

STUDY GUIDE

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR

JOYCE MEYER

BLESSED

IN THE

MESS

HOW TO EXPERIENCE  
GOD'S GOODNESS  
IN THE MIDST OF LIFE'S PAIN

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IN THE MIDST OF LIFE'S PAIN

JOYCE MEYER



NEW YORK • NASHVILLE

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## INTRODUCTION

If you've lived long at all, you know that life isn't always easy. Thankfully, we do experience good times, but we also have our share of pain and difficulty. God does not promise us a trouble-free existence. In fact, His Word teaches us to expect the opposite. Jesus says in John 16:33, "In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (NKJV). In addition to this clear warning that we will certainly face troubles, the Bible is filled with instructions on how to handle ourselves when difficulty does come our way.

I refer to the hurts we deal with and the problems people face as our "messes." I often hear people say, "My life is a mess," or "This situation is a mess." What they mean is that life has become difficult, painful, or confusing. As Jesus promised, no one is immune to trials and tribulations.

The good news is that we can be blessed in the midst of our mess. We don't have to wait for things to get better. Right in the middle of our pain, in our most discouraging moments, when situations seem to be at their worst, we can experience God's goodness and His blessings.

This study guide, which accompanies the book *Blessed in the Mess*, is designed to help you apply the lessons of the book to your individual circumstances and your personal life. I have lived through many messes, starting when I was just a child. And I have seen God's faithfulness, received His blessings, and experienced His redemption in every situation.

My prayer for you in the midst of whatever mess you are going through is that *Blessed in the Mess* and this companion study guide will help you

navigate the pain and problems in your life in such a way that God's blessings and the good things He does in you and through you as you walk through your trials will far outweigh the negatives of your situation.

Keep praying, keep hoping, remain positive, be patient, and stay close to God, and you'll be blessed in the midst of your mess.

# PART 1

## God Can Bless Your Mess

## CHAPTER 1

# The Double Blessing

1. When you think about your “mess,” meaning the pain you feel right now or the problems you are facing, what situation comes to mind?
2. I am thankful that God has allowed the story of my mess—sexual abuse as a child and other difficulties—to help other people. What is your story?
3. How do you think your story could help other people?
4. When people intend to hurt us or cause us trouble, God can use it for good (Genesis 50:20). How have you seen Him do this in your life or in a situation involving someone around you?
5. In my story, I shared about how I felt abandoned because my mother and other relatives did not take action when I needed their help. Read Psalm 82:3 and Proverbs 31:8. What does the Bible teach us as believers to do in situations like this?

## God Comes on the Scene

1. Take a moment to think about your salvation experience. What were the circumstances?
2. How has your personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ made a difference in your life?

3. At what point in your life did you first begin to sense God drawing you to Him? Were you very young, or did it happen later? How did He make Himself known to you and begin to draw your heart toward Him?
4. Before you received Jesus as your Lord and Savior, did you see yourself as a sinner? If so, what made you realize that?
5. Perhaps you have noticed the effects or consequences of sin in your life or in someone else's. What are some examples of this?
6. Have there been difficult situations in your life that God didn't get you out of right away? How has your walk with God grown closer as a result of the suffering you've endured?
7. According to Hebrews 5:8–9, what did suffering accomplish in the life of Jesus?
8. How can your suffering equip you to help someone else?
9. Do you ever keep people at a distance due to fear of getting hurt? After reading that we need other people and we aren't created to be alone, what are some things you can do to be more available and engaged in relationships?
10. How could you help people around you who struggle to connect in relationships and tend to keep others at a distance?
11. Why does deciding not to need other people not work?

### God Changes People's Hearts

1. Have you ever made mistakes similar to the ones Hannah made? What happened?
2. How has God changed your heart in this situation?
3. Why is jumping to conclusions about people before getting to know them or understanding their circumstances a mistake?

4. How could you better discern God's will about a relationship when you meet someone new? How would prayer and knowing God's Word help you do this?
5. What can you learn from Hannah's story? What were some signs in her thoughts and behavior that showed God had changed her heart?
6. Would you be willing to pray as Hannah did, that God's will be done, even if you dislike someone? Why or why not?
7. Do you feel there are any relationships in your life where a change of heart may be needed? Ask God to show you and help you make the adjustments you need to make.

