

How are you today?

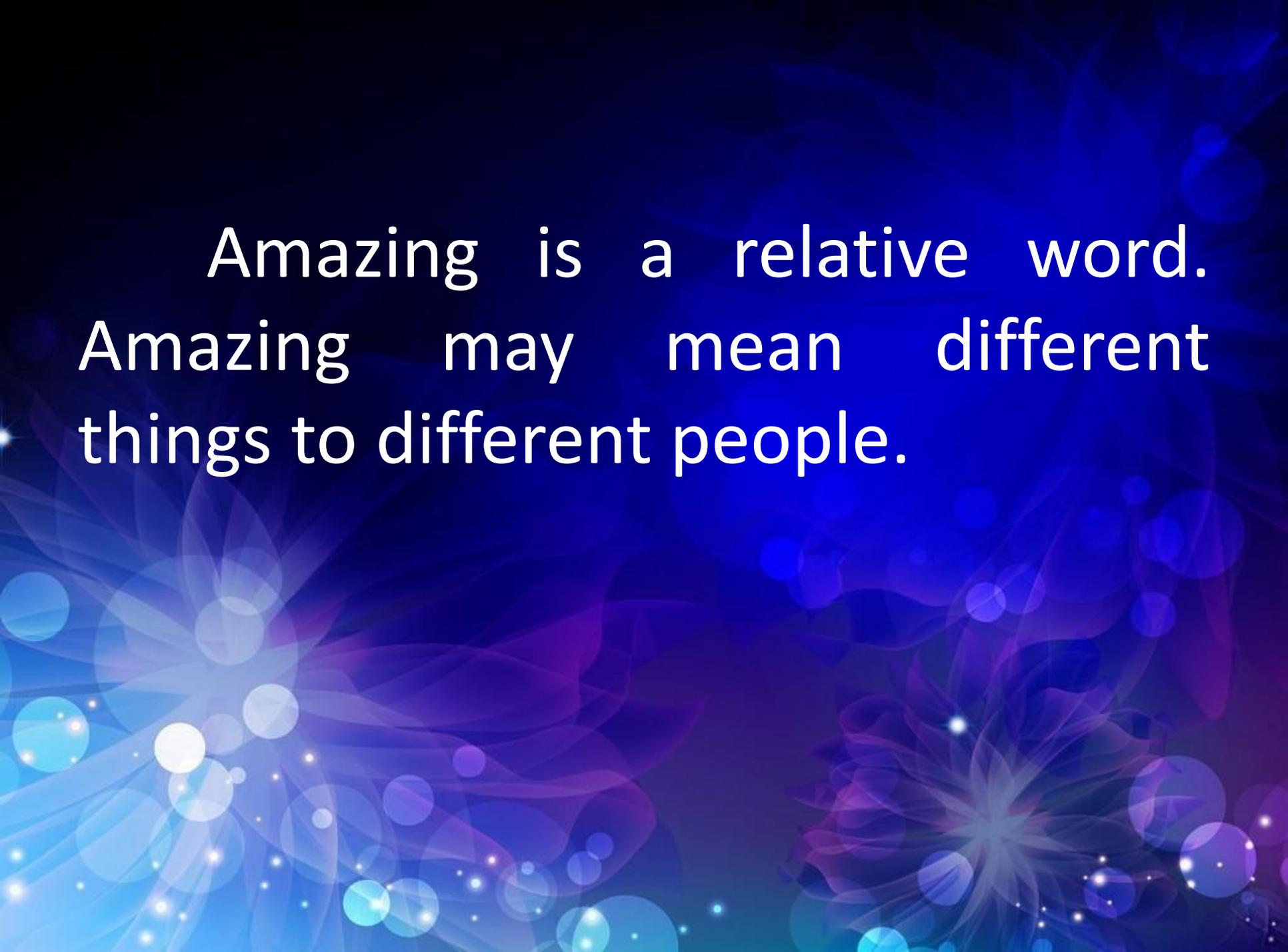
The background is a vibrant gradient of blue and purple. It features several large, stylized, multi-layered floral or starburst patterns. Interspersed among these are numerous glowing bokeh lights of various sizes and colors, including bright white, yellow, and cyan. The overall effect is a soft, ethereal, and celebratory atmosphere.

How is life?

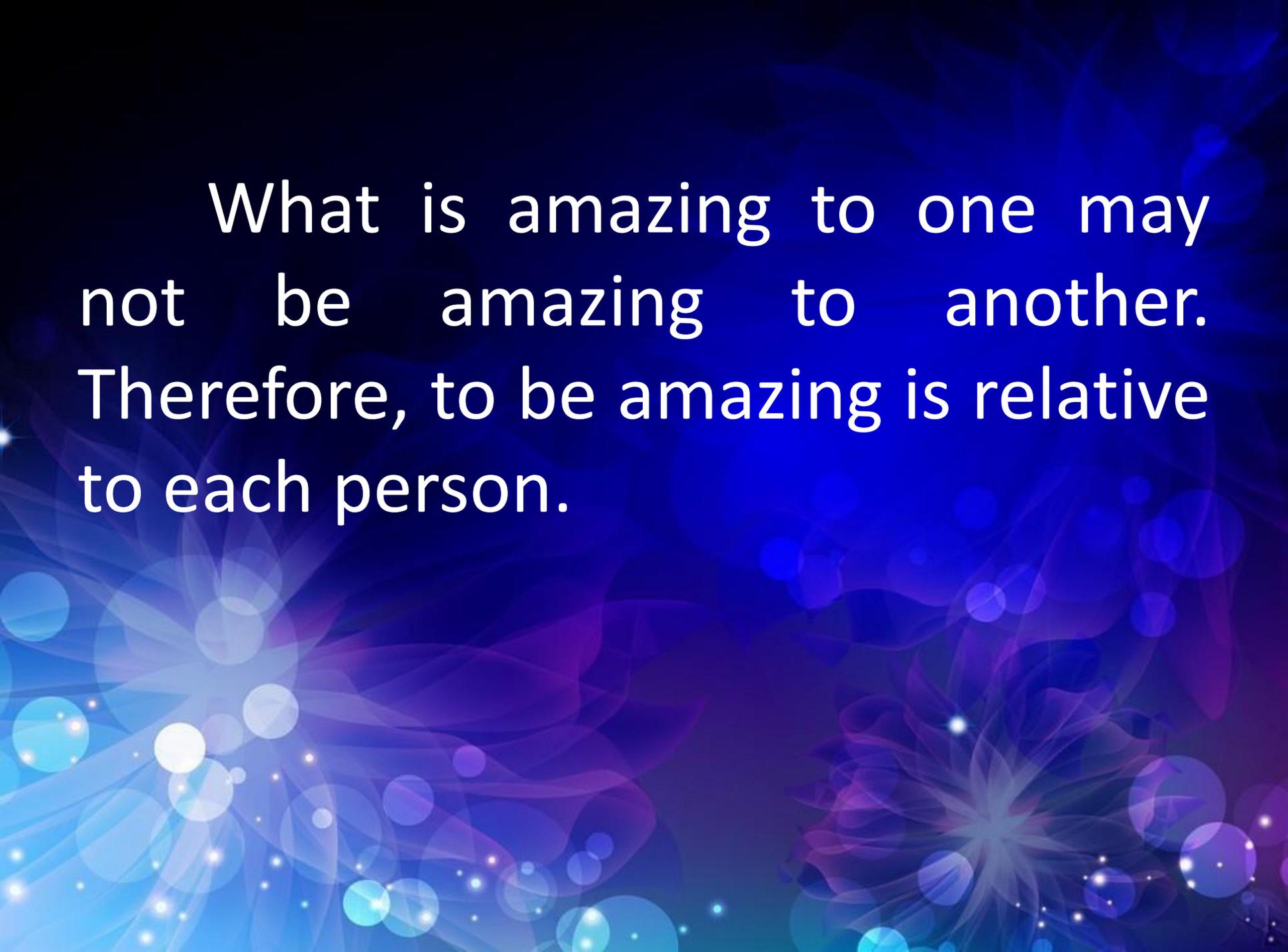
The background is a deep, dark blue gradient. It is decorated with several large, semi-transparent, glowing floral or starburst patterns. These patterns are composed of overlapping, curved lines that create a sense of depth and movement. Interspersed among these larger shapes are numerous smaller, bright blue and white circular bokeh effects, some of which appear to be out of focus, adding to the ethereal and dreamlike atmosphere of the image.

*If life is good and okay,
why are you here?*

*Ah, because you want life
not only to be okay
but to be amazing!*



Amazing is a relative word.
Amazing may mean different
things to different people.



What is amazing to one may not be amazing to another. Therefore, to be amazing is relative to each person.

