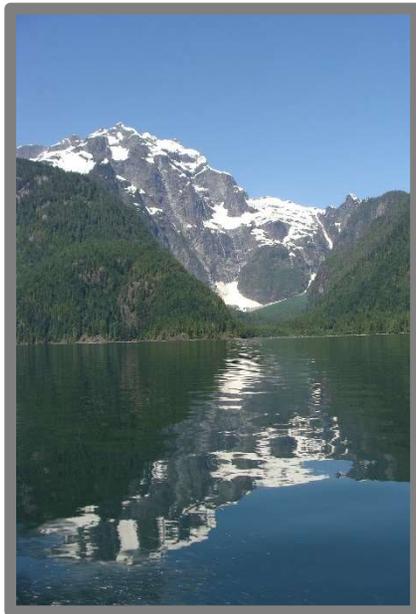


LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY



Daily Meditations



JANUARY 2021

These meditations are available online
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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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LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations

JANUARY 2021

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 1, 2021

THE FIRST DAY OF THE YEAR

Happy New Year! What will we do in this year 2021? Will it be the “same old same old” or will we choose to live in response to God’s love for us? Will we earnestly pray to know God’s will for us and to have the power to carry it out in the year ahead?

You have now become a new person and are always learning more about Christ. You are being made more like Christ. He is the One Who made you. (Colossians 3:10 NLT)

We can begin this new year with joy and hope because God says that when we invite Him into our lives, we become new creations. The old goes and the new comes. Before we invited God to live in us we were dead people wandering around not knowing how to live. When God made us alive through Christ, He showed us how to live and gave us the desire and the power to do what pleases Him.

God has chosen you and made you his holy people. He loves you. So your new life should be like this: Show mercy to others. Be kind, humble, gentle, and patient. Don't be angry with each other but forgive each other. If you feel someone has wronged you, forgive them. Forgive others because the Lord forgave you. Together with these things, the most important part of your new life is to love each other. Love is what holds everything together in perfect unity. (Colossians 3:12-14 ERV)

Today, and throughout the next 364 days of this year, can we really hope to live like that? Yes, because hope is not based on our own self-effort but in the amazing God who has chosen us and who works powerfully in us to make us His holy people.

In Step-2 of the 12-Step program of A.A., this is what we are affirming when we speak about coming to believe that a power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity. This is the humility of Step-7 when we humbly ask God to remove all our shortcomings. This is the immeasurable joy of Step-12 as we realize that we have had a spiritual awakening and are not only sharing the good news with others but are practicing it in all our affairs.

Prayer: Loving God, thank You for not only inviting me to new life but for coming to be that life in me today and each day of this new year. You are the hope that lives in me and the love that is always there to take me forward. One day at a time, I pray that You will help me live in this year as the person You created me to be. Help me to become more like You every day. Amen

When God made us alive through Christ, He showed us how to live and gave us the desire and the power to do what pleases Him.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2, 2021

JUST FOR TODAY – NOTICE THE GIFTS

I will take time to notice the gifts in me, in others, and in my surroundings and let the rest go.

Brothers and sisters, continue to think about what is good and worthy of praise. Think about what is true and honorable and right and pure and beautiful and respected. (Philippians 4:8 ERV)

Both in the Bible and in the “12 Promises of AA” we are encouraged to trust that as we build our lives on the unfailing love of God and maintain our sobriety, we will notice certain gifts coming alive in us. They include experiencing new freedom and joy in life; seeing how our experience can benefit others; shifting from self-seeking to interest in others; growing in the ability to handle situations that used to baffle us. The best gift is saved for the last, we will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

God promises to use each of our lives to show His goodness and glory to others

Give thanks to the Father. He has made you able to have what he has promised to give all his holy people, who live in the light. (Colossians 1:12 ERV)

While it is necessary to maintain an inventory around our character defects so we don't slip into destructive attitudes and behaviour, it's also strengthening and life-giving to pay attention to what is changing and growing and becoming beautiful in our minds and hearts.

One of the “12 Promises” reminds us that “*We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.*” God promises to use each of our lives to show His goodness and glory to others – that includes our story of how He brought us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

God chose you to be his people. You are royal priests. You are a holy nation. You are God's special treasure. You are all these things so that you can give him praise. God brought you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (1 Peter 2:9 NIRV)

Prayer: Thank you God for the many gifts I've already experienced in this life with You in recovery. Help me to notice even more today. Amen

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3, 2021

SUNDAY PSALM – LET’S HAVE A PARTY

How many of us have fallen to places in life where we never thought we would find ourselves? In a moment of clarity we woke up to what we had become, and we were shocked. Our concerned family and friends had begged us to get help but, in our self-centered pride, we just continued to walk our rebellious path and we sunk deeper and deeper into the darkness of addiction. Finally, in the chaos of our hopeless condition we called out to the Lord and He helped us.

