to fulfill our inner needs. Those inner desires have become the most important rule in our lives. It has become our right to fulfill every inner desire. I'm saying that is a bad thing. We are a society that is living for our pleasure and satisfaction first and foremost. That is just the opposite of why Jesus created us.

Every person was created so that Jesus could live through that person. Jesus doesn't exist for us. We exist for Jesus. Your existence is for the sole purpose of Jesus living through you.

I sound like a lunatic or a fanatic, right? The world must think I'm crazy. Jesus lived His life as person for His Father. Look at Jesus' life, and you know I'm right. The Father lived through Jesus. Pay

attention to every word and action of Jesus. It's obvious He was living for someone other than Himself. Clearly the Father was living through Jesus in all that happened.

**When Jesus is living through us, He turns our whatevers to glory.** We have a lot of whatevers. I mentioned earlier that whatever our situation that is a whatever. The ways we live through our situations is whatever.

Life happens and it's beyond our control, but how we live through whatever happens is important. I must confess that I am mostly just plowing through my daily life. This confession is that I live to get through whatever is happening doing whatever it takes to make to the next moment. When it's over, I'm looking to recuperate from whatever just happened.

You should make that same confession. We're the same. We're living through whatever happens only to recuperate from whatever happened. We're not in control, even though we tell ourselves that we are. We are too often like pollen being blown around by the wind, being an irritant to somebody. That's cynical. Sorry for going so dark. But it is dark if we're not in control and merely surviving. That is pitiful.

Whatever happens we need Jesus to live through it. We need the power of Jesus guiding our minds, strengthening our bodies, and encouraging our spirit. Maybe you don't, but I know that I do. I've become aware that to face whatever, by whatever power I have is empty and exhausting. If my life is merely surviving the whatevers of each day only to stare at a screen or put something in my body, then what am I doing? Why do I spend so much time and energy only to survive? Surviving is simply not enough.

But the power of Jesus working through me physically, emotionally, and spiritually changes everything. I don't have to rely on my power, my wisdom, my discernment. I'm able to rely on Jesus. Jesus is more than enough. We need Jesus to be present with us as we encounter whatever happens to us and around us.

Life without Jesus is lonely. Going through whatever, by whatever I think is right, feels isolated. Even though there are times I think about becoming a hermit, I realize I don't want to be alone.

Can you hear Jesus saying, "Well done good and faithful servant"? When we allow Jesus to be present through whatever is happening we hear His encouragement, we see His guiding hand, we are able to follow Him.

The presence of Jesus in your life is like getting out of the boat on walking on the water in the middle of the storm. Whatever is happening you know that Jesus is with you, within an arms length, ready to calm the storm. Whatever is no longer the issue, trusting Jesus has become the issue.

**In whatever way you center your life on you, let Jesus live through all your whatevers.** Jesus is present whatever is happening in your life, so acknowledge Him with a word of thanks. That's how we let Him live through us. For all those people who love Jesus, giving thanks opens the door for Jesus to work through our lives. It's not complicated. Giving thanks to Jesus for whatever is happening empowers you through to live through it.

As a result you no longer need whatever as whatever happens. Those ways of relieving your stress, or overcoming your fear, or hiding from whatever are irrelevant. Jesus is with you, going through whatever with you. Every believer needs to acknowledge Jesus is with them.

I know this from my personal experience. When I don't acknowledge Jesus is with me, then I've fallen back to whatever I once used to cope with my situation. In my personal experience I've come use these sentences. "Thank you Jesus. Jesus I give you... whatever."

As I do this I am letting go of my whatever situation by giving it to Jesus. I am letting Jesus decide to do whatever He decides is necessary. I'm no longer trying to be in control. I'm no longer seeking my outcome, I'm letting Jesus be the Lord over the situation.

The power of Jesus is able to be at work through whatever when you acknowledge He's with you. Here's my problem as a believer. It's your problem also. We don't acknowledge that Jesus is with us. We keep trying to do it our way. Whatever it is that doesn't work. Call upon Jesus.

When you feel overwhelmed, call out to Jesus with thanks giving. When you see the crisis, call out to Jesus with thanks giving. When fear rises up within you, call out to Jesus with thanks giving. As you become bored, call out to Jesus with thanks giving. While you are falling apart, call out to Jesus with thanks giving.

You exist so that Jesus can live through you. He can't live through you unless you call out His name: Jesus. Right now, close your eyes and bow your heads. Let's call out to Jesus. "Jesus, thank you. We are thankful that you are the God who created us. We give you thanks for being with us every moment of every day. We trust you to save us when we have been unfaithful. We believe that you will make us faithful people. Amen."