

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations



February 2018

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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.*

We want to hear from you.

Visit us at www.partnersinhope.ca or write to us at:

Partners in Hope Recovery Society
1906 – 615 Belmont Street, New Westminster, BC V3M 6A1

Email: pihrecovery@gmail.com
Phone or text: 604-215-0335



Come and learn and grow with us:

Christian 12-Step Recovery Meeting
Wednesdays, 7:00 pm
325 6th 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



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FEBRUARY 2018

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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2018

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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.

OBSESSION WITH PAST FAILURES

Sometimes people in recovery circles are obsessed with past failures. They replay scenes of negative events over and over again in their minds allowing the hurt to cause them even more pain.

Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. (Luke 6:37 NIV)

Some of us struggle with memories of how someone failed to provide the necessities of life for us. We may similarly judge and condemn ourselves for our failure to provide for those loved ones who depended on us. Failures of others, or our own failures, too easily become the dominant focus in our thinking and our conversations. Resentment and bitterness grow like weeds in this type of environment and our obsession with past offences eventually becomes our identity. Can God help in these circumstances?

Is anyone crying for help? God is listening, ready to rescue you. If your heart is broken, you'll find God right there; if you're kicked in the gut, he'll help you catch your breath. (Psalm 34:17-18 MSG)

Continuing to obsess on past failures is a hindrance to our present and future well-being. We need to ask God for forgiveness for the sins of bitterness, resentment or meanness that occupy our minds and hearts. We need to see those who harmed us as sinners in need of forgiveness. We need to give up being judge of our own and someone else's failures. Failures are not fatal. Bitterness can be.

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 12:15 MSG)

Let's ask God today to help us deal with our obsession with past failures.

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to let go of the bitter discontent I harbour because of past hurts. I accept Your forgiveness and healing and choose to live with others in Your peace and blessing. Amen

***We need to
give up
being judge
of our own
and
someone
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Failures are
not fatal.
Bitterness
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FEELINGS OF SADNESS

We are often overwhelmed with feelings of sadness when we begin the recovery process. We feel sad because of the road we have travelled and the harmful choices we have made. We recognize our complete disregard for the well-being of ourselves and our loved ones. The guilt we feel contributes to feelings of sadness. We condemn ourselves because we think we should have been stronger. Had we been, the people we care about would not have suffered and we would not be in the mess we find ourselves in today. These negative feelings often contribute to our inability to do the daily things we need to do to stay clean and sober and may lead us to relapse. How can God help in these circumstances?

Each morning I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly. The Lord is a shelter for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. Those who know your name trust in you, for you, O Lord, do not abandon those who search for you. (Psalm 5:3, 9:9-10 NLT)

***So now there
is no
condemnation
for those who
belong to
Christ Jesus.
Romans 8:1***

When we accept Jesus as our Saviour and Lord, God totally forgives us all our sins and frees us from all condemnation. To allow self-condemnation or guilt to continue when we have received God's forgiveness conflicts with what God says and what Jesus did for us on the cross. Jesus opened our future, and permanently closed our past. We need to renew our minds with these facts and move forward in the lavish grace that God is pouring out on us. We need to fix our thoughts on good things. We need to determine in our hearts to do those things which contribute to our well-being, whether we feel like doing them or not. We need to remember; God

is always with us, we need never face our problems alone.

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all the marvelous things you have done. I will be filled with joy because of you. I will sing praises to your name, O Most High. (Romans 8:1; Psalm 9:1-2 NLT)

Today, let's give God praise and rejoice in the future He has opened for us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You that through Jesus I am totally forgiven. Help me to live in the peace and joy that freedom from condemnation and guilt brings. Amen

NOTES

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2018

HELP FOR THE HOPELESS ADDICT

Do I matter? Does anyone notice me? Does anyone care? These are questions we might ask and that individuals who struggle with hardship and pain have asked for centuries. The longer we have struggled with addiction, the more times we have faltered and failed, the harder it is to have hope.

The good news is that as long as we are living and breathing, there is hope for us today. God is inviting us to a new life with Him. We may think that temptation is too much for us to handle but God says that if we come to Him, he will make a way of escape for us.

The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. (1 Corinthians 10:13 NLT)

What is God's way?

1. Look to God for help and saving. ***Let all the world look to me for salvation! For I am God; there is no other.*** (Isaiah 45:22 NLT)
2. Spend time reading and learning God's way: ***I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.*** (Psalm 119:11 NLT)
3. Welcome the new perspective on life the Holy Spirit will show us. ***Let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes.*** (Ephesians 3:23 NLT)
4. Make our hearts available to hope: ***When doubts filled my mind, your comfort gave me renewed hope and cheer.*** (Psalm 94:19 NLT)
5. Give it our best effort: ***Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.*** (2 Corinthians 13:11 NIV)
6. Live in gratitude: ***Let all that I am praise the Lord; may I never forget the good things he does for me. He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies. He fills my life with good things.*** (Psalm 103:1-5a NLT)

***As long as
we are
living and
breathing,
there is
hope for us
today.***

Let's choose to give God's way a chance. Remember, with God nothing is impossible.

