

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY



# Daily Meditations



## January 2019

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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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## Daily Meditations

JANUARY 2019

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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 1, 2019

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

Happy New Year! There is a line in a Christian music song which says, God has "opened up my future, closed my past." This New Year's Day may generate that desire within us – a longing for a new beginning.

One of the ways people seek to make the New Year better than the old one, is to make New Year's resolutions – commitments to personal goals, projects, or the reforming of a habit. The only problem with looking to self-determined New Year's resolutions is that statistics tell us that after 9 days there is a 75% failure rate in keeping the resolutions.

If we think that's bad news, what do we do with the statistic that tells us that 100% of people fail to live according to God's righteous laws? The result of that failure isn't just a few more pounds in weight on our bodies or a little more debt – it means death and eternal separation from God.

It's no wonder we love to celebrate Christmas -- the birth of Jesus Christ. It is such a wonderful event because the Bible tells us: ***But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children.*** (Galatians 4:4-5 NLT)

Before the beginning of time, God planned for each of us to live in a productive, loving, creative connectedness to Him. He planned for us to have the opportunity to daily walk and talk with Him. His desire was for us to know the peace and blessing that would flow from our relationship with Him. However, humans rejected the ways of God and chose for their own ways.

Today is a good day to seek restoration with the God who created us, who alone can "open up our future and close our past." If we accept Jesus' death on the cross as payment for our sins, we are assured of God's forgiveness and life forever with Him. May this New Year's Day 2019 be the beginning of a truly "Happy New Year" for each one of us.

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for giving Your beloved son Jesus to be a sacrifice for my sin. I choose to surrender my will and life into Your care and trust that as I faithfully follow You, Your plans for my future will open up and this will be my best year yet. Amen*

***Today is a good day to seek restoration with the God who created us, who alone can, "open up our future and close our past."***

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2019

## HAPPY NEW YEAR – EVERY DAY

Today as we recover from the festivities of saying good-bye to the old year, and embrace the New Year, let us reflect on what we would like to achieve in the coming months. How can we do as Jesus commanded and better love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength, and love our neighbour as ourselves? God loved us so much that He sent His son Jesus into the world to be our saviour. When we understand this love, we can ask God to teach us how to love as He loves. Our Loving God will show us what needs changing and how to go about it.

***Walking an unknown way with God is more secure than travelling an old familiar path on our own.***

***We love because he first loved us.*** (1 John 4:19 NIV)

Love covers a multitude of sins and goes beyond mere words. Sometimes love is demonstrated in silence, or in an understanding touch as one comes alongside another who has strayed from the recovery path. Love doesn't point a finger of accusation but encourages the one who has relapsed to get back on the road and continue the journey.

***I cried to the Lord with my voice, and He heard me from His holy hill. Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'*** (Psalms 3:4; Isaiah 41:10 NKJV)

We have a wonderful opportunity today, and in each day of this year, to be effective witnesses to God's love and our new life with Him in recovery. To achieve this, we must daily spend time with God in His word seeking His direction for our lives. Welcoming the input of others assists us as well. As we humbly and gently share our message, and learn from the experience, strength and hope of others, one day at a time we will build a successful year in a tried and true way.

Walking an unknown way with God is more secure than travelling an old familiar path on our own. It will bring a "Happy New Year" to each of us.

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, As I go forward in this new year I purposefully put my hand into Your hand and choose to walk with You in the path You have prepared for me. I welcome Your Holy Spirit to daily guide me in the way I should take. Amen*

THURSDAY, JANUARY 3, 2019

## CHARACTER STRENGTH – CO-OPERATION

Many of us had our character shaped in addiction by isolation and getting our own way in whatever way we could. Now in recovery, it's challenging to live in agreement with people who have ideas and ways of doing things that are different from our way. For healthy relationships to be formed and our sobriety sustained we need to develop the character quality of co-operation.

***Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all! Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace.*** (Romans 12:16, Ephesians 4:3 NLT)

When we co-operate, we work together towards a common goal. It doesn't mean we all do or say the same thing. We each have our distinctive personality and role to play but we take time to listen to one another, to support each other, and together find a way to make things better for everyone concerned. Co-operation requires that we learn from others by sometimes letting go of our usual way of thinking and behaving and try something new. At times it will be important for us to quit hiding in silence and ask a valid question or voice our opinion about a matter in a way that brings some fresh insight to the product or event.

***How wonderful and pleasant it is when brothers live together in harmony!*** (Psalm 133:1 NLT)

Developing a habit of co-operatively dealing with others will require us to grow and get past easily hurt feelings and approval seeking. It may also require laying down a bullying attitude or offensive words. As we learn new ways of interacting with others, God will strengthen and encourage us and bring us to that place of peace which surpasses all understanding.

While it's not easy to find our place and be ourselves after being detached for so long, the benefits of peace and effective new ways of living are worth the effort.

***Prayer: Loving God, you made us to live in co-operation with one another. Forgive me for the many ways I have been hard to get along with, voicing my own opinion and desiring that my will be done. I ask for Your help to co-operate and build healthy relationships with others. I ask Your Holy Spirit to teach and guide me in all my ways. Amen***

***When we  
co-operate  
we work  
together  
towards a  
common  
goal.***

FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, 2019

## I CAN'T DO IT ALONE

We come into recovery because we recognize we are powerless over addictive substances, people, or things that we've become dependent on to sustain life as we know it. We acknowledge that where we find ourselves is not life-giving and, if we continue on this path, it will cause a further downward spiral. Regardless of what we have gained or lost, what we have achieved, or where we have fallen short, we have reached the point where we no longer can cope with life on our own.

We admit defeat and turn to God for mercy and grace. God assures us that if we get to know and trust Him, He will rescue us and help us do what we cannot do for ourselves. In fact, Jesus said He came to save people exactly like us, in circumstances just like ours.

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***The Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost. I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners.*** (Luke 19:10; Matthew 9:13 NLT)

We are not suffering solely because we have misused certain substances or developed destructive habits or co-dependent relationships. We are not suffering because we were created as a second-class human being or because we grew up in a less than perfect environment. We are suffering because we believed the lie that we could meet our own needs and solve our problems in our own way. We are suffering because we believed that masking the unbearable pain inside us with a substance, a habit, or a relationship would give us lasting pleasure and make life worth living. We are suffering because we did not believe our need to have an ongoing relationship with God above all else.

***Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.*** (2 Corinthians 1:21-22 NIV)

God offers us a new way of life that begins by admitting, we can't do life on our own.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I admit defeat. I am powerless to live life on my own. Without your guidance, my life truly is unmanageable. I give up trying to meet my own needs. I give up trying to cover my pain and confusion with substances, destructive habits, and unhealthy relationships. Heavenly Father, I turn to You to bring peace to my heart. Amen***

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 2019

## HALF MEASURES AVOIDED US NOTHING

To experience success in our life with God in recovery we must make a commitment to be thorough in our search for truth and how we apply this learned truth in our thoughts and behaviours.

***Lord, teach me how you want me to live. Do this so that I will depend on you, my faithful God. Give me a heart that doesn't want anything more than to worship you.*** (Psalm 86:11 NIRV)

The founders of AA organized the steps in a particular way. Their goal was that those who followed these steps would experience a spiritual awakening. They knew that experiencing God's forgiveness and unconditional love would bring peace of mind from the obsession to pick up. Picking and choosing which steps we will do and how many of them we will wholeheartedly give ourselves to will not provide the spiritual awakening we desire. Instead, we will find ourselves continuing to run on our own power and self-will.

It's why at each AA meeting we are reminded: *"Half measures avoided us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked His (God's) protection and care with complete abandon ..... We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start."* (Big Book p.58)

These thoughts simply echo what God has said for thousands of years through the scriptures. They are tried and true principles for those who struggle with addictive and destructive life habits, and for those who love them. We have to make a choice to be all in, even when it's not easy. Difficult times will come. Emotions will go up and down. People will do crazy things around us. The only thing that matters is that we wholeheartedly abandon ourselves and all our concerns to the care of God. If we do, we will find the sobriety and peace we seek.

***Serve him [God] faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you. Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken.*** (1 Samuel 12:24; Psalm 55:22 NIV)

***Prayer: Loving God, help me to be fearless and thorough from this moment on and give you every opportunity to transform my life. Amen***

***"... we  
beg of  
you to be  
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and  
thorough  
from the  
very  
start."  
Big Book of  
AA***

SUNDAY, JANUARY 6, 2019

## SUNDAY PSALM – LOVED THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES

When problems arise it's easy to forget that God cares. We often feel alone and vulnerable. Daily life continues regardless of the heartache we are feeling and somehow we must cope. We feel like orphans with no one to care for us. We forget God's promise to help us and assume He also has abandoned us. However, God does not forget His beloved. We just need to call on Him and He will answer us.

***The Lord says, "I will rescue those who love me. I will protect those who trust in my name. When they call on me, I will answer; I will be with them in trouble. I will rescue and honor them.*** (Psalm 91:14-15 NLT)

In difficult times, rather than running from God we need to draw closer to Him and let His unfailing love ease the pain we are feeling. We live in a broken world where sin and sorrow has impacted everyone. Perhaps we've wondered where God was when bad things happened to us. Perhaps we did not seek God for help because we were unaware that He was right there.

Jesus took all sin, suffering, and sorrow on Himself when He died in our place on the cross. God offers us forgiveness, healing, and comfort as we put our trust in His unfailing love for us. Regardless of life's circumstances, God promises that He will never leave us and will hold us steady until we can effectively stand strong again.

***The eternal God is your refuge, and his everlasting arms are under you. Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down, and we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.*** (Deuteronomy 33:27, Isaiah 53:4-5 NLT)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I don't understand suffering, but I know that you do and that you offer me forgiveness, healing, and comfort because You love me. Hold me close today. Take my hand and steady me in your unfailing love. Amen***

MONDAY, JANUARY 7, 2019

## CHARACTER DEFECT – CO-DEPENDENCY

Contentment in life does not come from trying to control someone so they will meet our needs, or by trying to please someone so they will like us and make us feel secure.

We are living co-dependently when we are looking to others to affirm and maintain our value because others have limited ability to understand and provide for our needs. The same limitation applies to us when we are dealing with others and their needs. God's plan for us to have secure and satisfying relationships begins with us identifying with who God says we are – nothing more and nothing less.

***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)

We need to let go of the impossible expectations we put on others. People cannot love us enough or touch us deeply enough to satisfy the deep-rooted longings in our heart. Only God can truly satisfy those longings. We have our own desires and dreams and we need to let others have theirs. We make our own mistakes and others make theirs. We need to forgive ourselves and others and determine to learn from these mistakes.

***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)

Fullness of life and freedom from co-dependency can only be found when we are first rooted in a relationship with our Heavenly Father. God made us in His image and we have great value in His sight. When we base our worth and identity around this truth, rather than on the opinion of others, we will begin to experience peace, freedom and security.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am forever grateful that I am loved and accepted by You. Forgive me for being co-dependent with another rather than fully trusting in You. I ask You to teach me how to live in a way that honours who You are, and others for who they are. Amen***

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2019

## THE GIFT OF PEACE AND SERENITY

Peace and serenity are gifts to be received. They are treasures to be chosen. To make room for them in our hearts requires surrender on our part – not having to be right; not having to look good; not having to be understood; not having everything around us peaceful and pleasant. When we live for God and our hearts and minds are surrendered to Him, we will experience peace.

***Being at  
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Holy Spirit  
to guide and  
direct us.***

It is God's desire that we live in peace regardless of the circumstances of our lives. In fact, being at peace is one of the ways we will know whether we have truly given our will and our lives over to God's care and are allowing His Holy Spirit to guide and direct us.

***The Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.*** (Galatians 5:22-23 NLT)

God is working around us and in us every day of our lives. Not all circumstances change in a moment. God knows that life will feel rich sometimes and empty at other times. When we seek to follow a new and healthy way of life, we will face challenges that seem too much for us to handle. While some effort from us will be required, we can rely on God's help and encouragement throughout the process. When we choose to make right choices and do the next right thing, we can safely leave all the consequences with God.

***Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.*** (Philippians 4:6-7 NLT)

Peace and contentment are the fruit of making good choices every day.

