

**LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY**

# Daily Meditations



**April 2018**

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*Partners in Hope Recovery Society  
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outreach organization  
offering hope, support, and healing  
through Jesus Christ  
to victims of  
harmful circumstances and dependencies,  
as they reclaim the gift of their life.*

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LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY  
**Daily Meditations**

**APRIL 2018**

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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SUNDAY, APRIL 1, 2018

## HAPPY EASTER – JESUS IS ALIVE

Jesus is risen from the dead! Because He lives, we also shall live. My life and my recovery have hope because of this truth. All sin – from the beginning of time to the end of time – was laid on Jesus and not even the awful weight of death for these sins could hold Him down. Jesus' resurrection demonstrates that no sin or evil, no pain or brokenness could ever overcome the power and love of God for those who are in Christ Jesus.

*I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms.* (Ephesians 1:19-20 NLT)

No matter how miserable or fearsome our lives may have been, not even the weight of that can hold us down when Jesus Christ fills us with life. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is in us when we completely surrender our will and our lives to God. Are we willing to do that?

*God works for good in all things for those who love Him, those who are called according to His purpose.* (Romans 8:28 NIV)

What seems impossible for us, is only impossible when God is not involved. When we truly seek God, things happen that are beyond all that we could ask for or imagine. God's ways are more generous than we ever dared to hope. God's power is stronger than anything we have previously encountered. God's kindness to us is more than any loving response we've ever experienced.

When we invite Jesus into our lives He brings power with solutions and hope. He fills us with His Holy Spirit. He fills us with peace and joy.

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, I believe that the death and resurrection of Jesus gives evidence of the fact that You have power over sin and death. Today, I turn my will and my life over to Your care and ask that You make me alive in my spirit. Teach me Your ways and give me the desire and power to follow You all the days of my life. Amen*

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**Jesus' resurrection demonstrates that no sin or evil, no pain or brokenness could ever overcome the power and love of God for those who are in Christ Jesus.**

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MONDAY, APRIL 2, 2018

## THE EASTER QUESTION

Most of Jesus' friends abandoned Him before He died on the cross. After His death they huddled together in a locked room wondering what to do next. In their grief and sorrow, they were sure that the troubles that awaited them outside the room were more than they could endure. They didn't know how to go forward because Jesus was dead and they had no hope -- or so they thought. While they sat in that room, an incredible thing happened. Jesus appeared to them.

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**Will we, like Thomas, realize that something incredible happens when we ask Jesus to show us who He truly is?**

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*On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.* (John 20:19-20)

Jesus gave them convincing proof that He was truly alive. He wasn't just a ghost or a delusion, but a person they could feel and touch. He was alive! Wonder, joy and peace filled their hearts. However, one of Jesus' disciples, named Thomas, wasn't with the others when Jesus first made an appearance to them. When Thomas was told that they had seen Jesus, he doubted that it was true.

Like Thomas, some of us have known the discouragement of hopes dashed and opportunities lost. In our broken fearful lives, we doubt the presence of God with us to help.

Later when they were all together, including Thomas, Jesus came again. Jesus did not judge Thomas for having doubts but invited Him to, "**Stop doubting and believe.**" Jesus also told Thomas, "**Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.**" (John 20:29 NIV)

Will we, like Thomas, realize that something incredible happens when we ask Jesus to show us who He truly is?

*Prayer: Lord Jesus, Forgive me for doubting who You are and what You have done for me. Help me to be like Thomas who stopped doubting and believed. Amen*

TUESDAY, APRIL 3, 2018

## YOU ARE ONLY AS SICK AS YOUR SECRETS

In recovery circles there is a saying, "You are only as sick as your secrets." Recovery is a process where, with God and trusted caring people, we begin to come alive to the life God has planned for us. In the right place, and at the appropriate time, we start dealing with our darkest secrets.

***The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living.*** (Romans 13:12 NLT)

We follow the outline of the 12 Step Program and begin to put each of the steps into practice. Sometimes we find that while we are ready for God's will to be done in some areas, we are fearful and uneasy about having God's light shine in others. When we are unwilling to expose our hidden secrets, the guilt and shame from our past festers and causes harm to our recovery.

***There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God's one and only Son. And the judgment is based on this fact: God's light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil. All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed.*** (John 3:18-20 NLT)

God wants us to come out of darkness. The longer we cooperate with darkness, the more we will hide from the light. If we choose to remain in darkness we will not be aware of the light that leads to life even though it is available to us.

***Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, "I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life."*** (John 8:12 NLT)

To the extent that we surrender our lives to the light of Christ and receive His healing, we will be strengthened with His glorious power to live life to the full.

***Prayer: Loving God, Many things are buried in me and I'm not sure how to bring them to the light. Please strengthen me with Your power to follow the light that leads to life and joyous living. Amen***

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 2018

## BRINGING SECRETS OUT OF THE DARKNESS

Sometimes, when it particularly suits us, we make excuses for not telling the truth. Some people say things like "don't ask, don't tell" as a way to live in blind tolerance with what others are doing. However, we will make ourselves vulnerable to relapse if we tell ourselves, we'll be fine in our recovery if we, "don't ask, don't tell" because we're rejecting God's instruction about being truthful.

Sometimes we have past events that we are not ready to deal with. We choose to live with secrets simply because we haven't been caught. We convince ourselves that no one needs to know about certain things that have happened in our lives.

***It's time to bring the hidden things of darkness to the light where they can be identified and healed or forgiven.***

Regardless of the reason for our secrets, we are aware of the uneasiness within us. We know what has been done to us. We also know what we have done and project how we would feel if someone was to find out.

***Jesus said: People do not light a lamp and then hide it in a jar or put it under a bed. Instead, they put it on a stand. Then those who come in can see its light. What is hidden will be seen. And what is out of sight will be brought into the open and made known.*** (Luke 8:16-17 NIRV)

God offers us a way out of our fear of exposure and humiliation. Jesus said that if we acknowledge the truth, the truth will set us free. It's time to bring the hidden things of darkness to the light where they can be identified and healed or forgiven.

***Therefore, since God in his mercy has given us this new way, we never give up. We reject all shameful deeds and underhanded methods. We don't try to trick anyone or distort the word of God. We tell the truth before God, and all who are honest know this.*** (2 Corinthians 4:1-2 NLT)

God has given us a clear picture of what produces a good life and what causes harm. If we continue to keep dark secrets in our heart, they will hinder our healing and impede our life with God in recovery.

