

# Want Your Life to Flourish? Try This.

**How are you flourishing?** OK, so maybe that's not an idea you give much thought to, so let me ask it another way.

**How are you doing?** If you're not sure, Harvard University has a Human Flourishing Program to help you solve the mystery. They have created a quick, simple app to evaluate your level of flourishing. It asks you two questions in each of these categories:

- Happiness and Life Satisfaction
- Mental and Physical Health
- Meaning and Purpose
- Character and Virtue
- Close Social Relationships
- Financial and Material Stability

I'm not sure what you're supposed to do with this information other than sign up for one of their courses to help you flourish in your flourishing.

What I want to draw your attention to is what our friends at the American Bible Society (ABS) did with this test. Each year, ABS releases their "State of the Bible" research. They devoted one chapter of their 2024 research to the idea of human flourishing, and two facts stick out.

1. **Those who are "Bible engaged" scored higher on the Flourishing scale.** I conclude from this that those who regularly read and study God's Word are learning to see their lives and the world around them from God's perspective. Life may not always go as I want, but my life is bigger than any momentary setbacks. God's Word helps me focus on God and my relationship with Him. With God's help, I'm going to be just fine—even when outward



appearances say otherwise. A biblical worldview is critical, and the more we lean on Christ and see life under His lordship, the more content we will be.

2. **Those who are able to forgive others scored higher on the Flourishing scale.** Unforgiveness has a way at eating at us. It may not effect the one we despise, but the bitterness we feel is detrimental to our own well-being—both physically and emotionally. Yet for even non-believers, a willingness to forgive has a positive impact.

Forgiving the hurts we've experienced is not easy for any of us, but for the believer, it is—or should be—easier. If we have embraced Christ's forgiveness—recognizing the great sacrifice He made in removing our sin—we should be able to forgive others.

**"And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ" (Eph. 4:32).**

**"For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well. But if you don't forgive others, your Father will not forgive your offenses" (Matt. 6:14-15).**

To forgive is not say that what the person did was OK. Forgiving is not treating the offense like it was no big deal. Nor is it necessarily opening the door for that relationship to return to what it once was. Forgiveness does not mean we forget the offense; but it does mean *we choose not to remember*. Do you hear the difference? When we forgive, we refuse to keep digging up the offense and dwelling on it. That offense no longer defines us or controls our attitude. We choose to forgive and move forward in Christ.

Friends, we can't help but flourish when we bask in the forgiveness of Christ and let that forgiveness pour out of us into the lives of others.