

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY



Daily Meditations



FEBRUARY 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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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2020

THE BENEFIT OF DOING THINGS GOD'S WAY OVER THE LONG HAUL

How many times have we spoken before we thought and, as the saying goes, "put our foot in our mouth?" For too long we've held narrow views of life and our place in it. God created us for community and caring relationships. In the scriptures He has given us all the knowledge we need to live well every day.

If you listen closely to my wisdom and good sense, you will have sound judgment, and you will always know the right thing to say. (Proverbs 5:1-2 CEV)

In Step 11 of the 12-Step program, we are encouraged each day to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out. As we encounter God's wisdom in the Bible and put His ways into practice, we will have the satisfaction and joy of experiencing how practical God's word really is. In some circumstances it's a challenge to choose to put God's ways into practice. God's way teaches us to be generous to others, which is opposite to the self-centered messages we have heard and told ourselves in addiction, and yet when we do things God's way we discover His way is better.

The Lord watches your ways. He studies all your paths. Sinners are trapped by their own evil acts. They are held tight by the ropes of their sins. They will die because they refused to be corrected. Their sins will capture them because they were very foolish. (Proverbs 5:21-23 NIRV)

To walk with God requires us to discipline ourselves at certain times and in certain ways. The more often we make the choice to do things God's way, the more often we will see that it was exactly the right thing to do at that time. Everyone around us will benefit from our right actions and our sense of what is good will grow clearer. It becomes part of the message we are to carry to others as we practice God's principles in all our affairs.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to not only meditate and pray for the knowledge of Your will but to have the courage to put it into practice in all my affairs. Help me to trust Your way even when it seems inconvenient or quite different from what I have known in the past. I choose once again to turn my will and my life over to Your care. Please direct me in all my ways. Amen

The more often we make the choice to do things God's way, the more often we will see that it was exactly the right thing to do at that time.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2020

SAY WHAT WE MEAN AND MEAN WHAT WE SAY

Many of us have been in the company of others who think they know everything but when they open their mouths very little wisdom is detected. Know-it-alls have very little respect for those around them and lie through their teeth to save face when the truth about a situation is exposed. The person who wrote the following Psalm is asking God for help to deal with people like this who lived in his community.

Help, Lord! No one does what is right anymore. Those who are faithful have disappeared from the human race. Everyone tells lies to their neighbors. With their lips they praise others, but they don't really mean it. May the Lord close all lips that don't mean what they say. May he stop every tongue that brags. They say, "What we speak with our tongues will win the battle. What we say with our lips will keep us safe. No one will have victory over us." (Psalm 12:1-4 NIRV)

We need to learn to "say what we mean and mean what we say."

While living in a dysfunctional lifestyle, we often thought those who tried to help us were cramping our style. We moved away from anyone who spoke to us about doing what was right. We thought most highly of those who were supplying us with the substance we needed to get high or helped us relieve the pain we were suffering. We decided we knew what was best for us and that was the end of any discussion about the harm we were causing ourselves and our loved ones. We lied to others. We made promises we had no intention of keeping. Our self-will brought us to the place where we didn't know what was right anymore and our life was totally unmanageable.

When we came into recovery, we were broken but may have reasoned that we could still have victory by continuing to do things our way. However, the only sure way to win the battle is by becoming a person who is faithful to God, to others, and to living as the person God created us to be. We need to learn to "say what we mean and mean what we say." We need to seek God to guide us, and as we do, we will find that He is faithful to keep us safe and give us strength to persevere and be persons who do those things that we say we will do.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I repent of my arrogance in thinking that my ways are better than Your ways. Today I acknowledge that in You are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Help me to seek Your will and to be a person who faithfully does what I say. Amen

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2020

BECOMING EMOTIONALLY AVAILABLE AGAIN

Living in addiction is living emotionally unavailable to God, to others, and to ourselves. One of the essential areas we give attention to in recovery is learning how to experience, identify, and deal with emotions. Grief, shame, unforgiveness, and fear of rejection are just some of the root causes of our emotional separation from life experiences. God created us to be individuals who experience a wide variety of emotions and He wants to help us recover this satisfying life He has prepared for us.

We know that God loves us. We depend on it. God is love. Anyone who leads a life of love is joined to God and God is joined to them. Love is kind and patient. Love rejoices in the truth, but not in evil. Love is always supportive, loyal, hopeful, and trusting. Love never fails! (1 John 4:16 NIRV, 1 Corinthians 13:4a, 6-8 CEV)

The only way to healing and becoming emotionally available again is to open our hearts to God's unfailing love. Jesus died on the cross to make this life available to us. God gave us freedom of choice to invite Him to come and make our dead hearts alive. We don't have to earn this new life. We need not fear that it will be taken away from us if we do something wrong. In the safety of God's love and forgiveness and healing, we can face the truth in every emotionally threatening memory or circumstance.

I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. (Ezekiel 36:26 NLT)

Our journey in this area will likely be taken in very small steps. As we persevere and open our hearts more and more each day, God will accompany us and support us through the healing process. When we feel vulnerable and feel like shutting down or running and hiding, we can call out to God for His help to improve our conscious contact with His love.

Prayer: Loving God, While I find it quite difficult to open up to my emotions, I know you created me to experience a healthy and satisfying emotional life. I turn away from fear and invite You to give me new life today. Help me to trust in the safety of your unfailing love and support. In your care, help me to learn to live and love as You intend. Amen

The only way to healing and becoming emotionally available again is to open our hearts to God's unfailing love.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2020

WHAT IS INIQUITY and WHAT DOES IT HAVE TO DO WITH MY RECOVERY?

Most of us have gone through the process of admitting to God, to ourselves, and to someone else where we have failed and caused harm. While that initial unburdening of our heart was very freeing, it is an all too common truth that many of us either failed to recognize or skipped events that we were not ready to face. We admitted those things we had done wrong but were unable to sort out "the exact nature of our wrongs." God wants to take us forward in this journey, not to condemn us and knock us down when we are just beginning to stand, but to bring us to experience the freedom we long for.

The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? (Jeremiah 17:9 NLT)

God wants to deal with the true heart of the problem – the brokenness that leads to patterns of failure and wrongdoing.