***Prayer: Loving God, Thank you for the gift of peace that I receive as I surrender my will and life into Your care. When I am not at peace, help me to seek You and determine how I have wandered from Your ways. Please give me the strength to do the next right thing and get back to Your path of peace. Amen***

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2019

## FACING GUILT

When we turn our will and our life over to God's care and trust in the new life Jesus gives us, does that mean we should never reflect on guilty feelings again? No! There is a valid source of guilt which comes when we fall back into self-will and disobey God's commands. The Holy Spirit will warn us that we are off track. We call it being convicted of sin. We've done wrong and we feel guilty. This is a clear signal from God that we are sliding into dangerous and destructive patterns of doing things. Guilt is our indicator to turn and get back on the right track.

***And when he (the Holy Spirit) comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment.*** (John 16:8 NLT)

Satan wants us to wallow in our guilt, believing we have pushed God's grace beyond its limit. However, restoration is the intention of the Holy Spirit's conviction and our experience of guilt. God's desire is always to set us free, restore us, and lead us back onto the path of righteousness. We need to promptly recognize and resist condemnation and false guilt from the accuser of God's people. Similarly, we must acknowledge genuine guilt and promptly surrender to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Our Step 10 daily inventory is a great time to sort through these issues and get back on track with God.

***People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy.*** (Proverbs 28:13 NLT)

The more quickly we confess, repent, and make amends, the more quickly the weight of guilt will be removed from our shoulders. We can then get back to living life to the full, free of all condemnation.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that I have been falling back into self-will in my thoughts, my words, and my deeds. In Your mercy, forgive me and cleanse me from my sin. Thank You for freeing me from all condemnation and restoring me to the blessed life I have received. Amen***

***We must acknowledge genuine guilt and promptly surrender to the conviction of the Holy Spirit.***

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 2019

## CHARACTER DEFECT – IMPATIENCE

How many times in a day do we struggle with the character defect of impatience? Things are not happening as quickly as we thought they would. Someone isn't meeting our needs in the way we thought they should. We even think God is slow in how and when He responds to our prayers – particularly when we tell Him what we think He needs to do immediately. We feel stressed, worried, and irritated and since we think no one cares, we decide we better do what we need to do to "get this show on the road." Too often the immediate action we take causes more trouble for us than we could ever have anticipated.

***Impatience is really one expression of our self-will as we remove our will and our lives from God's care***

***I hold you by your right hand — I, the Lord your God, and I say to you, don't be afraid. I am here to help you. Let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up.*** (Isaiah 41:13, Galatians 6:9 NLT)

At its root, impatience is really unbelief in a good God. God promises that He will always be there for us and that all things will work together for our good. However, we don't really believe we are watched over and cared for. In other words, impatience is really one expression of our self-will as we remove our will and our life from God's care – and we already know that disaster awaits us when we do that.

***The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.*** (2 Peter 3:9, Romans 12:12 NLT)

It takes time to let go of the impatience we demonstrated in our life in addiction when our focus was on getting what we needed immediately, no matter what. It also takes courage to do things God's way rather than in the way our "instant gratification" society demands. God wants to build character in us as we wait for His perfect plan and timing. Let's take a breath, relax, pray, and give God the opportunity to do what He says He will.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to trust You with my life – even the parts that frustrate and irritate me. Help me to do the next right thing and leave everything else with You, trusting that You will make all things right as I surrender to Your will. Amen***

FRIDAY, JANUARY 11, 2019

## CAME TO BELIEVE

At some point in our lives we became aware that we were powerless over our dependencies and that our lives had become unmanageable. By some miracle we found ourselves in rooms where we were told the next step to a healthy life was, "coming to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." The challenge then is, how do we come to believe? How long does it take and what is involved in the healing and restoration process?

God meets us at this place on our journey and reassures us of His love, His care, and all the help that is available to us.

*When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.* (Romans 5:6-8 NLT)

It is God's desire to restore us to a life giving and satisfying relationship with Him. As we seek God, we can ask Him for His direction and help for the journey of coming to believe He exists, and will be there for us in our times of trouble.

*Without faith it is impossible to please God. Those who come to God must believe that he exists. And they must believe that he rewards those who look to him.* (Hebrews 11:6 NIRV)

One step at a time God will show us a new life-giving way to walk out of hatred and victimization. Daily reading the Bible is foundational to our progress because it teaches us how merciful and kind God is to those who reach out to Him and begin to walk in the path He directs. As our thoughts and actions follow God's principles, we will notice peace and security filling our hearts. We have come to know that a good and caring God is present with us offering personal and practical help and support. As we come to know God's character, we become willing to turn our will and our life over to His care

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for living so long in the misery of my own making. I have come to believe that You care for me and that You have the power to do what needs doing to restore me to sanity. Help me to trust in Your unfailing love for me and in the truth that only in You will I find the peace and security in life that I am seeking. Amen*

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12, 2019

## PART OF THE SOLUTION RATHER THAN THE PROBLEM

Someone has rightly said, "If you are not part of the solution then you are part of the problem." Our life with God in recovery is about making the transition from being part of the problem to becoming part of the solution. A key word in that slogan is "part." God is now in control of our lives. We make space for Him to do His part and we actively engage in the part He asks us to do.

*Call out to me when trouble comes. I will save you and you will honor me. If any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it. He will give it to you. God gives freely to everyone and doesn't find fault.* (Psalm 50:15, James 1:5 NIRV)

**God invites us to trust in His wisdom. Our part is to live with a peaceful heart.**

Fear and pride often show up in the middle of a difficult situation and, if we allow them to govern our thinking process, the problem only gets worse. God has a solution for our trouble that is better than anything our fearful minds could conjure up.

In our new life with God in recovery our first response to a problem should be to call out to God, ask Him for wisdom and find out what our part is in bringing about a solution. Sometimes we will have a major role in the solution and at other times we will need to simply wait and watch God work. One of the hardest lessons to put into practice is that of letting go and giving God a chance to demonstrate that He has a solution. We lack confidence in the waiting process and our impatience often brings added complications.

*I will give you words of wisdom. None of your enemies will be able to withstand them or prove them wrong. I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life.* (Luke 21:15, Psalm 23:6 NIRV)

God invites us to trust in His wisdom. Our part is to live with a peaceful heart, get to know God's ways by reading His word, seek good counsel from sponsors and mentors, and pray to be conscious of God's will and the power to carry it out.