***Prayer: Gracious God, Please give me the courage to reveal all my hidden secrets and receive Your forgiveness and healing. My desire is to faithfully walk with You in the light of Your presence. Amen***

THURSDAY, APRIL 5, 2018

## LOVING OTHERS – MAKING AMENDS

As we recover from addiction, it is emotionally draining when we come to the place of dealing with the harm we have caused others. We've lived for a long time blaming others for the way they treated us. What we often fail to see is how our own actions, resulting from the anger and fear we felt, also passed on harm to others. Regardless of the reason for our behaviour, we are encouraged to make a list of those we have harmed and become willing to make amends to all of them.

*You're familiar with the command to the ancients, 'Do not murder.' I'm telling you that anyone who is so much as angry with a brother or sister is guilty of murder. Carelessly call a brother 'idiot!' and you just might find yourself hauled into court. Thoughtlessly yell 'stupid!' at a sister and you are on the brink of hellfire. The simple moral fact is that words kill.* (Matthew 5:22-23 MSG)

Deep rooted unforgiveness results in angry outbursts and rage towards others. Sometimes even those who genuinely love us suffer because of what is going on at a deep level within us. We may feel sorry for what we did or said to a person after an abusive outburst, and perhaps have apologized, but to fully make amends we need to understand what causes us to behave as we do. Unless we come to terms with the root of our problem we will again behave in the same way and cause even more harm.

*One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."* (Matthew 22:35-40 NIV)

Making amends is a test of our integrity to honour others above ourselves. Let's consider who we are today and to whom we need to make amends.

*Prayer: Gracious God, Please heal me from the wounds that I carry and enable me to forgive those who have harmed me. Help me also make amends to those I have harmed. Amen*

FRIDAY, APRIL 6, 2018

## WISDOM FOR THE RECOVERY JOURNEY

From cover to cover the Bible is filled with wisdom and good direction for our lives. As we read and meditate on God's word and obey His instructions we will experience a meaningful and purposeful life. This is what Step 11 speaks to when it reminds us, *"we sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out."*

*The wise are mightier than the strong, and those with knowledge grow stronger and stronger. If you really want to become wise, you must begin by having respect for the Lord. All those who follow his rules have good understanding.* (Proverbs 24:5 NLT, Psalm 111:10 NIRV)

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**God wants to help us know what is right and good. All we have to do is ask Him.**

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God wants to help us know what is right and good. All we have to do is ask Him. *If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.* (James 1:5 NLT)

Our part in this process is to put God's ways into practice so we can test and see that what God says really works. We will grow stronger as our actions reflect the wisdom that fills our hearts. God doesn't just give us words and instructions. When we surrender our lives to God and invite Him to be the Lord of our lives, God's Spirit comes to live in our hearts. He teaches us God's will and gives us the power to carry it out.

*But when the Friend comes, the Spirit of the Truth, he will take you by the hand and guide you into all the truth there is. He won't draw attention to himself but will make sense out of what is about to happen and, indeed, out of all that I have done and said.* (John 16:13 MSG)

Not only do we gain wisdom as we seek God's direction and practice His principles in all our affairs, but we enjoy safety and peace as well.

*Prayer: Loving God, My desire is that You would grant me a willing heart to follow You. Give me understanding of Your word and help me to obey what You say, so I may have wisdom in all I do and say. Amen*

SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 2018

## OUR BEST THINKING GOT US HERE

When we admitted that our lives had become unmanageable, many of us entered into detox and then treatment programs where we found support, and daily we grew stronger. We began to attend 12-step recovery meetings and in many of those meetings often heard the words, "Our best thinking got us here". With the clarity that time in recovery brings, we were able to give witness to the fact that our self-centered thinking got us into the mess we were in.

**Christ is the mighty power of God and the wisdom of God. This "foolish" plan of God is far wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God's weakness is far stronger than the greatest of human strength** (1 Corinthians 1:24b-25 NLT)

Many of us have also discovered that no matter how strong we might be feeling, or how smart we think we are, it's not enough to bring us through to sustained recovery. We will tire out and we will give up the struggle if we think any physical or mental strength we feel is enough for the long haul. Strength and wisdom are gifts. They are the result of an ongoing relationship with God. They come from trusting God, waiting for God to act, following God's word, and seeking His plan for our lives. This is what gives us joy, keeps us safe, and helps us respond differently to people and circumstances around us. This is the sure foundation on which to build our new life in recovery.

Outside of God, we can't even maintain the desire to do what is right let alone find the strength to act on what we know we ought to do.

**For God is working in you, giving you the desire to obey him and the power to do what pleases him.** (Philippians 2:13 NLT)

It is the experience of those who walk with God, that we can rely on His power when we feel weak, and that's what actually makes us strong.

God says, **"My gracious favor is all you need. My power works best in your weakness."** (2 Corinthians 12:9 NLT)

*Prayer: Thank you God for giving us new life, new thoughts and new strength, as we daily surrender our lives to You and live in the power of Your Holy Spirit. Amen*

SUNDAY, APRIL 8, 2018

## SUNDAY PSALM – SURPRISING WISDOM

It's amazing that after all the chaos and heartbreak of our self-absorbed life in addiction that we could be so changed that we now passionately love God and His laws. Our new way of life is certainly a testimony to God's amazing work of grace in our hearts.

***Oh, how I love your instructions! I think about them all day long. Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are my constant guide.***

***Yes, I have more insight than my teachers, for I am always thinking of your laws. I am even wiser than my elders, for I have kept your commandments. I have refused to walk on any evil path, so that I may remain obedient to your word. I haven't turned away from your regulations, for you have taught me well. How sweet your words taste to me; they are sweeter than honey. Your commandments give me understanding; no wonder I hate every false way of life.*** (Psalm 119:97-104 NLT)

Love from God has dramatically changed us and now our love for God is daily transforming our way of living. We're not serving God out of fear but responding to His great kindness and forgiveness. The light of God's truth is exposing the lies and deception of the evil one. Now, at times, we are even surprised by the wisdom that comes to our minds and out of our own mouths as God works in and through us.