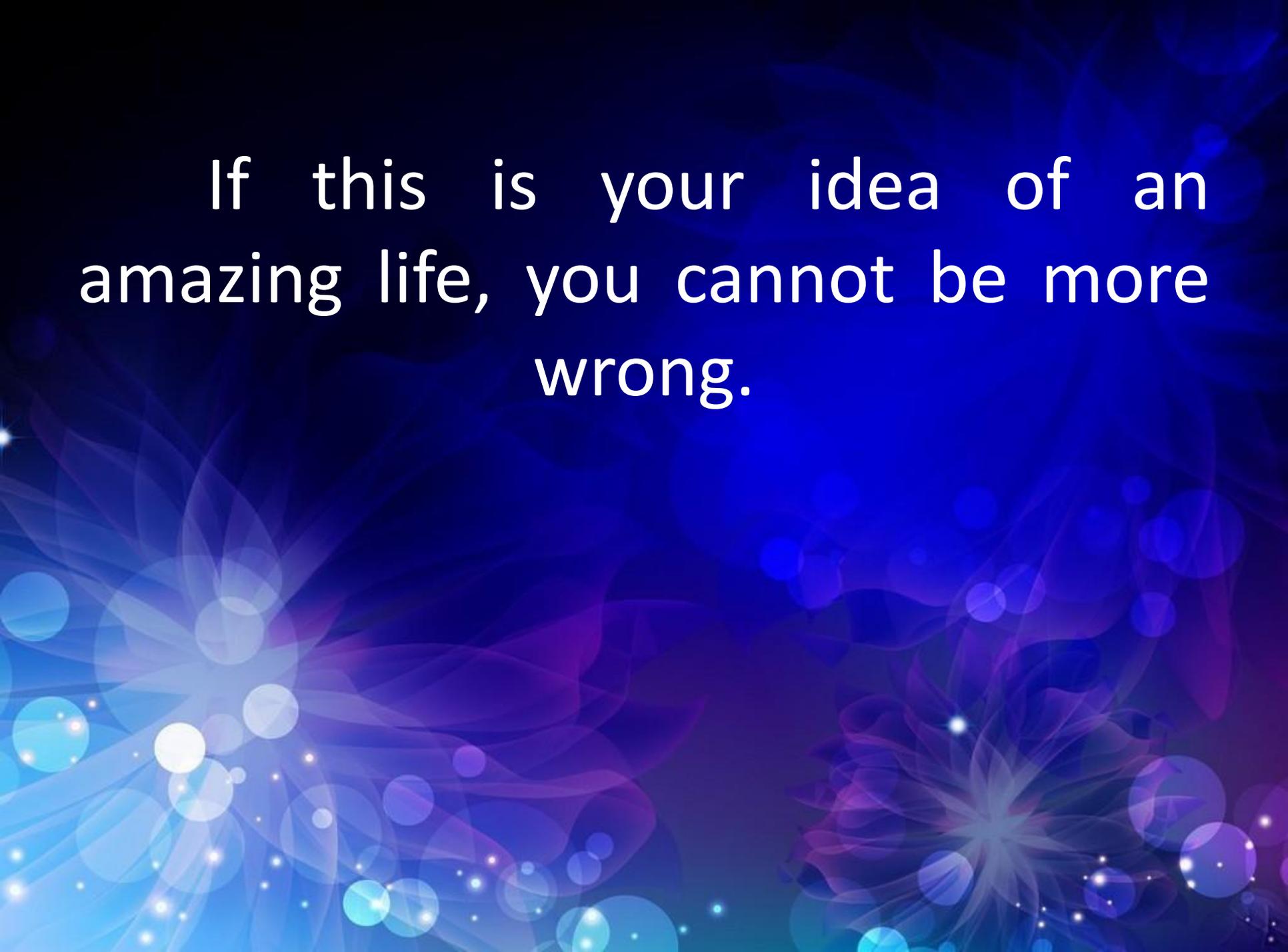
However, we can agree that to be “amazing” is to be better than what it is right now. To be amazing is to level up to a position where you feel great about yourself.

*What is an
amazing life for
you?*

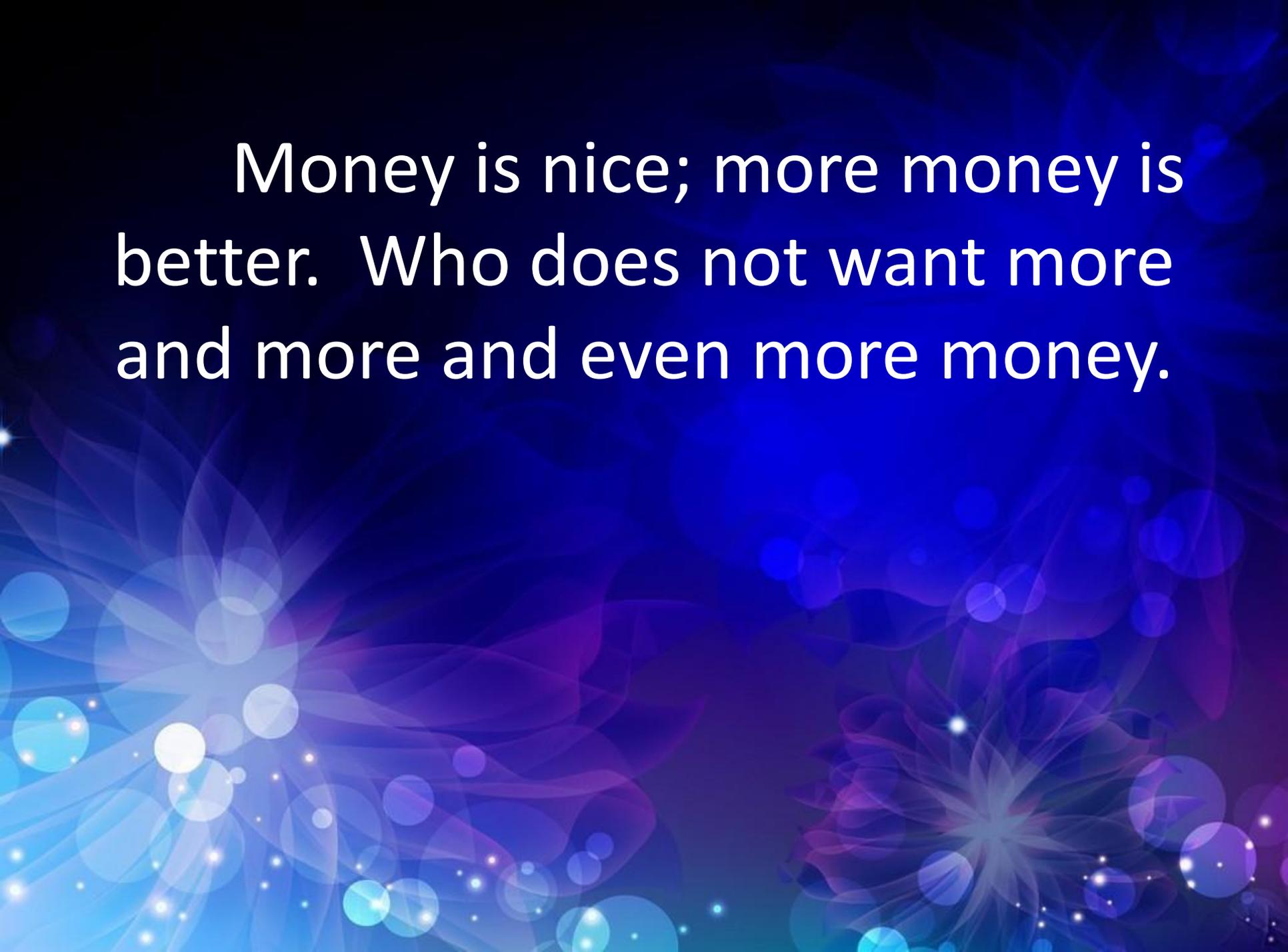
Is it a life of abundance,
privilege, comfort and/or luxury?

Is it having a fat bank account,
living in palatial homes, wearing
expensive clothing, deck with fine
jewelry or living the life of the rich
and famous?

If this is your idea of an
amazing life, you cannot be more
wrong.

The background is a deep, dark blue gradient. It features several large, stylized, glowing floral or starburst patterns. These patterns are composed of overlapping, semi-transparent layers of petals or rays, creating a sense of depth and movement. The colors of these patterns range from light blue and white to deep purple and magenta. Scattered throughout the background are numerous small, bright, out-of-focus circles, resembling bokeh or distant stars, in various shades of blue and white. The overall effect is ethereal and visually rich.

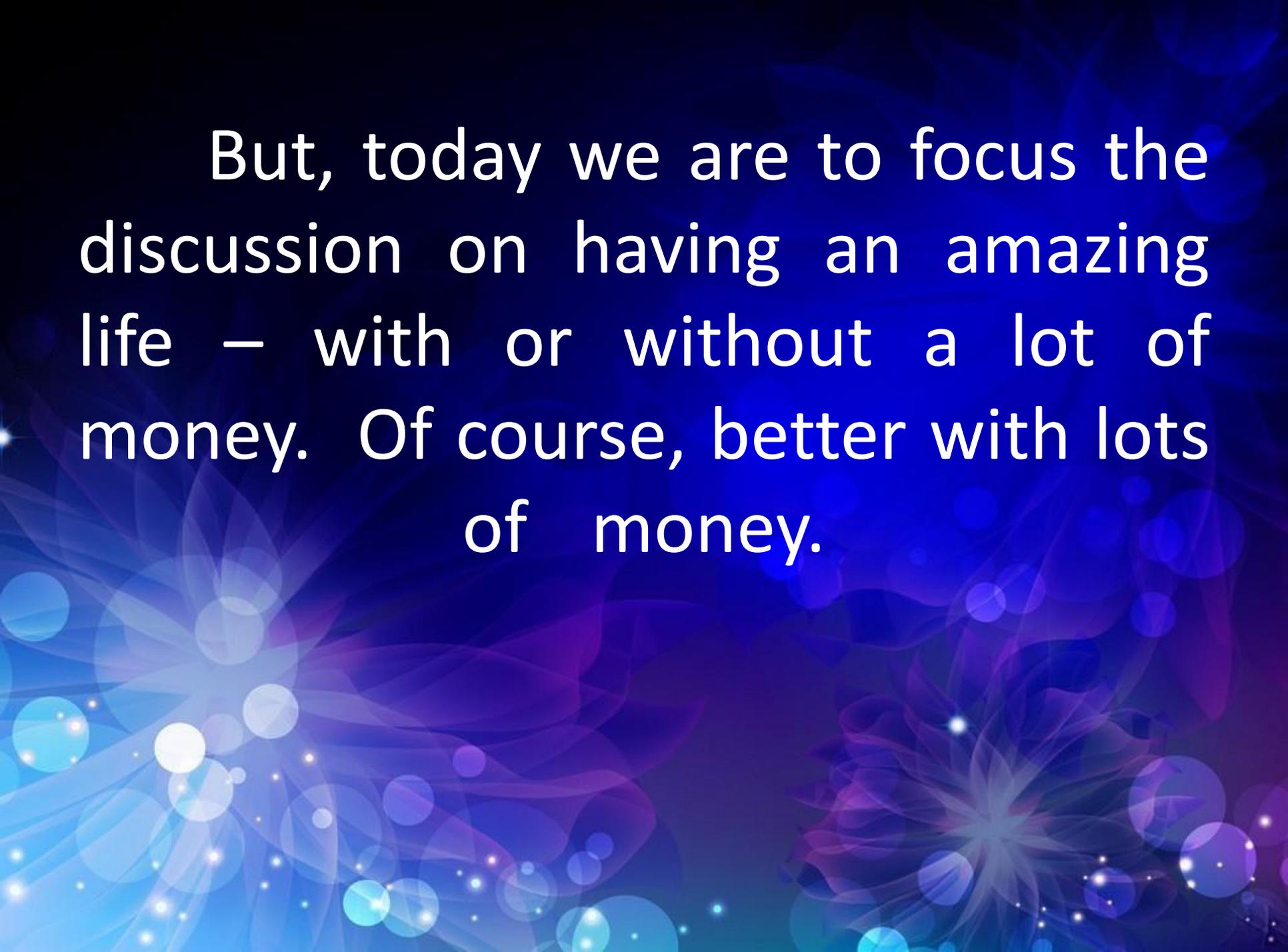
Money is nice; more money is better. Who does not want more and more and even more money.