Prayer: Gracious God, Please give me hope and strength to live according to Your Word. Help me to take practical steps to make room for hope in my heart and mind. Amen

SUNDAY PSALM: TURNING FROM WORTHLESS THINGS

Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain. Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word. Fulfill your promise to your servant, so that you may be feared. Take away the disgrace I dread, for your laws are good. How I long for your precepts! In your righteousness preserve my life. (Psalm 119:35-40 NIV)

***As we leave
behind
worthless
things and
begin to put
God's
principles into
action, He
gives us
courage and
strength to
continue to do
what is right.***

While we operated in the chaos of our addiction all our attention was focused on worthless things. We longed for the good life. We thought that our substance of choice would give us freedom from pain and fill us with pleasure. The insanity of our addiction was that no matter how often we used, we never found complete freedom from pain or the pleasure we sought. All that resulted was increased desperation and suffering. The Bible clearly describes this way of life as seeking after worthless things which put our lives in danger.

By God's grace, in the chaos of our addictive living, we became aware that something better was available – something right and good which leads to a purposeful life. This was the quiet voice of God, inviting us to the meaningful, satisfying life He created us to live. God also promises to teach us about this new way of life He planned for us.

Our old ways are flawed. We have numerous triggers in us related to fear and pain that, left on their own, will have us moving towards unhealthy behaviour before we even think through what we are doing. The God who created us knows exactly what we need.

Through His Word, God teaches us His principles for a good and pleasing life.

As we leave behind worthless things and begin to put these principles into action, God gives us courage and strength to continue to do what is right. We begin to discover that the good life we were always seeking is found in wholeheartedly obeying God's word.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Teach me Your ways that I might delight in You and follow You all the days of my life. Amen

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2018

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S HELP

God's way is uncomplicated if we will simply follow His principles. As little children trust the good and caring hearts of their parents, so in life with God in recovery we make a choice to believe that God is good and act accordingly.

Then he said, "I tell you the truth, unless you turn from your sins and become like little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven. (Matthew 18:3 NLT)

When our thinking and God's word clash, we lay down our thoughts, and choose for God's direction. We match our behaviour to our new understanding of how life works. We read the Bible and see how God says we can achieve this.

Only obedience to the word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit can keep us from falling into familiar patterns.

The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:4-5 NIV)

Without God's help, we will never be able to choose the correct pathway to a fulfilling life. We have too many incorrect beliefs imprinted on our minds and hearts. Only obedience to the word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit can keep us from falling into familiar patterns. Are we willing to wholeheartedly surrender to God and obey His Word?

But what happens when we live God's way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection

for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely. (Galatians 5:22-23 MSG)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to change my thought patterns so they are in line with Your ways. My desire is to be guided by You in all my affairs. Thank You for working in me and giving me the desire and the power to do what pleases You. Amen

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2018

WISDOM FOR THE RECOVERY JOURNEY – DON'T TRADE ADDICTIONS

The wisest man of his time, King Solomon compiled sayings that can be found in the book of Proverbs in the Bible. Some of these address addiction issues. We often think that addictions are limited to drugs and alcohol, but we are coming to know there are many other substances and practices which we use to cover our feelings of pain. Food and money are two other common problem areas.

Listen to me, my children! Be wise and have enough sense to follow the right path. Don't be a heavy drinker or stuff yourself with food. It will make you feel drowsy, and you will end up poor with only rags to wear. Give up trying so hard to get rich. Your money flies away before you know it, just like an eagle suddenly taking off. (Proverbs 23:19-21 CEV)

Trading socially unacceptable addictions for ones which are socially acceptable doesn't solve our real problem. Whenever we seek to sort out or avoid our feelings with anything other than the comfort and healing of God, we only create a path for continued suffering. God knows what we need in every area of our life and He promises to take care of us if we will come to Him first and let Him work out His will in each situation.

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. The Lord is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me? Jesus said: Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 13:6, Matthew 11:28 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, there are so many things in life that I don't understand and don't know how to sort out on my own. Help me to do the work of recovery that exposes what needs deeper healing. Give me the strength not to run but rather to reach out to you for the comfort and healing I need. Amen

God knows what we need in every area of our life and He promises to take care of us if we will come to Him first and let Him work out His will in each situation.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2018

TOGETHER WE CAN

Life in addiction is life in isolation. We figure things out on our own. We seek to get what we want when we want it, regardless of the impact on others. In recovery, God invites us to a new way of living which includes sharing our thoughts, our needs, our desires, and our daily lives with God and others.

Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 NLT)

Alone we could never accomplish what is possible when we work together in love and build each other up.

It's important to learn from others who have walked the recovery path before us. Since we become like the company we keep, it is important to have friends we respect and who are modeling the qualities of honesty, perseverance, and accountability. These friends, who have chosen to walk in the ways of God, will challenge us to get the help we need as we move forward. When we are made aware of our shortcomings, we need friends who will support us as we adjust our attitude and behaviour towards others. They will encourage us to become a person who shares and cares about others.

Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ. The way of foolish people seems right to them. But those who are wise listen to advice. Foolish people are easily upset. But wise people pay no attention to hurtful words. An honest witness tells the truth. But a dishonest witness tells lies. The words of thoughtless people cut like swords. But the tongue of wise people brings healing.
(Galatians 6:2, NLT, Proverbs 12:15-18 NIRV)

As we choose to support and encourage one another, we will be strengthened to move forward in recovery. Alone we could never accomplish what is possible when we work together in love and build each other up.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to embrace Your plan for my life. Help me to be accountable to Your word and listen to the guidance and counsel of good friends. Help me to love others and care for them as You love and care for me. Amen

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2018

THE CARE OF GOD

What does it mean to turn our will and our life over to the care of God? What kind of care can we actually expect to receive from God?

