Accepting life on life’s terms means we take things as they come and live in the awareness that things aren’t under our control. Life happens to all of us. We experience sickness, relationship problems, financial loss, and pain. On top of the major problems, we also experience irritations such as slow traffic, long lines, mistakes, miscommunication, difficult people, and other normal annoying stuff.

The following things prevent us from accepting life on life’s terms:

- Holding on to our own expectations. We struggle with the fact that life “shouldn’t” be this way because we didn’t plan it, don’t want it, and shouldn’t have it.
- Staying stuck in “if only.” We dwell on thoughts like: “If only he/she/I were ______.” “If only he/she/I would have done __________, then __________.”
- Comparing ourselves to others and becoming envious.
- Refusing to deal with reality and thereby staying stuck in denial.
- Bathing ourselves in self-pity and martyrdom.
- Refusing to trust God.

Refusing to accept life on life’s terms results in:

- Wasted energy and time.
- Inability to change what we can.
- Absence of peace or rest and the presence of turmoil and negativity.

Accepting life on life’s terms results in:

- Closer relationship with God because we trust Him and know Him on a deeper level.
- Better relationships with others because we stop trying to control and change them and instead do our part to improve the relationship by changing our own actions.
- Freedom to change the things we can.
- Presence of peace and resting in God.
When you accept life on life’s terms, you live in the awareness that you will not be able to keep life from happening, so you prepare yourself to make the necessary healthy adjustments that allow you to respond appropriately.

By Karla Downing

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Relationship Prayer

God,

Help me to accept life on life’s terms so that I can move into acceptance and do what I need to do.

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Relationship Challenge

❖ Identify the things that keep you from accepting life on life’s terms.

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Scripture Meditation

Numbers 11:1 & 18

“Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the Lord. ‘If only we had meat to eat! We were better off in Egypt!’”

The Lord told Moses to tell the Israelites that He would free them, redeem them, and bring them into the Promised Land and that they would know that He was God. The Israelites didn’t expect hardship, so they focused on their frustrations with their circumstances when life happened and let it interfere with their getting to know God and trusting Him. They were restless, helpless, divided, and miserable and as a result wasted thirty-eight years, as they could have been in the desert for two years instead of forty.
If you have any questions you would like to ask Karla, please feel free to e-mail her. Portions of your e-mail and Karla's response to you may be used anonymously in future materials. By e-mailing her, you are giving your implied permission.

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