As we look back on the way we used to live, and see others still living in the deceit of addiction, we wonder how we could also have been so blind. Now that we have learned to hate false ways and clearly identify with the goodness of God, others are amazed at what we know and how we now live and behave towards others.

Life gets sweeter as we consistently walk and talk with God. He has taught us well.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I love Your laws. They make me wiser than I ever thought I could be. Obeying them has given me a life that is sweeter than I could ever have imagined. How can I ever thank you enough? Amen***

MONDAY, APRIL 9, 2018

## SPEAKING WITH HONOUR – NO MORE SWEARING

What does speaking honourably have to do with recovery? So, what if I swear? So, what if I tell off-colour jokes? To live in recovery is to live as respectful people, honouring God and those God loves. How does my speech reflect this?

***You must not misuse the name of the Lord your God. The Lord will not let you go unpunished if you misuse his name. Our Father in heaven, may your name be honored.*** (Deuteronomy 5:11, Matthew 6:9 NLT)

Many people, when they don't like what is happening around them, often react with words such as, "Oh for God's sake" or "Jesus Christ". In that setting, there really isn't a desire for God or His will when these words are spoken. It is a disrespectful misuse of His name.

God's name reflects His reputation and demonstrates His character in all that He says and does. Each time we pray the Lord's Prayer we are committing ourselves to upholding God's name with reverence and using it with respect. In the same way that we would not appreciate people saying and doing things in our name, especially things we do not approve of, we should not invoke God's name in things He would not approve of.

***I bow before your holy Temple as I worship. I praise your name for your unfailing love and faithfulness; for your promises are backed by all the honor of your name.*** (Psalm 138:2 NLT)

Many of us would rather not swear but we get careless and the words are out of our mouth before we even think. It's time to both think and speak with honour about the God who loved and cared for us even when we didn't care for ourselves. God sent His beloved son Jesus into the world to die for our sins so that we might be made right with Him and live forever with Him in heaven. We need to think about what causes us to so carelessly misuse the name of this awesome God of unfailing love?

***Prayer: Our Father in heaven, may your name be honored on my lips today and every day. Help me to cease speaking careless words and instead honour You in all my ways. Amen***

TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 2018

## WHAT DO COARSE JOKES AND DIRTY LANGUAGE HAVE TO DO WITH MY RECOVERY?

Today we hear so much profanity in music, in movies, on TV, on the street, and in print that it almost seems it's the normal way to communicate. A great deal of swearing includes references to bodily functions or ugly labels of body parts. These words are used as a slur and are often intended to hurl filth and negativity on a person. Movie producers have often rationalized the presence of profanity in movies as being a more realistic expression of what people say or do in the life scenes they are portraying. Their observation of human interaction may be accurate, but God's commandment is that we abstain from such talk.

***Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes—these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God.*** (Ephesians 5:4 NLT)

***It is time to be mindful of words that easily flow from our mouths.***

We need to ask ourselves if we honour God with the content of our speech. Stories and jokes may celebrate and honour a person or, they may degrade a person's race or their ethnic culture. Traditional roles such as that of a mother-in-law have been the focus of many jokes which demean a beautiful family relationship. Many stories in the comedy routine of a stand-up comic have sexual undertones and are demeaning to both males and females. They may draw lots of laughter from the audience, but the Bible encourages us to have no part in this kind of talk.

***But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language.*** (Colossians 3:8 NLT)

Moments of anger, disappointment, and frustration are filled with the temptation for us to speak dishonourably. It's so easy to shame and curse a person in reaction to what they have said or done. This is not God's way of dealing with problems. God wants us to reason together, to forgive, and to bless. When we speak, God wants us to encourage and uplift others. Perhaps it is time to be mindful of words that easily flow from our mouths.

***And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right!*** (James 3:10 NLT)

***Prayer: Lord Jesus, Set a guard over my lips and help me be mindful of the words that come from my mouth. My desire is to bless and not curse those around me. Amen***

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 2018

## UNDERSTANDING THE CARE OF GOD

On a regular basis, when you climb into bed at night do you sleep soundly, or do you count sheep? Do you feel at peace, or do you worry about the problems tomorrow may bring? Jesus often told stories about everyday life to help us understand spiritual principles. One day Jesus spoke about a secure sheep pen where sheep were held. This sheep pen provided shelter against thieves, wild animals, and the weather. In telling the story Jesus wanted us to understand how we can find security and belonging.

***Anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice.*** (John 10:1-5 NIV)

The sheep pen that Jesus refers to appears to be a safe place in this world. Jesus is the entry gate by which the sheep enter the safe place. He is also the Good Shepherd who cares for the sheep. Who are the sheep who are cared for by the Good Shepherd? They are the ones who have accepted Jesus' death on the cross as payment for their sins. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep and is the only gateway to God's promised care and protection. If sheep remain outside the sheep pen, they are vulnerable to enemies. Predators may be lurking. Sheep stealers may try to steal, kill and destroy the helpless sheep. However, when sheep are under the care of the Good Shepherd they can lie down and know they are safe in His care.

***The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need. He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name.*** (Psalm 23:1-3 NLT)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to be safe and secure in Your care. I am thankful for Jesus who gave His life that I could become Your precious child and live with You forever. Help me to hear only Your voice and follow only You. I am forever grateful that You care for Your sheep. Amen***

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***When sheep are under the care of the Good Shepherd they can lie down and know they are safe in His care.***

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THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2018

## ACCUSATION AND CONDEMNATION

If we obsess on negative words that others have said it affects us and may contribute to relapse. A better way is to focus on God's word which supports our new life in recovery. ***There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.*** (Romans 8:1 NKJV)

Hearing accusation or condemnation from others, or from within, has a negative impact on our self-worth. We judge ourselves and tell ourselves we are a failure or stupid. We may also tell ourselves we are not making progress in our relationship with God or in our life in recovery. When we take our focus off God's word and dwell on condemning words, we begin to believe recovery is too hard, we're too messed up, it hurts too much, or it costs too much to change. One of Satan's tactics is to tempt us to do wrong and then immediately accuse us of being weak and powerless. His one purpose is to get us so confused, filled with shame, and discouraged, that we simply give up, go out, and pick up again.

