

## From Crisis to Purpose . . .

“Mid-life can be the most productive—or destructive—years of your life.”<sup>1</sup>

Midlife can be a time of self-doubt and disappointments that can lead to irrational thinking, impetuous purchases, and irresponsible relationships.

But this crisis can also be an immensely productive time as well, a time when people refocus their priorities and exchange old desires with new dreams. During this time of crisis you can come into a deeper knowledge of who you are and what your relationship with God can be.

In fact, a midlife crisis may be a God-produced event designed to shake you out of your comfort zone so that you might achieve the highest purpose for which you were created.

*“Let us not grow weary of doing good,  
for in due season we will reap,  
if we do not give up.”  
(Galatians 6:9)*

**Q:** “How can a husband and a wife help each other in a difficult midlife crisis?”

- Put romance back into your marriage.
- Consider a rather unusual passage to relate to a marriage, but one that can be applied to your relationship.

*“I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.”  
(Revelation 2:4–5)*

## 1. The Problem

- Have you “*abandoned [emotionally] the love you had at first*”? This does not necessarily refer to a physical leaving, but rather to the absence of a sense of connection, therefore, the absence of a sense of romance.

## 2. The Solution

- “*Remember . . . from where you have fallen.*” Remember what attracted you to each other in the first place. Those traits and attributes are still present, although covered up with the overlay of marital neglect.
- “*Repent.*” Change the direction of your relationship. Ask yourself, *What are the things that are keeping us from intimacy?* Schedules? Wrong priorities? Hurts? What? Identify those things and commit to change.
- “*Do the works you did at first.*” Spend time together. Be courteous to one another. Talk!

## Midlife Crisis Checklist

“Our spirits are restless until they find their rest in God.”

—Saint Augustine

- I feel trapped in my circumstances.
- I wish I could disappear.
- I feel I am getting old too fast.
- I feel I've never had the chance to do what I really wanted to do.
- I feel like a failure.
- I feel unappreciated.
- I don't have any real purpose for living.
- I have grown spiritually numb to the Lord and the church.
- I daydream and fantasize.
- I have little interest in sex with my spouse.
- I am easily angered.
- I feel that now is my last chance for happiness.

*“Even to your old age I am he, and to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save.”*  
(Isaiah 46:4)

## Surface Causes of a Midlife Crisis<sup>2</sup>

Major Transitions  
from One Season of Life to Another

- T**houghts of one's own mortality
- R**eassessment of lifelong goals and values
- A**chievement of goals but not finding fulfillment
- N**ormal biological and physiological changes
- S**exual drive (diminishes in the male, increases in the female)
- I**nsufficient financial resources
- T**raumatic illness or death of parents, family, or close friends
- I**dentify misplaced (in a person, a job, or social status)
- O**ffspring at difficult age and/or leaving home
- N**arrowing of job opportunities
- S**ocial emphasis on youth

*“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.”*  
(Ecclesiastes 3:1)

## Move from Crisis to Christ

Who am I? (1 John 3:1)

What is my purpose in life? (Romans 12:1–2)

To whom do I really want to give myself?  
(Matthew 22:37–39)

What do I want to do for the rest of my life?  
(Psalm 40:8)

Where does God fit into my life? (Psalm 23:1–6)

What does God do with my wrong choices?  
(Lamentations 3:22–23)

Where does my hope ultimately lie? (Psalm 62:5–8)

*“I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.”*  
(Psalm 40:8)

## Key Verse to Memorize

*“Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD,  
whose trust is the LORD.”  
(Jeremiah 17:7)*

## Key Passage to Read and Reread

2 Samuel 11:1–26

## Model a Positive Midlife Message<sup>3</sup>

I will regard midlife as different, not inferior.  
(Ecclesiastes 3:1)

I will realize the advantages of aging. (Job 12:12)

I will accept the physical changes that are happening  
to me. (Isaiah 40:31)

I will evaluate my life purpose. (Colossians 1:10)

I will set goals for new challenges. (Isaiah 32:8)

I will aim for sincere love in my relationships.  
(1 Corinthians 13:4–7)

I will focus on creatively communicating love to  
others. (John 13:34)

I will determine to make the most of the time God  
gives me. (Psalm 90:12)

I will listen for God’s direction in my life.  
(Proverbs 16:9)

## Related Topics . . .

- Aging:  
*Wisdom for the Winter Years*
- Divorce:  
*A New Beginning from Brokenness*
- Dysfunctional Family:  
*Making Peace with Your Past*
- Purpose in Life:  
*Pinpointing Your Priorities*
- Rejection:  
*Healing a Wounded Heart*
- Widowhood:  
*Wisdom in the Wilderness*

HOPE FOR THE HEART’s *Biblical Counseling Library Quick Reference* provides immediate, concise, biblical truths for today’s problems.

For more comprehensive help, refer to our *Biblical Counseling Keys . . .*

### Midlife Crisis:

*Facing the Fork in the Road.*

If you would like more information,  
call 1-800-488-HOPE (4673) or visit  
[www.hopefortheheart.org](http://www.hopefortheheart.org).

For prayer encouragement and biblical counsel  
call 1-866-570-HOPE (4673).

1. Jim Conway and Sally Conway, *Maximize Your Mid-Life*, Pocket Guides (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1987), back cover.  
2. Conway and Conway, *Maximize Your Mid-Life*, 18–26.  
3. For this section see Ray Ortlund and Anne Ortlund, “Middle Age,” in *Christian Counselor’s Manual*, ed. Gary R. Collins and Lawrence M. Tornquist (Waco, TX: Word, 1980).



*Together . . . Changing Minds.  
Changing Hearts. Changing Lives.*

P.O. Box 7, Dallas, TX 75221

Scripture taken from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*.  
Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of  
Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.