Wealth is neutral. It can be a source of great blessing or a great curse. Wealth can be used for good or for evil. It can make one happy and another miserable.

Consider 1 Timothy 6:6-10 (source of misery and grief) and verses 17-19 (source of goodness and happiness).

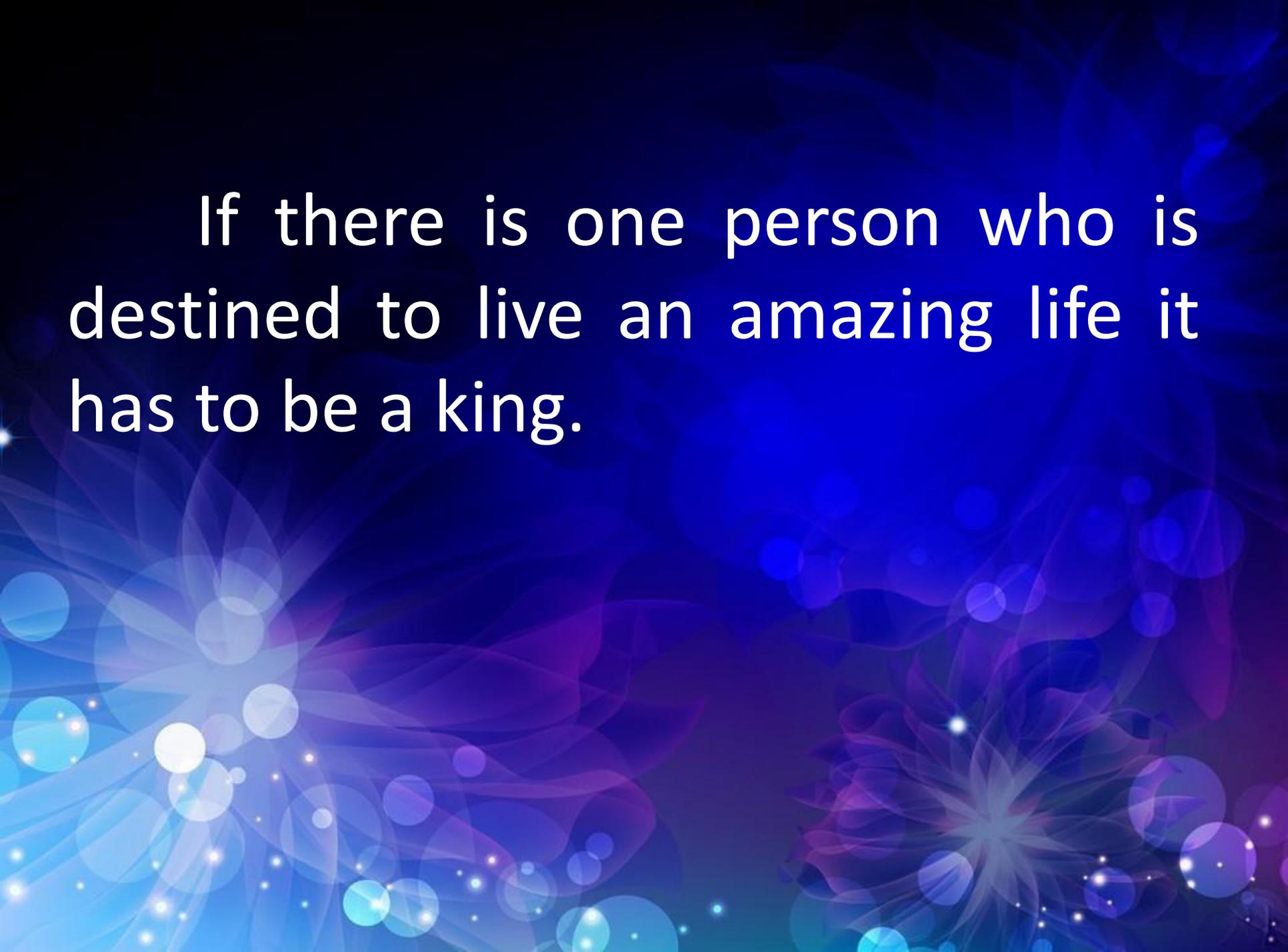
We will devote time to talk about riches one of these days – Biblical Principles on Riches – *“How to get rich the Christian way.”*



But, today we are to focus the discussion on having an amazing life – with or without a lot of money. Of course, better with lots of money.

Life Of A King

If there is one person who is destined to live an amazing life it has to be a king.



Take a look at Prince William,
the future king of England and his
(*oh, so lovely*) wife Duchess Kate
Middleton. Their lives must be
amazing.

The future king and queen of Great Britain! The royal family is worth at least US\$1.0B. They command the adoration of millions of fans.

Live in palaces, travel in style and wear the latest designer clothes and shoes and bags. They live in the lap of comfort and luxury.

They have a new baby – Prince George. He is so cute. His life will be amazing too, right?

Prince Charles lived in the same space so did Princess Diana. In the lap of royalty, fame, comfort and luxury they both lived miserable lives.

Their marriage ended up in divorce after so many unhappy years together. Their lives were less than amazing.

Princes Charles and William
live in the same space but the
outcome of their lives look very
different.

King Solomon

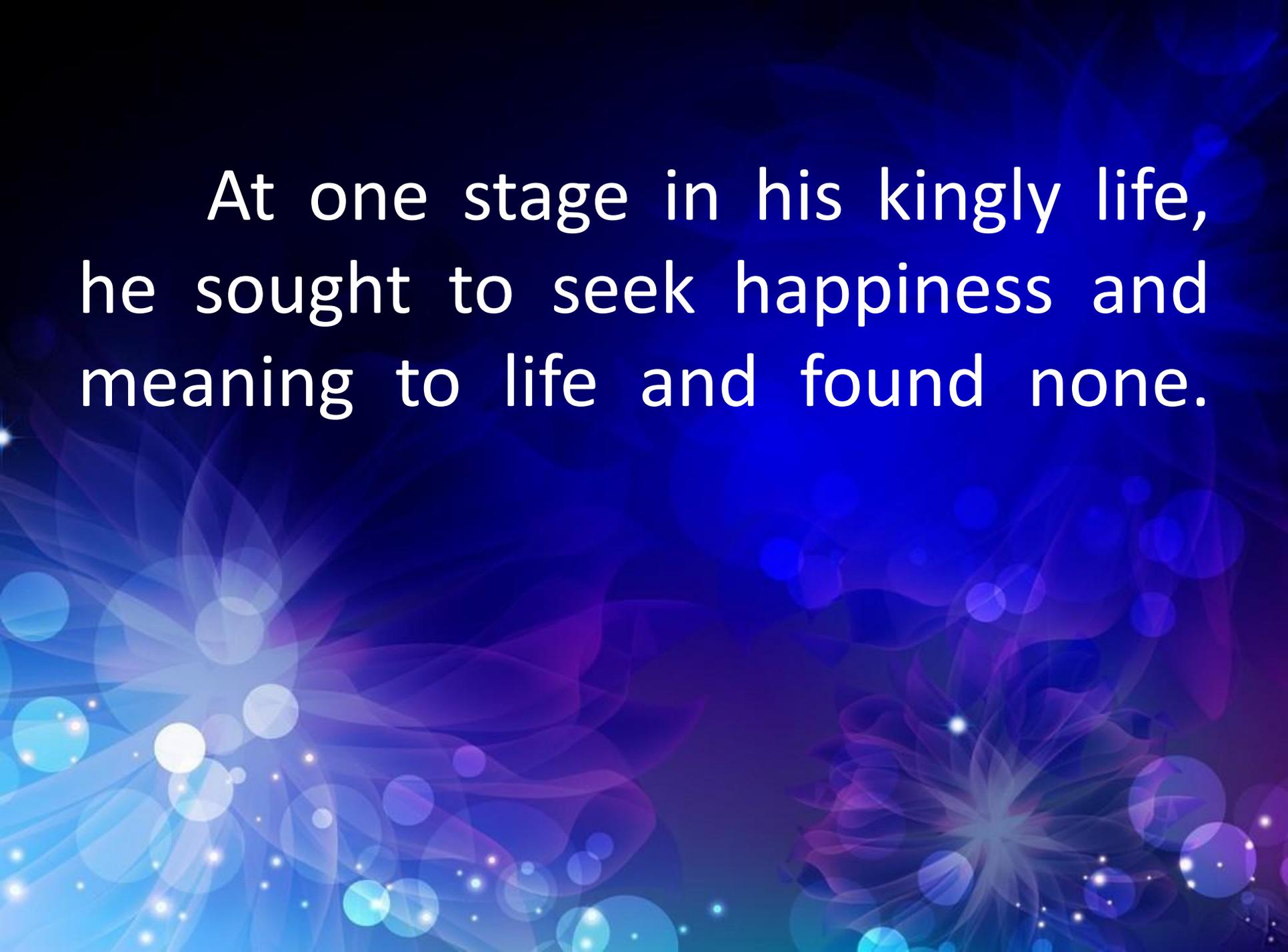
If there is a king who ought to live an amazing life it has to be King Solomon; exceedingly wise, superbly good looking, fabulously wealthy and a pageantry of beauty queen as wives.

What can be more
amazing than that, right?

The background is a deep, dark blue gradient. It is decorated with several large, intricate, glowing floral or starburst patterns. These patterns are composed of many overlapping, semi-transparent layers of petals or rays, creating a sense of depth and movement. The colors of these patterns range from light blue and white to deep purple and magenta. Scattered throughout the background are numerous small, bright blue and white circular bokeh effects, some of which are larger and more prominent than others. The overall effect is one of a magical, ethereal, and futuristic space.