I was pushed back and about to fall, but the Lord helped me. The Lord is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation. Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous: “The Lord’s right hand has done mighty things! The Lord’s right hand is lifted high; the Lord’s right hand has done mighty things!” I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the Lord has done. The Lord has chastened me severely, but he has not given me over to death. (Psalm 118:13-18 NIV)

In recovery we can now look back and see how the Lord has lifted us up. He held our hand in His and guided us to the place where we could be restored to new life. As truth replaces our distorted belief system, our faith in God is growing and we are becoming stronger in body, mind, and spirit. We are being healed and restored. We are in the process of becoming willing to forgive those who have caused us pain, simply by realizing how much God has forgiven us for the pain we have caused others. The Lord has not allowed us to die but to live in the power of His Holy Spirit and proclaim to others the great things He has done for us.

Jesus said there is a party in heaven every time one lost soul turns their will and life over to the care of God. What a party they had for us! We may even find that because we have been healed and restored to new life, our family and friends right here on earth were also partying.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You that I will not die but live and carry the message of Jesus and His redeeming work to others. I am forever grateful that You love and care for me and have restored me to a meaningful, purposeful life. Amen

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MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 2021

CHARACTER STRENGTH – CO-OPERATION

In our addiction, many of us had our character shaped through isolation and getting our own way in whatever way we could. Now in recovery, it is 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 letting go of our usual way of thinking and behaving and allow ourselves to 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.

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

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

Developing a pattern of co-operatively dealing with others will require us to grow and get past easily hurt feelings and approval seeking. It may require that we lay down a bullying attitude or a habit of yelling 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, tirelessly voicing my 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 guide and teach me in all my ways. Amen

TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2021

BECOMING EMOTIONALLY AVAILABLE AGAIN

While living in addiction we were emotionally unavailable to God, to others, and to ourselves. As we recover, one of the essential areas we give attention to is learning how to experience, identify, and deal with our 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 the 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 route to healing and becoming emotionally available again is to open our hearts to God's unfailing love for us. Jesus died on the cross to make this way of life available to us. God gave us the freedom of choice to invite Him to come and make our dead hearts alive. We did not 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 that we have tried to hide.

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 one step at a time. As we persevere and open our hearts a little more each day, God will accompany us and support us through the healing process. When we feel vulnerable and want to run and hide or just want to shut down we can call out to God to calm our fears and strengthen us, for He is our rock to stand on as well as our saviour and our friend.

Prayer: Loving God, I know you created me to experience a healthy and satisfying emotional life, therefore 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 route to healing and becoming emotionally available again is to open our hearts to God's unfailing love for us.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2021

I CAN'T DO IT ALONE

God knows we are unable to find our way forward on our own and that it is impossible for us to consistently behave in healthy ways, no matter how much we want to. In Step-1 of the 12-Step program of A.A. we admitted to our powerlessness over our dependency and that our life had become unmanageable. In His love for us, God calls us to come close to Him so He can teach us a new way to live and give us the strength to do so.

Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light. (Matthew 11:28-30 NLT)

God knows we are unable to find our way forward on our own and that it is impossible for us to consistently behave in healthy ways.

We wonder how God could value us as a person and be willing to give us another chance at life. In the past we never asked for or even desired His guidance. We certainly did not want to consider life on His terms or learn from Him. Again, and again, we chose our own way. Despite our persistent arrogance and disdain for God, He continues to love and care for each one of us. Because of God's great love for us Jesus came to earth to redeem us, heal us, and set us free.

Jesus said, ***"The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the LORD's favor has come."*** (Luke 4:18-19 NLT)

Today, God calls us to let go of all that is unmanageable in our lives and turn to Him. When we do, God will work everything together for our good, including those things in our past that were harsh and caused us much pain.

And 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)

Prayer: Dear God, I confess I am powerless over my dependency and my life is unmanageable. I accept Your written words in the Bible as the truth on which I will build my life. I receive hope in place of my despair. I receive truth to sort out my confusion. Amen

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2021

AN ACCURATE VIEW OF OUR RELATIONSHIPS

An important part of recovery is coming to a truthful view of what happened in our relationships. Regardless of the excuses we may make for what went on, we need to admit that at times we were the one who caused harm to another. We need to seek to understand the underlying reason for our actions. We need to take responsibility for our part in any breakdown in a relationship. As we go forward, we need to learn the basic principles for building a healthy and caring relationship with others.