*Prayer: Loving God, I want my actions to be part of the solution to any difficulty rather than the creation of more problems. Help me recognize what is helpful and what comes from my defects of character. Help me to live in peace knowing You are in control and Your wisdom is wiser than any solution I could ever conjure up on my own. Amen*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13, 2019

## SUNDAY PSALM – NO RECORD OF WRONGS

From the chaos of our dysfunctional lives many of us called out to God with words like, “God if you are really there, please help me”. We were unsure if there was a power greater than ourselves to hear our cry for help. However, in unexpected ways God answered our call. Perhaps through a person he put in our way, or with the quiet voice of His Spirit in our hearts He reminded us of places we had heard help was available. God then opened doors for us to enter recovery.

The writer of the following words also cried out to God because he could no longer live with the sin in his life.

***Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord; Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy. If you, Lord, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, so that we can, with reverence, serve you.*** (Psalm 130:1-4 NIV)

When we receive God’s forgiveness of our sins, God removes every record of our wrongs. He no longer remembers our sins. God does not have a bad memory. He simply chooses not to remember what He has forgiven. What about being accountable for our sins? When Jesus died for our sins, His sacrifice “paid in full” the debt we owed for our rebellion against God. None of us could stand before a Holy God in our unclean condition but the blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin. When we accept Jesus as our Saviour and Lord, we become new and clean, just as if we had never sinned. God holds no charges against us. He lifts the burden of shame and guilt from us.

***We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need.*** (Colossians 1:11 NLT)

As we come to understand the amazing gift of God’s grace to us through Jesus, we will be strengthened to live the life God has called us to.

***Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for Your saving grace. I praise You for all You have done for me and humbly ask You for even more of You in my life. Amen***

***When we receive God’s mercy for the forgiveness of our sins, God removes every record of our wrongs.***

MONDAY, JANUARY 14, 2019

## THE PRAYER THAT MAKES IT ALL RIGHT

Jesus told the story of two men who went to church to pray. One stood proud and named off all his accomplishments. He compared himself to another person near him who was also praying and gave thanks that he was much better than that man since the man was known in the community to be guilty of all sorts of wrong doing. The other person, who admitted he was guilty of wrong doing, hung his head in shame, opened his heart to God and confessed His sin asking God for mercy and forgiveness. Jesus said it was the person who knew He had sinned and asked for forgiveness that went home in right relationship with God. (see Luke 18:9-14 for the story)

***Be humble in front of the Lord and he will lift you up.***  
*James 4:10*

As we work the 12-step program we are asked to do things like: make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves; become willing to have God remove our defects of character; make a list of all persons we have harmed; and become willing to make amends to them all. At many places along the way it’s easier to make a list of what others did to us and so much more difficult to take responsibility for our part and seek forgiveness for where we went wrong and caused harm to ourselves and others. Comparing our actions with another’s actions to minimize our destructive behaviour will never heal our hearts or restore our relationship with God.

***Be humble in front of the Lord and he will lift you up. Pride brings a person low. But those whose spirits are low will be honored. The Lord is honest and good. He teaches sinners to walk in his ways. He shows those who aren’t proud how to do what is right. He teaches them his ways.*** (James 4:10, Proverbs 29:23, Psalm 25:8-9 NIRV)

Only a humble acknowledgement of our own shortcomings before God and seeking His help in removing them will get us to the place of peace we long to experience.

***Prayer: Loving God, be merciful to me a sinner and forgive my lawless deeds. With Your precious blood, wash me clean from every evil thing I have done. Make me pure as the driven snow. Bring me joy and gladness as I stand on the truth of Your word that says my sins and my lawless deeds You will remember no more. Amen***

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2019

## WISDOM AND WEALTH

***To the person who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness, but to the sinner he gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.***  
(Ecclesiastes 2:26 NIV)

We all want to enjoy life. Some of us fell into addiction because we focused on seeking pleasure. If it made us feel good, we wanted more of whatever it was, and were willing to do whatever it took to get more. In recovery we constantly hear messages in the media about how we need this or that to make us happy. Especially in cities where the cost of living is high, we wonder if we will ever be able to make enough money to have the lifestyle which we believe will make us happy.

From God's perspective, and that's the basis of all healthy recovery, the blessings that money and material things represent are only good for us when we first live in the care and pleasure of our loving Heavenly Father. Safe in His love, we will find the satisfaction and contentment we long for whether we are rich or poor or have the latest smart phone.

***Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*** (Matthew 6:33 NIV)

Giving up an addiction to drugs and alcohol only to pick up an addiction to money and possessions is not the way to abundant life. If we thought we were living meaningless lives under the control of our dependencies, how much more will we experience emptiness if we run after money and possessions? Building our foundation on the love of God through Jesus Christ, is the only way to a good, pleasing, and perfect life.

When material blessings come, we should give thanks to God, receive them with joy and share them with others. When we do this we are acknowledging that we are blessed to be a blessing as God intended.

***Prayer: Loving God, help me to find joy and satisfaction in my life whether I am blessed with a little or a lot. Protect me from the trap of thinking I need certain things or a given amount of money to be truly happy. I trust You to provide for my needs. With what You provide, help me be content and bless others from Your provision. Amen***

***Safe in His love, we will find the satisfaction and contentment we long for whether we are rich or poor.***

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2019

## CONFRONTING DENIAL

A healthy foundation for life with God in recovery includes seeking truth in all our affairs. Our goal is to know what is good and recognize what is harmful. We can then correctly identify what has the power to negatively impact us. God's word is a trustworthy source of truth in directing us to new ways of life. We need to confront any denial of God's truth and invite Him to show us where our thinking and perceiving have become confused. God's wisdom and power will help us make the changes that are necessary.

***We need to confront any denial of God's truth and invite Him to show us where our thinking and perceiving have become confused.***

***Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. (Psalm 139:23-24 NIV, Matthew 11:28 NLT)***

In recovery we are taught to accept responsibility for our actions. We come to know that our actions bring consequences. In the past, some of us tried to deceive ourselves into thinking we could escape the consequences of the things we had done. Now, with some time and learning in recovery, we know the truth that God made accountability a necessary part of human existence.

***Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.*** (Galatians 6:7-8 NIV)

The good news is that God will help us be accountable and make amends to those we have harmed. God wants us to live with self-worth before Him and others. We may fear humiliation and the pain of acknowledging the truth about what we have done. However, finally admitting the truth will bring us peace, even though it means facing our past. Truth leads to freedom. Deceit and denial lead to bondage and death.