God knows that we are deceitful at our core and many evil patterns are ingrained in us because of family history, our culture, our choices, and life events. We all have destructive thoughts and behaviours which are very familiar to us and continue to impact our thoughts, emotions, and behaviour. God wants to deal with the true heart of the problem – the brokenness that leads to patterns of failure and wrongdoing. The Bible has a word for this – iniquity.

Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord" and you forgave the guilt of my sin. (Psalm 32:5 NIV)

The journey of recovery is the moment by moment bringing of our motives and desires as well as our actions before God, so He can show us where we are self-centered and continuing to live in destructive ways. Because of God's mercy and kindness towards us, He will continue the process of speaking the truth about our twisted and broken emotional thought patterns. May God give us grace to agree with Him on every point and the willingness to choose for action that rids us of everything that hinders.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You know my heart better than I know it myself. By the power of Your Holy Spirit, help me to understand the reasons below my actions and humbly admit wrongdoing where needed. Please give me the courage to bring about core changes so that I may live in freedom from everything that hinders me. Amen

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2020

GROWING MATURE BY TRUSTING GOD'S PROMISES

A lot of destructive and addictive behaviours are based in the poverty mentality that results from our needs not being met. Whatever the reasons for this experience in the past, it's time to allow God to help us learn to live in the security of His promise to provide all that we need today.

We have everything we need to live a life that pleases God. It was all given to us by God's own power, when we learned that he had invited us to share in his wonderful goodness. God made great and marvelous promises, so that his nature would become part of us. Then we could escape our evil desires and the corrupt influences of this world. (2 Peter 1:3-4 CEV)

Our world teaches us to look outside of ourselves to money, toys, or popularity to supply the need for satisfaction in life. Unfortunately, as so many lives have given witness to, no matter how many worldly things we have, there is still an emptiness inside us.

God's word teaches us that the way to escape the insecurity and drive that leads to much evil, brokenness, and pain is to trust God and all He promises to be for us and do for us. Addiction to substances wasn't the way out for anyone and neither is dependency on anything else we see around us. Only in coming to believe in the faithful promises of a faithful God and centering our actions on those promises will we be able to live in a way that pleases God and have inner satisfaction.

God has saved us. He has chosen us to live a holy life. It wasn't because of anything we have done. It was because of his own purpose and grace. Through Christ Jesus, God gave us this grace even before time began. And God is able to shower all kinds of blessings on you. So, in all things and at all times you will have everything you need. You will do more and more good works. (2 Timothy 1:9, 2 Corinthians 9:8 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, forgive me for the many places I've put my trust rather than in You and Your promises. Help me to know You more and have faith in Your favour towards me as I follow You in all my ways. Amen

It's time to allow God to help us learn to live in the security of His promises to provide all that we need today.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2020

BUILDING CONFIDENCE FOR SUCCESSFUL RECOVERY

Moving forward in identifying character defects and allowing God to help us develop our true character is no easy process. Few of us are all that confident in our ability to succeed. We have too many examples of our trying and failing and if we are honest, we wonder if this time will be the time we will be able to maintain our sobriety. Many of us slipped into addiction to cover up our lack of confidence and low self-esteem. It's no easy task to look ourselves in the mirror once again and believe that we can be something other than what we have been.

In His kindness, God affirms repeatedly in the Bible that there is a way forward for us and that He will be with us every step of the way supplying all that we need.

God will support us each step of the way and as we experience success, our confidence will grow.

The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. (Psalm 32:8 NLT)

God knows us better than we know ourselves. God knows that on our own we will fail but as we surrender our will and life to His care, He will show us a new way. God will support us each step of the way and as we experience success, our confidence will grow.

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (1 John 5:14, Hebrews 4:16 NIV)

We are not aware of what we really need. Our understanding is too clouded by our pain and the destructive patterns of our life in addiction. God has never lost sight of the truth of who we are and what we need in order to succeed. We can be confident of finding and living the wonderful life God has for us as we stay close to Him and let Him guide us with His strong hand.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I cannot do this on my own. We both know that. Help me to trust Your view of me and who You say I am. Help me to listen carefully to the voice of Your Spirit in my heart as He teaches me how to apply Your Word to my actions and circumstances. Give me the courage and humility to return to You again and again for help in my time of need. Amen

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2020

STAYING SOBER – FACING TRAUMA

With the 24-hour news cycle on our televisions and on our digital devices we are exposed daily to traumatic events around the world. Whether it's the devastation of a community or something inflicted on one person by another, these are horrible experiences which cause long lasting memories of pain and brokenness. The news also may trigger memories in our own hearts of experiences of past events. Is there relief from this deep grief and pain?

What has been done cannot be undone. However, God can help us navigate today by giving us peace in our souls and healing in our bodies. Our first action is to turn our hearts and thoughts towards God and allow His love to encourage us as we listen to what He has to say through the scriptures as recorded in the Bible.

Whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm. So do not be afraid. I am with you. Do not be terrified. I am your God. I will make you strong and help you. I will hold you safe in my hands. I always do what is right. (Proverbs 1:33 NIV, Isaiah 41:10 NIRV)

While healing of the mind and soul is a process that takes time, we don't need to hide from the past and shove painful memories into the deep dark places in our soul. In God's presence, and often with the assistance of safe helpers, we can find what we need to live well today. We can be set free from the traumas of our past. Jesus died on the cross for all sin and was resurrected from the dead proving the power of God over all evil – and that includes the evil traumas inflicted on us. Today is a new opportunity to reach out and receive this amazing God who will provide healing from all suffering.

The Spirit of the God who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you. So the God who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your bodies. He will do this because of his Spirit who lives in you. God saves suffering people while they suffer. He speaks to them while they are hurting. (Romans 8:11, Job 36:15 NIRV)

Prayer: Loving God, it is most difficult to face the pain buried deep in my soul. Help me to come to believe that You are the power who can restore me from the trauma I have experienced. Come and be with me in those dark and fearful memories. Today, help me to hear Your voice speaking peace to those places where I hurt. Thank you for caring for me. Amen

God saves suffering people while they suffer. He speaks to them while they are hurting.