God says: ***I have loved you, my people, with an everlasting love. With unfailing love, I have drawn you to myself.*** (Jeremiah 31:3 NLT)

It is not uncommon to link our perceptions about God to our negative childhood experiences. Just because God is a power greater than ourselves, and the people who harmed us had decisive power over us, we often incorrectly conclude that God is like them and would be harmful to us. Turning our life over to the care of God involves becoming willing to accept God as He is and not insisting on creating Him in our image, based on our flawed ideas. God is faithful and worthy to be trusted. We need have no fear that God will ever let us down because, even when we are unfaithful, God remains faithful.

He will keep you strong to the end so that you will be free from all blame on the day when our Lord Jesus Christ returns. God will do this, for he is faithful to do what he says, and he has invited you into partnership with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (1 Corinthians 1:8-9 NLT)

When we begin to live our lives yielded to God's will and are accepting of God's care, it's like the light goes on and we recognize, "This is it. This is what I've been looking for all my life." In that moment, something within us comes alive. We will never have experienced it before and it truly is fulfilling. From this we know that surrendering to God's will satisfies those who are thirsty and fills those who are hungry with good things.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for loving me and making a way for me to experience a satisfying life. You truly are faithful to perform all that You have promised. In all my affairs I ask that, Your will, not mine, be done. Amen

When we begin to live our lives yielded to God's will and are accepting of God's care, it's like the light goes on and we recognize, "This is it. This is what I've been looking for all my life."

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2018

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY - RANDOM OR RATIONAL

Did life as we know it today come about through a series of random acts of fate? What keeps the delicate balance of life steady in the solar system as well as around us -- just a lucky day held together by a fortunate lining up of powerful forces? The Bible says that God created the world and sustains it by His power.

He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. There is one God, the Father, by whom all things were created, and for whom we live, there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were created, and through whom we live. (Colossians 1:17, 1 Corinthians 8:6 NLT)

We come to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Scientists say: We never observe orderliness occurring by accident, without an intelligent cause to direct the order. No amount of power or energy is enough to bring order out of chaos. (<http://www.icr.org/> 2014) The earth's rotation, the moon cycle, and the changing seasons are just a few of the ordered processes observable in nature. Are these processes random happenings or are they divinely caused and sustained by God?

The earth is located the right distance from the sun to sustain life. If it were any further away from the sun, we would all freeze. Any closer, and we would burn up. The Earth remains this perfect distance from the sun while it rotates around the sun at a speed of nearly 67,000 mph. It is also rotating on its axis, allowing the entire surface of the Earth to be properly warmed and cooled every day. Random or intelligent design?

What about our lives? Random happenings or creatively designed? Are we spinning around on our own or is God working in everything that takes place so we can know purpose and goodness and meaning today, and every day of our lives? "We come to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." Maybe the founders of AA were on to something. Like a man in the Bible facing a crisis of how to respond to God we too can pray, "***I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!***" (Mark 9:24 NLT)

Prayer: God of all Creation, I praise You that before the world began You had a plan and that plan included my life. When things around me aren't perfect and it's hard to believe You are still in control, help me overcome my unbelief. Amen

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2018

REPROGRAMMING MY CONSCIENCE

Folklore advises, "Let your conscience be your guide." This has serious limitations since our conscience can be wrongly programmed by our experiences and the values of the people around us. We need to renew our conscience so that it becomes a trustworthy mirror of the wisdom of God's Word within us.

I do my level best to keep a clear conscience before God and my neighbors in everything I do. With Christ as my witness, I speak with utter truthfulness. My conscience and the Holy Spirit confirm it. (Acts 24:16, Romans 9:1 NLT)

From early childhood we've heard many twisted messages because of "fake news," the half-truths of political spin, and the simple distortions that come from others as they speak from their limited perspective. Sometimes people are incorrectly guided by false guilt which does not come from doing wrong but is a psychological guilt typically developed in early childhood. In the middle of efforts to escape abuse or violence, these persons' consciences became seared by fear, self-hatred, and ugly words. Their actions reflect what they have come to believe.

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. My conscience is clear, but that doesn't prove I'm right. It is the Lord himself who will examine me and decide. (2 Timothy 1:7, NLT, Acts 24:16, 1 Corinthians 4:4 MSG)

God wants to release us from the fear that has clouded our view of reality and damaged our conscience. Only God is wise enough to help us discern right from wrong and support us as we renew our minds with truth. God will guide us and help us in this work as we, one day at a time, maintain conscious contact with Him and surrender to His will.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, reveal to me any false beliefs about myself, others, and the world around me that lead to false guilt or inappropriate behaviour. Help me to reprogram my conscience and recognize truth in all my ways. Amen.

We need to renew our conscience so that it becomes a trustworthy mirror of the wisdom of God's Word within us.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2018

A PROPERLY FUNCTIONING CONSCIENCE

God created us to be moral beings. He has given us a conscience that, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is intended to help us recognize when our behaviour is morally right or wrong.

The purpose of my instruction is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith.