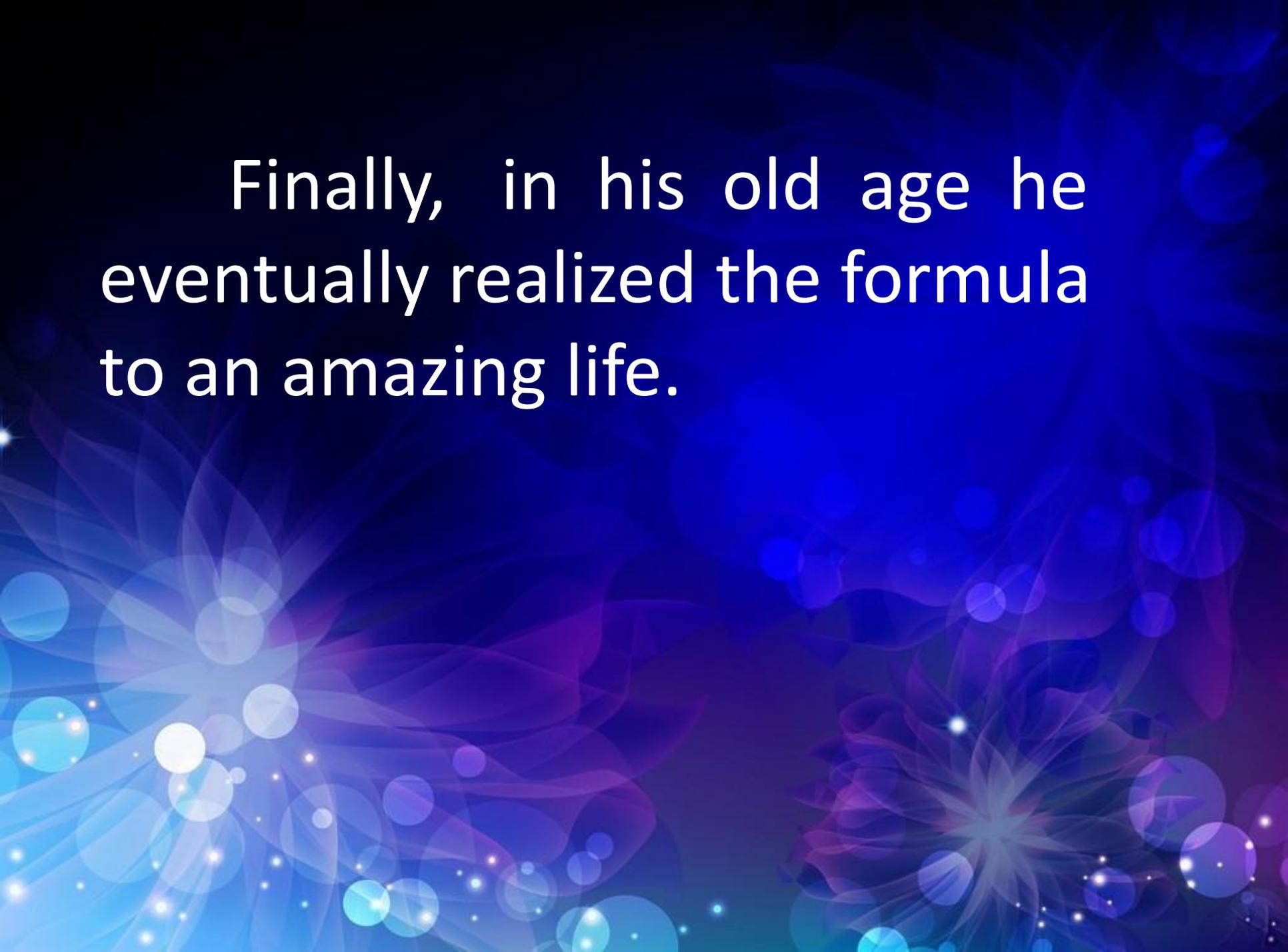
Wrong, he was seriously unhappy
and frustrated with life.

At one stage in his kingly life,
he sought to seek happiness and
meaning to life and found none.



As a king, Solomon tried everything under the sun to discover the secret to an amazing life. He did great experimentations that brought instead many headaches and heartaches.

Finally, in his old age he eventually realized the formula to an amazing life.



King Solomon's wisdom was
renown. He considers himself a
teacher and wise men came from
far and wide to listen to him.

Even queen of Sheba came to visit. This was what she said of King Solomon. 2 Chronicles 9:5-8. Queen Sheba was truly moved and impressed by Solomon's wisdom.

In an assembly of wise men;
King Solomon started out with
these words:

**“Meaningless, meaningless!
Utterly meaningless!
Everything is meaningless.”**

What words of disillusionment and frustration at the circumstances of life from the great and wise king!

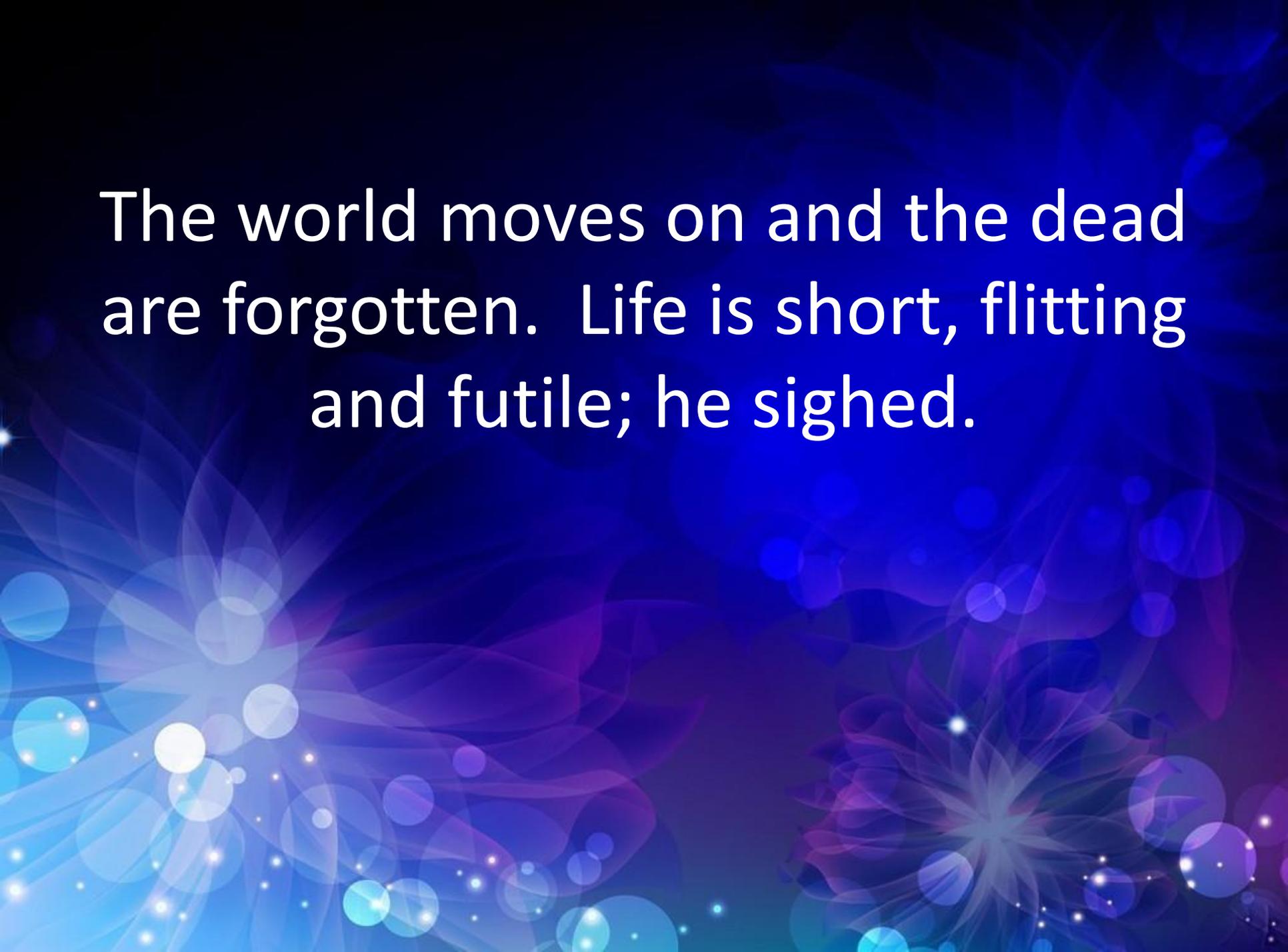
His surprising opening remarks must have shaken up a few wise men who came to listen to him.

He starts by expressing the futility of life. He looks at life and asks:

**“What does man gain
from all his labor
at which he toils under the sun?”**

The answer is nothing. In Ecclesiastes 1:15 he observes:

**“what is twisted
cannot be straightened,
and what is lacking
cannot be counted.”**



The world moves on and the dead
are forgotten. Life is short, flitting
and futile; he sighed.

The Experimentations

Solomon narrated the great experimentations he did in order to find meaning and marvel in life. He wanted to live an amazing life, thus he experimented with:

1. Wisdom

He thought wisdom is the key to an amazing life. I would think so too. How cool would it be to have an IQ of a genius, to be able to fathom mysteries and become a walking wikipedia.

You are able to understand things at a level far above average people. King Solomon amassed much wisdom and found it to be futile. He construed: *“for with much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more the knowledge, the more the grief.”* Eccl. 1:18.

Solomon experienced that great wisdom is actually frustrating. Although in life, the wise man has an advantage but eventually both the wise and the fool meet the same death “*Meaningless*”, he concluded in Eccl. 2:13-16.

2. Pleasure

He tested pleasure. He did what his heart pleases him. He tried laughter and wine. Like us today, going to comedy bars where jokes, laughter and wine are abundant; he too had nightly entertainment.

He then undertook huge and magnificent projects. Eccl. 2:3-10.
His conclusion:

“It’s meaningless.

*Nothing was gained from
the whole exercise.”* Eccl. 2:11.

Thus, his frustrations in Eccl. 2:17-
23.

3. Riches

He tried to hoard riches. The motto of riches is 'more is merrier' - the more the millions the more amazing life is. Solomon found it out the hard way. It does not work that way.

Eccl.5:8-15

We live in a materialistic world;
we want to savor life's little
pleasures.