### A Bad Relationship That Never Improved

1. Think about the ways you have observed this statement to be true in your life or in a situation you have observed and describe them: "Desperate people do not make good decisions."
2. Consider Isaiah 45:3. How has God given you treasures in darkness?
3. Can you see any signs of God's provision and His hand at work in my situation? What were they?
4. How does the story of my son David encourage you?
5. Have you or anyone you know made a bad decision out of desperation? What were the circumstances and results?
6. What are some ways to protect yourself from pursuing relationships with people who will likely have a negative influence on you?

## Blessed after a Mess

1. Have you ever felt God calling you to do something that seemed impossible? How did you respond?
2. Do you sense God leading you to do something impossible right now? If so, how does my story encourage you?
3. God clearly worked in my life and developed my faith. How has He done this for you?
4. Why do you think that learning to be under authority before we accept positions of authority over others is important?
5. Have you ever lacked anything or desperately wanted something and later received it? How did the season of lack cause you to appreciate it more when you finally got it?
6. Is there anything you're still praying for and waiting to receive? How can my story encourage you as you wait?
7. Have you ever felt you lacked the background or skills to do something great for God? How does 1 Corinthians 1:26–31 encourage you?
8. Do you need an increased hunger and love for God's Word? Pray now and ask God for it. This is a prayer He loves to answer.
9. Have you ever felt you didn't know how to give or receive love? How can receiving God's love help you begin?
10. Romans 8:28 teaches us that "all things work together for good" in the lives of those who love God and are called according to His purpose (NKJV). How have the bad things that have happened to you worked together for good in your life?
11. Saint Augustine said, "Trials come to prove and improve us." How have you seen this statement ring true in your life or the lives of others?

## The Promise That Changed My Life

1. What does it mean to receive a “double portion”? How does Isaiah 61:7 give you the hope of restoration for what you’ve suffered?
2. Ask God for a double portion by praying this prayer or a similar one in your own words: “God, please give me a double portion, along with joy, for the hurt and shame I suffered when \_\_\_\_\_.”
3. Define what *recompense* means. How does this work hand in hand with God’s justice?
4. Do you feel you are often waiting for the next bad thing to happen? How can you renew your mind according to God’s Word and begin to live with the expectation that He will do good things for you?
5. Why is hope a powerful motivator? According to Proverbs 13:12, what can happen when people don’t have hope?
6. Fill in the blanks in this sentence from the third paragraph of the section “The Promise That Changed My Life”: “When we have hope, we live with the \_\_\_\_\_ that God will do something \_\_\_\_\_ for us.”
7. Who can have hope?
8. One way to gain more hope is to believe and repeat this phrase several times a day: “Something good is going to happen to me because God is good.” Try this for at least a week and notice how your attitude becomes more hopeful by the renewing of your mind (Romans 12:2).
9. Why was Job’s prayer for his friends in Job 42:10 an important step for him to take before he received his double blessing?
10. How can unforgiveness block the blessings God wants to pour out in your life? Is there anyone you need to forgive and pray

for as you prepare to receive the blessing God has for you? Ask God to show you and help you do it.

11. In 2 Kings 2:1–12 Elisha asked for a double portion of Elijah’s spirit, and God granted his request. In what area of your life do you want God to give you a double portion? Follow Elisha’s example and ask God for it.
12. Proverbs 6:30–31 talks about the sevenfold blessing when something has been stolen. Has anything been taken from you that you can ask God to restore based on these verses?
13. Do you need to restore anything to anyone you’ve hurt or from whom you may have taken something? Ask God to lead you and give you strength to do what you need to do.
14. What did you learn from the story about the television station? Why is it important for us to release situations such as this one to God—even if they don’t involve something like teaching God’s Word on television? What can He accomplish through our obedience?

### I Am Amazed

1. What did you learn from my story about God turning my mess into my message and ministry? How does this encourage you and give you hope that God can use your situation for good?
2. God has a way of turning a situation you think will be your worst enemy into your best friend. Can you see any ways He may be doing this in the midst of your mess right now? What are they?
3. Could you identify with Sawyer’s story? How has God allowed you to comfort others because of what you have been through?

4. Sawyer could have kept walking when he saw his classmate crying, thinking his own life was too messed up to help anyone else. What step of faith did he take instead?
5. How do you think that step of faith and the others Sawyer has taken to comfort the people God has put in his path have helped him become the godly man he is today?
6. How could your mess become your message and your ministry? Are there people who could benefit from what you've learned? What examples can you think of?
7. The second-to-last paragraph of the section "I Am Amazed," which begins with "To experience blessing in the midst of your mess," lists several decisions and actions you will need to take to experience blessing in the midst of your mess. What are they?
8. How does Zechariah 9:12 give you hope that God can bless you?