(1 Timothy 1:5 NLT)

A renewed conscience clearly indicates what is morally right and good and gives warning when we are straying into wrong doing.

Unfortunately, we live in a world that has been infected and broken by sin. We hear all kinds of false messages and we spend years becoming familiar with ways of living that are contrary to God's way. Our conscience gradually becomes corrupted and we can no longer rely on its direction for good in our daily lives.

Everything is pure to those whose hearts are pure. But nothing is pure to those who are corrupt and unbelieving, because their minds and consciences are corrupted. (Titus 1:15 NLT)

An important part of life with God in recovery, is restoring reliable function to our conscience. A renewed conscience clearly indicates what is morally right and good and gives warning when we are straying into wrong doing. What is the process of restoring this proper function to our conscience? We feed our minds with God's word and choose for His way each time our thinking and His word differ.

Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. When outsiders who have never heard of God's law follow it more or less by instinct, they confirm its truth by their obedience. They show that God's law is not something alien, imposed on us from without, but woven into the very fabric of our creation. There is something deep within them that echoes God's yes and no, right and wrong. (Psalm 119:105, NIV, Romans 2:14-15 MSG)

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for forgiveness of my sins and the new life you offer me through Jesus. Help me to listen to, and act on, the guidance of Your Holy Spirit so that I am filled with truth and once again have a reliable and good conscience. Amen

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2018

TRUST AND OBEY

You are my portion, Lord; I have promised to obey your words. I have sought your face with all my heart; be gracious to me according to your promise. I have considered my ways and have turned my steps to your statutes. I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands. Though the wicked bind me with ropes, I will not forget your law. At midnight I rise to give you thanks for your righteous laws. I am a friend to all who fear you, to all who follow your precepts. The earth is filled with your love, Lord; teach me your decrees. (Psalm 119:57-64 NIV)

Our new life with God in recovery is a journey of learning and growing. Learning takes place, not only when we are exposed to new information, but when we respond to that information. To live according to God's will, we will need to make changes about what we believe and what we say and do. As we begin to trust and obey what God says, we will observe that His ways are trustworthy.

Based on today's reading, the following are some practical and helpful actions to take in order to learn and progress in our recovery:

- Have a wholehearted desire to know God and His principles for every area of life.
- Be intentional about asking God for direction throughout the day.
- Be willing to honestly assess what we are saying and doing.
- Change our thought patterns and actions when they differ from what God says is right and true.
- Be quick to obey. Be consistent. Don't be complacent. Don't compromise in even one area.
- Regularly give thanks for all the knowledge we have gained and the growth we observe.

God's promise to fill our lives with love, joy and peace as we walk obediently with Him is trustworthy. Today is a good day to begin trusting and obeying God in all our ways.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Great and marvellous are Your works and just and true are Your ways. Help me to wholeheartedly obey all Your commands that I may live a fulfilling life in recovery with You. Amen

Learning takes place, not only when we are exposed to new information, but when we respond to that information.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2018

IS YOUR ROOM CONFIRMED?

Homelessness is often an issue we face while in addiction. The good news is that when we enter into a new life with God in recovery we are assured of a home with Him forever.

Jesus said: ***Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.*** (John 14:1-3 NLT)

When we enter into a new life with God in recovery we are assured of a home with Him forever.

Jesus, who created this world and everything in it, including us, came to earth to die for our sins. When this work was finished, Jesus returned to heaven to make ready a place for those who believed in Him. When we look at the spectacular beauty of this created earth we can hardly imagine what that place will be like. Thankfully, we don't have to wait for heaven to find a peaceful sanctuary, God promises one with Him today.

Jesus said, ***All who love me will do what I say. My Father will love them, and we will come and make our home with each of them. Anyone who doesn't love me will not obey me. And remember, my words are not my own. What I am telling you is from the Father who sent me.*** (John 14:23-24 NLT)

When we accept the unfailing love of God for us and turn our will and our lives over to His care, Jesus says that He and His Father will come and make their home with us. Our hearts and lives will be filled up with all the fullness of God. The Holy Spirit will walk with us and teach us everything we need to know.

But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you. (John 14:26 NLT)

Today, let's give thanks that we are the temple of the Holy Spirit and are never alone because God lives with us, and is in us.

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You that in this life, wherever I am, You are my safe shelter. I look forward to the place in heaven that Jesus is preparing for me and can only imagine how much better it will be than anything I could ever envision. Amen

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2018

PREJUDICE AND PEACE

Stories of intolerance and prejudice air regularly on the news networks. Sadly, this kind of thinking and acting has been common place throughout the centuries. History shows that many wars have been started because of prejudice and hatred between races and sexes, and religious and political groups. The rich judge the poor, and the poor judge the rich. The list is endless.

When we come into recovery, if we want others to treat us with respect, then we need to respond with respect towards them. This is the first step towards us seeing others as God sees them and to living in peace.

I see very clearly that God shows no favoritism. In every nation he accepts those who fear him and do what is right. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Acts 10:34-35 NLT, Galatians 3:28 NIV)

We may not approve of another's beliefs, choices, and actions. However, the Bible tells us we are to ***“show proper respect to everyone”*** (1 Peter 2:17 NIV). To embrace God's way of living in recovery we must do all we can to see walls broken down and individuals come together to honestly and respectfully interact with one another for the good of all.

