

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY



Daily Meditations



APRIL 2020

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*Partners in Hope Recovery Society
is a Christian community
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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APRIL 2020

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2020

DOING ALL WE CAN TO HAVE FAITH

Few people are more aware of their need for God's help to restore them to sanity than recovering addicts. We know how unmanageable our life has been and how powerless we were to stop the suffering and chaos. What a relief it was to turn to God who was ready, willing, and able to receive and restore us.

Do all you can to add to your life these things: to your faith add goodness; to your goodness add knowledge. (2 Peter 1:5b ERV)

There is a "God's part" and an "Our part" to this new life we have. God sent Jesus into the world to die for our sins so that we might be free from the penalty of sin, which is death. Our part is to humbly admit our wrongs and receive forgiveness and the new life God is offering us. God has established spiritual principles for a life that is good, pleasing and perfect. Our part is to get to know those principles and obey them. When our character defects cause us to stumble, we ask God to forgive us and help us change our ways.

It is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him. Faith comes from hearing the message. And the message that is heard is the message about Christ. (Hebrews 11:6 NLT, Romans 10:17 NIRV)

God's word shows us our part in the recovery process, that is: with God's help we learn to have faith. How do we do that? We take time, at least daily, to learn what God is saying. There are many printed devotionals, apps, audio podcasts, teachings on YouTube and elsewhere to help us read and understand God's Word in the Bible. God's message is as near to us as our phone or tablet.

At the heart of all our practices is faith: faith in God that He is good; faith in God's direction for our lives; faith in God's principles as the best path for us to follow; faith in God's power to help us take the next right step and do the next right thing; faith to put what we learn into practice in all our affairs.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You are always with me and willing to provide what I need for a successful day. Help me to trust Your presence ever with me, Your power to change me, and Your wisdom to guide me. Amen

Do your best to please God. Be a worker who doesn't need to be ashamed.

(2 Timothy 2:15a NIRV)

THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2020

OVERLY RESPONSIBLE

As we go forward in recovery we have come to realize that we are accountable for the actions we have done, the behaviour that has impacted our relationships, and the problems we created throughout our addiction. It's not been an easy process for us to identify and take responsibility for these things, but it has been liberating and life changing as we have done so.

For some of us it's been a balancing act between taking responsibility for our part and being overly responsible for the actions of others that were beyond our control. While we may have had a part to play in making life difficult for others, their choices remain their responsibility. It is up to each person to identify their own issues and take any necessary action. It's not our job to sort others out and fix their problems.

We do a disservice to others when we continually do things for them that, with instruction, they can do for themselves.

The Lord will guide you continually, giving you water when you are dry and restoring your strength. You will be like a well-watered garden, like an ever-flowing spring. (Isaiah 58:11 NLT)

It is important that we care and support others, assisting them when help is truly needed. We do a disservice to others when we continually do things for them that, with instruction, they can do for themselves. By being overly responsible we get in God's way because God uses all the circumstances of a person's life to draw them to Himself.

People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy. A person without self-control is like a city with broken-down walls. (Proverbs 28:13, 25:28 NLT)

Boundaries help us live respectfully and safely in our relationships. When we define and uphold personal boundaries, they contribute to our peace. When we get a clearer picture of what it takes to live in healthy ways, God will be honoured by having first place in all our decisions and actions.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to identify and live within healthy boundaries. I want to be supportive but avoid harming others by getting in the way of Your work in their lives. Please help me to be caring and wise each day. Amen

FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 2020

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

The "going the extra mile" principle encourages us to live from a generous heart. Jesus taught us not to do things from selfish motives or from a bitter reaction to the bad behaviour of others. His standard for us is to show kindness, grace, and generosity to our neighbours.

In Jesus' day there was a much-hated custom that a soldier in the occupying army could enforce. An ordinary citizen could be ordered to carry a soldier's heavy load for one mile. This was inconvenient, humiliating, and disruptive for the person. Jesus used this custom to help His followers understand the practice of going beyond what is required and living in a way that benefits and supports others, even when our own interests must be set aside.

If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles. Give to those who ask, and don't turn away from those who want to borrow. (Matthew 5:41-42 NLT)

There will always be people who thoughtlessly do things that stretch our kindness and patience and stir-up our character defects. Our choice is, will we react with anger and mean-spiritedness or will we go the extra mile?

Jesus was equal with God. But Jesus didn't take advantage of that fact. Instead, he made himself nothing. He did this by taking on the nature of a servant. He was made just like human beings. He appeared as a man. He was humble and obeyed God completely. He did this even though it led to his death. Even worse, he died on a cross! (Philippians 2:6b-8 NIRV)

While we were still lost in our sin and rebellious ways, God took notice of us, and acted on our behalf. Jesus went the extra mile for us by dying on the cross to provide forgiveness for our sins and to restore us to eternal life with Him forever. To follow Jesus in our new life means that we are also willing to go the extra mile on behalf of others.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, it's not easy to go the extra mile, particularly with people who irritate me and make unreasonable demands of my time. Through Your word, help me to gain wisdom and obey Your direction in each difficult situation I encounter. Amen

**Jesus said:
I have set
you an
example
that you
should do
as I have
done for
you.**

John 13:15 NIV

SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 2020

FINDING WISDOM IN COMFORTABLE PLACES

Becoming strong and steady in our recovery requires that we keep on listening to and learning from God's Word and from the experience, strength, and hope of others. It's easy to be disrespectful of experiences some share with us simply because we don't like their personality or something in their journey is different from ours. In our arrogance we believe they are wrong in what they are saying and therefore have nothing to teach us. The sad truth is that when we do this, we shut ourselves off from valuable lessons their life experience could teach us.

Those who make fun of others look for wisdom and don't find it. But knowledge comes easily to those who understand what is right. (Proverbs 14:6 NIRV)

***Those
who make
fun of
others
look for
wisdom
and don't
find it.***

*Proverbs 14:6a
NIRV*

We need humility to listen to those who are newer to recovery than we are. Sometimes the freshness of their message and their description of the struggle can shine a needed light on areas of our own heart that still needs attention. Their way of presenting may still be a bit rough around the edges but the truth at the core of their sharing might be just what we need today.

We need to hear and learn from those who offer constructive criticism and challenge habits or attitudes they observe in us. Stinking thinking creeps up on us in so many areas. The very fact that we are making fun of someone suggests there is some expression of a character defect that requires attention.

A good mentor or sponsor will bring things to the conversation that are inconvenient and challenging. Too often we are more ready to "get a new sponsor" than we are to ask God to show us the wisdom we're missing in what our sponsor is saying.