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***Satan's one purpose is to get us so confused, filled with shame, and discouraged, that we simply give up, go out, and pick up again.***

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***I know that as soon as I'm gone, vicious wolves are going to show up and rip into this flock, men from your very own ranks twisting words so as to seduce disciples into following them instead of Jesus. So stay awake and keep up your guard.*** (Acts 20:29-30 MSG)

We need to ask ourselves if the words we are currently hearing in our heads, or from another person, are condemning words related to the past. Then we need to ask ourselves, "Why do I believe these words?" We need to challenge all accusation and condemnation with the truth of God's word in the Bible. Our recovery depends on what we believe, and we need to focus on words that build us up rather than those that pull us down.

***Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse.*** (Philippians 4:8 MSG)

***Prayer: Loving God, Help me to challenge self-condemnation with the truth of Your word. I am thankful that I have hope and am blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. Amen***

FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 2018

## IMPERFECT BUT NOT DISCOURAGED

God wants us to be successful in recovery and in life. One of the truths that God shares with us is that Satan's primary mission is to constantly find ways to accuse us. The Bible warns us that he is prowling around looking for ways to deceive and discourage.

***Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.*** (1 Peter 5:8-9 NIV)

It doesn't matter to the devil what he uses to accuse and condemn us. If we are doing well he'll remind us of times in the past when we did poorly. If we experience joy in following the ways of God he'll attempt to steal our joy by making us believe we are proud and self-righteous. We need to believe what God says about us and be conscious of the fact that the devil is a liar.

***He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.*** (John 8:44b NLT)

No matter how well we are doing, the evil one's tactic is to eat away at our confidence through showing us how imperfect we are. He will remind us of a time in the past when we relapsed. He will tell us that we should have done more, or still could do more, to withstand temptation. While we can't justify a bad choice based on several good ones, it is important not to focus on failure when we've had many successes in the same period. God is more patient with us than we are with ourselves. We need to discipline ourselves to rejoice in the encouragement that God's word brings and embrace the unfailing love of God.

***And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in his sight. And remember, our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved.*** (2 Peter 3:14-15a NLT)

*Prayer: Gracious God, I am thankful that Your mercy is new every morning and that Your love and compassion never cease towards Your children. I am grateful that Your word leads me in the path of right living. Thank You for loving and caring for me. Amen*

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***We need to discipline ourselves to rejoice in the encouragement that God's word brings and embrace the unfailing love of God.***

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SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 2018

## WHO HAS AUTHORITY IN MY LIFE?

God's purpose in creating humans in His likeness was that they would be in relationship with Him and reflect His image on the earth. In creating this beautiful earth for humans to dwell in, God's desire was that they would live well and enjoy everything He created. However, through lies and scheming, Satan managed to make the first humans believe that God was withholding something good from them.

***Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."*** So God

***created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*** (Genesis 1:26-27 NIV)

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***Perhaps it is time to reflect on who we really want to have authority over our lives.***

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Satan, a created angel, once held a place of great importance before the throne of God. However, he became prideful and wanted to be worshipped like the Most High God and, because of his pride, he was cast out of heaven. Now he roams the earth seeking to destroy humans who are made in the image of God.

***How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, "I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God. I will make myself like the Most High." But you are brought down to the realm of the dead, to the depths of the pit.*** (Isaiah 14:12-15 NIV)

When we follow the desires of our own heart, whether in an addictive lifestyle or in just ignoring the God who created us, we are disloyal to God and are giving Satan authority over us. We are saying by our actions that we have found something better than God, and what He has lavishly provided for us. Perhaps it is time to reflect on who we really want to have authority over our lives.

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for my rebellion against You and Your ways. Thank You for pursuing me with Your love. Thank You for sending Jesus into the world to free me from the power of Satan. Today, I choose to give You authority over my life. Amen*

SUNDAY, APRIL 15, 2018

## SUNDAY PSALM – LIFE WORTH LIVING

***Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path. I've promised it once, and I'll promise it again: I will obey your righteous regulations. I have suffered much, O Lord; restore my life again as you promised. Lord, accept my offering of praise, and teach me your regulations. My life constantly hangs in the balance, but I will not stop obeying your instructions. The wicked have set their traps for me, but I will not turn from your commandments. Your laws are my treasure; they are my heart's delight. I am determined to keep your decrees to the very end.*** (Psalm 119:105-112 NLT)

Today's words from the Bible encourage us to have hope as we seek life with God in recovery. We have suffered much. On many occasions life seemed to be hanging in the balance. Even now, as we determine to walk a new path, we hear the voice of the enemy tempting us back to our old way of thinking and operating. However, we have God's promise that He will help us stand firm in Christ. Thankfully, God's promises are unlike our promises. His promises are trustworthy and reliable.

As we walk forward, one step at a time, we need to keep our focus on the Lord, allowing His word to bring light to our path. We will find, as we continue to journey with the Lord and follow His instructions, that His way is perfect. We will experience the good life we were previously seeking but never able to find, and we will experience joy. We may not be able to see too far ahead of us, but we certainly have light for our next step and the presence of a loving God accompanying us.

We don't need to understand everything today. God will teach us as we go. The pathway to peace is found in persevering and following God's righteous regulations to the very end. God's laws become the treasure we seek and our heart's delight.

***Prayer: Lord Jesus, In your light, I will see light, for You are the light of the world. Please help me to know You more and follow Your ways in all my affairs. Thank You for Your presence ever with me. Amen***

MONDAY, APRIL 16, 2018

## TURNED OUR WILL AND OUR LIFE OVER

When we turn our will and our life over to the care of God we are surrendering ourselves to the work of God in our lives. In the "12 x 12" book it says, "It is only by ACTION that we can cut away the self-will which has always blocked the entry of God into our lives." Why would we take on this challenging action and give God entry into our lives? The truth is, we only experience life to the full when we shape our lives by God's principles.

***What a stack of blessing you have piled up for those who worship you, ready and waiting for all who run to you to escape an unkind world.*** (Psalm 31:19 MSG)

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***We only  
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Only by inviting God to live in us and to direct our thinking and behaving will we ever find what we've been looking for in life.

***So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then. But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy.*** (1 Peter 1:14-15 NLT)

God created us, and He is the only one who knows the way to a life that is truly fulfilling. To achieve life to the full we need to surrender our will and our life into God's care. This will mean NOT always having our own way. Our happiness is NOT the result of getting what we want when we want it. In fact, true happiness will only be achieved when we repeatedly say, "NO" to ourselves and "YES" to God.