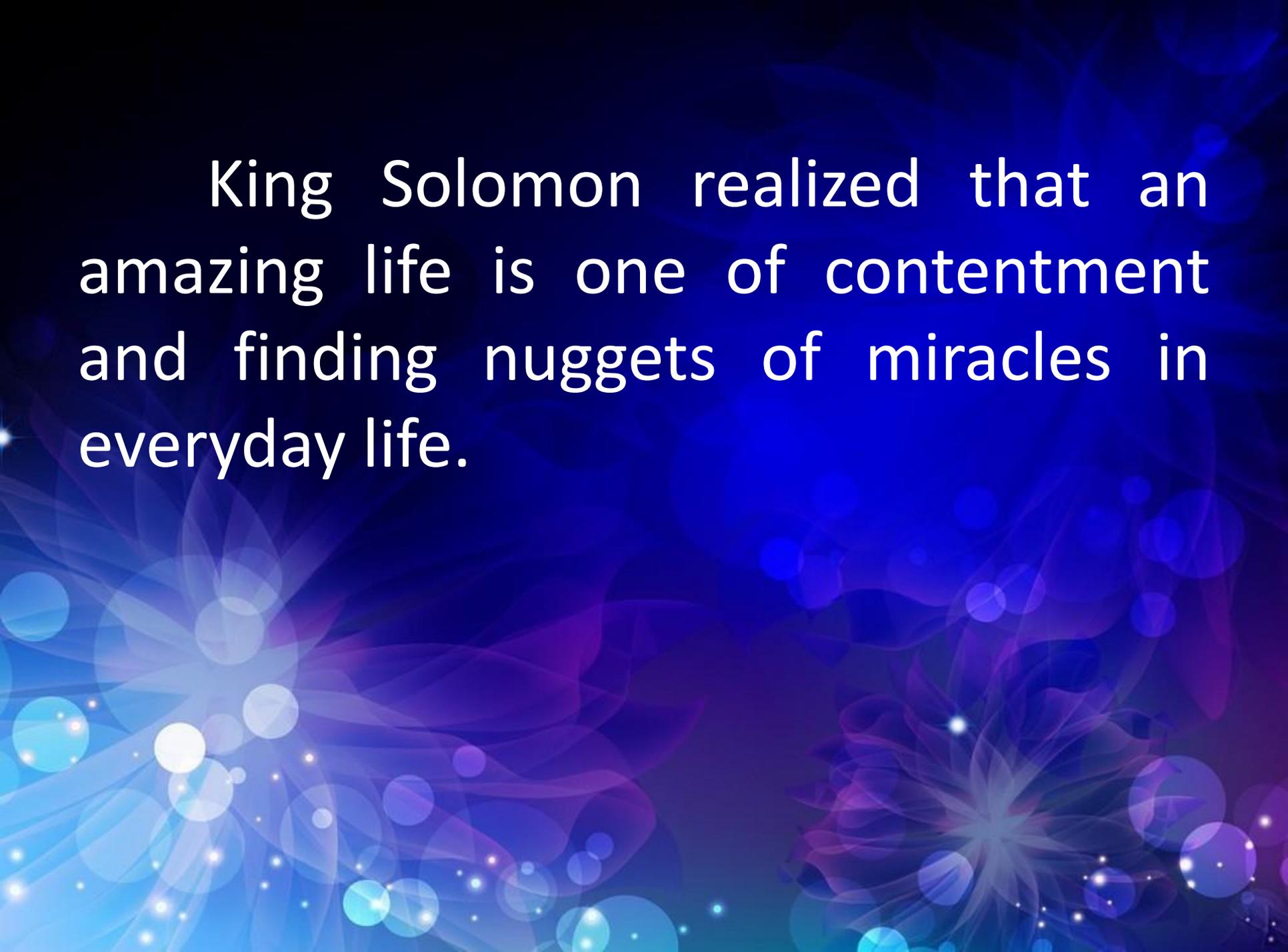
However, once we've had the opportunity to drink the finest French wines, fly in a private jet, eat foie gras or caviar, and dine in the best restaurants, coffee at Starbucks with a friend or a chicken joy at Jollibee doesn't provide the same jolt of happiness anymore as it used to.

Indeed, a landmark study on lottery winners showed just that: People who had won between \$50,000 and \$1,000,000 were less impressed by life's simple pleasures than people who experienced no such windfall.

Biblical Insights

After much experimentations,
King Solomon finally realized that an
amazing life is attainable but not
through wisdom, pleasure or
abundance.

King Solomon realized that an amazing life is one of contentment and finding nuggets of miracles in everyday life.



Since "a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions", life for both the rich and the poor is the totality of what each brings to it.

There is something inherently beautiful in appreciating the simple pleasures in life. Solomon made a short list of these simple pleasures of life; they are:

The background is a dark blue gradient with abstract, ethereal floral patterns in shades of purple and light blue. There are numerous bokeh-like light spots and soft, glowing circles scattered throughout, creating a dreamy and textured effect.

**1. Enjoy your
meals
Eccl. 2:24-25**

We eat three (3) times a day and sometimes a little bit of snacks in between meals. The simplest delight in life is the ability to enjoy our food and drink. We should enjoy our meals. And, some enjoy preparing them.

My daughter loves food and she loves preparing them. The daddy loves eating them. A good meal does not have to be lavish. Simply, well-prepared meals are wonderful. A meal shared with family and friends is most enjoyable.

I love food. I am a foodie. I love to try out new dishes, new eateries, new cuisines, new ice cream flavors, etc. My family, we all love food. And, we eat together.

Have you tried salted caramel ice cream, sapin sapin ice cream or taho ice cream?

My past time is to look for new places to eat. I have tried Japanese, Korean, Indonesian, Indian, Persian, Afganistan, Singaporian, Malaysian, American, Parisian, Italian, Mongolian, German, Vietnamese, Thai and of course Chinese and our very own Filipino food.

Food is cultural. Nothing beats Filipino and Chinese food. I love chicken adobo. I am a happy camper with sinigang na bangus especially sa guava. I like tuyo especially paired with nilagang baka. I adore vegetables – kangkong, repolyo, mustasa, all leafy vegetables. For Chinese food I love dumpling, fish with taosi, stir fry vegetable.

My favorite foods are the simple everyday dishes, nothing fancy. I do not think I can eat steak everyday or salmon every night. I like bangus, lapu-lapu and tawilis (so crispy when fried well). To enjoy what we eat and drink is one of lives simply and amazing joy.

Workshop:

Write down a list of your favorite dishes. Make a menu for the week with one favorite dish a day. Now, you have something planned and look forward to everyday.

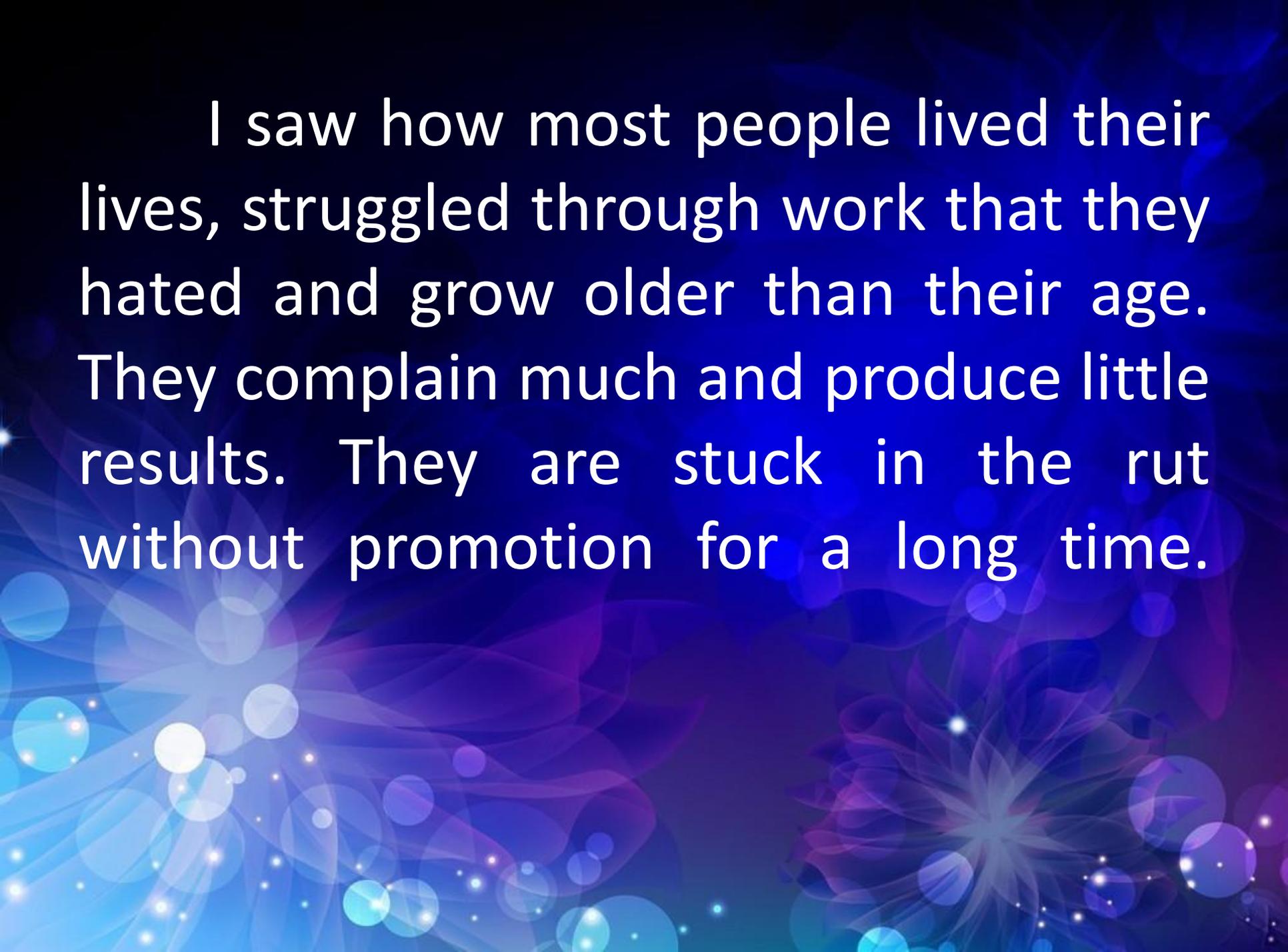


2. Enjoy your work

Eccl. 3:22

We spend at least 8 hours at work – most of our waking hours. Needless to say, that to improve our quality of life we need to enjoy what we do. If you are unhappy with your work, those 8 hours of work can be hell. Learn to love your work or find a work that you love. The work is not only at the office or factory, it can also be house chores.

