

RESUMING LIFE AFTER A CAPTIVITY

Building a Better Life
Rick Warren

CAPTIVITY: “The condition of having your freedom limited involuntarily. Being confined, trapped, restricted or controlled against your will.”

The Opposite: Emancipation, freedom, independence, liberty, choice

HOW TO RESUME LIFE SUCCESSFULLY

1. EXPECT

“All who had returned from captivity (in Babylon) began to work on rebuilding the Temple of God... When the builders finished laying the foundation...everyone sang with thanksgiving to God and shouted, ‘Praise the Lord! The foundation of his Temple has been laid!’ BUT many of the older people, including the priests and family leaders who had seen and remembered the first Temple wept with sadness when they saw the new foundation. But because everyone made so much noise that it could be heard far away, no one could tell the difference between the joyful shouting and the sad crying, and it was all mingled together.” Ezra 3:8-13 (NCV)

2. EXTRACT

“You have experienced many things. Were all those experiences wasted? I hope not!” Galatians 3:4 (ICB)

“Did you go through this whole painful learning process for nothing? It is not yet a total loss, but it certainly will be if you keep this up!” Galatians 3:4 (The Message)

QUESTIONS: What have I LEARNED about: What matters most and what doesn't matter? . . . My weaknesses? . . . My relationships? . . . The pace of my life? . . . About God? . . . The world? . . . How I use my time? . . . About money? . . . About happiness?

3. EVALUATE

“This is what the Lord Almighty wants you to do: Take a good, hard look at your life. Think it over! You've spent a lot of money, but you haven't much to show for it. You keep filling your plates, but you never get filled up! You keep drinking but you're always thirsty. You put on layers of clothes, but you can't get warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it! So give serious thought to your ways!”

Haggai 1:5-7 (The Message/NIV)

“Zeal without knowledge is not a good thing; a person who moves too quickly may go the wrong way.” Proverbs 19:2 (NLT)

4. ENGAGE

God: “At the appointed time that I have decided, everything I've planned will happen. You can trust what I say about the future, but it won't happen all at once. It may seem that it's taking a long time, but be patient and keep on waiting, because the vision will surely happen!” Habakkuk 2:3 (CEV)

God told the Israelites: “I'm NOT going to get rid of all your enemies in a single year, because the land would then be deserted and unmanaged, and wild animals would multiply quickly beyond your control. So, instead, I will drive them out slowly, little by little, until you've grown strong enough to take full possession of your land!”

Exodus 23:29-30

5. ELIMINATE

“An intelligent person aims at wise action, but a fool starts off in many directions.” Proverbs 17:24 (GNT)

Jesus: “My dear friend Martha! You worry and fuss over so many different little things. But really, only one thing is essential, and Mary has selected it.” Luke 10:41-42 (GNT)

6. EMBRACE

“The Lord says, ‘Forget the former things, and do not dwell on the past. Instead, look at the new things I am going to do. They are already starting to happen. Can you SEE what I've begun to do?’” Isaiah 43:18-19 (NCV)

“Even though your land was unused and abandoned, it will soon be too small for all the new people – more people than you know what to do with! Your captivity will seem far away! And the new generation born in exile will return and say, ‘We need more room! It's crowded here!’” Isaiah 49:19-20 (NLT/The Message)

7. ENTRUST

“The Scriptures show us that the whole world is held captive by sin. We're ALL prisoners to sin's powerful control. The only way to freedom is through faith in the promise of Jesus Christ. That freedom is given to ALL who believe in Jesus. Until faith in Christ came, we were all held captive under the judgment of God's Law. We were locked up until God revealed the way to freedom through faith.” Galatians 3:22-23

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