Using our drug of choice or engaging in destructive habits is a reaction to whatever is going on inside us. To be willing to face those deep-rooted issues and want to live God's way is something God must do in us. In each situation, as we surrender our will, God will change us from the inside out. Something will come alive within us, something that has never been alive before, and it will be truly satisfying.

***Prayer: God, Today, I surrender my will and my life into Your care and ask You to show me the way forward to a meaningful, satisfying life. Amen***

TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 2018

## WELCOMING FRIENDSHIP IN RECOVERY

Some of us slid into destructive and addictive lifestyles out of a desire to belong and have friends. We longed to be known and supported. We wanted to matter to someone. We longed to have people around us who would enrich our lives by just being together with them. The ongoing pain of loneliness, even in recovery, is a challenge to maintaining sobriety. Thankfully, through His word, God gives us instruction on how to build lasting friendships.

***One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend*** (Proverbs 18:24 NIV, Proverbs 27:17 NLT)

Healthy friendships are characterized by mutual respect and sharing. They are based on love, caring, and interest in the wellbeing of each other. Friends discuss God's word, pray for each other, and build each other up. They laugh, they weep, they mourn, and they rejoice with each other depending on the season of life. They share their experience, strength, and hope with each other whenever they talk together. When it's appropriate they even hold each other accountable.

***Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.*** (John 15:13-15 NIV)

As we come out of the isolation of addiction and move into the life God created us to live it's good to ask ourselves, "How am I being a friend?" "How am I welcoming the presence of healthy friends into my daily life?"

***Prayer: Thank you God for the opportunity I have been given to be a friend and to welcome friendship with others. Teach me how to do that well as you restore me to the life of relationship you created me to enjoy. Amen***

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18, 2018

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS OVER TIME

A long as we are trapped in a destructive lifestyle of addiction we are unable to sustain healthy friendships. One of the gifts of our new life with God in recovery is learning how to share ourselves with others and develop meaningful relationships. Jesus was a good friend to twelve men who became His disciples and He served and taught them well. Jesus also received friendship from these men in return.

***This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me.*** (John 15:12-15 NLT)

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***The bottom line of all healthy relationships is that we help each other know and serve God well.***

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What are some characteristics of being in a healthy relationship? Friends trust and rely on each other. They may not always agree but they respect one another's differences. Friends are kind and understanding towards one another. They stand together in times of trouble even when others can't or won't stand with them. Friends celebrate the good times and encourage each other during the bad times. They tell each other the truth -- the truth they like to hear as well as the truth they don't want to hear but need to.

***A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity. My intercessor is my friend as my eyes pour out tears to God; on behalf of a man he pleads with God as one pleads for a friend.*** (Proverbs 17:17, Job 16:20-21 NIV)

The bottom line of all healthy relationships is that we help each other know and serve God well. Those who fail to examine themselves in light of God's word, and the advice of good friends, often end up enslaved by their destructive habits and dependencies.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, you created me to live in loving relationship with You and with others. Help me to tear down the walls I have built to keep You and others out. Give me the will and desire to live in the light of Your love as I share in respectful relationships where each person cares for the other. Amen***

THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 2018

## COURAGE TO CHOOSE CHANGE

We have all sorts of reasons why we think we can't change. We've told ourselves that we've always been this way. We've tried and failed too often. There's no hope. No one will help us. We have become familiar with our limitations and what is necessary to just get by each day. We are so focused on problems and blaming others that we no longer take time to think about hope and solutions. In fact, we've come to believe that it's impossible to get well and have a good life

Jesus met a man who had been ill for 38 years. He'd tried many times to get well but there was always some reason why it didn't happen. Over the years he began to believe he couldn't do what was necessary to be healed and that no one would help him. His identity as a powerless victim was rooted firmly in his heart. He believed that his situation was hopeless. Jesus knew this but also knew many other things the man did not know. Jesus asked the man a revealing question, "Would you like to get well?"

***When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, "Would you like to get well?" "I can't, sir," the sick man said, "for I have no one to put me into the pool when the water bubbles up. Someone else always gets there ahead of me." Jesus told him, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!" Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking!*** (John 5:6-9 NLT)

The courage to change that Jesus offers us is the willingness to let go of those things that have kept us in hopelessness and begin to believe His ability and willingness to heal us. Jesus asks us to do two things – trust Him and obey what He tells us to do. Are we willing to live in the courage to change that Jesus is making available to us today?

***Prayer: God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Amen***

FRIDAY, APRIL 20, 2018

## OVERCOMING A VICTIM MENTALITY

The victim mentality is quite widespread in our society and particularly in the world of addiction and recovery. A victim is a person who has been abused, hurt, or oppressed, and is without the needed knowledge or power to change their circumstances. A victim mentality develops when a person believes they are so marred by an experience that they are unable to take responsibility for today's issues. In their minds, they live as if they are still under the influence of the abuser.

God knows, and God cares about everything we have experienced. In love, God invites all of us who have been victimized to come to Him and receive healing.

***Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.*** (Matthew 11:28-30 NIV)

Even though each person desires and needs intimacy, people with a victim mentality struggle to form emotional intimacy in healthy relationships. When their neediness causes a relationship to break down, they feel like they have been victimized again. Their unresolved offences, grief, and bitterness continually sabotages their life and relationships. They choose to believe that no one truly understands their situation, and no one really cares.

The good news is that God is aware that none of us can face these fearful injustices on our own. God is willing and able today to heal hearts and speak peace and hope to our troubled souls. God's desire is that we accept His love and healing and trust His power to help us overcome the injustices of our past.

***You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.*** (1 John 4:4 NIV)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I come to you today with my painful memories and wounded soul. I ask You to comfort and heal me in those places that are bruised and broken. Supported by Your love and strength I can be an overcomer and let go of my victim mentality. Amen***

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***The courage to change that Jesus offers us is the willingness to let go of those things that have kept us in hopelessness and begin to believe His ability and willingness to heal us.***

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***God's desire is that we accept His love and healing and trust His power to help us overcome the injustices of our past.***

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SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 2018

## LIVING IN VICTORY RATHER THAN AS A VICTIM

A person with a victim mentality has learned to focus on suffering while trying to avoid more at any cost. Some isolate and live behind high walls. They complain and blame and are easily angered. Some bury their feelings, opinions and desires and just do what they are told, believing they are powerless. They believe that life can only improve if someone else fixes what is wrong.