Job 36:15 NIRV

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2020

WISDOM FOR OUR RECOVERY – WHAT GOD HATES and WHAT GOD LOVES

When we pray for God's will and the power to carry it out, God just doesn't point to something tiny or unfocused in the distance. God brings truth up front and close and tells us in simple ways what we need to know and act on. In the book of Proverbs in the Bible, there is much wisdom in the many clear and simple sayings that are truths we can put into practice while we are learning about our life in recovery. Today we find a list of practices that are clearly NOT God's will. The more we avoid these things and do what God says the more we will grow and find continued success in this new life we have been given.

God calls us to be those who love and lift others up, and with all that we are to encourage them.

There are six things the Lord hates. In fact, he hates seven things. The Lord hates proud eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that kill those who aren't guilty. He also hates hearts that make evil plans and feet that are quick to do evil. He hates any witness who pours out lies and anyone who stirs up conflict in the community. (Proverbs 6:16-19 NIRV)

We have all sorts of excuses for lying, for angrily confronting or accusing someone of their wrongdoing. It's so easy to be a bit shifty and underhanded in how we approach a person in authority or someone from whom we want some favour. Instead of acting in these ways, God calls us to be those who love and lift others up, and with all that we are, to encourage them. God is love and He tells us to love one another, promising us that love will never fail.

Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIRV)

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for rescuing me from sin and darkness. I admit that I have done things that Your Word says You hate. Forgive me and wash me clean. Help me to move away from being sneaky and negative and always blaming others. Help me to be humble, truthful, quick to do what is right and to make peace rather than say things that stir up anger and conflict. Help me to establish new patterns of thinking and behaving regardless of what others may think. Help me to endure through every circumstance. You have been my friend who sticks close to me. Your love is unfailing. I desire to please You with my life. Amen

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2020

WHO WILL STAND UP FOR ME?

Often when we are going through hard times we fail to call out to God for help. We are so focused on our problems that we think and talk continually about them instead of coming to a quiet place to pray and seek God for His help. If God promises to help us in our time of need, why are we reluctant to seek it?

The Lord says, "The poor are being robbed. Those who are in need groan. So I will stand up to help them. I will keep them safe from those who tell lies about them." The words of the Lord are perfect. They are like silver made pure in a clay furnace. They are like gold made pure seven times over. Lord, you will keep needy people safe. You will always keep sinners from hurting us. Proud and sinful people walk around openly when the evil they do is praised by the human race. (Psalm 12:5-8 NIRV)

One reason we don't come to God when we are in trouble is that we are unsure if He will help us. Some of us would prefer to go to someone we can see rather than to God who is always with us, but whom we are unable to see. God has infinite power to help. The above scripture says that the Lord will stand up to help us and He will keep us safe from harm. Do we believe what God says in His word or do we doubt that He is able to fulfill what He says?

The above Psalm tells us that God's words are perfect. They are like silver or gold which has been made pure in a furnace. This means that we can be sure God's word is true and free of all error or falsehood. God's promises and His faithfulness in fulfilling what He has said is dependable. Jesus said that those who are weary and heavy laden should come to Him for rest.

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28 NIV)

Are we willing to come to Jesus who knows all about our troubles and desires to help or would we rather go to someone else? The choice is ours.

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to believe that You do what you promise. When I am afraid help me to come to You and trust You to keep me safe from all that would harm me. Fill my heart with confidence and courage that You are there for me in my time of need. Amen

***The Lord
will stand
up to help
us and He
will keep us
safe from
harm.***

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2020

MONEY – A BALANCED PERSPECTIVE

We all need a certain amount of money to buy food and clothes, pay the rent, and get around from one place to the next. We are advised to save some of what we earn for an emergency and for retirement. When is it healthy to consider money in our lives and when does our focus on money become a problem?

Anyone who loves money never has enough. Anyone who loves wealth is never satisfied with what they get. Money gained in the wrong way disappears. But money gathered little by little grows. The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. (Ecclesiastes 5:10a, Proverbs 13:11 NIRV, 1 Timothy 6:10 NIV)

***When is it
healthy to
consider
money in
our lives
and when
does our
focus on
money
become a
problem?***

Money is a problem when we refuse to work to supply our need. Money is a problem when we spend more than we earn and run up debts we are unable to pay. Money is a problem when we are willing to engage in dishonest behaviour in order to get it. Money is a problem when we gamble and are unable to buy necessities. Money is a problem when we refuse to give an offering of thanks to God or help someone in need. Money is a problem when we think money is a solution to all our problems.

Some of you are living idle lives, refusing to work and meddling in other people's business. We command such people and urge them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and work to earn their own living. It is better to live right and be poor than to be sinful and rich. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. (2 Thessalonians 3:11-12 NLT, Psalm 37:16 CEV, Matthew 6:33 NLT)

God encourages us to work to earn a living and not simply live off the generosity of others. God promises that He will ensure we have all we need when we seek Him first and live according to His will. Today is an opportunity to look at both our practice of using money and our attitude toward it.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to have a healthy attitude towards money. Forgive me for the ways I've tried to gain and use money to solve my problems and only ended up with increased problems. Help me to live simply and honestly, trusting that as I focus on You, You will provide for all my needs. Amen

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2020

READY

Every week, or every other week, people put out trash cans and recycling bins so they are ready for the scheduled collections in their community. God wants us to be able to get rid of the trash that accumulates in our lives and the founders of AA recognized this when they included Step Six in the 12-Step program. *“We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.”*

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life. (Psalm 139:23-24 NLT)

What does it mean to get ready for God to do this work? We must first seek God and give Him control in revealing what needs to go, as well as when and how. That is the hard part. We're willing to work on our character defects but only on the bits we want to change and in the time frame we want them changed. In our mind we have decided to take control of how to proceed.