***Prayer: Gracious God, Help me to fearlessly commit to truth in all my affairs. I want to live in the freedom that comes from living life your way. Amen.***

THURSDAY, JANUARY 17, 2019

## IT'S NOT FAIR – OR IS IT?

It's easy for us to become discouraged and feel sorry for ourselves when life doesn't go the way we think it should. We cry, "It's not fair" when we have troubles; when the system doesn't give us what we think we need when we need it; when our family members don't trust us even though we said we have changed. The fact that we cheated and stole and lived for a long time in a destructive way may have something to do with why life is not how we would like it to be.

Sometimes life seems to get better more quickly for others than it does for us and we feel resentful. We see others get housing, get an opportunity for education, or get a job that we wish we could have. We complain that life is unfair. Where is God in the middle of all of this?

***The Lord is good and does what is right. He shows sinners the right way to live. He teaches his ways to humble people. He leads them with fairness.*** (Psalm 25:8-9 ERV)

God has a good plan for our lives. His priority is that we get to know Him and through obedience to His word, have a loving relationship with Him. God knows what is best for us and will provide those things that are good for us at just the right time. Sometimes that may mean not having as much money or as much independence as quickly as someone else. God knows we have certain character defects that would destroy us if we did. God may keep us in our current situation until we are mature and strong enough to live responsibly. In His kindness, God is keeping us from future harm. From our point of view, it seems unfair but from His, it is pure love and protection.

***God is fair, and he will remember all the work you have done. He will remember that you showed your love to him by helping his people and that you continue to help them.*** (Hebrews 6:10 ERV)

God is generous and kind. When we trust Him, He will make a way forward for us that is good, pleasing and perfect, and we will praise Him for all that He has done.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Sometimes I feel that life isn't fair, and things never go right for me. Help me to trust Your wisdom in knowing what is best for me and that all things will work together for my good. Please help me focus on knowing You and following Your ways. Amen***

***It is better to be poor and do right than to be rich and do wrong.***

***Proverbs 16:8 ERV***

FRIDAY, JANUARY 18, 2019

## CONTINUING SURRENDER

Living in recovery and following the Twelve Steps is a spiritual journey. It requires a conscious commitment to a spiritual way of living. In one of the steps we are invited to turn our will and our life over to the care of God as we know and understand Him today.

***You will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Lord.*** (Jeremiah 29:12-14a NIV)

***Surrendering to God is an everyday, moment-by-moment, ongoing process of turning away from self-will and choosing for the will of God in every situation.***

When we came into recovery, most of us admitted that our way of doing things resulted in pain, frustration, sickness, and despair. We came to God because we knew we needed help, or because someone shared with us that God is the Higher Power who restored them to sanity.

Surrendering to God is an everyday, ongoing, moment-by-moment process of turning away from self-will and choosing for the will of God in every situation. This always involves action on our part. If we say that we have entrusted our life to God but do not make changes in how we think and act, then we are only fooling ourselves.

We may not understand how everything will work together for our good, but we can step out in faith today and choose to do whatever God says works.

***To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.*** (Jude 1:24-25 NIV)

***Prayer: Loving God, I don't understand how life works and what tomorrow may bring but today I choose to turn my will and my life over to Your care. Help me to seek You and find out what Your will is for my life, and then act accordingly. Amen***

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 2019

## JUST FOR TODAY – UNAFRAID

*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.*

Facing today without fear – that’s a tall order. It’s clear from just a brief look at slogans and acronyms from AA and NA that FEAR dwells in the mind of many. Here are some examples: **FEAR** = Failure Expected And Received. **FEAR** = Forget Everything And Run. **FEAR** = Frantic Effort to Appear Real.

In our addiction, we cycled around desperation and failure for so long that we lost track of who we once were. We forgot what real life was like. When we were confronted with the possibility of relationships and intimacy, or meaningful work and growth, we froze with fear. What were we to do? How could we move forward in these areas which filled us with fear of the unknown?

On our own it would be impossible but what we’ve come to know is, when we turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, we are no longer alone. God promises to be with us and show us a way forward even when we don’t see a way. All we have to do is seek His will for us and follow His path.

***Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.*** (Proverbs 3:5-6 NLT)

There are a couple of acronyms for fear that may help us in our journey. **FEAR** = False Evidence Appearing Real. **FEAR** = Face Everything And Recover. When fear tells us we can’t get ahead and be successful, it’s important to remember that this is untrue. God has the power to do more than we can ask or imagine. When we think our past is too much to face we can reject that thought for the lie that it is. Our past does not define our future. When we come to new life in Christ, the old goes and new comes. Just for today I will trust God and be unafraid.

***We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin.*** (Romans 6:6 NLT)

*Prayer: Lord Jesus, Thank you that my sin is nailed to Your cross. Today I turn my will and life over to Your care. Fill me to overflowing with the power of Your Holy Spirit, so fear loses its power in my life. I will live unafraid today knowing I am Your beloved child. Amen*

***Just for today I will trust God and be unafraid.***

SUNDAY, JANUARY 20, 2019

## SUNDAY PSALM – HOW WELL DO WE HEAR

Have you ever been for a hearing test? The tester gives instructions to the person being tested, and then puts that person into a cubicle with ear phones. At all times the tester closely watches the person being tested. One of the tests requires the person to raise their hand each time they hear a sound. The tester will also speak some words and ask the person to repeat what they have heard. To correctly assess how well a person can hear, the person being tested must obey the instructions of the person giving the test.

How well do we hear when God speaks to us? Do we always obey what He says? Are we taking time throughout the day, and in our prayers, to just listen to how God is instructing us?

***I will listen to what God the Lord says; he promises peace to his people, his faithful servants.***

*Psalms 85:8 NLT*

***Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord; Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy. If you, Lord, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, so that we can, with reverence, serve you. I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope. I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning. Israel, put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption. He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.*** (Psalm 130:1-8 NIV)

Like the hearing tester watches the person in the cubicle, God is always watching us to see if we follow His instructions. Let’s demonstrate that we have heard the Lord by praying some of His words back to Him. In place of the name “Israel” we can put “our name”. Today, let’s remind ourselves that God has redeemed us from all our sins, filled us with His unfailing love, and given us hope.