God says, ***I have swept away your sins like a cloud. I have scattered your offenses like the morning mist. Oh, return to me, for I have paid the price to set you free.*** (Isaiah 44:22 NLT)

God promises that regardless of what has happened to us, we can have victory over it by trusting Him and following His direction. God also assures us that nothing in heaven or on earth can separate us from His love.

***Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep." No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.*** (Romans 8:35-37 NLT)

While our specific experience of pain might not be mentioned in the above verses, the intent of the writer is to tell us that whatever injustice and trouble we have suffered, God's word remains true in our situation. God promises us that we can live successfully. We don't need to just survive and cope with what life has handed us. Our future has not been stolen by the abusive person in our past. God wants to pour out His grace upon us and give us new life. Are we willing to leave the old and embrace the new?

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to let go of the insanity of my past that continues to fill my heart and mind. Help me to embrace your love and healing. Fill me with your grace and teach me how to live well in healthy relationships. Amen***

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***God promises us that we can live victoriously. We don't need to just survive and cope with what life has handed us.***

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SUNDAY, APRIL 22, 2018

## SUNDAY PSALM – DIVIDED LOYALTIES

When we wandered in addiction we tried to be loyal to our families but gave priority to our drug of choice. We wanted to do what was right but, in a moment of need, we threw away our moral principles and did whatever we thought we had to do to get what we thought we needed. We were people of divided loyalties.

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***In our new life with God in recovery, we get to lay down the false facades, move away from unhealthy people, and walk with a single focus.***

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In our new life with God in recovery, we get to lay down the false facades, move away from unhealthy people, and walk with a single focus. We can just be ourselves. We learn to make and keep commitments and no longer need to run away from responsibility because of our obsession with our drug of choice. More and more we experience the weight lifting from our shoulders as we walk in truth with nothing to hide and no games to play. God's word describes this shift.

***I hate those with divided loyalties, but I love your instructions. You are my refuge and my shield; your word is my source of hope. Get out of my life, you evil-minded people, for I intend to obey the commands of my God. Lord, sustain me as you promised, that I may live! Do not let my hope be crushed. Sustain me, and I will be rescued; then I will meditate continually on your decrees.*** (Psalm 119:113-117 NLT)

The way to a life of peace and joy is to single mindedly focus on God's will and God's instructions. As we commit to doing this on a daily basis, we will find that the fear and stress in our heart settles down. The sense of restlessness and always needing to "be on the alert" diminishes. Hope grows within us that we really can have a meaningful life, one day at a time. As we choose to read God's word and follow God's principles, we begin to experience peace in our hearts. This feels so good that we make a choice to guard our hearts from all that would cause us to stumble. No more divided heart. Now a single-minded focus on God's goodness for us.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to live in relationship with You and put Your principles into effect in my life. Strengthen me as I reject those things that would cause me to stumble. Fill me with Your power and wisdom to live well with You and at peace with others. Amen***

MONDAY, APRIL 23, 2018

## A PERSON OF INTEGRITY

Integrity is one of the most valued character qualities a person can have. A person of integrity has strong moral and ethical principles. They are honest regardless of their circumstances, or the company they keep. What you see on the outside is the same person they are on the inside. People of integrity keep their word even when it is not convenient. They are honest in all their dealings, personal and professional. They practice morality in their sexual life, both in mind and body. They are not perfect. They make mistakes and occasionally sin, but they do not cover up their faults. They confess them, and deal with any consequences.

***Righteousness guards the person of integrity, but wickedness overthrows the sinner.*** (Proverbs 13:6 NIV)

Integrity is not a character quality most of us could claim when we lived in addiction. It's also not something that automatically appears when we come into recovery. However, integrity can and will be developed in a person who lives according to the Word of God and whose confidence is in God alone.

***I know that you are pleased with me, for my enemy does not triumph over me. Because of my integrity you uphold me and set me in your presence forever.*** (Psalm 41:11-12 NIV)

People of integrity have the peace of a clear conscience. When we live according to the Word of God we experience a deep inner peace because we know that we have not violated our conscience or harmed someone else. In contrast, when our lives lack moral wholeness, we live in constant fear of being "found out" as frauds.

***Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out.*** (Proverbs 10:9 NIV)

If our activities, thoughts, and desires were exposed today, would we be considered a person of integrity?

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, My desire is to love and care for others as You have faithfully loved and cared for me. As I walk in Your ways, help me to become a person of integrity. Amen***

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***Integrity can and will be developed in a person who lives according to the Word of God and whose confidence is in God alone.***

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TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2018

## RE-BUILDING INTEGRITY

What does integrity look like in our lives, in our time, and in our city? People of integrity set a good example for the children and youth of our society. We may think our children don't know when we cheat, take advantage of a customer or employer, lie to the boss, or abuse paid benefits. However, they see more than we realize. Our misdeeds, whenever they are exposed, cause our children to lose respect for us, or worse, to pattern their own actions and lives after ours. People of integrity live honestly in all situations, noticed or unnoticed.

***Even in darkness light dawns for the upright, for the gracious and compassionate and righteous man. Good will come to him who is generous and lends freely, who conducts his affairs with justice. A righteous man who walks in his integrity--how blessed are his sons after him.***" (Psalm 112:4-5 NIV & Proverbs 20:7 NASB)

People of integrity gain the respect of others. Men and women of integrity can be depended upon. People look to them with trust and respect. Neighbours speak highly of them and they are helpful in their community or place of work. Few things are more valued than a good reputation.

***A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.*** (Proverbs 22:1 NIV)

Integrity is built over time as we diligently apply God's teachings to the choices we make. If we remain faithful to God's principles, we can leave the consequences of others' actions with Him. The result of living with an undivided heart and being a vibrant witness for Jesus to those around us is worth any effort that may be required.

***May integrity and honesty protect me, for I put my hope in you.*** (Psalm 25:21 NLT)

As we do an inventory, it might be helpful to ask ourselves: "What personal challenges do I face in living as a person of integrity? Is there any area of my conscience that is flawed and in need of correction?"