Prejudice won't go away simply because we try to ignore it. Responding to hate and discrimination with anger is often more harmful than helpful. We must learn to separate people from words or actions and learn how to deal with individuals in whose presence we might feel uncomfortable. Where troubles and tensions exist, we need to take a step back and sort out what's really going on. What arises in our own hearts that needs to be addressed so that everyone around us may be lifted up, protected, and can live peacefully with one another.

In a nutshell, to move from prejudice to peace we must listen long, talk to God, and continue to talk respectfully to one another.

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to identify any prejudice I may hold in my own heart. Forgive me if I've built walls rather than bridges. Help me to let go of all prejudice. Strengthen me to walk with wisdom and respect before You and others. Amen

To move from prejudice to peace we must listen long, talk to God, and continue to talk respectfully to one another.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2018

FACING PREJUDICE WITH COURAGE AND TRUTH

God hates sin, but with unfailing love He pursues every person who sins. God loves even the stubborn and rebellious person and desires that they turn away from their harmful ways and turn to Him.

Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts. Let them turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. (Isaiah 55:7 NIV)

***Only God
can redeem
the past.
Only God
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the healing
and
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that is
needed.***

One reason for prejudice is past injustice experienced by us or by those we love. None of us can go back and undo the past. It's impossible to correct the great wrongs of history, no matter how much we would like to. Only God can redeem the past. Only God can bring the healing and restoration that is needed.

Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged. And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own? How can you think of saying to your friend, 'Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,' when you can't see past the log in your own eye? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye. (Matthew 7:1-5 NIV)

To live in peace with others, we must stop taking inventory of what we, or our ancestors have lost, and stop blaming other people or groups for the record of wrongs we keep. Acknowledging our own sinfulness in refusing to forgive, is one way to receive healing for our own anger and bitterness and prejudice. We all stand guilty before our Holy God for the things we have done. When we were mired in sin in our active addiction, God pursued us with His love. Only through our belief in the finished work of Jesus on the cross do we have forgiveness and healing and eternal life. Jesus is also offering what we have received to the person or group we may be prejudiced against.

Prayer: Lord, I want to stop judging others and being prejudiced against them. I want to live in peace. Please help me! Amen

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2018

HOW CAN I GET DISCERNMENT

How can I get discernment? Discernment comes through the work of God's Holy Spirit living in us and teaching us God's ways. Through God's Word, as recorded in the Bible, He invites us to know Him intimately. God's desire is that we know His character and His ways, so we will wholeheartedly trust Him as we daily turn our will and our life over to His care. Through the wisdom God gives, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, God will help us discern the plans He has for our lives.

Let those who are wise understand these things. Let those with discernment listen carefully. The paths of the LORD are true and right, and righteous people live by walking in them. But in those paths sinners stumble and fall. (Hosea 14:9 NLT)

As we take steps and make plans in our new life with God in recovery, we need to seek God's wisdom to discern the right path. That's certainly the appropriate action to take when we are uncertain, but probably even more important to do when we think we know what to do. Our way of approaching a situation may be twisted by familiar thinking based on past experience.

Some simple steps we might take in this process are:

- ✓ list the known pros and cons of the choice we are about to make.
- ✓ consider the gifts God has given us.
- ✓ pray and trust that God will direct our steps in the way we should go.
- ✓ seek guidance from someone who knows us well (pastor, priest, parents, spiritual counselor) and carefully consider their advice.

This is what the Lord says—your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: "I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is good for you and leads you along the paths you should follow." (Isaiah 48:17 NLT)

In each situation, we need to make a humble assessment of our will versus God's revealed will. God promises to direct our steps as we submit our plans to Him.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, My desire is to have knowledge and understanding of all Your ways so that I may have discernment in all I undertake to do. AMEN

***God's desire is
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and His ways, so
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trust Him as we
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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2018

DISCERNMENT

People with discernment usually do the right thing in every situation. Spiritually discerning people, based on their knowledge of God and His ways, have the capacity to separate and sift what is good from what is best.

When humans were created, we were meant to live in relationship with God forever. God gave humans free will to choose to love and obey Him. Even though humans chose to disobey God and relationship with Him was cut off, eternity remains in our hearts where it was planted when we were created.

**Without
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in the next.**

God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end. (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NLT)

Many humans continue to function in this world as though they will live forever. They don't consult God with regards to what is best for them. They think they know intuitively what that is, but end up suffering painful consequences for the unhealthy choices they make. The truth is that without God's wisdom, none of us know how to live purposefully in this life, or what will happen to us in the next. What are we to do?

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16 NIV)

When we surrender our lives to Jesus Christ, God's Holy Spirit comes to live in our hearts and He teaches us the truth about life that we could never know on our own. It is this truth that results in us "having discernment." It is more than our conscience speaking to us, or "trusting our gut." This is God revealing truth to us, so we can live well. As we spend time in God's word each day, He gives us a discerning heart to know His ways and then put them into practice.

Deal with your servant according to your love and teach me your decrees. I am your servant; give me discernment that I may understand your statutes. (Psalm 119:124-125 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that You are the only wise God. Teach me Your ways so I may discern and choose what is the best path for my life. Amen

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2018

SUNDAY PSALM – TELLING THE TRUTH

Telling the truth presents many challenges for individuals seeking new life in recovery. We have a history of lies and manipulative ways. We used every resource available to get what we wanted when we wanted it. Those habits of conveniently hiding the truth, when it was to our advantage, can be a challenge to overcome.