Are we willing to consider that God might know the best way and the appropriate timing for whatever defects need to be removed? Much of what's gone wrong in the past is our application of our own flawed solutions to our inaccurate understanding of our real problems. It's time to think about things from God's viewpoint. The Bible is the place to find the guidance we need.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV)

If we humbly come to God and surrender all that we are to Him, in His perfect timing, God will prepare a way for us to let go of the trash we've accumulated.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I ask that You reveal my character defects and give me the desire and the strength to let go of all that hinders my life's purpose. Help me to be continually honest about what is going on inside me. I want to follow Your principles in all my ways. Amen

We must seek God and give Him control in revealing what needs to go, as well as when and how.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2020

NO REGRETS

The second promise found in the Big Book of AA tells us that if we diligently work the steps, *“We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.”* This echoes what we read in the Bible about our journey in this new life with God in recovery.

I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me.

Friends, don't get me wrong: By no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward—to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back. (Philippians 3:12-14 MSG)

Because of God's unfailing love for us, we can look at our past with eyes wide open.

One of the greatest gifts we can give ourselves is accepting the fact that whatever has taken place in our past is done and cannot be changed. We can learn from it and we can allow God to use it to bring about good, but we cannot change it. In fact, we can safely let go of the regret that we may continue to feel.

We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28 NIV)

Because of God's unfailing love for us, we can look at our past with eyes wide open. We can process what went on in some events and, where necessary, take responsibility and then just let the rest go. We can work on becoming ready to make amends for the harm we have done and seek healing and forgiveness for all who were involved. We can keep our hearts and minds open to God's ongoing healing as He restores us to sanity. We can live with the knowledge of progress rather than perfection. Above all, we can live in gratitude to God for one more day to enjoy His blessings and to carry this message to others who suffer.

Prayer: Loving God, thank you for opening up my future and closing my past. Thank you for giving me today. With your help I will embrace everything this day brings, trusting that you will guide me along a good path and use everything in my life, both the good and the bad, to bring about your will for my future. Amen

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2020

SEEING OUR TRUE VALUE

Self-worth is the value we see in ourselves and our role in life. Some of us overrate ourselves and some of us undervalue ourselves according to our position in life. What is the right approach to assessing our self-worth? When selling a house, the asking price is not the true value of that house. Its value is the price the buyer is willing to pay for it. God was willing to pay a high price to buy us back from the broken and isolated condition we found ourselves in because of our sin and rebellion against Him.

When people sin, they earn what sin pays—death. But God gives his people a free gift—eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23 ERV)

We are of great value to God because Jesus came into the world to pay the price for our sin so that we could be free from its penalty. How do we value what Jesus has done for us? If we refuse to accept what Jesus has done for us, then we are assessing no worth to the plan of God for our deliverance from the penalty of sin. Our self-worth is then self-determined or assessed by the value others place on us.

For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:21 NLT)

Jesus came into the world not to judge the world but to save it. Our unwillingness to receive this precious gift of new life through Jesus is what will judge us. Our true value is only determined by who we become when we accept the finished work of Christ on our behalf. In Christ we are children of our Heavenly Father. Our worth to God is more than we could ever imagine. We are God's masterpieces created in Christ Jesus to do good works.

God rescued us from dead-end alleys and dark dungeons. He's set us up in the kingdom of the Son he loves so much, the Son who got us out of the pit we were in, got rid of the sins we were doomed to keep repeating. (Colossians 1:13-14 MSG)

Prayer: Gracious God, Help me to base my self-worth on the truth of who You are and all that I am because I have accepted what Jesus has done for me. I am grateful that You have become my Heavenly Father and that I am Your precious child. Amen

***Our worth
to God is
more than
we could
ever
imagine.***

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2020

A LOVE TO CELEBRATE ON VALENTINES DAY

One of the things many of us missed while growing up was tenderness in our homes. This lack of love and compassion may have driven us towards the path of addiction and a destructive lifestyle. We got used to feeling that others had no interest in us and no time for us. We gave up on going to anyone with our needs or our troubles because we believed that no one cared. What a joy when we came into recovery and discovered that someone really loved and cared about us. That someone is God who offers us the unfailing love and tenderness we have always wanted. This Valentine's Day let us truly celebrate the lavish love God pours out on us.

See what amazing love the Father has given us! Because of it, we are called children of God. And that's what we really are! (1 John 3:1 NIRV)

***Every day
God turns
toward us
with a
smile on
His face
and a
welcome in
His heart.***

We can call out to God whatever our needs are. We can speak to God as often as we like. God never gets tired of listening to us. God is interested in all things that concern us. God has been waiting for years for us to notice Him reaching out to us with love and tenderness and inviting us to come close to His heart. Is there a better friend that we could have?

We are safe with God. He is always looking out to ensure our safety. He sees and rejoices in all the new things we learn. He doesn't frown at the silly mistakes we make. God celebrates our successes and encourages us to try again when we have failed. Every day God turns toward us with a smile on His face and a welcome in His heart.

May the Lord bless you and take good care of you. May the Lord smile on you and be gracious to you. May the Lord look on you with favor and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26 NIRV)

We are precious to God. Today God asks us, "Will You be mine? Will You receive my love, respond to my love, and love me in return?"

Prayer: Loving God, on this Valentine's Day help me to recognize and respond to the many expressions of love and kindness You convey to me. Help me to pause and give thanks for your faithful and unfailing love. You are the best friend and companion a person could ever have. Amen

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2020

WISDOM FOR THE JOURNEY – PROTECT YOUR EYES

Good eyesight is a great gift. With our eyes we see and admire the beauty that God has put in our natural environment. Sight helps us see what is needed to accomplish our daily tasks. We use our eyes to read and learn, to see love in the eyes of another, to make necessary changes when we look in a mirror. We use our eyes to see the wisdom sayings in the book of Proverbs which help us understand the treasure of God's truth.

My child, remember what I say and never forget what I tell you to do. Do what I say, and you will live. Be as careful to follow my teaching as you are to protect your eyes. Keep my teaching with you all the time; write it on your heart. Treat wisdom as your sister, and insight as your closest friend. (Proverbs 7:1-4 GNT)

When we can't see clearly, we get prescription glasses. When the sun is bright, we wear sunglasses. If pressure in our eye is too much it can destroy our ability to see, so many people put drops in their eyes to relieve the pressure. At times even surgery is required when things grow in our eyes (cataracts) or one part of the eye detaches from another part. We do our best to take good care of our eyes because our ability to see is precious.

Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. (Psalm 119:97, 119:11 NIV)

What will we do today to welcome God's truth into our lives and let it give us insight for going forward? We are told to "never forget" what we've learned. We do this by asking the Holy Spirit to grow a real love in our hearts for God's truth and then by making time to daily learn from God's Word and from the experience, strength, and hope of others. Learning is not the objective. We must put into action what we learn in all our affairs. We rely on the Holy Spirit to give us a clear vision of what is true. We come to God for His healing medicine when we feel pressured. We allow God to cut away anything in our lives that is harming our ability to see.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Your Word is precious and the wisdom and insight it brings to my life is essential. Help me to pay attention to what You are teaching me and to what I see around me. As the Holy Spirit shows me, help me to apply Your principles in every event in my day. Amen

Give me understanding so that I may keep your law and obey it with all my heart.

Psalm 119:34 NIV

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2020

WHO CAN PAY THE PRICE?

In our time in addiction we often considered life, even our own, as pretty cheap. We are reminded today that our lives are precious to God. The life of God's beloved son was also precious to Him and yet He allowed Jesus to come to earth to pay the price for our sin so we could live in relationship with Him forever.

No one can pay for the life of anyone else. No one can give God what that would cost. The price for a life is very high. No payment is ever enough. No one can pay enough to live forever and not rot in the grave. But God will save me from the place of the dead. He will certainly take me to himself. (Psalm 49:7-9, 15 NIRV)

Our lives may have become unmanageable, but they were never worthless. God is willing to remove the sin that we carry in ourselves. That sin is killing us. Jesus paid the price for our sin. Jesus made a way. Jesus has done what no earthly person could. Jesus lived a perfect life.

Our lives are precious to God. Jesus came to earth to pay the price of our sin so we could live in relationship with Him forever.

The Christmas story reminds us that Jesus was born as a baby. God was his father and Mary was his mother impregnated by the power of God's Holy Spirit. In a remarkable way, Jesus never stopped being one with His Heavenly Father. By coming to earth Jesus demonstrated God's love for each of us. He lived a perfect life. He died on a cross to pay the penalty for sin that He never committed. Jesus died to pay the price for our sin. He did not remain dead but was made alive again, proving the power of God over death, the penalty for sin. Jesus died once for eternal salvation for all who choose to obey God. That's how precious we are to God.

When you sin, the pay you get is death, but God gives you the gift of eternal life. That's because of what Christ Jesus our Lord has done. You were set free from an empty way of life ... You know that you were not bought with things that can pass away, like silver or gold. Instead, you were bought with the priceless blood of Christ. (Romans 6:23, 1 Peter 1:18-19a NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for the mess I've made of things. Thank you for Jesus who paid the price for my sin and reconciled me to You. Today I put my trust in You and turn my will and life over to Your care. Please guide me in the way I should go. Amen

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2020

CELEBRATING FAMILY

In some places today is a public holiday given to celebrating family. Some of us are happy to celebrate family and for others, thoughts of family bring fear and pain. Family is very important to God. God knows about the challenges for families impacted by addiction. God will make something beautiful available to us today whether we are reconciled to our families or feel very much on our own.

See how much the Father has loved us! His love is so great that we are called God's children—and so, in fact, we are. (1 John 3:1 GNT)

When we surrender our lives to God and trust in the forgiveness Jesus won for us on the cross, we become part of a family where God is our Father and others become our sisters and brothers.

You are no longer outsiders and strangers. You are citizens together with God's people. You are also members of God's family. (Ephesians 2:19 NIRV)

As we learn to walk with God and change our ways to reflect His plan for our life, all sorts of benefits result. Some of us have seen changes in how we interact with our family and the restoration of many relationships.

Reverence for the Lord gives confidence and security to a man and his family. (Proverbs 14:26 GNT)

God will comfort those for whom reconciliation with their biological family is not possible at this time, or maybe never. He will also help us develop loving and supportive relationships with healthy people where we can experience the joy of sharing and interacting with one another.

God places the lonely in families; he sets the prisoners free and gives them joy. (Psalm 68:6a NLT)

Wherever we are in our journey with God or our family, let's celebrate God's good plan for each of us in the family of God. Let's give Him thanks for our life today and ask Him to strengthen us to continue to follow Him in all our ways.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for making me part of Your family through Jesus. Thank you for brothers and sisters and all those who share in my life today. Help me to continue the work of restoration in my relationships with family and friends. Amen

A slave has no lasting place in the family. But a son belongs to the family forever.
John 8:35 NIRV

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2020

ASKING NOT TELLING

We came into recovery because we knew life wasn't working. Our lives were unmanageable, and we were powerless to change them. At many points we were aware of our character defects and the impact of our behaviour on ourselves, our loved ones, and even strangers. We wanted change but were not always willing to humbly ask God to make those changes in us.

So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete. (Luke 11:9, John 16:24 NIV)

We wanted change but were not always willing to humbly ask God to make those changes in us.

The structure for our new life with God in recovery is that we should come before Him and humbly ask Him for what we want. However, some of us are more familiar with getting what we want when we want it. We tell God what we want rather than ask Him. We then wonder why we feel pressure and have little joy in our recovery. God promises that if we ask, we will receive, and our joy will be complete.

God knows the solutions to our problems and the order they must follow for healing to come. That's why He tells us our first "ask" must be for forgiveness of sin and for the Holy Spirit to come and live in our hearts. A willingness to surrender to God's will at every point, in every circumstance, can only be expressed if we have first asked for the knowledge of God's will and the power to carry it out. It's not a one-time "ask" in our prayers in the morning but a continuing conscious invitation to God at points throughout the day to know and welcome His plan for each event.

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

Prayer: Loving God, forgive me for trying to fix my own life, for trying to tell you what to do, and for blaming you when things didn't work out. Today I come and humbly ask You, by the power of Your Holy Spirit who lives in me, to show me Your will for my life, your view of my character defects, and Your plan for removing them from my thoughts and interactions with others. Please give me the power to do what honours you. Amen

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

LIVING SOBER – WATCHING OUT FOR COMPLACENCY

As our time increases in recovery one of the enemies we need to be aware of and guard against is becoming complacent. We think we're doing okay so we skip doing the things that helped us get sober and find life. We get too busy earning money and we don't take time to go to church or meetings anymore. We used to take time in the morning for prayer, meditation, and reading our Bible but now we hit the snooze button one more time and just grab a coffee and get on with the day. After all, we think, we've got recovery now. We're feeling okay. It's at this time that we are most vulnerable to relapse to our substance or habit of choice or slide into new unhealthy behaviour.