***“I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope. (our name) put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption. He himself will redeem (our name) from all (his or her) sins.”*** (Psalm 130:5, 7)

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to listen to You and put your words into action – not just talk the talk, but walk the walk. Help me to follow Your instructions in all my ways. Amen*

MONDAY, JANUARY 21, 2019

## SPIRITUALLY POOR – I'M NOT GOD

***Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*** (Matthew 5:3 NIV)

Jesus told us we would be blessed if we were “poor in spirit.” What does that mean? Is being “poor in spirit” like being poor by not having enough money or not getting our needs met? If being “poor in spirit” is like that, why would Jesus say we are blessed, and the kingdom of heaven is ours?

When a person is poor in spirit, they have come to God and admitted they are powerless to do life on their own. They have chosen to turn their will and life over to the care of God. They do not deny the things they have done but humbly admit their sins to God and ask for His forgiveness. They choose to wholeheartedly follow the ways of God because they know God will give them the strength to do so.

***Don't love the world's ways. Don't love the world's goods. Love of the world squeezes out love for the Father. Practically everything that goes on in the world—wanting your own way, wanting everything for yourself, wanting to appear important—has nothing to do with the Father. It just isolates you from him. The world and all its wanting, wanting, wanting is on the way out—but whoever does what God wants is set for eternity.*** (1 John 2:15-17 MSG)

When we are poor in spirit we humbly live in the grace and favour of God. We admit our lives are unmanageable without God. We take responsibility for our character defects and ask God to remove them. We are willing to confess our sin to God, knowing that no condemnation awaits us, only forgiveness and blessing. We have no fear of failure because we know God is rich in love and slow to anger. We acknowledge that God's strength is greater than that of any human being. We choose to be thankful for who God is and for all He has done for us. We are poor in spirit because we rely entirely on the richness of the favour of our awesome God.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I acknowledge that without You I can do nothing. I desire to be poor in spirit so that I can be rich in Your unfailing love and care for me. Amen***

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2019

## LOVE YOUR ENEMY

Jesus gave us very clear instructions about loving our enemies and doing good to those who spitefully use us. Many of us got caught up in addiction because we didn't know how to handle the harm inflicted on us by people who did not treat us as they should have. To recover life as God intended, we need to learn how to deal with these relationships.

Jesus was despised, physically abused, and rejected more than any other human and yet from the cross He asked His Father to forgive those who had acted unjustly towards Him. The challenge for us in our life with God in recovery is to be like Jesus and offer forgiveness to our enemies and those who have mistreated us.

***As  
followers of  
Jesus,  
regardless  
of the  
injustice  
done to us,  
we are  
instructed  
to love our  
enemies.***

***“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*** (Matthew 5:43-48 NIV)

As followers of Jesus, regardless of the injustice done to us, we are instructed to love our enemies. We are reluctant to do this and ask, “why should we forgive them?” We do so because unforgiveness is like a cancer that eats away at our soul. Those who have harmed us will have to account to God for what they have done. It's time for us to forgive and turn them over to God's righteous judgment.

***I also noticed that under the sun there is evil in the courtroom. Yes, even the courts of law are corrupt! I said to myself, “In due season God will judge everyone, both good and bad, for all their deeds.”*** (Ecclesiastes 3:16-17 NLT)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, it is hard for me to love those who hurt me. Please work in my heart so that I can forgive and release those who have harmed me to You. Amen***

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2019

## BREAKING SHAME'S POWER

Shame is a powerful emotion that repeatedly tells us we are worthless, unacceptable, unforgiveable, and have no place in a loving relationship. Pictures of embarrassing happenings tend to replay in our minds and intensify our shame. However, God stands ready to forgive what we have done and repair the harm caused to us and to others. The only way to rid ourselves of shame is to ask for and receive the forgiveness of God for our actions. When we accept Jesus' death as payment for ALL our sins, God will work to bring restoration and healing where any event has caused harm.

***He [Jesus] has come to do away with sin by offering himself. People have to die once. After that, God will judge them. In the same way, Christ was offered up once. He took away the sins of many people.*** (Hebrews 9:26-28 NIRV)

People who live in shame are bound up with fear. They build walls. They are terrified to get to know themselves. They wear a mask and live a role that does not reflect who they truly are. They constantly seek the approval of others. They are unable to live in a healthy mutual relationship because at the core of their being they believe they can never measure up.

God invites us to turn away from our sins and receive forgiveness. God wants us to be who we truly are – the person He created us to be. God wants us to come to Him just as we are, shame and all. As we wholeheartedly give our will and life over to God's care, our old shameful self is put to death and we are raised to new life without stain or blemish. The solution to shame is: receive what God is offering, see what God is seeing, and say what God is saying.

***The Spirit that we received is not a spirit that makes us slaves again and causes us to fear. The Spirit that we have makes us God's chosen children. And with that Spirit we cry out, "Abba, Father." And the Spirit himself speaks to our spirits and makes us sure that we are God's children.*** (Romans 8:15-16 ERV)

***Prayer: Lord Jesus, I admit that in the past I have done shameful things. Thank You that You died on the cross to take away my shame and the punishment for my sins. Because I accept Your death in my place, I believe I am free from all sin and have become a child of God. From this day forward, I choose to follow Your ways and rely on Your promises. Amen***

***The solution to shame is: receive what God is offering, see what God is seeing, and say what God is saying.***

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 2019

## FREEDOM THROUGH TELLING THE TRUTH

*"We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."* If we knew there was even a possibility that God was a liar would we consider trusting Him and turning our will and our life over to His care? Fortunately, truth is one of our Heavenly Father's characteristics. In fact, the Bible tells us it is impossible for God to lie. Every promise He has made, He will keep. Every word God speaks is a word of truth.

***God wants to deliver us from the deception and lies we have lived under in the past, because lies harm us and keep us in bondage.***

***It is impossible for God to lie. Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. God tells the truth, even if everyone else is a liar.*** (Hebrews 6:18, John 14:6 NLT, Romans 3:4 CEV)

God speaks truth, even difficult truths. Jesus spoke truth with kindness and love and rather than driving people away from Him it drew people to Him. There's a story in the Bible in John 4 that tells about Jesus' encounter with a woman who was trying to hide the truth about her life's circumstances. Jesus engaged her in conversation and the complete truth, which wasn't all that great, was revealed. Amazingly, after just a few minutes with Jesus, that woman who had lived in shame in her community for years ran back to town and invited everyone to come and hear Jesus because "He told me all things that I ever did".