May your unfailing love come to me, Lord, your salvation, according to your promise; then I can answer anyone who taunts me, for I trust in your word. Never take your word of truth from my mouth, for I have put my hope in your laws. I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts. (Psalm 119:41-43, 45 NIV)

There's plenty of wreckage around from our bad choices and the awful truth of things we have done causes us anxiety. We are afraid of the opinions of others and of the consequences. We know we need to talk about our past behaviour, but we're not sure how to go about it without arguments and harsh misunderstandings arising.

God's invitation to us as we walk with Him in recovery is to know freedom by living in the truth. God promises that when we walk in the truth we won't need to be afraid or ashamed. The past is what it is, and God's mercy and forgiveness are abundant enough to forgive and heal all of it. Even though the way of truth-telling is unknown and uncertain for us, God says that we'll experience freedom when we put our hand in His and follow Him. When we do tell the truth, everyone may not agree with us. Our perception of events may differ from that of others. Initially, people may not be supportive of us when we get honest and we need to accept this.

In the face of all these challenges our only hope is to rely on God's promise to us that truth telling is the right way and, when we obey, we will live without shame supported by His unfailing love. Today is a new opportunity to trust in God's word and walk in honesty before Him and others.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I have lied and hidden the truth repeatedly in my life. Forgive me. Teach me Your way of walking in truth today and give me wisdom and courage to respectfully embrace truth in all my dealings with others. Amen

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MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2018

WHERE IN THE WORLD DO I BELONG?

How many of us feel like we truly belong? Much addictive and destructive behaviour is rooted in loneliness. Mother Teresa said, "Being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody, I think that is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty than the person who has nothing to eat . . . We must find each other."

Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. (Ephesians 1:4-5 NLT)

When we know we are loved and accepted, our hearts are touched, and we begin to experience peace and the security of belonging.

Feeling lonely is not restricted to the poor or the rich, the educated or the uneducated. God created us in His image, so we could know love in relationship with Him, and with those around us. A broken relationship with God results in broken relationships with others around us and loneliness results.

God loves us with an everlasting love. He loved us so much that He sent His son Jesus into the world to die on the cross so that the wages of sin could be paid for, and our relationship with Him restored. We do not have to continue to live lonely. When we accept Jesus as our Lord, we are adopted into God's family and we become children of God. When we know we are loved and accepted, our hearts are touched, and we begin to experience peace and the security of belonging.

Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life. (Psalm 143:8 NIV)

PRAYER: *Loving God, Thank You for sending Jesus into the world so that my sins could be forgiven and my relationship with You restored. In times of trouble, help me remember that I belong to You and You will never leave me alone. I am truly blessed to be part of Your family. Amen*

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2018

AVOIDING TEMPTATION

God wants us to live in victory over temptation. He promises that in every situation this is possible. For those of us who have struggled with addictions and relapsed numerous times, that's incredibly good news.

The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. (1 Corinthians 10:13 NLT)

One of the best ways to overcome temptation is to stay as far away from what tempts us as we possibly can. How do we do that? Here are some practical ideas:

- Realize that temptation will be an ongoing issue in life, not a one-time issue. ***God's name is a place of protection. -- Good people can run there and be safe.*** (Proverbs 18:10 MSG)
- Read the Bible and apply the truths we learn to our daily lives. ***I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.*** (Psalm 119:11 NLT)
- Pray and ask God to keep us conscious of what is helpful or what might be harmful. ***Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing but the body is weak*** (Matthew 26:41 NLT)
- Avoid places, people, and actions that invoke tempting thoughts. ***Stay away from every kind of evil. Avoid worthless, foolish talk that only leads to more godless behavior.*** (1 Thessalonians 5:22, 2 Timothy 2:16 NLT)
- Be practical in everyday living. We need to eat well, exercise, get sleep, schedule events, do kind things, make reasonable plans and live in the discipline of each plan. Empty and unstructured time can easily make us vulnerable to temptation. ***So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do.*** (Ephesians 5:15-17 NLT)

One of the best ways to overcome temptation is to stay as far away from what tempts us as we possibly can.

Prayer: *Gracious God, I admit that I am weak. Please strengthen me by the power of Your Holy Spirit to withstand temptation and give me the will and the desire to do what pleases you. Amen*

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2018

THE POWER TO OVERCOME TEMPTATION

Anyone who has tried to break free from the harmful use of a substance or an addictive habit does not need a dictionary to help them understand temptation. Too many times we've felt the overwhelming obsession to "pick up", even though we know that giving into that urge in a moment of weakness, will result in damaging consequences. Sometimes we lie to ourselves until we are convinced that something or someone we have been yearning for will make us happy. We believe our problems will all go away if we just have this thing or this person.

God promises to help us and to give us victory over temptation as we turn our will and our lives over to His care.

How quickly the pleasure that we sought fades, the painful consequences return, and the self-condemnation rises up in our thoughts for giving into the temptation. We find ourselves dejectedly asking once again, "How can I win over temptation and turn my life around?" God has a way forward for us. God promises to help us and to give us victory over temptation as we turn our will and our lives over to His care.