Sin and self-satisfaction bring destruction and death to stupid fools. (Proverbs 1:32 CEV)

Sometimes the signal that we've become complacent shows in an attitude. We get irritated and find ourselves reacting negatively towards others. We excuse our attitude and blame it on annoyance with those newer in recovery than ourselves. Perhaps we begin to feel a bit isolated and find ourselves sleeping more or vegging out in front of a screen where we used to get in touch with friends. We begin to tell ourselves that maybe we could have one drink or hang out at the bar with friends and just not drink. It's time to take an inventory and check in with someone who can speak the truth to us, whether it is convenient or not.

They have lost all feeling for what is right. So they have given themselves over to all kinds of evil pleasures. They take part in every kind of unclean act. And they are full of greed. (Ephesians 4:19 NIRV)

The Bible warns us to be alert and to stay on guard because our enemy is just waiting for an opportunity to get at us when we are vulnerable.

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. (1 Peter 5:8 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I need you just like I needed you the first day I came into recovery. Help me to reestablish my personal relationship with you today and to get back on track with prayer and meditation, seeking only to know your will and have the power to carry it out. Amen

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

Deuteronomy 6:5 NIV

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2020

GOD HAS YOUR BACK

Living well with God in recovery requires many things, not the least of which is courage. It's so easy to feel blocked by fear or beaten down by discouragement because there's wreckage from the past to be cleared, hurts we need healed, and vision and skills to obtain in order to build a solid future. How could we even begin to think we could manage all that without the wisdom, support, and consistent presence of God.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. (Joshua 1:9 NIV)

God promises to be the one who is there for us when no one else can be.

God is aware that our natural response to challenges and problems is not strength and bravery. It is His will though, that we find the courage and perseverance we need by seeking it from Him. Just remembering that God is with us will give us comfort. We are not alone. The Bible tells us that God has infinite power and we can call on Him to solve whatever needs solving.

Our part is to follow God's instructions and leave the results with Him. We need to trust Him to give us what we need when the timing is right. Sometimes we want to have what we need ahead of time and God doesn't promise that to us. He does promise to be with us in the moment, in the situation, in the challenge, and get us through it.

We often seek to reassure someone who is facing a challenge with the words, "I've got your back." God promises to be the one who is there for us when no one else can be. He's "got our back" and He has the love and power to effectively deal with whatever we are facing. We can rely on Him!

But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:57 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for not just promising to be with me in my time of need but showing me over and over again that You are true to Your word. I don't know what my future holds, even the rest of this day, but You do, and so I ask You to fill me with Your peace and the courage to face whatever may lie ahead. Amen

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2020

CHARACTER STRENGTH – BEING GENEROUS

God wants us to be responsible and generous with all He has given us – time, abilities, money, possessions. God does not want us to carelessly spend the money and resources we have as soon as we get them, with no thought about what we might need in the future. He also wants us to help others even though we might feel our resources are limited. God wants us to ask for wisdom and seek His will in how we use the resources we have been given. He promises to bless us when we do.

Remember this: The one who plants few seeds will have a small harvest. But the one who plants a lot will have a big harvest. Each one of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give. You should not give if it makes you unhappy or if you feel forced to give. God loves those who are happy to give. And God can give you more blessings than you need, and you will always have plenty of everything. You will have enough to give to every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:6-8 ERV)

Farmers know they need to provide for their families from the crops they grow. They also need to maintain enough seed in order to plant for a new harvest. God wants us to be responsibly generous and promises to give us all we need so we can share with others what we have been given.

God expects us to do some planning around what we have and not just do whatever we suddenly feel like doing in the moment. When we become aware of a need, we should ask God what our part might be in meeting that need, and then obey what God says. As we give to God and to others as God directs, He promises that we will receive back what we have given, abundantly multiplied.

Give to others, and you will receive. You will be given much. It will be poured into your hands—more than you can hold. You will be given so much that it will spill into your lap. The way you give to others is the way God will give to you. The Lord All-Powerful says, “Try this test. Bring one-tenth of your things to me. Put them in the treasury. Bring food to my house. Test me! If you do these things, I will surely bless you. Good things will come to you like rain falling from the sky. You will have more than enough of everything. (Luke 6:38, Malachi 3:10 ERV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank you for providing what I need for this day and your promise to always meet my needs as I prayerfully use and share what You have given me. Amen

**As we give
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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2020

WISDOM FOR THE JOURNEY – PAY ATTENTION

Each day we have many decisions to make. We may find ourselves at the place where two roads meet, and we wonder which road we should take. We may see an open door and wonder if it is the right one for us to go through. God’s wisdom for us today is that He will guide us in the way we should go if we are willing to hear and learn and obey. Through the reading of His word and obedience to it we will develop maturity and good sense.

Listen! Wisdom is calling out. Reason is making herself heard. On the hilltops near the road and at the crossroads she stands. At the entrance to the city, beside the gates, she calls: Are you immature? Learn to be mature. Are you foolish? Learn to have sense. Listen to my excellent words; all I tell you is right. (Proverbs 8:1-3, 5-6 GNT)

**Open my
eyes to see
the
wonderful
truths in
your
instructions.**

Psalm 119:18 NLT

There’s no doubt that our way of thinking and dealing with situations has been seriously compromised by life and by addiction. Our minds have attached themselves to false information and our thinking is distorted. We must learn new ways to deal with emotions and thoughts. We must learn from wise people who have walked with God and found restoration by taking practical steps each day. Most importantly we need to pay attention to the instructions contained in God’s word as recorded in the Bible. We need to pay attention to the promptings of God’s Holy Spirit who helps us sort out what is right and what is wrong.

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. (John 16:13a NIRV)

The unfailing promise we have is that when we do things God’s way, we will find life. If we chose not to obey God, the consequences are clear as well.