I love my work. I love my career. I cannot say that of many people. I did not start out my career with a dream job. I had an ordinary job as a salesman when I started out. I love my job and my job loves me in return.



I saw how most people lived their lives, struggled through work that they hated and grow older than their age. They complain much and produce little results. They are stuck in the rut without promotion for a long time.

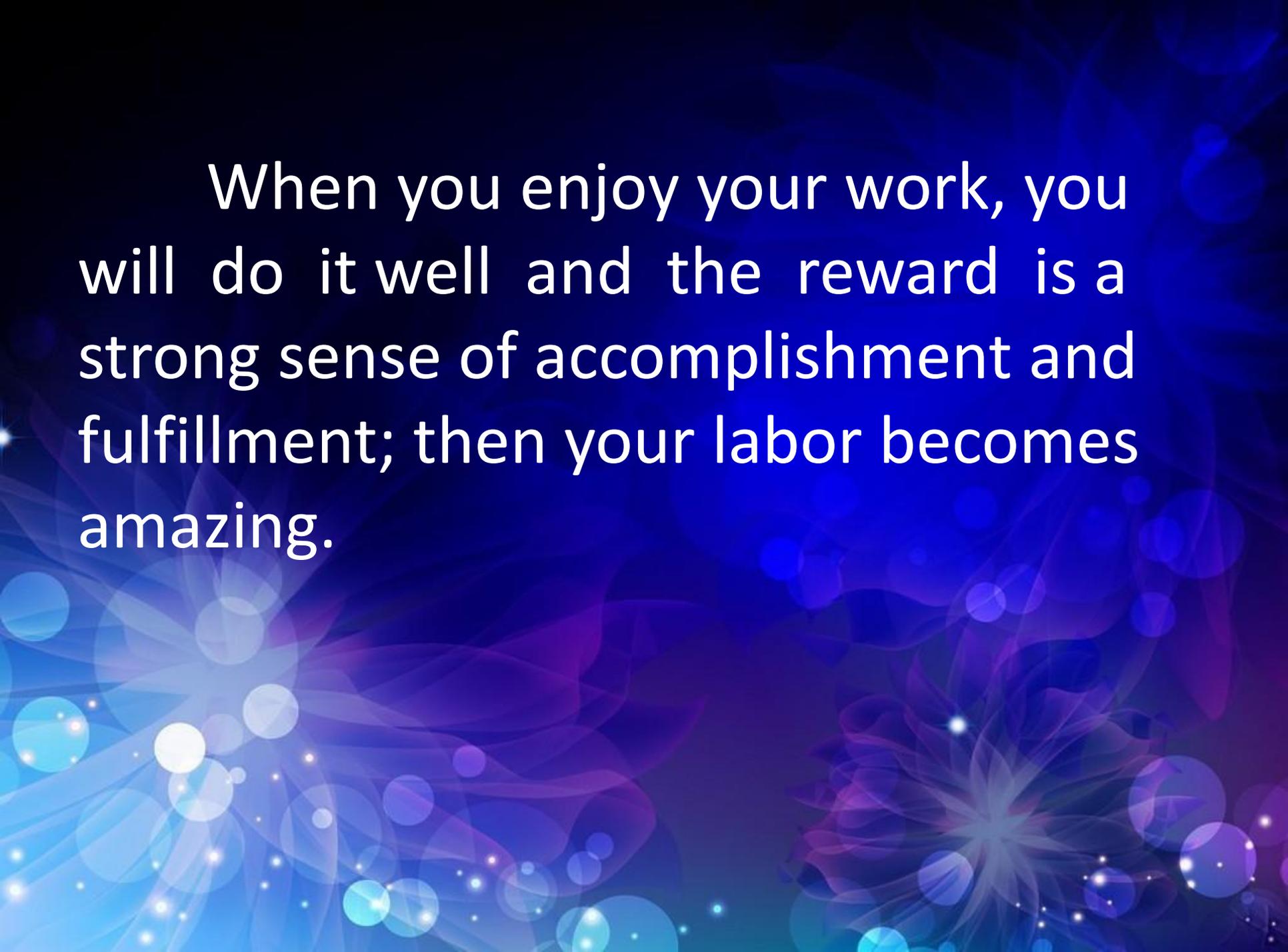
Solomon said:

*“whatever your hands find to you, do it
with all your might.”*

Meaning with the best of your
God given ability. Eccl. 9:10

For a person to love his job and do it well, he must see a purpose in his work. Many of us hate house chores; clean the dishes, laundry the linens, clean the house and the abhorrent of them all is to clean the toilet.

The secret in loving your work, be it a simple house chore or your permanent career is to focus on how you feel when it's done. Don't think about scrubbing the tiles, think about the feeling of having a nice and clean bathroom. The same goes for work - think about the feeling of success because you devoted 100% of your effort to accomplish the project.



When you enjoy your work, you will do it well and the reward is a strong sense of accomplishment and fulfillment; then your labor becomes amazing.

Workshop:

Set success parameters and goals for your work. Set your own KPI. Meeting them will make you enjoy your work more with a sense of fulfillment.

Example, your project has a completion time of 5 days. You may set your own KPI at 4 days.

So, when you finish your project on the 4th day, you feel accomplished because you meet your own timeline ahead of the deadline. Your boss is happy and you too are happy. It's that amazing?

The background is a dark blue gradient with abstract, glowing floral and bokeh patterns in shades of blue, purple, and white. The text is centered on the left side.

3. Enjoy your
wealth
Eccl. 5:18-20

We work to live and not live to work. Work is our source of livelihood.

What do you do with your money?

Solomon said: *do not hoard the money rather spend it for our enjoyment.* We should not be slaves to money but money should be our slave.

It is nice to have money. It is true that money cannot buy you true love or true happiness. But, money can buy you well-being, comfort and luxury. If we want to buy happiness, we need to squeeze as many rewarding and stretching experiences from our purchases as possible.

Here are some helpful tips on
how to enjoy your wealth:



1. Spend on activities that help you grow as a person like pursuing a passion: taking music lessons, cooking lessons, parenting lessons, etc.

2. Invest in the family. Buy the best education for your children, strengthen family ties with relatives and friends, provide for comfortable shelter and necessities. Do some family shopping, watch a movie, dine out, take a vacation, etc.

3. Give some back. Contribute to the community. Nice to do some charity work and to help the needy.

Workshop:

Set a budget from your monthly income to splurge on a little leisure and entertainment. Also, make a list of things that you and your family and friends love to do together. Then, use the budget to make them happen.
Enjoy your wealth.

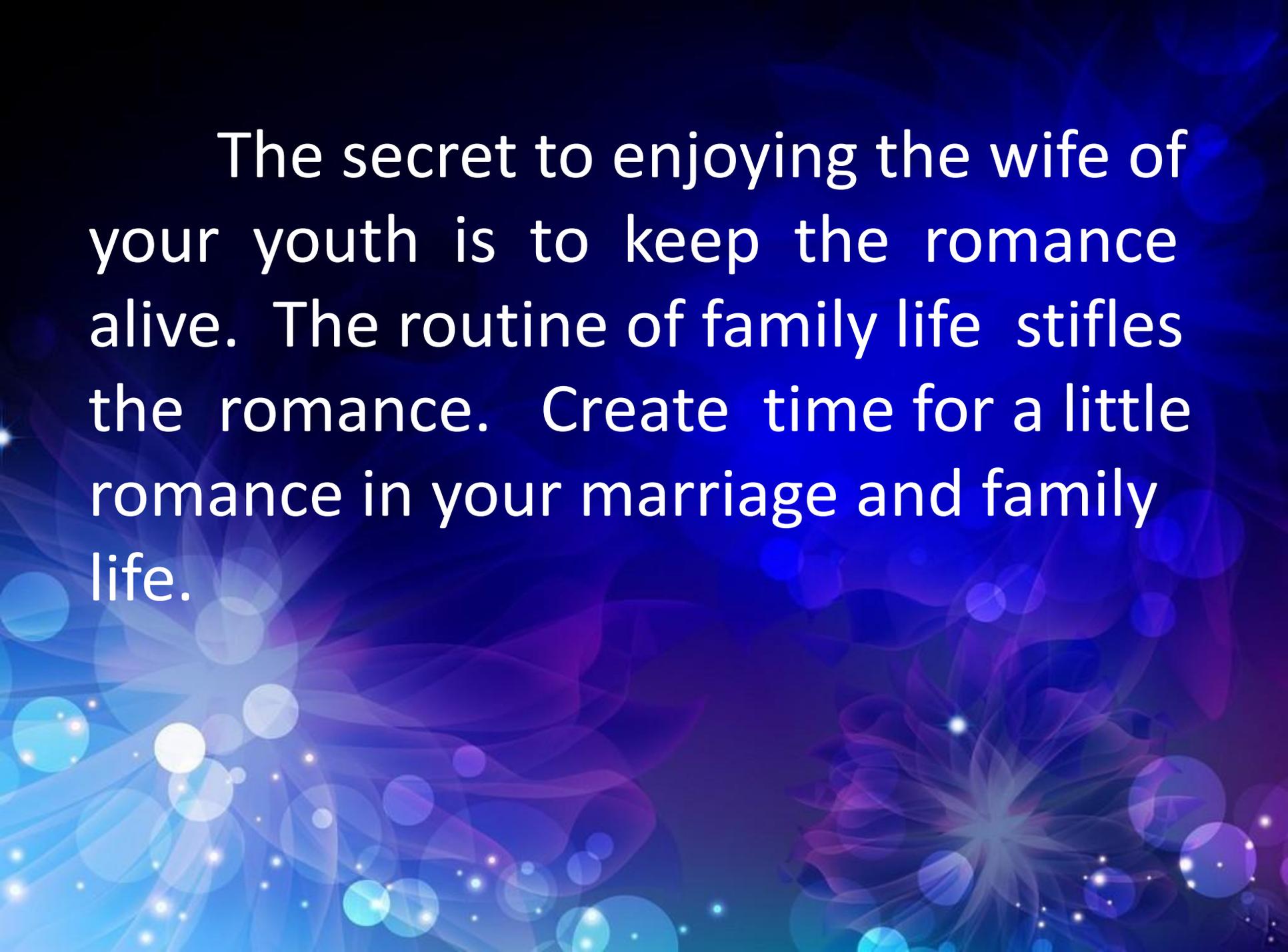


4. Enjoy your
marriage
Eccl. 9:7-9

You are married to your spouse 24X7 for life. A large degree of your happiness depends on the success of your marriage. There are many challenges in marriage.