***What sorrow for those who drag their sins behind them with ropes made of lies, who drag wickedness behind them like a cart!*** (Isaiah 5:18 NLT)

When God, who loves us unconditionally, speaks truth to us, life, hope, and a desire for healing fills our hearts. God wants to deliver us from the deception and lies we have lived under in the past, because lies harm us and keep us in bondage. When we choose to face the truth of everything we have ever done, we will be set free to face our past without fear. When we have freedom from the lies of the past, we can embrace our future with the Power greater than ourselves who keeps His promises and whose word is truth.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank you for always speaking the truth in love to me. Help me to live in the freedom of always speaking the truth to You, to myself, and to others. Amen***

FRIDAY, JANUARY 25, 2019

## TAKING INVENTORY

At various times in our recovery journey we are asked to take personal inventory. Why is it important to make a frank and honest assessment of ourselves?

For numerous reasons we have participated in actions that were destructive and addictive. We feared pain, craved pleasure, desired power, and wanted to do life our way. We tried to find satisfaction in addictive behaviour and/or substances. To satisfy our self-centered desires, we mercilessly manipulated those as broken as ourselves or others who tried to help us. Now we have come to realize we need a new way and must take the time to identify what needs to change.

***The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? But I, the Lord, search all hearts and examine secret motives. I give all people their due rewards, according to what their actions deserve.*** (Jeremiah 17:9-10 NLT)

God tells us that knowing the truth is a building block to freedom. The Bible tells us that we are unable to be honest with ourselves – all of us have hearts that don't know how to face the truth. We find ways to justify and minimize what's wrong and too readily find excuses to avoid some issues altogether.

As we inventory our past behaviour, our relationships, and our character defects or strengths, it's important that we invite God's Holy Spirit to reveal those things in us that need forgiving and healing and made right.

***God already knows our deepest thoughts and he understands what the Spirit is saying, because the Spirit speaks for his people in the way that agrees with what God wants.*** (Romans 8:27 ERV)

Taking personal inventory is a positive step because it asks us to identify those things that are obstacles to living the fulfilling way of life that God is offering us. God's principles are provided for us in the Bible. We need to trust and obey them.

***Prayer: Lord Jesus, I need You to look at my heart and my life and identify those things that block me from having a loving relationship with You and with others. Please give me the desire and the power to make the changes You reveal to me. Amen***

***We have come to realize we need a new way and must take the time to identify what needs to change.***

SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 2019

## PRACTICING AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Practicing an attitude of gratitude – is this just a happy little slogan or is it a way of daily living that will change our perspective on life?

**Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.** (1 Thess. 5:16-18 NLT)

Is being thankful in all circumstances the key to a fulfilling life or an impossible command to fulfill?

There's a wonderful story in the Bible that illustrates the gratitude principle. A king and his people were being attacked by some armies who were much larger and stronger than they were. They were under intense pressure and filled with fear. The king's FIRST response was to speak to God about their situation. He called the people together and led them in a prayer which included giving thanks to God for His presence with them, His supreme power over them, and the history of times when God had helped His people in the past.

God's heart was touched by the king's gratitude. Through a prophet, God told the king that he would not have to fight this battle and the people were not to be afraid or discouraged by the circumstances confronting them. The king and his people chose to believe God and to act courageously on God's directions. True to His word, God took care of them. Their part? Sing and give thanks to God. Really? (Read 2 Chronicles 20:21-24)

Is giving thanks our first response when trouble presents itself in our minds or in our circumstances? Trusting in God's power and having confidence in God's directions, are life recovery principles we need to begin applying in all our challenging situations. Like this particular king and his people, we will sing and give thanks as we recognize that God, through Jesus, has fought and eliminated those enemies we thought were larger and stronger than us.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for always being there for me and for Your promise that You will never leave me nor forsake me. Help me to acknowledge every good thing You have done for me in the past. I am grateful that as I seek You, and not lean on my own understanding, You will direct my path in every daily challenge I may encounter. Amen***

SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2019

## SUNDAY PSALM – WHOM DO YOU TRUST?

When we turn our will and our life over to the care of God, one question to ask ourselves is, “Do we really trust God to do everything He says He will do”? In the past, many people have made us angry by making promises and then not keeping them. After repeatedly feeling hurt and insignificant, we decided to rely only on ourselves to get through life. Perhaps we never knew there was a God to whom we really mattered and to whom we could confidently turn to for comfort.

***Praise the Lord! Let all that I am praise the Lord. I will praise the Lord as long as I live. I will sing praises to my God with my dying breath. Don't put your confidence in powerful people; there is no help for you there. When they breathe their last, they return to the earth, and all their plans die with them. But joyful are those who have the God of Israel as their helper, whose hope is in the Lord their God. He made heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them. He keeps every promise forever.***  
(Psalm 146:1-6 NLT)

We build trust in a person by observing that their actions are consistent with their words. We intentionally watch and listen to how they interact with others. If we witness respect and reliability in their behaviour, we begin to trust them. However, even people seeking to live trustworthy lives can sometimes let us down and our trust in people is at best, fragile.

Learning to trust God is like learning to trust people with one huge difference, God is never going to let us down. We need to know God's word, so we can observe that His actions are consistent with what He says. We need to listen attentively to others who have walked with God and confirm His character and His faithfulness in times of trouble. Over time we will come to know that God is a trustworthy friend who is always there for us and will never let us down.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to confidently trust and praise You, for You are perfect in all Your ways. Thank You for Your promise that You will never leave or forsake me. I am truly grateful that I can rely on You. Amen***

***Learning to trust God is like learning to trust people, with one huge difference: God is never going to let us down.***

MONDAY, JANUARY 28, 2019

## SALT OF THE EARTH

***Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You've lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage.***  
(Matthew 5:13 MSG)

Everything Jesus said and did showed us the amazing qualities of God. He had compassion for the people around Him. He healed the sick and the lame. He spoke about God's great love and forgiveness for people in such a way that crowds came and couldn't get enough of what He had to say. As strange as it may sound, we are being flavoured with hope and trust by the salt of God's word as we read these words and come to know how God truly can make a difference in our lives.