For those who find me find life and receive favor from the Lord. But those who fail to find me harm themselves; all who hate me love death. (Proverbs 8:35-36 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I hear You speaking truth to me today. With every decision I need to make, help me to pay attention to Your voice and walk in Your ways. I want to find life and receive Your favour as we journey together in recovery. Amen

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2020

CALLING OUT FROM FAR AWAY

No matter how far away God seems, we can always call out to Him and He will always respond.

Please listen, God, and answer my prayer! I feel hopeless, and I cry out to you from a faraway land. Lead me to the mighty rock high above me. You are a strong tower, where I am safe from my enemies. Let me live with you forever and find protection under your wings, my God. You heard my promises, and you have blessed me, just as you bless everyone who worships you. (Psalm 61:1-5 CEV)

We know that many times we take back our self-will and wander away from the path God has prepared for us to walk. We stop doing certain things that help us stay strong. We drift into unhealthy places and begin hanging around with people who, together with us, are ready to slide down the slippery slope into the pit. Before we know it, life is once again unmanageable, and we are powerless to save ourselves. It might not be that we've picked up again. There is also a miserable place we can get to when we are running in self-will that makes a mess of our relationships and steals our peace of mind and heart.

There are other times when we may feel far away from God. We may have been doing all the right things but tiredness, grief, challenges, pain, and so many other things can dull our conscious awareness of God's presence. God promises to respond when we call to Him even from a depressing place we have drifted to. He will lead us to a safe harbour. He will provide protection and support for us just like a mother bird covers her little ones with her wings. Today's verses of scripture can be a loving reminder that in those dark moments God is a close as a call. God never leaves us and never forsakes us. We are not alone.

Then call on me when you are in trouble, and I will rescue you, and you will give me glory. (Psalm 50:15 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for lifting me out of the slimy pit and setting my feet on a rock, giving me a firm place to stand. Thank You that I am secure in You regardless of my circumstances. I'm calling out to You today, asking for Your guidance and support so that I may follow You in all my ways. Thank You for never leaving me nor forsaking me. Amen

No matter how far away God seems, we can always call out to Him and He will always respond.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2020

TRUSTED SERVANTS and ULTIMATE AUTHORITY

As we hear Tradition 2 read in each AA meeting, we are reminded that, "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern." Whether we are those who jump in and try to get our own way in a situation or those who step back because we feel inferior to others, this principle invites all of us to share and do our part in the group.

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but they all come from the same Spirit. There are different ways to serve the same Lord, and we can each do different things. Yet the same God works in all of us and helps us in everything we do. (1 Corinthians 12:4-6 CEV)

This love recognizes the gifts that God gives each person and the need for one another for something to be complete.

God's plan has always been for us to live in relationship with Him through Jesus Christ, loving Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and then loving our neighbour as ourselves. This love recognizes the gifts that God gives each person and the need for one another for something to be complete. Nothing seems less perfect than a jigsaw puzzle of a beautiful scene missing a few pieces when it is put together. We each need to enjoy one another and do our part in what we are doing together.

I realize how kind God has been to me, and so I tell each of you not to think you are better than you really are. Use good sense and measure yourself by the amount of faith that God has given you. A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. That's how it is with us. There are many of us, but we each are part of the body of Christ, as well as part of one another. (Romans 12:3-5 CEV)

Thank God we can let go of the pressure of having all the answers, being right all the time, or always being in control. Without fear we can confidently bring our perspective and our service because God knows how to fit all the pieces together to accomplish His good plan.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, you have called us to serve you and one another in love. Thank you for the many different gifts You have given each of us. Help me to humbly offer my service today with the gifts You have given me and welcome the gifts and service others bring. Together may we give full expression of all You have planned for us to do. Amen

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2020

PUT IT ON THE LIST

Little by little as we walk with God and work the steps, we gain new information about ourselves and how we relate to other people. As we prayerfully review our lives with God, He will reveal where we have caused harm, where we might owe someone some form of amends, and teach us how we can live in new ways in relationship with others.

I, the Lord, search all hearts and examine secret motives. I give all people their due rewards, according to what their actions deserve. (Jeremiah 17:10 NLT)

It is God who knows all our hearts and what interaction each person is ready to give or receive. God is willing to share His wisdom and good plans with us if we will consult Him and listen for His voice.

Show me the right path, O Lord; point out the road for me to follow. Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you. (Psalm 25:4-5 NLT)

God invites us to live in honesty, courage, accountability and forgiveness as we admit our mistakes, forgive those who have harmed us, and compassionately work out a plan for making necessary amends.

Any person involved in this process is on a journey of facing and dealing with trauma and that has challenges that need care and time. We don't want to be either too late or too early in the action we take.

It's always the right time to be willing to see what God sees and agree with Him about making things right, but it takes wisdom to know when to involve the injured party.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to be willing to face how I have harmed others and be available to make things right with them in the way and time that You know is best for all of us. Help me to learn from my past mistakes and be more considerate of others. I ask You for healing for all those with whom I need to make amends and for myself. Encourage all of us to love and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Amen

The Lord is good to everyone who trusts in him, So it is best for us to wait in patience—to wait for him to save us
Lamentations 3:25-26 GNT

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2020

TWO KINDS OF SADNESS

Sadness is one of the most common human emotions and can be difficult to deal with. The feeling itself brings a burden and often the memory of the event that caused the sadness presses down on our hearts. It's interesting that the Bible talks about both a bad and a good sadness. How are we to know the difference and how are we to deal with each of them?

For the sadness that is used by God brings a change of heart that leads to salvation—and there is no regret in that! But sadness that is merely human causes death. (2 Corinthians 7:10 GNT)

Our God has sent me to comfort all those who are sad. He wants me to help those ... who are filled with sorrow.

(Isaiah 61:2b-3a NIRV)

We may experience sadness due to grief, loss, worries, disappointments, shame or regret, just to name a few factors. Thankfully, God does not leave us on our own to face all this. He comforts and strengthens us in our time of need.