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me consider the impact of my actions and behaviour on those around me. Give me the courage to behave in ways that are right and just, regardless of who is watching. Amen***

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***Integrity is built over time as we diligently apply God's teachings to the choices we make.***

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25, 2018

## OPEN AND RECEIVING

One of the hardest things for hurting people to do is to continue to receive the love of God until they are filled and healed. We'd rather hold a record of wrongs. We'd rather hang onto resentments that give us an excuse to act out. We want our rights. We want others to make things right with us. We want justice. God's way of dealing with suffering in our souls is to offer us grace - grace for our own shortcomings and grace for others who also have shortcomings.

***Make allowance for each other's faults and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.*** (Colossians 3:13-14 NLT)

We need to keep on receiving God's love until every hurtful issue in our minds and on our hearts is soaked in His love. How do we do that? First, we receive comfort for every painful thing that has been cluttering up our minds and our emotions, and then we let the generous love of God bring healing to those places.

As God's enduring love fills us with peace and security, we can then bless others. When people around us act poorly and hurt us, we can bring those hurts before God and receive healing. If we react poorly to a situation and are filled with guilt and shame, we can confess our shortcomings to God and receive His forgiveness. We can then go to the person who was on the receiving end of our poor reaction and ask for their forgiveness. In this way, God invites all of us to live in His safe and unfailing love.

***We love because he loved us first. Anyone who says he loves God but in fact hates his brother or sister is a liar. He doesn't love his brother or sister, whom he has seen. So he can't love God, whom he has not seen. Here is the command God has given us. Anyone who loves God must also love his brothers and sisters.*** (1 John 4:19-21 NIV)

***Prayer: Lord Jesus, I embrace the lavish love You have for me, and receive healing for all my hurts. Where it is hard for me to believe and trust, I receive hope and faith. I receive the generous grace You pour out and Your peace that passes all understanding. I receive. I receive. I receive. Amen***

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***God's way of dealing with the suffering in our souls is to offer us grace - grace for our own shortcomings and grace for others who also have shortcomings.***

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THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2018

## EXCHANGING OUR WILL FOR GOD'S WILL

God teaches us to know His will through the Bible and through following good counsel from pastors, sponsors, and Christian friends who have been faithfully walking with God for some time. As we regularly replace our will with God's will and plan for our lives, our daily life will take on new meaning and will be satisfying.

***For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.***

(Jeremiah 29:11; 31:3 NIV)

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***As we regularly exchange our will for God's will and plan for our lives, our daily life will take on new meaning and will be satisfying.***

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Turning our will and our life over to the care of God is not simply asking God to bless what we believe and determine we should do. It is actively researching the Bible for what God says brings satisfaction in life. Because of His love for us, God warns us to stay away from those things that He knows will injure us. God's principles for living are not twisted by wounds and resentments and shame and fear. His desire for us is to know a satisfying way of life and live it well. As we submit to building on that foundation, life will change and become more fulfilling.

***Christ has brought us into this place of highest privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory. We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they***

***are good for us – they help us learn to endure. And endurance develops strength of character in us, and character strengthens our confident expectation of salvation. And this expectation will not disappoint us.*** (Romans 5:2-4 NLT)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, sometimes I feel irritated and stretched by the unfamiliar ways in which you are leading me. However today I once again humbly admit, "God, You know better than I do. Even though I may not feel like doing what you say, I will trust you and make adjustments according to Your word." Amen***

FRIDAY, APRIL 27, 2018

## WHO PUSHES MY BUTTON?

***The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace.***  
(Psalm 29:11 NIV)

How often have we found ourselves in conversation with someone and a remark is made that “pushes our button?” The next thing we know, a stream of bitter words flows from somewhere inside us. The volume of our voice increases, or we go silent and distance ourselves a bit. When something like this happens, we need to consider the cause. We are clearly not at peace with something inside us and whatever that is needs to be brought to the light so that we can be healed.

***“Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed,” says the Lord, who has compassion on you.*** (Isaiah 54:10 NIV)

We live in an angry world with people who are sensitive and easily upset. Both in addiction and in recovery we can experience physical and emotional pain that results from someone’s harshness. When someone “pushes our button” God’s invitation is to take the problem first to Him. God will calm the inner turmoil we are experiencing and bring peace to our souls. We can then take the appropriate action for the situation. Perhaps we need to ask God for the courage to speak quietly with the other person to help sort out what went wrong. Our action may be to simply “live and let live” or we may need to establish healthy boundaries with that person.

***Work at getting along with each other and with God. Otherwise you’ll never get so much as a glimpse of God. Make sure no one gets left out of God’s generosity. Keep a sharp eye out for weeds of bitter discontent. A thistle or two gone to seed can ruin a whole garden in no time.*** (Hebrews 12:14-15 MSG)

***Prayer: Almighty God, To You all hearts are open, I ask that You reveal the source of my anger when certain situations arise, and someone pushes my button. Please heal me of any underlying root of bitterness that may be lurking in my soul and fill me with Your joy and peace. Amen***

SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 2018

## ESSENTIALS FOR LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Water is a very simple substance. It is colorless, odorless, and has no taste, yet no living thing can survive without it. Plants, animals, and human beings consist mostly of water. The human body is 2/3 water. In spite of its simplicity, water is amazing, and its properties point us to the God who created water, gathered water, and disperses it over the earth.

***God said, “Let there be a space between the waters, to separate the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth.” And that is what happened. God made this space to separate the waters of the earth from the waters of the heavens ... Then God said, “Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place, so dry ground may appear.” And that is what happened. God called the dry ground “land” and the waters “seas.”*** (Genesis 1:6-7, 9-10)

***Just as water is essential for natural life, so being filled up with God’s Spirit is essential for spiritual life.***

Water is a universal solvent. This property means that various chemicals, minerals and nutrients in the water we drink can be diluted and dispensed throughout our bodies. Water freezes from the top down and floats, so fish can survive underneath the ice, and yet water in the root of plants flows against gravity, giving water and nutrients to the top of even the tallest trees.

Even though 97% of the earth’s water is in the oceans and is salt water, yet in the plan of God, evaporation takes the ocean waters, leaves the salt behind, and forms clouds which are easily moved by the wind to disperse the water over land for vegetation, animals, and people. This planned system purifies, recycles, and reuses water in a way that sustains life across the planet.