It is never fun to be corrected. In fact, at the time it is always painful. But if we learn to obey by being corrected, we will do right and live at peace. (Hebrews 12:11 CEV)

Today's invitation and challenge is to welcome the inconvenient or uncomfortable truth rather than to scorn it.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I still have so much to learn. Please help me to be teachable each day. Give me eyes to see and ears to hear how You are speaking to me, particularly about things I find difficult to receive. Amen

SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 2020

PALM SUNDAY

The day we call Palm Sunday was foretold in the Jewish scriptures hundreds of years before it happened. The religious scholars in Jerusalem on that day would have known of the prophesy yet they failed to relate it to what was happening. As Jesus had told them, His followers found a donkey which the owners allowed to be borrowed and taken to Jesus because they were told, "The Lord has need of him." The disciples threw their clothes on the colt and set Jesus on him. Others spread their clothes on the road as Jesus rode along and, at the Mount of Olives, the people began to praise God for all the mighty works they had seen Jesus do.

Rejoice, rejoice, people of Zion! Shout for joy, you people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you! He comes triumphant and victorious, but humble and riding on a donkey – on a colt, the foal of a donkey. (Zechariah 9:9 GNT)

Jesus fulfilled many prophecies about His life and death. How could the writers of the scriptures have known things about Jesus hundreds of years before He was even born? Why would the owner of the donkey allow the disciples to take it? Why would a donkey on whom no one has ever sat be calm enough to let Jesus sit on its back? The crowds were full of praise for the things Jesus had done among them. The Jewish religious leaders, who were offended by this display of worship, asked Jesus to stop the people praising God.

He (Jesus) came closer to the city, and when he saw it, he wept over it, saying, "If you only knew today what is needed for peace! But now you cannot see it!" (Luke 19:41-42 GNT)

Jesus knew what was needed for peace. His death and resurrection were required for peace for us and for the Jewish leaders even though they didn't recognize their need. Jesus knew the time of His death was near and He carried through to the end.

As we increase our conscious contact with God, do we praise God for those things that have taken place, and are we able to see and believe for those things God has promised that are yet to come?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Thank You for restoring me in body, mind and spirit and for giving me Your peace which passes all understanding. You are worthy of my praise and adoration. As You have promised, even so, come Lord Jesus come. Amen

***Do we praise
God for those
things that
have taken
place, and
are we able
to see and
believe for
those things
God has
promised
that are yet
to come?***

MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2020

TRAUMA

Many of the events in our lives that contributed to us becoming dependent on substances or unhealthy relationships were traumatic and caused us to retreat into hiding. We were not prepared to discuss these events with others, so we buried them deep in our soul. We then sought other means to help us deal with the intense pain. However, covering up traumatic events with painkillers does not make them go away. In fact, as so many of us can testify, the memories, whether we are consciously aware of them or not, cause fear and shame to grow and become like mountains that confuse our thinking and affect our behaviour.

God invites us to bring all the trauma and its impact on us to Him for comfort and healing.

God is our mighty fortress, always ready to help in times of trouble. And so, we won't be afraid! Let the earth tremble and the mountains tumble into the deepest sea. Pray to me in time of trouble. I will rescue you, and you will honor me. (Psalm 46:1-2, 50:15 CEV)

***Covering up
traumatic
events with
painkillers
does not
make them
go away.***

When a ship is tossed about on an angry sea the captain will seek a safe harbour where the ship can anchor and wait for the storm to pass. If the ship has sustained damage, it can be repaired while resting in the harbour.

Some of us have been through many storms in our lives and are battered and broken because we have not found a safe harbour where we could rest. God offers that to us. All we need to do is to come to Him. When we come, we can allow Him to comfort us and heal the trauma we have endured. He will lead us to quiet waters, He will restore our soul.

The Lord your God wins victory after victory and is always with you. He celebrates and sings because of you, and he will refresh your life with his love. The Lord has promised: Your sorrow has ended, and you can celebrate. (Zephaniah 3:17-18 CEV)

Prayer: Loving God, I come to You because You invite me, and I need Your help. I choose to release to You all the baggage I have been carrying and the associated trauma. I want to be free to enter into a new life with You. Please help me! Amen

TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2020

COMING TO TERMS WITH OUR LIFESTYLE

Coming to terms with our lifestyle in addiction requires us to admit that we have zero self-control where our dependencies are involved. Our self-will is not enough to stop us from continuing on a dark path. The demon inside our heads is insistent that we do whatever is necessary to fulfill its demands or suffer the consequences. Our bodies follow through and give in to its demands. Recovery begins when we admit that the power behind our addiction is beyond our control.

You followed the ways of this world and obeyed the devil. He rules the world, and his spirit has power over everyone who doesn't obey God. Once we were also ruled by the selfish desires of our bodies and minds. We had made God angry, and we were going to be punished like everyone else. (Ephesians 2:2-3 CEV)

Friends and family members have spoken to us about our lifestyle and suggested we needed to get help. Because we thought we were in control, we paid no attention to their concerns. But, when we tried to stop what we were doing, it was evident that we were not the one in control. We were ruled by the selfish desires of our bodies and minds. There are two powers at work in this world. One wants to destroy us and the other wants to give us eternal life. Which power will we choose to obey?

This is what I told them: Obey me, and I will be your God, and you will be my people. Do everything as I say, and all will be well! But my people would not listen to me. They kept doing whatever they wanted, following the stubborn desires of their evil hearts. They went backward instead of forward. (Jeremiah 7:23-24 NLT)

When we admit that we are “powerless over our dependencies” we are making a true statement. Thankfully, there is a power greater than ourselves and if we obey Him, “all will be well”. Today is another opportunity to turn our will and our life over to God’s care and experience His life-changing power at work in us.

Prayer: Gracious God, I need a Power greater than myself to restore me to sanity and give me a meaningful life. Please strengthen me to follow Your ways for I know I am powerless to help myself. Amen

Recovery begins when we admit that the power behind our addiction is beyond our control.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2020

COMPASSION

When we observe someone in need of help what is our first reaction? Are we a person with genuine compassion who seeks to help another, or do we just want to know what’s going on with no real interest in helping? In the Bible we are told many times that Jesus had compassion on the crowds or on a person in need, and He stopped to help them.

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. (Matthew 9:35-36 NIV)

Jesus told a story about a person who was robbed and injured on a dangerous road. Two people looked at his near dead body lying on the roadside but went on their way without doing anything to help. Then a person who was not of the man’s ethnic background came by and took care of him. He even put him on his own donkey and took him to an inn where he paid for his care until the man was well.

Are we a person with genuine compassion who seeks to help another?

By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side. Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. (Luke 10:31-33 NLT)

When Jesus looked on us in our life in addiction, He had compassion on us, pursued us with His love and brought us to our Heavenly Father. People were there for us when we came into recovery in a harassed and helpless state. As we have received the love and compassion of Jesus and others, so now it is time for us to do as Jesus says, “Go and do the same.”

Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. (1 Peter 3:8 NIV)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Please help me to love others and be compassionate towards them as You and others have been towards me. Amen

THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2020

RECONCILIATION

To be reconciled with someone who has wronged us is difficult. It's hard to get beyond our hurt and find the compassion we need to forgive and then find a way forward with them. God is more than able to help us do this.

Don't be angry with each other but forgive each other. If you feel someone has wronged you, forgive them. Forgive others because the Lord forgave you. (Colossians 3:13 ERV)

We are all flawed individuals. When we make amends for our mistakes, our desire is that others will forgive us and that we can be reconciled with them. We long for them to see the good things in us despite our imperfections, and to find a way to move forward in our relationship. We must make a similar effort on behalf of others and offer acceptance and compassion to those we need to forgive.

Try to live in peace with everyone. And try to keep your lives free from sin. Anyone whose life is not holy will never see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:14 ERV)

Forgiveness is the choice of a moment, but reconciliation is a journey. We must give others time to see how genuine and consistent our changes are and allow them to rebuild their trust in us. Similarly, we need to learn healthy boundaries with others while keeping our hearts open to whatever time they need to change, so the relationships we build are done on a solid foundation. We need to take responsibility for our actions and, where appropriate, leave another's responsibility with them. We make amends where we can and learn to lovingly let go of those folks who are not willing or able to build relationship with us in this new way.

For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:19 NLT)

Jesus provided a way of reconciliation for us and put His Spirit in our hearts, so we could have all we need to live reconciled to God and others. We are invited to carry this message of reconciliation to others as a sign of God's heart for all of us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for Jesus who has made a way for me to have peace with You and with others. Help me to want and pursue reconciliation with others. Amen

***Forgiveness
is the
choice
of a moment,
but
reconciliation
is a journey.***

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2020

GOOD FRIDAY – GOD'S GOOD PLAN IN GOD'S GOOD TIME

We often give up on God before His plan, in His perfect timing, takes effect. Jesus' death on Good Friday came before His resurrection on Easter Sunday. Things looked hopeless during the time between those two events, but God was in charge. God had a plan and God had the power to carry out His plan no matter the evil and destruction the devil unleashed.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. (Isaiah 55:8 NIV)

God's plan had always been that Jesus would die on the cross for our sins. Before God created the world, He knew that despite their good intentions, humans would sin and they would need a saviour who could forgive them and give them new life. Jesus was punished and killed for sins He didn't commit. Jesus was beaten and mocked and mistreated because of the anger and jealousy and baggage others carried. Jesus was perfect but He suffered so He could relate to our suffering and could provide everything we need to get through it.

***Here is
how God
has shown
his love for
us. While
we were
still
sinners,
Christ died
for us.***

No one takes my life from me. I give it up willingly! I have the power to give it up and the power to receive it back again, just as my Father commanded me to do. (John 10:18 CEV)

Romans 5:8 NIRV

God's plan went into place and was worked out at just the right time. The cross of Jesus reminds us that God's ways are different from ours and while God's timing might be different than ours, God's timing is always perfect.

At just the right time Christ died for ungodly people. He died for us when we had no power of our own. (Romans 5:6 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for giving me new life through the death and resurrection of Jesus. I am forever humbled by Jesus' obedience to death, even death on a cross. Help me to live each day obedient to Your word, Your ways, and Your timing, trusting that you will make all things right as I surrender to Your will. Thank You for working all things together for good in my life. May all I do and say glorify Your Holy Name. Amen

SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 2020

WORDS – THE POWER TO ENCOURAGE OR CRUSH

We've all experienced the power of words in our own lives and observed the effect of their power in what others share with us. Some of us carry the effects of harsh words for a lifetime and find it difficult to get past the hurtful impact. When we take time to reflect, we will also often be able to remember some kind things people said and allow those words to bring hope to our heart and a smile to our face.

A gentle answer makes anger disappear, but a rough answer makes it grow. Good people think before they answer, but the wicked do not, and what they say causes trouble. Kind words are like a life-giving tree, but lying words will crush your spirit. (Proverbs 15:1, 28, 4 ERV)

It is time for us to consider what impact our words will have on others. Will we correct and speak with gentleness or thoughtlessly whip out a harsh reaction to something we don't like? Will we give a compliment and a word of appreciation or will we condemn someone for not doing things exactly the way we wanted? As much as we are a work in progress and want to be recognized as such, will we give the same honour and growing space to others by how we speak to them or speak about them?

Listening to wise people increases your knowledge, but only nonsense comes from the mouths of fools. People are happy when they give a good answer. And there is nothing better than the right word at the right time. (Proverbs 15:2, 23 ERV)

In our society, with its emphasis on social media, the thoughtless use of words is often reflected through our texts and posts rather than our mouths. In what seems like less than a personal encounter, we somehow feel freer to express our thoughts without first filtering them. Much harm may be caused to a person by what we post. With things hanging in cyberspace long after we delete them from our own page, we need to be aware that we have less control over the harm we may cause in social media posts than in face-to-face encounters. It's always wise to think before we speak or post.

Prayer: Loving God, help me to consider what I say and its impact on others. Give me the patience and self-control necessary to filter my thoughts before I respond to others so my words encourage rather than crush. Amen

***It is time
for us to
consider
what
impact our
words will
have on
others.***

SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2020

EASTER SUNDAY – THE HIGHEST POWER

All of humankind's sin – from the beginning of time to the end of time – was laid on Jesus and not even the weight of that could hold him down. Jesus rose from the dead. Jesus' resurrection demonstrates that no darkness or evil, no pain or brokenness can overcome the power of God for those who believe in 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)

***What
seems
impossible
for us to
believe is
only
impossible
when God
is not
involved.***

No matter how fearsome or broken our lives seem to us, not even the weight of that can keep us down when we are in Christ. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is in us who completely surrender our will and our lives to God.

But you, dear friends, carefully build yourselves up in this most holy faith by praying in the Holy Spirit, staying right at the center of God's love, keeping your arms open and outstretched, ready for the mercy of our Master, Jesus Christ. This is the unending life, the real life! (Jude 20-21 MSG)

What seems impossible for us to believe becomes possible when God is involved. When we invite God into a situation things happen that are beyond all we could hope for or imagine. God's power is stronger than anything we have ever encountered. God's kindness is more tender than anything we may have ever experienced. When Jesus comes into our lives He brings power and solutions and hope for a new way of life. He fills us with His Holy Spirit. As we truly believe that Jesus is alive within us with power to meet every need and solve every problem, all doubt about our recovery and our ability to deal with problems will flee.