Why am I so sad? Why am I so troubled? I will put my hope in God, and once again I will praise him, my savior and my God. (Psalm 42:5 GNT)

As we look at the wreckage in our past, our own pain and the pain we caused others may cause sadness in our hearts. Recovery groups and programs that are based on God's word will help us face those events and sort out what we are responsible to make amends for and what we can let go. So many of us have stories of how

God changed our sadness to joy when we were willing to repent of our sin and experience the pain associated with dealing with the past. Jesus compared that sadness and joy with the extreme suffering of a woman in birthing a child and the joy experienced when holding that baby in her arms.

When a woman is about to give birth, she is sad because her hour of suffering has come; but when the baby is born, she forgets her suffering, because she is happy that a baby has been born into the world. (John 16:21 GNT)

God will strengthen us as we come through the sadness of brokenness. Our joy will be complete as we come alongside others to comfort and give them hope.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank you for being with me in my sadness and for giving me forgiveness and healing and the joy of sharing Your love with others who suffer. Amen

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2020

SETTING THINGS RIGHT THROUGH PRAYER

God won't stop us from making bad choices. His desire for us to experience true life and love is a choice He gives us. He will never take that choice away by making us powerless robots who mindlessly do what He commands. When we make a mess of things God doesn't abandon us because it is not God's will that any of us should die in sin and addiction. It is God's desire that every person will find their way to life with Him and experience the joy of His unfailing love.

The Lord isn't slow about keeping his promises, as some people think he is. In fact, God is patient, because he wants everyone to turn from sin and no one to be lost. (2 Peter 3:9 CEV)

How do we make the move out of the mess into the care of God? We pray! We admit that we have not done what is right and that God has spared our lives. We turn away from our sin and we turn to God for forgiveness and healing. The amazing and joyful truth is that when we pray, God will answer. God will set things right. We will be set free. We will find what we have been searching for.

When they pray, God will answer; they will worship God with joy; God will set things right for them again. Each one will say in public, "I have sinned. I have not done right, but God spared me. He kept me from going to the world of the dead, and I am still alive." (Job 33:26-28 GNT)

How is God able to do this? He sent Jesus into the world to die on a cross to pay the penalty for our sin. As we trust what Jesus has done for us and ask for forgiveness each time we stumble, God forgives us and gives us new life. That's always been His plan – not to condemn and judge us but to give us new life that lasts forever.

God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life. God did not send his Son into the world to judge the world. He sent his Son to save the world through him. (John 3:16-17 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I'm so grateful You desired to save me rather than condemn me. Forgive me for my sins and failures. Set things right for me again and help me to live in Your presence now and forever. Amen

How do we make the move out of the mess into the care of God? We pray!

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2020

A BRIGHT NEW WAY OF LIFE

We lost our way. That's an obvious fact. We fell into addictive and destructive lifestyles. We hid in dark and isolated places. Sometimes that was in dark corners and streets, but even if it was under bright lights, we were still lost in dark places in our minds and hearts. We were lost in darkness and powerless to find a way to the light. Who can show us the way out of darkness into the light? Jesus says He is the light and if we follow Him, we won't have to walk in darkness but will have the light that gives life.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life!" Jesus answered. "Without me, no one can go to the Father. I am the light for the world! Follow me, and you won't be walking in the dark. You will have the light that gives life." (John 14:6, John 8:12b CEV)

Simon Peter answered, "Lord, there is no one else that we can go to! Your words give eternal life.

John 6:68 CEV

Darkness is not a thing of itself. Darkness is the absence of light. In pioneer days people lit a candle, put a glass orb around it, and the light spread out across the room. When we invite God to come and live in us, He is the light in us that reflects brightness to everyone around us. As others see things in the light of God's love that we are living before them, they will be drawn to that light. Darkness in our hearts and in our circumstances must give way to the light of Christ as surely as darkness leaves a room when we flip a switch and turn on a light.

In recovery we can live in a new way by reading the Bible to see how Jesus lived and then follow His example. God's Holy Spirit will give us the power we need to live in this way. Jesus gives light and life on our journey, and He will get us to our destination. Jesus not only knows the way, He is the way.

The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. (Romans 8:11 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank you for seeing me when I was lost in darkness and for sending Jesus to be the light to show me the way to life with You. I surrender myself to You and choose to follow Your plan for my life. I ask for Your Holy Spirit to empower me to do Your will and be a light to those who are around me. Amen

WHEN TO SPEAK AND WHEN TO BE SILENT

How many times did people try to help us see the truth about our problem when we were active in our addiction? How many times did we ignore what they said and just continued in our rebellious ways? As we share the message of life with God in recovery with others, we need to pray for wisdom to know when to speak and when to simply pray and leave people until they are ready.

Never correct conceited people; they will hate you for it. But if you correct the wise, they will respect you. Anything you say to the wise will make them wiser. Whatever you tell the righteous will add to their knowledge. (Proverbs 9:8-9 GNT)

It's a good idea to share in a measured way and watch for a reaction from those we are speaking with. This is particularly true with those who may see us living in recovery but are not yet able or willing to admit their own difficulties and need for change. We may not agree with everything someone says but we don't always need to confront it. Silence has its place. Every conversation can lead us to a conversation with God and He will show us when and what we are to say.

***We are to
be those
with
stories of
hope and
comfort.***

The right word at the right time is like precious gold set in silver. It makes a lot of sense to be a person of few words and to stay calm. (Proverbs 25:11, 17:27 CEV)

On the flip side, when we are with people who are longing to hear about hope, we need to honour God by telling the story of His work in us that has given us life and recovery. We need to simply share what effect responding to God's word or rejecting it had in our own lives. We are a witness not a judge. We are to be those with stories of hope and comfort. God's Holy Spirit will do the rest.

To be wise you must first have reverence for the Lord. If you know the Holy One, you have understanding. Wisdom will add years to your life. You are the one who will profit if you have wisdom, and if you reject it, you are the one who will suffer. (Proverbs 9:10-12 GNT)

Prayer: Loving God, You made so many wonderful changes in my life that I'm eager to share my experience, strength, and hope with others. Help me to be wise and know when to speak, and when to listen with respectful silence. Please open up opportunities for me to share Your Good News and, as I open my mouth, fill it with Your words of hope. Amen

NOTES

How To Enjoy New Life With God In Recovery

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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