Because he himself [Jesus] suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (Hebrews 2:18, Romans 8:37 NIV)

Even though Jesus faced many difficult moments and challenges He never gave into temptation because He never doubted God's care or God's power to work out the plan for His life. Jesus has compassion for us in our weaknesses. Jesus came to earth, took on human flesh, and entered into our suffering and temptation so He could identify with us. When we invite Jesus to be Lord of our

lives, we are filled with His Holy Spirit who will give us the power to conquer temptation.

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. (Hebrews 4:15 NIV)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Thank You for making a way for me to have victory over temptation and sin. Where I am weak I ask You to strengthen me. My desire is to live a victorious life in the power of Your Holy Spirit. Please help me to do so. Amen

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2018

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

"The heart of the matter is the heart of the matter." When we come into recovery we have many issues. Recovery appears complicated and we are overwhelmed by what we have to deal with. We're not sure how one problem impacts another, which is more important than the other, or which needs to have our attention first. What is the central issue of our recovery?

God is aware of our thoughts and feelings and how overwhelming they are for us. The God who invited us into recovery, and is guiding us through it today, wants us to focus on the one issue of life that is most important, and that is: God is God, and we are not. The founders of AA recognized this when they crafted the 12 Steps program. As we enter recovery we first acknowledge that we cannot do life alone. Then we come to believe that there is a power greater than ourselves who can restore us. Our part is to turn our will and our lives over to God's care.

Acknowledge that the Lord is God! He made us, and we are his. (Psalm 100:3 NLT)

So many issues clutter our hearts and minds. God wants to help us deal with all of them but only He knows how they all relate to each other. That's why, to enter into lasting recovery, we need to first seek God and listen to the truth He reveals to us. We need to follow His guidance and direction as we work through the 12 Steps and strive to move forward in our life in recovery.

I'll pour pure water over you and scrub you clean. I'll give you a new heart, put a new spirit in you. I'll remove the stone heart from your body and replace it with a heart that's God-willed, not self-willed. I'll put my Spirit in you and make it possible for you to do what I tell you and live by my commands. (Ezekiel 36:25-27 MSG)

Let's make the heart of the matter, the matter of our hearts today.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for living life as if You did not exist. I humbly ask You to remove the self-willed heart within me and give me a new heart that is God-willed. Thank You for making it possible for me to live by Your commands. Amen

Acknowledge that the Lord is God! He made us, and we are his.
(Psalm 100:3 NLT)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2018

VALENTINE'S DAY - HEARING GOD SAY, "I LOVE YOU"

Three of the most comforting, encouraging, and life-giving words in the English language are, "I love you". Spoken from a sincere heart, these three little words carry a tenderness and strength that will fill a lonely heart and bring a smile to a sad face. These are words that come from the hearts of loving parents when they see their new baby. They are whispered in the ear of someone frail as they lie on a hospital bed. They are words spoken with chocolates to a special someone, or perhaps with a "knowing gaze" shared across a room between partners in a caring marriage. They are words that every human longs to hear over and over again.

***As we pray
with a quiet
heart and
listen, we
will hear
God's voice
echoing in
our ears "I
love you".***

As we go forward in recovery, God wants us to hear Him tenderly tell us "I love you." These words bring healing and peace to our body, mind and spirit as we absorb the truth of what is being said. We will find, as we read God's word in the Bible, that it repeatedly tells us of God's unfailing and unconditional love for us. As we pray with a quiet heart and listen, we will hear God's voice echoing in our ears "I love you".

I pray that your love will have deep roots. I pray that it will have a strong foundation. May you have power together with all the Lord's holy people to understand Christ's love. May you know how wide and long and high and deep it is. And may you know his love, even though it can't be known completely. Then you will be filled with everything God has for you. (Ephesians 3:17-19 NIRV)

We cannot begin to find words to describe the all-encompassing, tender love that God continues to pour out on us. This Valentine's Day let's remind ourselves that love is available to us. God is with us. Let's live in God's love today, and every day.

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, thank you for your generous love for me that is wide enough to embrace me wherever I go. Come and heal me in the place of my deepest wounding and disappointment. Accompany me in my brightest moments. Fill me with courage and comfort when I feel challenged. This I know for sure, You truly do love me! Amen

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2018

GOD GRANT ME THE SERENITY

What comes to mind when we say or hear the word "serenity?" A smile? A longing? A regret? Serenity, for many, speaks of a sense of tranquility or inner calm. How do we find and maintain inner calm in the ups and downs of life? The serenity prayer suggests that we learn to be content with things that cannot be changed, and take responsibility for change where it is possible.

For even if the mountains walk away and the hills fall to pieces, My love won't walk away from you, my covenant commitment of peace won't fall apart." The God who has compassion on you says so. (Isaiah 54:10 MSG)

Some of us have never sought the healing and subsequent peace that God promises when we deal with the hurts of our past. We live in denial of the offences committed against us in order to avoid the pain, and inwardly rebel against who we are, or what has happened to us. Some of us have simply accepted the bad, the lies, the wounds, the defective self-image, even to the point that it feels normal and comfortable. Too often this results in repeated destructive cycles of addictive and co-dependent behaviour.