He saved us because of his mercy, and not because of any good things that we have done. God washed us by the power of the Holy Spirit. He gave us new birth and a fresh beginning. (Titus 3:5 CEV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You are God and You have the power to bring about change and healing in each life that is given over to You, including mine. Fill me with the mighty power of Your Holy Spirit so I can walk confidently in this new life You have given me. Amen

MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2020

SELF-HATRED

A lot of us express self-hatred in the way we look at ourselves and our life experiences. Perhaps we were brought up in an abusive home. Perhaps the bare necessities of life were not available to us and we lived in anxiety about our future. We compare our lot with that of others and grumble about how disadvantaged we are. We blame God and others for our missed opportunities and the way we find ourselves today.

I am sick of life! And from my deep despair, I complain to you, my God. Do you look at things the way we humans do? Is your life as short as ours? Is that why you are so quick to find fault with me? You know I am innocent, but who can defend me against you? (Job 10:1, 4-7 CEV)

Many of the people we read about in the Bible lived lonely fruitless lives until God called them out of their darkness and walked with them on the path He had planned for their lives. Moses was a murderer and unsure of his ability to speak when God called him. Gideon was a coward and hiding from his nation's oppressors when God called him. However imperfect or ineffective we see ourselves God is calling us and empowering us to the fulfill plan He has for our lives.

Through faith in the name of Jesus, this man was healed—and you know how crippled he was before. Faith in Jesus' name has healed him before your very eyes. (Acts 3:16 NLT)

When we give our will and life over to the care of God, it is faith in Jesus' name that restores us in body, mind and spirit. The work of Jesus on the cross and His resurrection proclaims to demonic oppressors that they are powerless to stand against Jesus' light and life within us. As we allow Jesus to heal us and make us complete, we find that self-hatred no longer has power over us and must go.

So let's do it—full of belief, confident that we're presentable inside and out. Let's keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. He always keeps his word. (Hebrews 10:22-23 MSG)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, You are mighty to save, please deliver me from the demonic oppression of self-hatred. I have come to believe that, through You, I am presentable both inside and out. Amen

***However
imperfect
or
ineffective
we see
ourselves
God is
calling us
to the plan
He has for
our lives.***

TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2020

WHAT IS THIS POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES?

When we came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity, what did we understand about that Power? As human beings we all have some power. Some of us have the power to run for miles. Others can hardly walk across the street. Policemen have the power to stop us if we make a driving error. Others who don't have authority still try to display power as they shout and accuse when they think we have done wrong. What then is the Power greater than ourselves that we can believe in so we can be restored to sanity?

I want you to know about the great and mighty power that God has for us followers. It is the same wonderful power he used when he raised Christ from death and let him sit at his right side in heaven. (Ephesians 1:19-20 CEV)

***What is
this Power
greater
than
ourselves
that we
can
believe in
so we can
be
restored to
sanity?***

What power does it take to raise a dead man to life? When Jesus gave His life to pay the price for the sins of the world, including ours, the mighty power of God was at work. We know that, because Jesus was raised from the dead. We have been living in darkness, dead to the ways of God, but He has called us to new life. Now, by believing in Jesus, we receive that new life by the same Power who raised Jesus from the dead, the Holy Spirit. Can you imagine? We who were once powerless over our dependencies can now live free from them because God's Power restores us to sanity.

But God has given us his Spirit. That's why we don't think the same way that the people of this world think. That's also why we can recognize the blessings that God has given us. The Spirit is the one who gives life! Human strength can do nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are from that life-giving Spirit. (1 Corinthians 2:12; John 6:63 CEV)

By our human strength we were unable to overcome the power of our dependencies but now we are no longer slaves to sin. We have become children of God in whom the Holy Spirit lives.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for calling me out of darkness and filling me with a Power greater than myself. I am no longer a slave to sin; I am a child of God. Amen

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2020

LOVE IS NOT BOASTFUL OR PROUD

When we come into recovery we are usually worn and broken and feel wretched, but often we still remain prideful in the way we talk. We brag about things we have done and make ourselves out to be clever in our dealings with others. God does not want us to be boastful or proud. He wants to transform the way we think so that we learn to behave in ways that are good and pleasing to Him. God's desire is that we humbly admit the exact nature of our wrongs.

Dear friends, God is good. So I beg you to offer your bodies to him as a living sacrifice, pure and pleasing. That's the most sensible way to serve God. Don't be like the people of this world, but let God change the way you think. Then you will know how to do everything that is good and pleasing to him. (Romans 12:1-2 CEV)

Satan was boastful and proud when He tempted Eve. He reworded God's instructions to make them seem more appealing to her human nature and he told her, "You will be like God." Satan's own downfall was pride. Satan entices us to his way of thinking and doing because his desire is to have control of us. We need to be on guard to his deceiving ways. He will attempt to twist the truth and have us look back at what we have left behind and make us think maybe we can handle things on our own after all.

You said to yourself, "I'll climb to heaven. I'll set my throne over the stars of God....I'll climb to the top of the clouds. I'll take over as King of the Universe!" But you didn't make it, did you? Instead of climbing up, you came down—Down with the underground dead, down to the abyss of the Pit. (Isaiah 14:13-15 MSG)

God is love. Love is not boastful or proud. Love is humble and selfless. Love is sacrificial in its actions towards others. As we read the following verses of scripture, how many of the characteristics listed would we say we exhibit? It may be something to think about!

Love is kind and patient, never jealous, boastful, proud, or rude. Love isn't selfish or quick tempered. It doesn't keep a record of wrongs that others do. Love rejoices in the truth, but not in evil. (1 Corinthians 13:4-6 CEV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am grateful for Jesus who, through His love and sacrifice, covers all my sins. Teach me how to love as You love and to live according to your truth. Amen

***Love is not
boastful or
proud.
Love is
humble
and
selfless.***

THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2020

HALFWAY IS BETTER THAN HALF MEASURES

Although we know that "*half measures avail us nothing*," it's also wonderful to have the promise that, "*If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through.*" (Big Book, pg 83-84)

We are not required to live a perfect life, just to make a sincere effort. As we do, we will experience the promise. While it is true that these promises are fulfilled among us, sometimes quickly and sometimes slowly, it is the experience, strength, and hope of others that reassures us and gives us hope when the going gets tough.

This is the reason we do not give up. Our human body is wearing out. But our spirits are getting stronger every day. The little troubles we suffer now for a short time are making us ready for the great things God is going to give us forever. We do not look at the things that can be seen. We look at the things that cannot be seen. The things that can be seen will come to an end. But the things that cannot be seen will last forever. (2 Corinthians 4:16-18 NLV)

***We will be
amazed
before we
are
halfway
through.***

The important changes within us take place deep in our soul where we are unable to see them. Our part is to consciously give ourselves over to the care of God and follow the principles that have worked for so many who have walked this path before us. It's only as time passes that we notice things are changing in ways that amaze us. We find a peace and stability we never knew before. Solutions to problems present themselves. We become more and more conscious of God being with us and supporting us each step of the way.