When we are upset, speaking in anger, or using silence or distancing to deal with a relationship problem, it will have the impact of wounding the other person. While outright cheating and stealing may not be part of our life right now, it is still too easy for us to lie and deceive and manipulate things for our own advantage. Have we learned to let complaining and blaming go or are we still using them to excuse our poor attitude?

Do to others as you would like them to do to you. Continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. (Luke 6:31; 1 Peter 4:8 NLT)

Forgiving those who have harmed us and releasing them and their actions into God's care is an important part of rebuilding relationships. Forgiveness turns our attention to God and away from the person who harmed us. Forgiveness establishes God as the source of our healing and restoration for God has promised to work all things together for our good and His glory.

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

Admitting our part and receiving healing from God; living respectfully; forgiving those who have offended us; making amends for any part we may have played in an incident; – this is how we go forward in building caring and healthy relationships.

Prayer: Gracious God, You created me to live in loving relationship with You and with others. Help me to do what is within my power to restore my broken relationships and to trust You to support me as I strive to build strong and caring relationships in the future. Amen

An important part of recovery is coming to a truthful view of what happened in our relationships.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 8, 2021

MATURE AND COMPLETE

When someone or something is the best that it can be, we say it is mature or complete. Do we often consider ourselves as mature and complete? In the Bible God gives us principles to follow so we can grow and become the mature person He created us to be. If we obey God and do not allow ourselves to be influenced by others, we will be blessed in all that we do. To be mature is to accept that in this world we will have trouble, just as Jesus said. To persevere through the troubles that come our way, we need to understand the ways of God and be willing to do what He says.

We will no longer be babies in the faith. We won't be like ships tossed around by the waves. We won't be blown here and there by every new teaching. We won't be blown around by cleverness and tricks. Certain people use them to hide their evil plans. (Ephesians 4:14 NIRV)

God gives us principles to follow so we can grow and become the mature person He created us to be.

In our unmanageable lifestyle some of us allowed others to get us involved in their evil plans and we suffered the consequences. What enables us to be mature in these situations is to have the will and desire to practice God's principles in all our affairs. Our attitude should be that of improving our conscious contact with God through prayer and meditation, so that He may direct us in the way we are to go. We will grow in our faith as we choose to adapt God's ways as our ways, rather than conforming to the ways that are acceptable to our friends or in our culture.

Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect. (Romans 12:2 NIRV)

As we mature in our faith, we need to be ready to admit to any defects of character that may arise and cause us to stumble. We need to regularly take personal inventory and when we are wrong, promptly admit it.

So be careful. When you think you are standing firm, you might fall. (1 Corinthians 10:12 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to set boundaries for myself that are in keeping with Your Word. Please work in me so I can be mature and complete, lacking nothing. Amen

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9, 2021

EASY DOES IT

"Easy Does It" is one of the most well-known slogans in recovery circles. Some 12-step groups choose it as their name. This slogan can be found numerous times in the Big Book of A.A. and elsewhere in recovery literature. Its main thought is to help us slow down and relax and take a measured approach to recovery, to problem solving, or to whatever situation that seems too big or too complicated for us.

Jesus taught us the way of "easy does it" when he told us: ***Don't worry about tomorrow. Each day has enough trouble of its own. Tomorrow will have its own worries.*** (Matthew 6:34 ERV) Jesus used the example of a little child to remind us that we need to keep things simple and take it easy.

You must change your thinking and become like little children. If you don't do this, you will never enter God's kingdom. The greatest person in God's kingdom is the one who makes himself humble like this child. (Matthew 18:2-4 ERV)

Letting tension get the best of us and becoming stressed out never puts us in a problem-solving frame of mind. When we trust that God is good and that our will and our lives are safely settled in His care, we won't feel like we have to fix everybody and everything.

When things are too fearful for a little child, they simply run to their loving parent for protection and support. As the parent holds them close, they quiet down because they know their parent will do what is necessary to sort out the problem situation. When things are difficult for us, we need to bring our problems to God and remember that "easy does it." As our hearts are quieted in His love, we will hear His guidance and know the next right step to take.

