

14. LIVING NOW

The Present Moment

1. We come from the past,
and are headed to the future,
but we do not belong in either place.
We only truly live in each moment
between the past and the future.
Each one of those moments
contains all the riches of God's kingdom.

2. As we walk our spiritual journey,
every single step we take
is being in the present moment.
Not the last step we took,
or the one we are about to take,
but the one right now.
Everything real that happens to us
happens in the present moment.

3. Our connection with God
only occurs in the present.
God's love can only be shared
in the present moment.
Our presence in the present moment
links us into the field of all possibilities;
it's where we connect with others,
allowing our prayer power to flow out,

and where we receive
the flow of love and blessings.
The precious present is ours.

4. Living in the present moment
does not mean we forget the past
or ignore the future.
What it means is that we use
the past and the future
in the proper way.
They can become debilitating baggage
or benevolent gifts.

5. Our past experiences are teachers,
and we must learn from them.
But we avoid dwelling on them
to the point that they interfere
with our present moment.

6. Planning for the future is helpful,
but living there is not.
So, plan if we must,
but come back home
to the present moment.
The steps to the future
all happen in the present moment,
one at a time.
Now is when the future is made.

A Common Rule for Monastics

7. To live in the present moment,
our minds, bodies, and spirits
must all be there first.
We become the observer of our thoughts
and how we're spending our time.
We become more aware
of the physical world around us –
we use our five senses with intention.

8. This awareness is helped by
paying attention to our own breathing,
or feeling the movement as we walk,
or watching the flight of a bird,
or seeing all the shades of a color
where before we thought we saw only one.
Listen for the voice of God in the breeze,
and in the words of another person.
Feel the grass or the leaf of a plant.
Treat objects as gifts of God.
Look at people as temples of God.
Consider each of your movements as a
sacrament to God.

9. Present moment awareness
is the key to living a full life.
It's the essence of being.
The present moment
is the only period of time
when we're truly conscious.

10. To discover the Kingdom
is the easiest thing in the world
because the Kingdom is all around us
and within us.
But it is difficult to possess,
because it only exists
in the present moment,
and because to possess it
means we must possess nothing else.
The more we let go of ourselves,
the more we come to realize this.
Let us leave the past to God's mercy,
and the future to God's providence,
and seek God's Kingdom in the Now.

*"What does it matter, Lord, if the future is bleak! I
cannot pray for tomorrow's needs...keep my heart
pure, keep me in your shade, just for today."*

- St. Therese of Lisieux