Give your burdens to the LORD, and he will take care of you. The Lord gives his people strength. The Lord blesses them with peace. (Psalm 55:22, 29:11 NLT)

Recovery is a time of learning to find serenity in our healing and blessing God, while also accepting life as it is, not as we would have it. Life often isn't fair. What happened in the past cannot be changed. However, God cares for us and will use even our most difficult experiences to enrich our lives today, and in the future. Our part? Surrender to God, receive healing and blessing, and live in faith that God is making all things right as we draw closer to Him.

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. Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardship as a pathway to peace; taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your will; so that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with You forever in the next.

***Recovery is a
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have it.***

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2018

SUNDAY PSALM – CONFIDENT IN GOD

Remember your word to your servant, for you have given me hope. My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life. The arrogant mock me unmercifully, but I do not turn from your law. I remember, Lord, your ancient laws, and I find comfort in them. In the night, Lord, I remember your name, that I may keep your law. This has been my practice: I obey your precepts.

(Psalm 119:49-52, 55-56 NIV)

Steadily moving forward in recovery is not easy. As we awaken out of the haze of years in addiction our minds are often assaulted with memories of things done to us and ways we have disappointed and harmed others. Sleepless nights and restless days challenge us. This is often most evident when we write out an honest summary of “our last 90 days,” or half-way through writing our moral inventory in Step 4 when we feel there’s so much more ugly stuff to come. Sometimes we get through all this, only to be confronted with the pain and shame again in Step 8, as we make a list of all persons we have harmed.

God’s faithful promises of forgiveness and restoration are the basis for our hope and strength to move forward.

God’s words of comfort to us today are for these kinds of times. God’s faithful promises of forgiveness and restoration are the basis for our hope and strength to move forward. We need to assure ourselves of God’s ability to work in all things for good. As we lie awake at night with our heads swirling with memories and anxieties, it’s time to remember that God is our refuge and strength, our

comfort and peace. God is the one who opens the way before us and as the song says, God “opens up our future, closes our past”.

Listening to praise and worship music is a wonderful way to be reminded of God’s goodness and to drive away the enemy’s accusations against us. We can replace the devil’s allegations with God’s truth. Not even the ugliness of our past can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. God is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does. God is with us. We never have to face our problems alone.

Prayer: Loving God, I am thankful that I can bring all my anxiety to You because You care for me. Help me to stand firm in the truth that absolutely nothing in all creation can separate me from Your love. Amen

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2018

THE CARE OF GOD

God teaches us how to know His will in 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 self-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)

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. Rather 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, 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)

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

As we regularly replace our self-will with God’s will and plan for our lives, our daily life will take on new meaning and will be satisfying.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2018

FINDING THE STRENGTH AND HOPE WE NEED

When we were in our addiction we didn't take care of ourselves and now we realize our need for getting healthy and emotionally strong. Some of us have diseases and wounds that still need healing. Others are suffering from poor eating habits and need proper nutrition. We often feel worn out. Our minds seem easily confused and our emotions are ultra-sensitive. Early recovery is a time to rest and find God's help. God is ready and willing to give us the strength and hope we need.

It's in the turning of our will and our life over to God on a moment by moment, day by day basis, that we are safe under the protection of God.

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. (Matt. 11:28-29 NLT)

In the beginning of our recovery we often comply with program guidelines simply because we believe that there has to be a better life than the one we have been living. We are willing to learn from the experience of others who have walked the path before us. We focus on simple things. We sleep and eat, read and pray. We exercise, go to meetings, and serve. Little by little we start to look better and feel stronger.

The sad truth is, at this point we can easily fall into the snare of forgetting that we are powerless over our addiction and begin to believe we got this far by our own efforts. We need to remind ourselves that it is only God's strength that sustains us. It's in the turning of our will and our life over to God, on a moment by moment, day by day basis, that we are safe under the protection of God. As soon as we take things back into our own hands and try

to use our own solutions we'll quickly slide into troubled waters again.

For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you. (Isaiah 41:13 NIV)

Prayer: Gracious God, Thank You for bringing me out of the darkness of my addiction. I am confident that as I remain in You, the good work You have begun in me will be perfected. Amen

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2018

EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH AND HOPE

[God] gives power to those who are tired and worn out; he offers strength to the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. (Isaiah 40:29 NLT, 40:30-31 NIV)

By attending 12-Step and support group meetings we learn from the experience of others. We listen. We share. We hear and observe what is working for others. We learn from the wisdom of old-timers. We want to know what has helped others get strong and stay strong in life in recovery. We also share what has brought us strength and hope as we move forward in our recovery.

Let your unfailing love surround us, Lord, for our hope is in you alone. (Psalm 33:22 NLT)

When we came into recovery, many of us were physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually weak. We were running on empty, just limping along and feeling weak and weary. What better help could we find than that of an all-knowing God who is completely committed to helping us have a meaningful and purposeful life? Only God, with His infinite wisdom, can give us the experience, strength, and hope we need to be successful.

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. (James 1:19-22 NIV)

In the past we may have treated the Bible like we treat a motor vehicle manual, only consulting it when something goes wrong. However, today is an opportunity for us to take the time to become familiar with God's principles as recorded in the Bible and, by practicing what we learn, find strength and hope for our on-going journey.

Prayer: Loving God, I humbly admit that Your wisdom is wiser than mine. Help me to be a good listener and willing learner and to not only learn but also to put Your wise principles into practice. Amen

Only God, with His infinite wisdom, can give us the experience, strength, and hope we need to be successful.