Just as water has many attributes and is essential for natural life, so being filled up with God’s Spirit is essential for spiritual life. As we welcome God and His ways into our recovery, it may mean doing things differently. As salt gets left behind in the evaporation from ocean waters, so we need to allow God to help us leave behind those memories, people, and habits that are not helpful as we move into the future God has planned for us. Let’s make an informed decision today to again turn our will and our life over to this amazing God’s care.

***Prayer: Loving God, You are awesome in all of Your ways. Help me to see You as You are and not as I have made You. I praise You that Your will for me is good, pleasing and perfect. Amen***

SUNDAY, APRIL 29, 2018

## SUNDAY PSALM – SEEING WITH NEW EYES

A remarkable change takes place in our thinking and our desires when we turn our will and our life over to the care of God. In the first two steps of the 12 Steps program, we admitted we had come to the end of ourselves and came to believe that acceptance of God's offer of forgiveness and new life through Jesus' death on the cross would work the necessary changes in us. When we made the decision to give our will and our lives over to God's care, we gave permission to God to make those dramatic changes at the deepest level of our beings.

*Don't leave me to the mercy of my enemies, for I have done what is just and right. Please guarantee a blessing for me. Don't let the arrogant oppress me! My eyes strain to see your rescue, to see the truth of your promise fulfilled. I am your servant; deal with me in unflinching love and teach me your decrees. Give discernment to me, your servant; then I will understand your laws. Lord, it is time for you to act, for these evil people have violated your instructions. Truly, I love your commands more than gold, even the finest gold. Each of your commandments is right. That is why I hate every false way.*  
(Psalm 119:121-128 NLT)

We very quickly begin to notice God's way at work within us compared with our previous way of behaving. We look back on the chaos and the harsh ways we treated ourselves and others while we were in addiction, and we recognize how destructive it all was. God's Spirit ignites a dislike in us for hurting and harming others and that adds a whole new dimension of kindness and respect to how we behave towards others.

To help them quit smoking, some people take various medications that make them feel ill if they smoke while taking it. One of the best prayers a person in recovery can pray is that God will give them a deep dislike – even hatred – for their drug of choice or destructive behaviour. Nothing lifts an obsession faster than the thought of it making you sick at heart.

Only God can expose the depths of the harm of our addictive ways and then fill us with His peace and unflinching love. Let's ask Him to do so today.

*Gracious God, Give me discernment so I can understand Your ways. I ask that You remove from me the desire to medicate myself to cover the pain in my heart. Please comfort me so that I fear no evil for You are always with me. I am forever grateful that You care. Amen*

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**Nothing lifts  
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heart.**

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MONDAY, APRIL 30, 2018

## JOY – MY HAPPY PLACE

Where's your "happy place"? When we Google "happy place," the pictures that come up are young hands holding older wrinkled hands; a wedding celebration; friends jumping for joy in the outdoors; a young child looking peacefully at a baby; someone resting in a hammock; a rainbow in the sky; a beautiful beach with waves of blue sea; a cup of coffee.

What if we didn't have to "go to a place" or "experience a happening" to find joy but could be in a place of joy, wherever we go? Today's good news is that God tells us how to do just that.

Following are some of the ways the Bible says we can have joy wherever we are.

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**It is God's  
desire that  
we live  
joyfully  
today. Let's  
follow His  
instructions  
and let the  
joy flow.**

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*Psalm 32:1 Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight!*

*Psalm 32:2 Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!*

*Psalm 34:5 Those who look to him for help will be radiant with joy; no shadow of shame will darken their faces.*

*Psalm 34:8 Taste and see that the Lord is good. Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him!*

*Psalm 41:1 Oh, the joys of those who are kind to the poor! The Lord rescues them when they are in trouble.*

*Psalm 70:4 But may all who search for you be filled with joy and gladness in you. May those who love your salvation repeatedly shout, "God is great!"*

It is God's desire that we live joyfully today. Let's follow His instructions and let the joy flow.

*Prayer – Heavenly Father, Thank You for making known to me the path that leads to life. I want to live forever in Your presence where there is fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore. Amen*

# NOTES

## ***How To Enjoy New Life With God In Recovery***

*God created us to have a wonderful life. In love, God planned for us and carefully put us together. God has always been calling out to us to enter into a relationship of love with Him. He doesn't force us but He invites us. Many of us have learned what a painful and confusing wreck our lives become when we try to live independently from God. Today is a good day to begin to live the full and rich life God intended for us. Nothing in our past can keep us from this life, if we want it and choose for it.*

*The 12-Steps remind us that our lives are unmanageable without the loving care of God and that we can get to know and come to believe that He is a power greater than ourselves. As we turn our will and our lives over to God's care, we find a solid foundation upon which to build a new life.*

*When we confess our sin and brokenness to God, repent and turn towards God, He gives us new life. When we invite God to come into our lives we find that He is ready and waiting for us. A simple prayer like the following, offered sincerely, establishes this new relationship with God that will last forever.*

***God, my life is unmanageable without you. You created me to live in relationship with you. There really is no good way to live on my own. Forgive me for not including you. I turn from my independent ways and surrender my will and my life to you. Thank you, Jesus for dying on the cross for my sins and making a way for me to have new life and be filled up with Your Holy Spirit. Come into my heart and wash me clean. Teach me to do your will. Transform my way of thinking. Strengthen me to obey You in all I do. Amen***

*If you prayed that prayer sincerely from your heart, God forgives you and receives you. God makes you His son or daughter. God wants to show you how to live well and give you strength to do that every day. We would love to provide you with some information to support you as you move forward in your journey with God. Please contact us. You'll find our contact information on the front cover of this booklet.*

# 2018

## JANUARY

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
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## FEBRUARY

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## DECEMBER

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*Come and learn and grow with us:*

***Christian 12-Step Recovery Meeting***

***Wednesdays, 7:00 pm***

*325 6<sup>th</sup> Street*

*New Westminster, BC*

***Christian 12-Step Recovery Meeting***

***Thursdays, 7:30 pm***

*543 Powell Street*

*Vancouver, BC*

*For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus,  
so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.*

*Ephesians 2:10 NLT*