God says: ***Only in returning to me and resting in me will you be saved. In quietness and confidence is your strength.*** (Isaiah 30:15 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to slow down and remember that "easy does it." You are bigger than my biggest problem and You have good plans for me. Help me to quiet my heart and trust You to show me Your will for my life which is the best plan of all. Amen

When we trust that God is good and that our will and our lives are safely settled in His care, we won't feel like we have to fix everybody and everything.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, 2021

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 being hurt and feeling insignificant we decided to rely on ourselves to get us through life. Perhaps we never knew there was a God to whom we really mattered and to whom we could confidently turn 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 if 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 what God says in the Scriptures so we can observe that His actions are consistent with His words. We need to listen attentively to others who have walked with God and confirm His character and His faithfulness to them 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 thankful that I can wholeheartedly 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 11, 2021

DON'T BE A PHONY

Being a phony is an intensely tiring way to live. Giving false impressions and lying to cover up attitudes or behaviours drains us of energy and joy. A person who shoves "their particular truth" in our face is disrespectful and is seen as more irritating than helpful. How can we make sure we are not the ones who are being fake? Where is the balance in being kind or being honest?

With most people our responsibility is to be truthful, kind, and respectful. We are to love God with all our heart and love our neighbour as ourselves. There will be some close trusted friends with whom we openly share our burdens and our frustrations, but with most people, positive, uplifting, and respectful talk should be our normal behaviour. There are always things to be grateful for no matter how challenged we may feel while communicating with others.

God gave us this command: If we love God, we must also love each other as brothers and sisters. (1 John 4:21 ERV)

We need friends with whom we can share our sorrows and burdens. There is also a time to be vulnerable and share our hurts and frustrations. We need to welcome honest feedback even when it makes us uncomfortable. We all have blind spots. We need honest support from sponsors and trusted friends. We don't need someone who is just going to smile and be nice to us while we wallow in self-pity or slide into harmful patterns of living.

You can trust what your friend says, even when it hurts. But your enemies want to hurt you, even when they act nice. (Proverbs 27:6 ERV)

The more we live as respectful and authentic persons who befriend others, the more we will experience God's blessing of caring and supportive friends.

So speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you'll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind. I know you're already doing this; just keep on doing it. (1 Thessalonians 5:11 MSG)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me to live as a genuine and positive person. Help me to always speak the truth in love and to listen to wise feedback from caring people who take the time to encourage me. Amen

How can we make sure we are not the ones who are being fake?

TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2021

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, which means 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.

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.

Being at peace is one of the ways we 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 13, 2021

FINDING HOPE

A person with hope looks forward with reasonable confidence to something that will take place. In recovery, we are hoping that the bondage to our dependency will be overcome and we will have freedom to nurture a new life focus. Our personal history confirms that within us we do not have the power needed to produce change, so where can we get this power that enables us to have hope?

Now glory be to God, who by his mighty power at work within us is able to do far more than we would ever dare to ask or even dream of—infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, or hopes. (Ephesians 3:20 TLB)

When we have repented of our wrongs and given our will and life over to the care of God, the Spirit of God works together with our spirit to give us conscious knowledge that we are children of our Heavenly Father. Therefore, we have hope, because we are loved and cared for by our Father in Heaven and by His extended family here on earth. Some of our brothers and sisters will have previously travelled the same path that we are on and as we listen attentively to them share their experience, strength, and hope, we will be encouraged.

Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. The Spirit you received doesn't make you slaves. Otherwise you would live in fear again. Instead, the Holy Spirit you received made you God's adopted child. By the Spirit's power we call God Abba. Abba means Father. (Romans 8:14-15 NIRV)

Instead of being alone in our anxiety we have a community of people around us who are willing to share the blessings that God is pouring out on them. Our expectation of staying clean and sober is being inspired and hope is growing in us for what we once thought to be impossible.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Your great love and tender mercy is fueling my hope to leave my unmanageable life behind and is encouraging me to practice Your principles in all my affairs. My hope is that Your mighty power at work within me will do far more than I could ever ask for or even dream about. Amen

We have hope, because we are loved and cared for by our Father in Heaven and by His extended family here on earth.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2021

WISDOM – TIME

There is a right time for everything, and everything on earth will happen at the right time. (Ecclesiastes 3:1 ERV)

When God created the earth and everything in it, He did so in a sequence that made provision for the nurture and pleasure of humans that He created. At just the right time everything was in place for human survival including a garden for humans to live in. When we were made in the secret place of our mother's womb God also had a plan for each of us. He planned where we would be born and where we would live, so that in that place we would search for Him and find Him.