Always remember in a marriage there is only love. There is no envy, jealousy and hatred. If you want an amazing life – be an amazing husband, wife and parent.

The happiness depends on small things in life that we share with others, like with our family members; our spouse, children and friends. An amazing family life starts with loving your spouse.



The secret to enjoying the wife of your youth is to keep the romance alive. The routine of family life stifles the romance. Create time for a little romance in your marriage and family life.

Occasion flowers, chocolates, love texts, candle dinner nights and late night movies help in maintaining the passion. To be able to court your spouse after marriage is fun and will keep your life amazing.

Workshop:

Make a list of the things your spouse love to eat, drink and do; and enjoy them with him or her together.

5. Follow the
ways of your
heart

Eccl. 11:9

The simplest thrill in life is to do what pleases you. There is this inexplicable joy in following your passion. A little adventure makes life more exciting and exuberant.

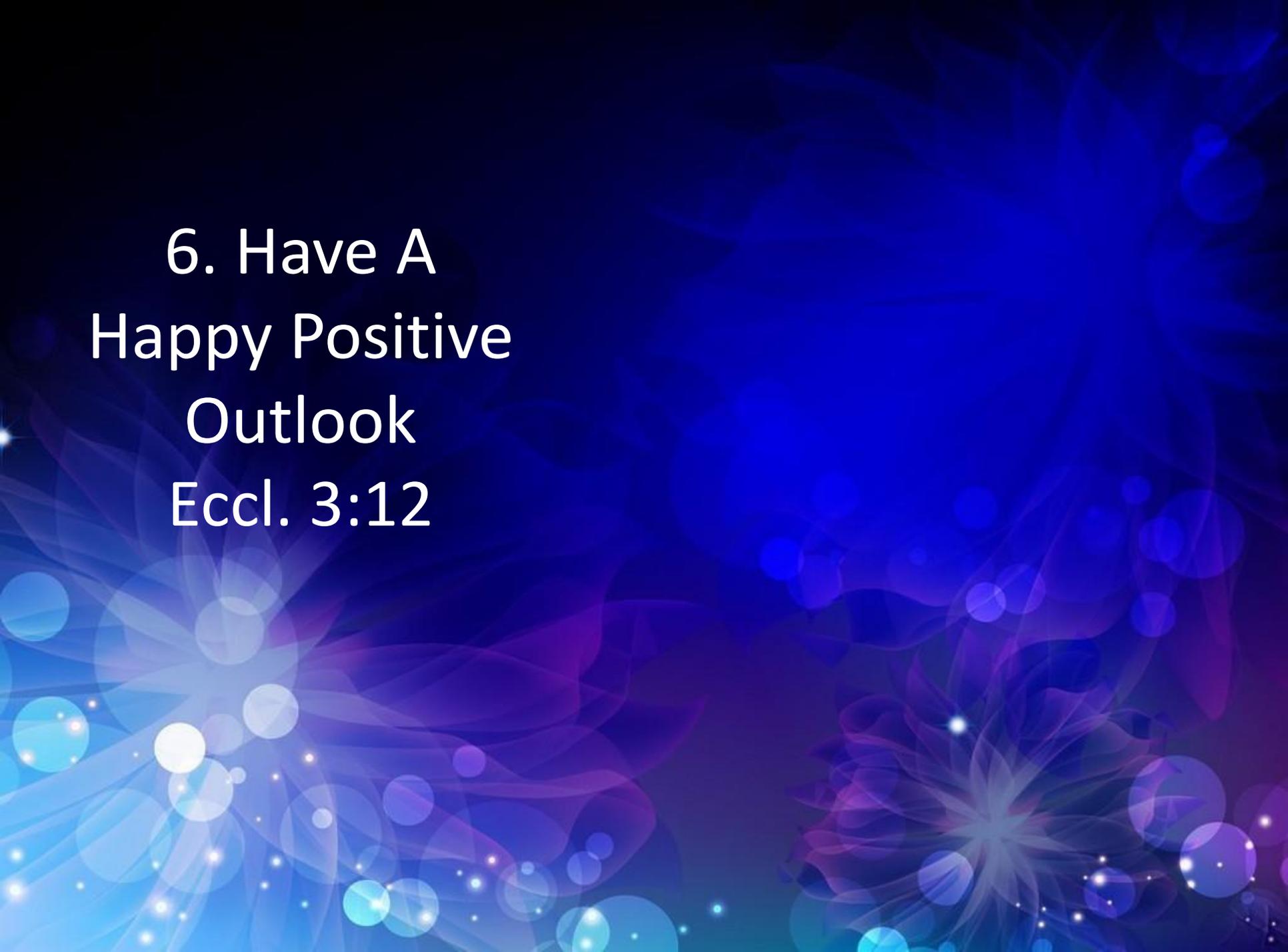
Whatever your heart feels like doing go for it whether it be sports, a hobby or a pursuit like a cause or a charity.

My corporate training teaches me to plan and organize my activities. Cocooning is safe but is boring. Sometimes, spontaneity is exciting, thrilling and stimulating. Give your life some serious excitement – follow your heart. Do things that make you happy.

The things that make for happiness are those little things you find enjoyable and have nothing to do with money. Like a walk in the park, a ball game with friends, an evening chatting on the internet, a nice book to read, a karaoke session with the barkada or a movie night with the family.

Workshop:

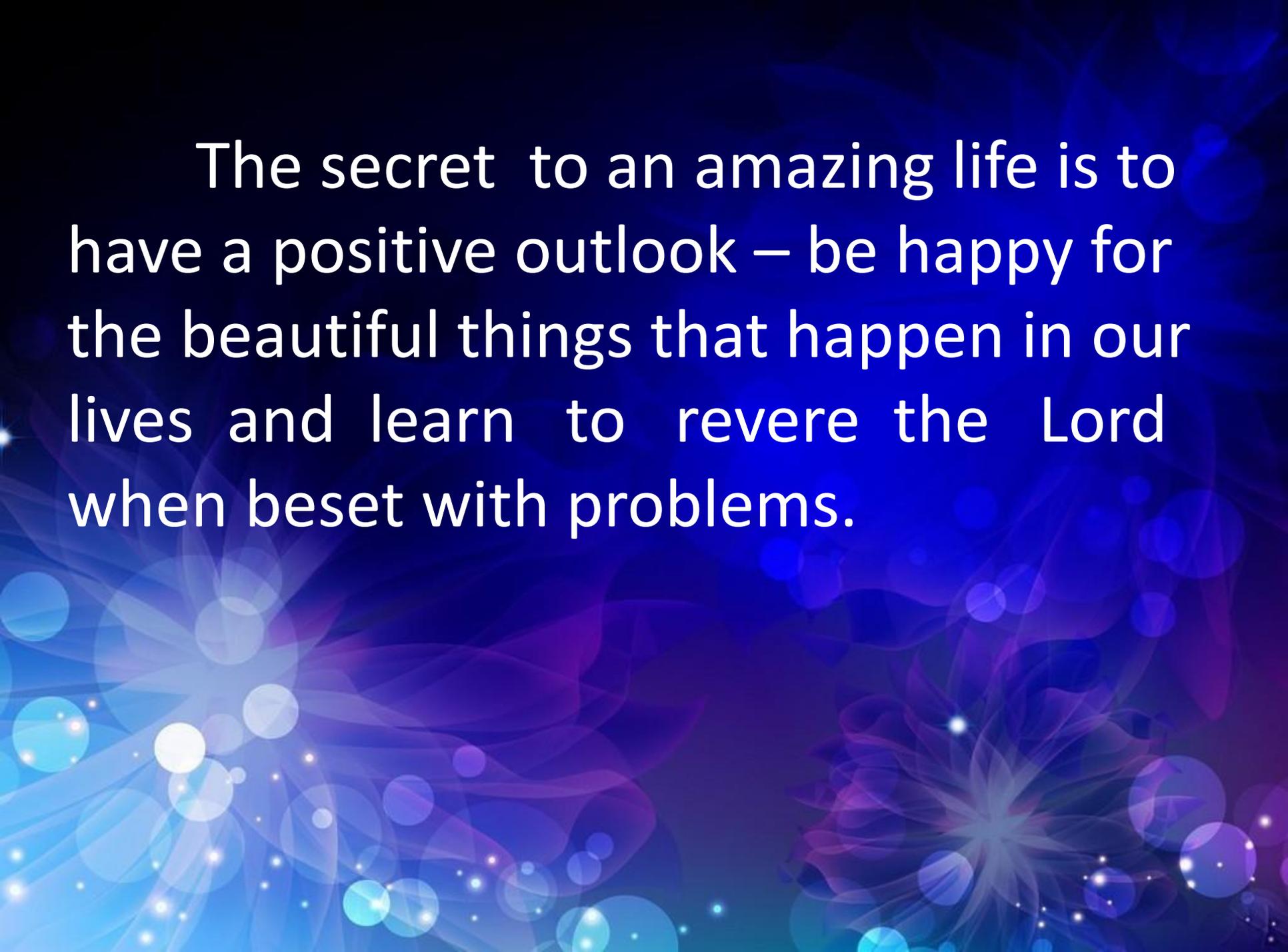
Make a list of the things you love to do
and do it.



6. Have A
Happy Positive
Outlook
Eccl. 3:12

No one can enjoy all the above without a positive attitude towards life. Life, as we all know, is not always a bed of roses rather it is full of challenges. Solomon describes it this way in Eccl. 3:1-11.

Life is a mixture of beautiful and sad events. For anyone to appreciate life, he must be able to take the good as well as the bad. Life must be viewed in God's grand plan of salvation.



The secret to an amazing life is to have a positive outlook – be happy for the beautiful things that happen in our lives and learn to revere the Lord when beset with problems.

Workshop:

Make a list the beautiful things that happen in your life and meditate on them.



7. Remember
God and keep His
commandments
Eccl. 12:13

The greatest fulfillment of joy is a close relationship with God. The close relationship with our heavenly Father gives us the assurance of eternal life without which life is meaningless. Solomon said the greatest vanity in life is death. The rich and the poor all meet the same end.