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. (Deuteronomy 31:6 NIV)

Thankfully we don't have to wait until we've completed Step 12 to experience these wonderful gifts. Most of the time, when we commit to doing the next right thing, we will notice that change has already taken place.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I'm so grateful that You are with me today, working change in the deep places of my soul as I follow Your ways with all my heart. Please help me to always live in hope and bravely do the next right thing in each situation I encounter. Amen

FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 2020

GAINING AND PRACTICING DISCRETION

In the Big Book of AA, we are advised to use discretion in knowing how much time and attention to give to any one situation in relation to others who might benefit in their desire to recover if given some time and support. Employers are encouraged to use discretion in how they approach those employees they want to help, even in mentioning the Big Book. We are cautioned to use discretion when making our Step 9 amends to people, and to do so only when it would not further injure them or others.

To show discretion is to know the right thing to do in a situation and to behave in such a way that we don't cause offense. Quite the challenge. Thankfully, the Bible is very clear about how we can gain wisdom and practice discretion.

For the Lord grants wisdom! From his mouth come knowledge and understanding. He grants a treasure of common sense to the honest. He is a shield to those who walk with integrity. He guards the paths of the just and protects those who are faithful to him. Then you will understand what is right, just, and fair, and you will find the right way to go. For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will fill you with joy. Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you. (Proverbs 2:6-10 NLT, Proverbs 2:11 NIV)

We know that on our own we are powerless to maintain healthy boundaries, think before we speak, and to know what's best in complicated situations. God's promise is that He will give us common sense, will protect us, will show us the way that is just and fair, and will even fill us with joy as we walk this journey. We only get wisdom and discretion by improving our conscious contact with God through prayer and meditation, and by practicing His principles in all our affairs. In other words, we learn by journeying with God, obeying what He says works, and then benefiting from the lessons we learn as we see the results. Discretion doesn't come in a moment. It comes from prayer, experience, integrity, and surrender to God's will.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to show wisdom and discretion in all my affairs. Help me practice knowledge of Your ways in each situation I encounter today. When I should be silent, help me to not speak. Where I need to practice healthy boundaries, help me to do so. Help me to learn the lessons You are providing as I walk with You each day. Amen

Discretion is a life-giving fountain to those who possess it, but discipline is wasted on fools.

Proverbs 16:22 NLT

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2020

PLANNING WELL AND WORKING THE PLAN

God has a plan for our life each day that is meaningful, purposeful, and joyful. There is a work for us to do today that will bless others and give us deep satisfaction. God is not only interested in what we do, but why we do it. Our circumstances may not change immediately but when we have sought God's direction and help in what we have planned, we can leave the outcome with Him.

People think that whatever they do is right, but the Lord judges their reason for doing it. Turn to the Lord for help in everything you do, and you will be successful. People can plan what they want to do, but it is the Lord who guides their steps. (Proverbs 16:2-3, 9 ERV)

We can pray at any time during the day, but there's something about beginning the day with God in prayer, bringing our plans before Him, and intentionally seeking His guidance. Everything will flow better when we do that, even though we may encounter challenges along the way. When we are conscious of God being with us and are seeking His help, positive solutions will come more quickly and easily.

Good people try to avoid evil. They watch what they do and protect themselves. Good things happen to those who learn from their experiences, and the Lord blesses those who trust him. (Proverbs 16:17, 20 ERV)

As we move forward, we are encouraged to do those things that we can do, so our plans will succeed. We are all blessed with a sense of what is right or wrong, above-board or shady. We need to pay attention to that knowledge and seek protection when we become aware of others operating in that way. We may not do things perfectly, but we are to learn from our experiences and trust that God will bless us when we pick ourselves up and move on from any failure or disappointment.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to trust You with my plans and follow Your guidance in all I do. Give me discernment to recognize when things are going wrong and to learn from my disappointments and failures rather than quit. Amen

We may not do things perfectly, but we are to learn from our experiences and trust that God will bless us when we pick ourselves up and move on from any failure or disappointment.

SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 2020

SUNDAY PSALM – THE HIDDEN KINDNESS OF GOD

God is aware of every difficult moment we have experienced and the pain we have endured for every wrong done to us, or by us. He hasn't looked away. He hasn't been busy elsewhere. He has watched and cared and acted on our behalf. It's a good day to give thanks for our experience of the kindness of God

I celebrate and shout because you are kind. You saw all my suffering, and you cared for me. You kept me from the hands of my enemies, and you set me free. Protect me from hidden traps and keep me safe. My life is in your hands. Save me from enemies who hunt me down. Smile on me, your servant. Have pity and rescue me.
(Psalm 31:7-8, 4, 15-16 CEV)

There are so many things we don't see - so many traps that could trip us up. God is on the watch for those and ready to offer protection. God will act on our behalf when we welcome His intervention. All we need to do is request His help.

The more we progress in recovery and practice following the ways of God, the more the enemies of our soul will try to harm us. Each day of our recovery requires that we put our life in God's hands and rely on Him to save us from the hidden dangers we may encounter.

You are wonderful, and while everyone watches, you store up blessings for all who honor and trust you. I will praise you, Lord, for showing great kindness when I was like a city under attack. I was terrified and thought, "They've chased me far away from you!" But you answered my prayer when I shouted for help. (Psalm 31:19, 21-22 CEV)

God is not passively watching us as we wander through our day. Others may watch and say nothing, but God pours out blessing and help as we open our hearts to His truth. We never live with a complete picture of what is happening in our life. Only God knows that. God promises to work on our behalf whether we can see what He is doing or not. God is always with us even though we may not be aware of His presence. Sometimes the most we can do in our weakness is just keep thanking God that He has promised to never leave us alone.

Prayer: Loving God, Whether I can see what You are doing in my life today or not, help me to trust that as I surrender my will and my life into Your care, You will help and protect me and comfort me in my time of need. Amen

***God will act
on our
behalf when
we welcome
His
intervention.***

MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2020

IT'S TIME TO TAKE A BREAK

Some sentences in the Bible are so meaningful that we just want to read them over and over again. Jesus' invitation to us today is one of those. We live in a world of busyness and stress where challenges both in us and in our circumstances seem so discouraging. At the time we are most weary, how comforting to hear the words of Jesus inviting us to come to Him and He will give us rest.

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
(Matthew 11:28-29 NLT)

***At the time
we are most
weary, how
comforting
to hear the
words of
Jesus
inviting us to
come to Him
and He will
give us rest.***

Some days it's difficult to watch the newscast and listen to more bad news. Financial problems, protests, disease, natural disasters, global warming, and on and on and on it goes. We get weary hearing it all. We feel like we've been given a heavy burden to carry. Jesus doesn't wave a magic wand to rid us of the burdens we choose to carry, nor does He encourage us to deny that problems exist, He invites us to live in the truth that He is in control. He has a way for us to do what is right, make a positive difference, and find rest for our soul all at the same time. Who wouldn't want that?