***You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth.***

We will make a positive difference in our community when we share with others about our new life in Jesus. Just as salt adds flavour to food, our stories of God's love and forgiveness will give hope and courage to those who need to hear good news. It is equally true that if we who believe in Jesus are not spreading the good news, then we are not being the salt that “brings out the God flavours” in our community.

***But how can people call for help if they don't know who to trust? And how can they know who to trust if they haven't heard of the One who can be trusted? And how can they hear if nobody tells them? And how is anyone going to tell them, unless someone is sent to do it?*** (Matthew 10:14 MSG)

God is not willing for anyone to perish but wants everyone to come to Him. He wants people everywhere to know why Jesus died and was raised to life again. He wants them to know that because Jesus lives, we also will live forever. Do we who are reading this know the good news about Jesus, and if we do, are we spreading salt in our community?

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to be the salt that spreads the good news of the gospel to others. I am blessed that others shared the good news with me. Amen***

TUESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2019

## WHERE IS MY FOCUS

How many of us who have given our will and our life over to the care of God have taken time to acknowledge all that we received by making that decision? At times we may focus more on what we let go of rather than on what we have received.

***There's far more here than meets the eye. The things we see now are here today, gone tomorrow. But the things we can't see now will last forever.*** (2 Corinthians 4:18 MSG)

When driving a car, if our eyes focus on something other than the road ahead, the car will turn in the direction of our focus. The same is true when our focus is on our former way of life. If we allow self-pity it will cloud our thinking. If we guard shameful secrets instead of bringing them to God and allowing a safe person to help us through the trauma we will struggle. When we obsess on former events, we often end up stumbling back into what we just left. We need to change our thought patterns and focus on those things which build us up and encourage us to move forward with God.

***This resurrection life you received from God is not a timid, grave-tending life. It's adventurously expectant, greeting God with a childlike "What's next, Papa?" God's Spirit touches our spirits and confirms who we really are. We know who he is, and we know who we are: Father and children. And we know we are going to get what's coming to us—an unbelievable inheritance.*** (Romans 8:15-17a MSG)

We experience pain when we have a physical injury, but the pain lessens as we go through the healing process. The same is true of emotional injuries. As we invite God to be with us, we are assured of His tender love and care for us. Medical evidence assures us that we heal more quickly when our focus is on getting well.

Now is the perfect time to focus on the good things God has done and continues to do, rather than on those things that can drag us into the pit again.

***Prayer: Gracious God, Forgive me for not seeing the good things I received when I turned my will and life over to Your care. As I submit to Your ways, help me to focus on the purposeful life I have with You and be thankful that You love and care for me. Amen***

***We need to change our thought patterns and focus on those things which build us up and encourage us to move forward with God.***

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2019

## FEELING VULNERABLE

While we were living in addiction our daily agenda was completely centered on meeting our own needs. We used our substance of choice to help cope with the emptiness, the unbearable pain, the loneliness, and other feelings we were unwilling to deal with. Now in recovery, we have become aware that God has promised to meet all our needs. Are we willing to let Him do so? When we feel vulnerable where do we turn to for help?

God invites us, ***Call on me when you are in trouble, and I will rescue you, and you will give me glory.*** (Psalm 50:15 NLT)

***Step by step we can come to know and believe in a power greater than ourselves who can restore us to sanity.***

No one likes feeling vulnerable but stuffing our feelings just does not work. When we admitted that we were powerless over the destructive dependencies we used to cover up our feelings, we chose to come into a recovery program. We needed help. Our life had become empty and unmanageable. We stopped using our substance of choice and began the journey of living in a healthy way. Now we wonder if it is possible to handle our life situations while sober. How can we face the devastating feelings and pain of our loneliness, frustration, disappointment, and even shame, without picking up again?

Success in recovery requires living in truth, and the truth is, without God, our lives are not complete. That is why we struggle with fear when we are feeling vulnerable and powerless. God, and trusted people around us, assure us that there is a safe way forward. They remind us that step by step we can come to know and believe in a power greater than ourselves who can restore us to sanity. God is powerful. God is with us. God cares for us. God will guide us. Peace will come, as we wholeheartedly turn our will and our lives over to the care of God.

***God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble.*** (Psalm 46:1 NLT)

***Prayer: Almighty God, I confess that I am powerless, and my life is unmanageable. Help me to sort out my vulnerable feelings. When I am fearful and overwhelmed, I ask you to help me trust in Your word which says, You are powerful, You are with me, and You care about me. Help me to believe. Amen***

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, 2019

# NOTES

## LOVED THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES

When problems arise it's easy to forget that God cares. We often feel alone and helpless. Daily life continues regardless of the heartache we are feeling and somehow, we have to cope. We feel like struggling orphans with no one to care for us. We forget God's instruction to call on Him for help and assume He also has abandoned us. However, God does not forget His beloved. We just need to call on Him and He will answer us.

***The Lord says, "I will rescue those who love me. I will protect those who trust in my name. When they call on me, I will answer; I will be with them in trouble. I will rescue and honor them." (Psalm 91:14-15 NLT)***

In difficult times, rather than running from God, we need to draw closer to Him and let His unfailing love ease the pain we are feeling. We live in a broken world where sin and sorrow abound, and no person will escape its ravages. Perhaps we've wondered where God was when bad things happened to us. Perhaps we were unaware that God was nearby, ready to provide comfort and help.

Jesus took upon himself all sin, suffering, and sorrow when He died in our place on the cross. When we believe this, God offers us forgiveness, healing, and comfort as we put our trust in His unfailing love for us. Regardless of our circumstances, God promises that He will never leave us and will hold us steady until we can effectively stand strong in His power.

***The eternal God is your refuge, and his everlasting arms are under you. Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down, and we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. (Deuteronomy 33:27, Isaiah 53:4-5 NLT)***

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I don't understand suffering, but I know that You do, and because of Your love for me, You offer me forgiveness, healing, and comfort. Hold me close today. Steady me with Your everlasting arms until I can stand strong in Your power. Amen***

***In difficult times, rather than running from God, we need to draw closer to Him and let His unfailing love ease the pain we are feeling.***

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **JUST FOR TODAY**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

***For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. Ephesians 2:10 NLT***