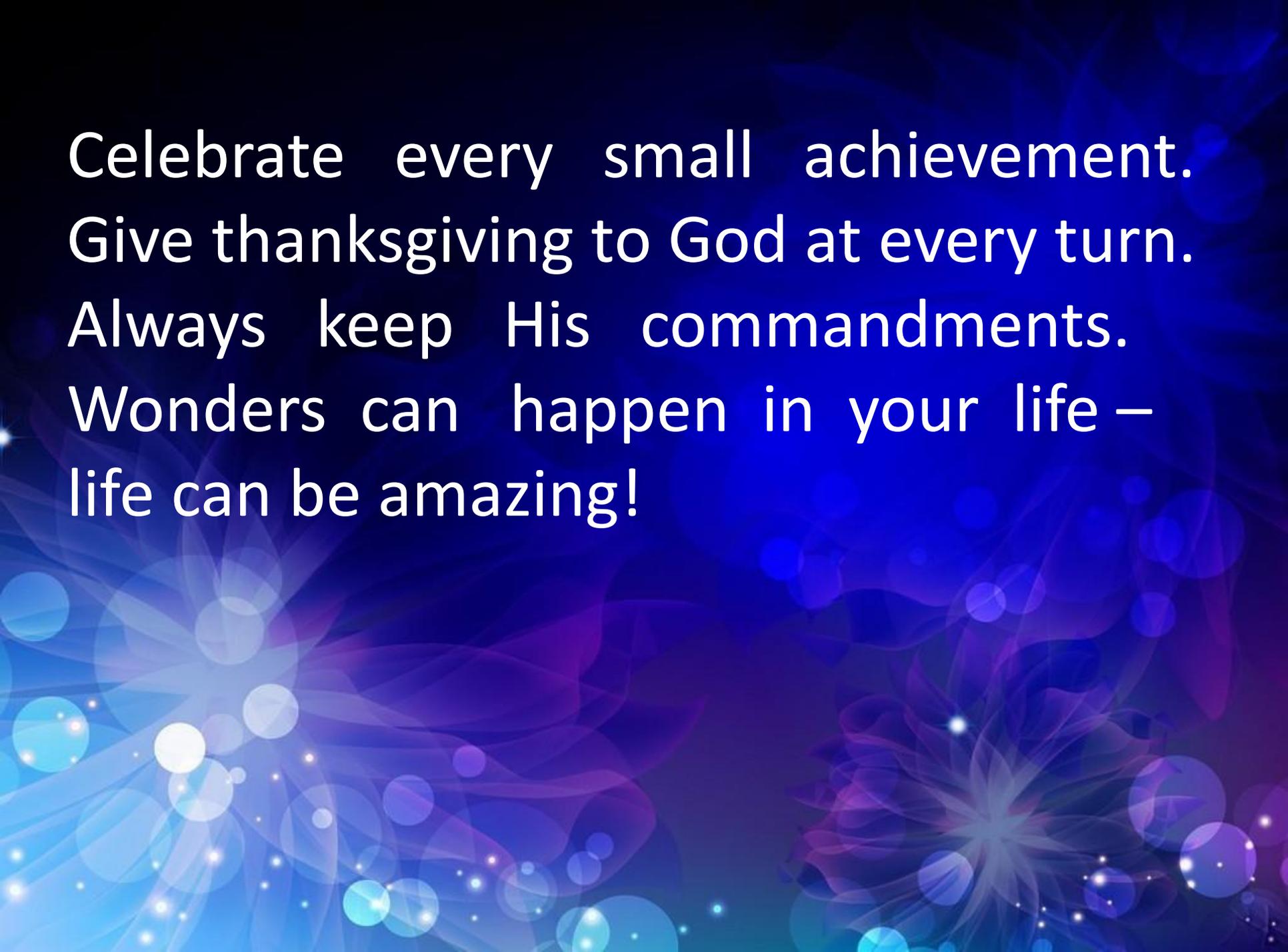
Everything returns to the ground. If there is no eternal life beyond this temporal human existence, we are most miserable and life is not only meaningless but worrisome. Therefore, our eternal hope and joy are in the Lord and eternal life hinges on our obedience to His commands.

Workshop:

Make a list of things you should thank God for. Go on your knees and thank Him daily. You will experience a transformation in your life when you do it. You can only experience an amazing life when God is with you.

SUMMATION

An amazing life is to find contentment in the daily providence of God. An amazing life is to enjoy life's simple pleasures. The ability to enjoy every moment, every meal, every labor, every thought at every opportunity is what leads to an amazing life.



Celebrate every small achievement.
Give thanksgiving to God at every turn.
Always keep His commandments.
Wonders can happen in your life –
life can be amazing!

When we were small, my parents didn't have much and we were not showered with toys and material things. I wore hand me down clothes from my brother and my little brother after me.

However, we were showered with their time and attention.

Our mother was a stay home housewife and we were the center of her universe and dad too was always there. He brought all of us to school everyday and each day without fail, rain or shine. We didn't have much growing up, but we have each other. We kids, the siblings, were really close. We do things together.

In my work, I meet a lot of people small and great, rich and poor. I must say that those that laugh, those who have more eureka moments are those with less. I presume it is they who are able to cherish and appreciate the moments, those fleeting moments - uncluttered by materialism.

As for me, what makes my life truly amazing are those when I return home from work and my family, my wife and my children eating together, enjoying the meal, and all of us share our bedroom, watching TV, telling stories, laughing, talking about God and just being family with what we have.. We have each other.

I'm so grateful for the experience,
the most precious times in my life
have been the simple ones.

We start the Bible study with a wonderful hymn entitled '*He Hideth My Soul*.' The hymn was composed by Fanny Crosby. Fanny Crosby wrote more than 9,000 hymns in her life. '*He Hideth My Soul*' is one of the most popular of her hymns.

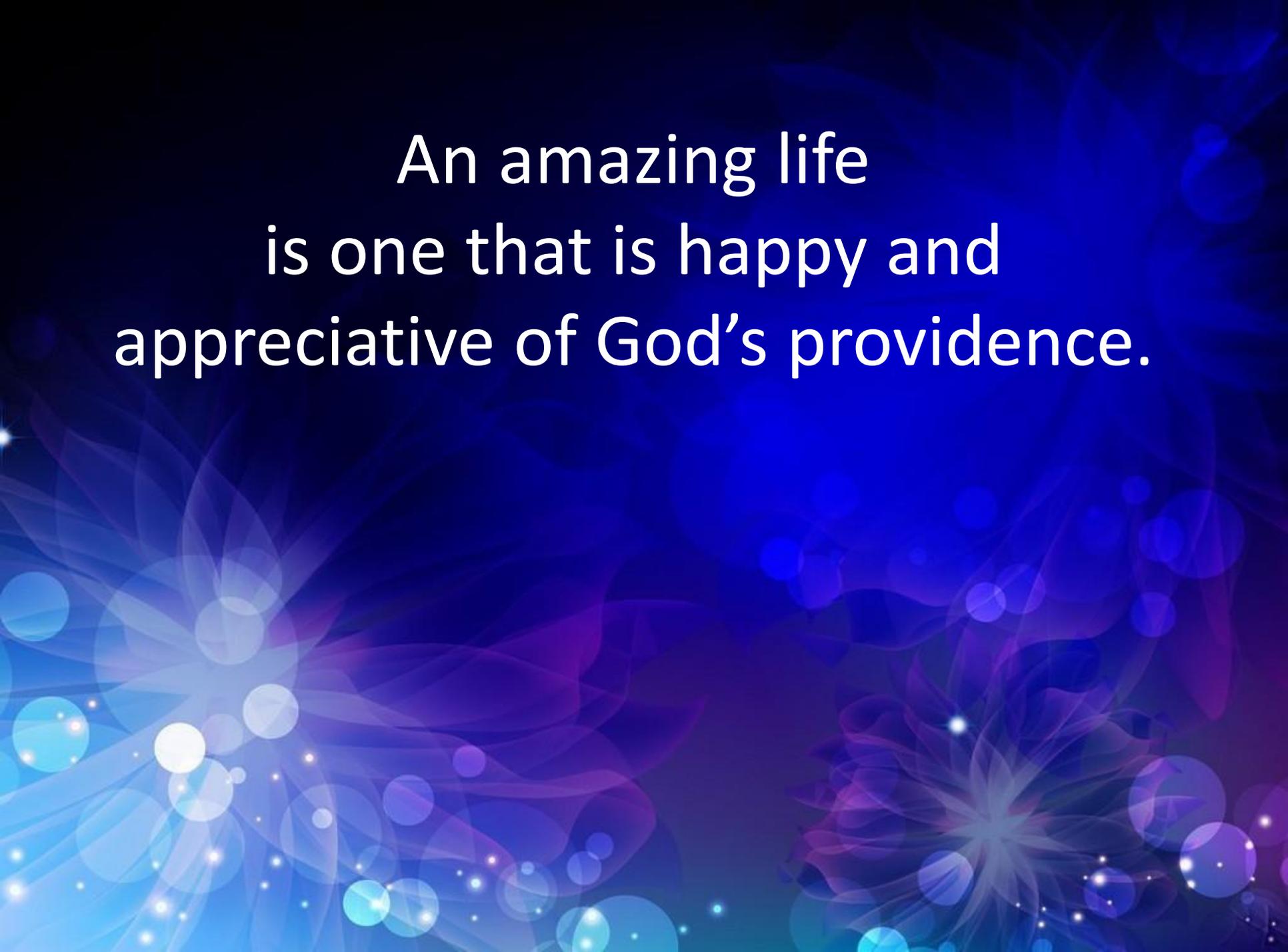
At six weeks old, Crosby caught a cold and developed inflammation of the eyes. The medication applied to treat the inflammation damaged her optic nerves and blinded her. Crosby lost her eyesight but not her love for life.

She lived a life faithful and appreciative of God's providence. She was never for a moment bitter about her condition. She remained happy and positive through out her life even having lost her daughter soon after birth.

Crosby later remarked:

"It seemed intended by the blessed providence of God that I should be blind all my life, and I thank him for the dispensation. If perfect earthly sight were offered me tomorrow I would not accept it. I might not have sung hymns to the praise of God if I had been distracted by the beautiful and interesting things about me."

An amazing life
is one that is happy and
appreciative of God's providence.



Enjoy what we have
rather than whining
about what we do not have.

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An amazing life can be yours
if you follow these
7 simple biblical principles.

Life amazingly.

God bless....