Lord, you will give perfect peace to those who commit themselves to be faithful to you. That's because they trust in you. It is useless to get up early and stay up late in order to earn a living. God takes care of his own, even while they sleep. (Isaiah 26:3 NIRV; Psalm 127:2 CEV)

Jesus invites us to come to Him and listen for His tender voice as He shows us the way forward together with Him. It won't be more than we can handle nor less than we can carry. He wants to give us gifts that we can use to bring blessings and support to others who are also weary and in need of care.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have not lost control of things even when it seems like many unsolvable situations exist. Help me to come to You with all my problems. I invite You to show me what I should undertake to do and what I should let go of; what I should attempt to resolve and what I should entrust to Your care. Give me strength to do the work You have prepared for me to do today. I choose to rest in the sure knowledge that You are at work in the world You created. Amen

TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2020

JOURNEYING WITH GOD

When we turn our will and life over to the care of God we are admitting that we cannot do life on our own and from this day forward are willing to let God direct our lives. We are aware of the past wrongs we have done, the evil we have brought on ourselves, and the harm we have done to our loved ones and friends while living in self-will. Now we choose to surrender our whole person - body, mind, and spirit, into God's care. We say to God, "I am Yours. You have paid the price to give me new life. Now do with me as You will."

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. (Romans 12:1 MSG)

God knows our hearts and when we are sincere about living a new life in the power of the Holy Spirit, it delights God's heart. God is patient and kind and has compassion on us when we are feeling weak about obeying His word. If we ask Him, He will help us. He will show us things that are well-pleasing to Him, things that we may never have thought about or considered.

So let us never stop offering to God our praise through Jesus. Let us talk openly about our faith in him. Then our words will be like an offering to God. Don't forget to do good. Don't forget to share with others. God is pleased with those kinds of offerings. (Hebrews 13:15-16 NIRV)

Our minds may not be in tune with God's word in every area yet, but we have God's mighty Power working in us to help us get to know and do what pleases Him. Our God is a tender Father who is patient. As we journey with Him, God will care for us and keep us safe on the path we have chosen.

Every word of God is perfect. He is like a shield to those who trust in him. He keeps them safe. (Proverbs 30:5 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for caring for me and guiding me in the way I should go. Please help me to obey Your word in everything I do. Amen

***As we
journey
with Him,
God will
care for us
and keep
us safe on
the path
we have
chosen.***

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2020

LEAVING SHAME BEHIND

God says we are precious in His sight. God, through Jesus, has provided a way for us to leave shame behind and live in honour and dignity, regardless of what has happened in our past. Believing and speaking the truth of God's word to ourselves will break the power of evil to keep us in bondage to the past. This will also open the door for us to live in the blessing of all the good gifts and plans God has for us. All God's promises are YES for us who belong to Jesus.

Let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! (Hebrews 10:22, 2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT)

***Instead of
shame and
dishonor,
you will
enjoy a
double
share of
honor.***

Isaiah 61:7a NLT

It is not easy to let go of powerful lies that have hindered our well-being for much of our lives, but God will give us the power to do so if we will follow His instructions and act on His word. If we are holding anything back, it's time to confess it to God and receive His grace and power to overcome.

My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness. So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith. (2 Corinthians 12:9, Philippians 3:9b NLT)

Those who live with shame often run to isolation when they feel threatened. God calls us to overcome shame by living in community with Him and others. When we want to run away because we feel threatened, our best choice is to stay. We may feel shame choking us from talking with a trustworthy individual about the things in our past but the only way to find real freedom is to get it all out. The truth will set us free.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for running to isolation, addiction, and destructive actions when I felt ashamed rather than calling on You for help. Thank you that Jesus died on the cross for me, so I could be forgiven, cleansed, healed and made whole. Help me to focus my thoughts on truth and not react to my feelings. When I feel like running or isolating, please strengthen me to remain and seek out healthy people with whom I can be honest about my feelings. I am forever grateful that You care for me. Amen

THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2020

SOBRIETY AND MIRACLES

We talk about experiencing miracles in recovery. What is a miracle? It's a joyful and pretty surprising event that can't be explained by natural laws and is therefore considered to be the work of God. How many of those have we experienced: physical and emotional healing, restored relationships, the opportunity to be a positive role model and support in the life of another struggler, a string of days sober that leads to a milestone celebration. Today we give thanks to God for the miracles we have already experienced and the many more we are promised from the God who loves us more than we will ever be able to understand.

Faith in Jesus' name put this man, whose condition you know so well, on his feet—yes, faith and nothing but faith put this man healed and whole right before your eyes. (Acts 3:16 MSG)

We come to recovery with little more than desperation and a bit of hope that, because we've seen some others get sober, maybe someone can help us get sober too. If we ask Him, God will work in our life way beyond our expectations. He will give us new life so that we can become the person He created us to be. He will fill us with His mighty Power and make us whole.

I ask the Father with his great glory to give you the power to be strong in your spirits. He will give you that strength through his Spirit. I pray that Christ will live in your hearts because of your faith. I pray that your life will be strong in love and be built on love. Then you can be filled with everything God has for you. (Ephesians 3:16-17, 19b ERV)

New life in recovery is a work that takes place from the inside out. When we invite Him in, God's Spirit comes to live in us. Where we were formerly dead in our sins, God brings life. There's no greater miracle than sins forgiven and new life. This gets expressed in so many beautiful ways every day as we put God's ways into practice in all our affairs.

Prayer: Thank You God for the daily miracle of You living in me and helping me be the person You created me to be. This is life beyond all my expectations. I want to keep on reaching out to You so I can be filled with everything You have for me. Amen

***Today we
give thanks
to God for
the miracles
we have
already
experienced
and the
many more
we are
promised.***

FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2020

DON'T WORRY ABOUT TOMORROW

Some of the most welcome words in life and certainly in recovery circles are, "One day at a time" or "Just for today." These are principles that help take the weight of the past and of the future off our shoulders, and help us deal with life in a way that is more realistic. These sayings are ways to express Jesus' teaching.

So don't worry about tomorrow. Each day has enough trouble of its own. Tomorrow will have its own worries. (Matthew 6:34 ERV)

The above words can be found in the most famous record of Jesus' teaching called, "The Sermon on the Mount." Jesus had just been speaking about some of the things we worry about – money, clothes, food – and encouraged His followers to believe that God cares very much for them and will provide for their need. Jesus uses examples of birds and flowers to remind us of how much attention to detail we can expect from God.

Instead of worrying, Jesus' advice is to seek God and His plans for the day and do what God says. If we do, we can trust God to take care of everything else.