## CONCLUSION

If you have read *Blessed in the Mess* and worked your way through this study guide, you have learned that life's messes are inevitable. Those messes may include job stress, family conflict, disappointment and other types of emotional pain, financial problems, a child struggling in school, a young person addicted to drugs or alcohol, and many other difficult situations. Jesus says that in the world we will have tribulation, but that we can be of good cheer because He has overcome the world (John 16:33). There is no way to avoid life's messes, but as we walk with God and obey His Word, we can find many ways to be blessed in the midst of them.

Many people make the mistake of trying to get *out* of their messes when they would benefit much more if they learned how to *go through* them. As you have learned through reading *Blessed in the Mess* and through your work in this study guide, dealing with life's difficulties has many benefits for us. When we face them with God's help, we become stronger people and more effective Christians. We grow closer to God, and we become more like Jesus.

I pray this study guide has equipped you to be more blessed in the midst of a mess than you ever thought you could be and to encourage and help people around you as they go through life's challenges.

Always remember, in Christ you are more than a conqueror, and nothing that happens on this earth can ever separate you from His love (Romans 8:37–39).

## *Do you have a real relationship with Jesus?*

God loves you! He created you to be a special, unique, one-of-a-kind individual, and He has a specific purpose and plan for your life. And through a personal relationship with your Creator—God—you can discover a way of life that will truly satisfy your soul.

No matter who you are, what you've done, or where you are in your life right now, God's love and grace are greater than your sin—your mistakes. Jesus willingly gave His life so you can receive forgiveness from God and have new life in Him. He's just waiting for you to invite Him to be your Savior and Lord.

If you are ready to commit your life to Jesus and follow Him, all you have to do is ask Him to forgive your sins and give you a fresh start in the life you are meant to live. Begin by praying this prayer . . .

*Lord Jesus, thank You for giving Your life for me and forgiving me of my sins so I can have a personal relationship with You. I am sincerely sorry for the mistakes I've made, and I know I need You to help me live right.*

*Your Word says in Romans 10:9, "If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (NIV). I believe You are the Son of God and confess You as my Savior and Lord. Take me just as I am, and work in my heart, making me the person You want me to be. I want to live for You, Jesus, and I am so grateful that You are giving me a fresh start in my new life with You today.*

*I love You, Jesus!*

It's so amazing to know that God loves us so much! He wants to have a deep, intimate relationship with us that grows every day as we spend time with Him in prayer and Bible study. And we want to encourage you in your new life in Christ.

Please visit [joycemeyer.org/howtoknowJesus](http://joycemeyer.org/howtoknowJesus) to request Joyce's book *A New Way of Living*, which is our gift to you. We also have other free resources online to help you make progress in pursuing everything God has for you.

Congratulations on your fresh start in your life in Christ! We hope to hear from you soon.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joyce Meyer is one of the world's leading practical Bible teachers and a *New York Times* bestselling author. Joyce's books have helped millions of people find hope and restoration through Jesus Christ. Joyce's program, *Enjoying Everyday Life*, is broadcast on television, radio, and online to millions worldwide in over one hundred languages.

Through Joyce Meyer Ministries, Joyce teaches internationally on a number of topics with a particular focus on how the Word of God applies to our everyday lives. Her candid communication style allows her to share openly and practically about her experiences so others can apply what she has learned to their lives.

Joyce has authored more than 140 books, which have been translated into more than 160 languages, and over 39 million of her books have been distributed worldwide. Bestsellers include *Power Thoughts*; *The Confident Woman*; *Look Great, Feel Great*; *Starting Your Day Right*; *Ending Your Day Right*; *Approval Addiction*; *How to Hear from God*; *Beauty for Ashes*; and *Battlefield of the Mind*.

Joyce's passion to help people who are hurting is foundational to the vision of Hand of Hope, the missions arm of Joyce Meyer Ministries. Each year Hand of Hope provides millions of meals for the hungry and malnourished, installs freshwater wells in poor and remote areas, provides critical relief after natural disasters, and offers free medical and dental care to thousands through their hospitals and clinics worldwide. Through Project GRL, women and children are rescued from human trafficking and provided safe places to receive an education, nutritious meals, and the love of God.