What you should want most is God's kingdom and doing what he wants you to do. Then he will give you all these other things you need. (Matthew 6:33 ERV)

We are not encouraged to live in denial and bury our heads in the sand. There are things we will need to deal with today and not all of them will be easy. But, God will meet our need and at the end of the day we will have further instances to share of God's faithful care and guidance.

As we learn to live one day at a time, it is essential that we come to God with a willingness and intention to surrender our will and our life to His care. He might stretch us more than we think in a certain situation because He knows best how to mature our faith, but He will never give us more than we can handle.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Your Word tells me not to worry about my life or the things of tomorrow. Forgive me for my lack of confidence in Your ability to work everything together for my good. Please help me to deal with those things I can, and to make changes where necessary. Help me to leave those things I cannot change in Your care. Amen

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2020

PRACTICAL WISDOM – PRACTICE BEING CHEERFUL

Scientific evidence suggests that being cheerful seems to have positive benefits on our over-all health. There are studies that suggest being cheerful and optimistic limits stress, reduces pain, supports our immune system, and even helps to protect our heart. Is it any wonder that long before there were tests to prove it, the Bible already had this important information available?

A cheerful heart makes you healthy. But a broken spirit dries you up. Worry weighs us down; a cheerful word picks us up. (Proverbs 17:22 NIRV, Proverbs 12:25 MSG)

Studies have shown that those who live with joy and cheerfulness better fight off seasonal bugs like cold and flu. Older people who reported feeling happy lived longer than those who were least happy. This is pretty good motivation to be thankful for who we are and to be cheerful today.

A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit. All the days of the oppressed are wretched, but the cheerful heart has a continual feast. (Proverbs 15:13, 15 NIV)

We tend to be more creative and to solve problems better when we are happy and optimistic rather than living in fear and worry, supposing the problems before us are bigger than God's ability to make a way through for us. God does not want us to pretend that problems don't exist. Denial didn't fix our problems with addiction and it won't solve the challenges we face in recovery. Our part is to pray often, work hard, and trust God in all circumstances. When we do, God's faithful promise is that he will be with us.

Be cheerful. Keep things in good repair. Keep your spirits up. Think in harmony. Be agreeable. Do all that, and the God of love and peace will be with you for sure. (2 Corinthians 13:11 MSG)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to live with joy in my heart and be cheerful no matter what challenges I face. I receive Your comfort and encouragement as I face problems head-on rather than avoiding or denying them. I trust You are with me and will make a way forward for me as You've done so many times in the past. Thank you for caring for me. Amen

***Don't burn out;
keep yourselves
fueled and
aflake. Be alert
servants of the
Master,
cheerfully
expectant. Don't
quit in hard
times; pray all
the harder***

Romans 12:11-12 MSG

SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2020

GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO WAIT

Many of us have heard the saying, "Good things come to those who wait." This proverb reminds us that if we are patient and keep on doing what we know to do, we will eventually achieve our goal. God's word has more to say about this.

Good things come to those who do what is right. Joy comes to those whose hearts are honest. You who are godly, be glad because of what the Lord has done. Praise him, because his name is holy. (Psalm 97:11-12 NIRV)

***But put
God's
kingdom
first. Do
what he
wants you
to do.
Then all
those
things will
also be
given to
you.***

***Matthew 6:33
NIRV***

We do not have all the answers for our future and perhaps feel insecure about some of the unknowns. God's promise to us is that if we will follow Him, live with integrity, and do what is right, He will fill our lives with good things and our hearts with joy. Not only that, but in our eternal life with God, after our bodies die and are put in the grave, we will experience wonderful things that are way beyond our ability to even think about or imagine, and we will enjoy these gifts forever.

Some people live for God's glory, for honor, and for life that cannot be destroyed. They live for those things by always continuing to do good. God will give eternal life to them. (Romans 2:7 ERV)

The best news of all for us is that God knows we are unable to always "live good" and so He encourages us to receive the gift of His Holy Spirit who will fill us with power and give us wisdom to overcome our weaknesses and the temptations that we will face along the way.

Even though you are evil, you know how to give good gifts to your children. How much more will your Father who is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:13 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that I am weak when it comes to temptation. Please fill me with Your Holy Spirit so I have the wisdom to wait patiently for things to change and have the power to do what is right regardless of the circumstances I encounter. I want to live for Your honour and continue to do good one day at a time. Please help me! Amen

MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2020

KEEP ALERT AND PRAY

When we struggle to do what's right it can be helpful to remember that God knows about the battle and provides a promise for success with a clear strategy for attaining: it keep alert and pray.

The sinful self wants what is against the Spirit, and the Spirit wants what is against the sinful self. They are always fighting against each other, so that you don't do what you really want to do. Keep watch and pray that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. (Galatians 5:17 ERV, Matthew 26:41 GNT)

The Bible teaches that the evil one is continually looking for ways to destroy us. Only God can keep us safe from Satan's attacks and show us the right way to proceed. Our job is to pray and pay attention.

Jesus prayed: ***"I am not asking you to take them out of the world. But I am asking that you keep them safe from the Evil One. They don't belong to the world, just as I don't belong to the world."*** (John 17:15-16 ERV)

When Jesus' followers asked him how to pray Jesus included in that prayer a request to God for help with temptation: ***Keep us from sinning when we are tempted. Save us from the evil one.*** (Matthew 6:13 NIRV)

How do we pray for this needed help? We humbly admit to God that we are powerless to overcome temptation without Him. We bring our challenging thoughts and circumstances to God. We neither hide them nor avoid them. We ask God for His wisdom and guidance. We make a choice to resist the temptation, affirming the promises of God we have read in the Bible to be living truth in this moment and ongoing. We must be intentional and persistent in surrendering ourselves to God's care and proclaiming His truth. He can be trusted to do the rest.

Prayer: Loving God, You have all power over every kind of temptation. Help me to stay alert to the work of the evil one who is seeking to destroy me. Help me to stand firm on Your promises. I will keep looking to You and will trust You for the help I need. I proclaim that Jesus is Lord over everything in heaven and earth. I will have victory through Jesus because He never leaves me and will never forsake me. Amen

***Only God
can keep
us safe
from
Satan's
attacks
and show
us the
right way
to
proceed.***

TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020

SEARCHING FOR GOD'S PLAN

Human beings are wonderfully complex creations of God. We have a body, a soul, and a spirit. God planned for us to live in harmony with God and with everything else in creation. God made us in His image so we could live in relationship with Him. Only in this relationship could we know the security and stability needed to properly enjoy all the other desires and passions we experience as human beings.

He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8 NASB)

Without relationship with God the foundation for living in a healthy human relationship does not exist. We fear pain, crave pleasure, and desire power. We participate in actions that are destructive and addictive simply because we don't know how else to cope.

***We were
created to
live in
harmony
with God
and with
everything
else in
creation.***

Making a searching and fearless moral inventory is a wonderful way to start at the beginning and see how everything is meant to fit together. We have natural appetites and passions for sexual fulfillment, emotional and financial security, and to have a place of respect and usefulness in society. These are God-given qualities. God is ready and willing to show us how these strong desires may be met in a wonderful way.

This is all there is in the world: wanting to please our sinful selves, wanting the sinful things we see, and being too proud of what we have. But none of these comes from the Father. They come from the world. The world is passing away, and all the things that people want in the world are passing away. But whoever does what God wants will live forever. (1 John 2:16-17 ERV)

We get into trouble when we focus on a particular desire and go after its fulfillment rather than seeking to know and love God and asking Him to show us the right path to find satisfaction for our deepest needs. God didn't give us instincts and passions in order to make us suffer. God wants us to enjoy full and satisfying relationships. However, in order to know how to live, seeking God must come first, then everything else will fit together in harmony.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Too often I've done things backwards. I've looked to meet my needs before asking You which is the best way forward for me. Help me to seek and learn from You today so I can have the satisfying life You created me to live. Amen

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2020

LIMITED AUTONOMY

An autonomous person is someone who is capable of making an informed decision about something on their own without having the input of another. Tradition 4 of Alcoholics Anonymous states: *Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.* This is a principle to be put into practice at the group level but has lessons for our individual recovery as well. We are encouraged to express our individual uniqueness “*except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.*” (Twelve By Twelve page 146)

In this tradition AA is recognizing something that flows from God’s own heart – that humans would have the gift of free will – freedom to live fully as the persons they were created to be but doing so according to the principles that their creator knew worked. From the very beginning, choices were provided so we could honour God’s wisdom as superior to our limited human knowledge.

There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death. This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him, for the Lord is your life. (Proverbs 14:12, Deuteronomy 30:19-20a NIV)

The founders of AA were willing to trust groups to rely on their own conscience as a guide to action. It was a courageous choice and offered huge freedom to groups – even the freedom to get things wrong.

God made us in His image, unique from every other created being, with the ability to think and choose how to act based on truth and moral principles. God encourages us to make use of the abilities and creativity with which He has gifted us. At the same time, God pleads with us to recognize the reality that we are limited and stand in need of His wisdom every moment of every day. In moments where what we think is right goes against the wider wisdom, we would do well to heed the “except in matters affecting” principle.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to humbly surrender all that I think and do to Your guidance. I want my life to be shaped by Your wisdom, so my choices do not negatively impact others. Amen

Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.

THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2020

FOLLOWING THROUGH

In “How It Works” we read and hear the words read regularly in meetings: *Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program.*” (Big Book of AA page 58). Anyone who has made an honest attempt at recovery knows how much hard work is involved. What gives us encouragement and hope is the knowledge that many people who do the work, succeed.

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope. (Romans 15:4 NIV)

Clearing the wreckage of our past and rebuilding our character and our relationships isn’t accomplished in a day. We can contribute to that goal every day, for sure, but effort over time is what is required to meet our long-term objective.

Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path.

Big Book page 58

We can know all sorts of things about God as we come to believe that He is a power greater than ourselves who can restore us to sanity. We can even make a decision to turn our will and our life over to His care. The real test of our desire for recovery is the follow-through of putting God’s word and the steps into practice one day at a time. Some days will be relatively easy and other days will require every bit of strength and commitment we can muster.

Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble and keep on praying. So let’s not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t give up. (Romans 12:12, Galatians 6:9 NLT)

Who of us enjoys doing a searching, fearless, and moral inventory and then admitting the exact nature of our wrongs? It’s painful to come before God and ask for the removal of our character defects. Making a list of those we’ve harmed and setting out to make amends to them is threatening for most of us. However, God’s promise and the experience strength and hope of those who have gone before us tells us that, as we follow the path and do things one step at a time, God will get us to the goal.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I often want the “quick fix” and find it hard to follow through on the challenging parts of becoming the person You created me to be. Help me to fix my eyes on the goal and please strengthen me to do the work required of me today. Amen

NOTES

NOTES

SOME AREAS OF ADDICTION AND DEPENDENCY

For a variety of reasons, many of us have an underlying structure of disorder that is damaging us and others. We invite God to show us the truth about ourselves so we can personally receive God's forgiveness to set us free and healing to make us strong.

<p>SUBSTANCE ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Alcohol Caffeine Injected or smoked substances such as: Crack, Crystal Meth, Heroin Marijuana Prescription Medications Sugar Tobacco</p>	<p>BEHAVIOUR ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Anger/Rage/Bullying Cutting Crime Eating Disorders: Bulimia, Anorexia, Binging, Obesity Gambling Hoarding Sex/Pornography Verbal Abuse: Gossip, Lying, Accusing Blaming, Condemning Violence (physical, verbal, cyber)</p>
<p>SOFT ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Digital Use: (Time or Content) TV/Phone/Tablet; video games, Social Networking; Cyber-bullying; Online shopping; Gambling, Pornography Exercise Food (See Eating Disorders) Isolating/Sleep Money: Debt/Fraud Religion Shopping Sports Work/Achievement</p>	<p>RELATIONSHIP ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Abusive Relationships: Includes: Intimidation, Isolation, Domination, Blaming, Humiliation, Withholding, Forcing acts against one's will Approval dependency Attention Seeking Codependence/Rescuing Power/Control</p>

PRAYER FOR HEALING AND RESTORATION

Loving God, Thank You for rescuing us from the dark power of Satan and bringing us into loving relationship with Your Son, Jesus. We ask for wisdom and understanding from Your Spirit in order to live as people who honour You. Heal us. Make us new. Make us strong followers of Christ. Root us deeply in Your love. We place our trust in Your power that can do far more in us than we dare ask or imagine. Amen.

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.

JUST FOR TODAY

Just for today I will try to live in conscious contact with God praying only for knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out.

Just for today I will strengthen my mind. I will take a few minutes to read and meditate on God's word, seeking God's perspective for my life today. I will take note of one helpful thing God is saying to me and seek to behave accordingly.

Just for today I will be joyful, optimistic, and grateful. I will take time to notice the gifts in me, in others, and in my surroundings and let the rest go.

Just for today I will adjust myself to what is and not try to adjust everything else to my desires. I will trust that God is working all things for good in my life.

Just for today I will be agreeable. I will not criticize, not find fault, and not try to improve or control anybody except myself. I will pray blessing on one person with whom I struggle to relate.

Just for today I will have a quiet half hour all by myself to relax and enjoy all that God is giving me.

Just for today I will be unafraid, believing that as I trust in God with all my heart and lean not on my own understanding, He will lead me along a good path.

Just for today I will seek to serve others with kindness, doing what is right, and walking humbly with God.

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