Maybe this is the right time for us to give our will and life over to the care of God.

God began by making one man, and from him he made all the different people who live everywhere in the world. He decided exactly when and where they would live. God wanted people to look for him, and perhaps in searching all around for him, they would find him. But he is not far from any of us. (Acts 17:26-27 ERV)

Perhaps we drifted into addiction because we believed the circumstances and place of our birth were not favorable to us. We were born into a sinful world and looking around and seeing the things that have happened, and continue to happen, we might have a hard time believing that God is good and that He truly desires that we live a pleasing and purposeful life.

God is aware of who we are and of our circumstances. Maybe He has brought us to this place, at this time, to seek Him and ask Him for the wisdom to follow the plan He has for our lives. There is a right time for everything on earth.

Maybe this is the right time for us to give our will and life over to the care of God who is not far from any of us.

In the Scriptures God says, ***"When the time came, I listened to you, and when you needed help, I came to save you." That time has come. This is the day for you to be saved.*** (2 Corinthians 6:2 CEV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Your wisdom is infinite and You say that this is the day for me to be saved. Today, I choose to give my will and my life over to Your care believing that You will lead me to the pleasing, purposeful life You have planned for me. Amen

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 2021

LIVING COMPLETE

To be complete means that nothing is lacking. Some people have health, wealth, possessions, honour and prestige in the community. To the on-looker they seem to lack nothing, yet many lack the ability to enjoy the things they have, and their lives are in turmoil. When we give our will and life over to the care of God, the Bible tells us that we will lack no good thing. Contentment, together with thankfulness to God for all He has given us, will help us mature and be complete.

For in Christ there is all of God in a human body; so you have everything when you have Christ, and you are filled with God through your union with Christ. He is the highest Ruler, with authority over every other power. (Colossians 2:9-10 TLB)

Being complete is not the result of getting the things we feel we lack but in being content with everything we have been given in Christ. When we believed in Jesus and repented of our sins, we were given eternal life and the promise that Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, will guard our hearts and minds. If earthly things begin to trouble us, we can come to Jesus and He will give us rest. Having a thankful heart is a great start to being complete in this life. Looking up at the sky at night can leave us in awe of God's creation and the place He prepared for us in it.

Since you became alive again, so to speak, when Christ arose from the dead, now set your sights on the rich treasures and joys of heaven where he sits beside God in the place of honor and power. Let heaven fill your thoughts; don't spend your time worrying about things down here. (Colossians 3:1-2 TLB)

In the Scriptures we are told not to desire the things we can see, but to fix our eyes on the things we cannot see which will last forever. These are the things that will make us complete in being the person God created us to be.

And now just as you trusted Christ to save you, trust him, too, for each day's problems; live in vital union with him. (Colossians 2:6 TLB)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Help me to fix my eyes on You so that I can be mature and complete, not lacking anything. Amen

When we give our will and life over to the care of God, the Bible tells us that we will lack no good thing.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16, 2021

KNOWING FREEDOM AND A NEW HAPPINESS

In the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous there is a section on making amends and sorting things out with our families. In this section we find a paragraph naming twelve promises we will celebrate "*before we are half-way through.*" The first of these promises is, "*We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.*" Are these empty words, promises for the select few, the experience of just some old-timers of AA? Is there a chance this can be a reality for me?

Christ has set us free to enjoy our freedom. So remain strong in the faith. Don't let the chains of slavery hold you again. (Galatians 5:1 NIRV)

After living in a self-centered addictive lifestyle, living in sobriety is hard work. Working the steps, particularly making amends to those we have harmed, and being careful to do so in a way that would not injure them or others, takes courage and care which we are just beginning to develop. We will experience the freedom that gives us hope when we believe God's promise to free us from our bondage.

We will experience the freedom that gives us hope when we believe God's promise to free us from our bondage.

Memories from our past do not need to hold us down. Fear of what others might say or do no longer needs to squeeze us into a mold that is something other than our true self. God lives in us so we can carry the good news to others of how He changed us and how He is ready to do that for anyone who comes to Him. God will give us words to share that will comfort those who are sad and those who are caught in their own resentment and fear, even if the fear and bitterness was the result of their own doing.

The Spirit of the Lord God is on me. The Lord has chosen me to tell good news to the poor and to comfort those who are sad. He sent me to tell the captives and prisoners that they have been set free. (Isaiah 61:1 ERV)

God is working in all of us today. Our responsibility is to trust God, do our part, and then relax and enjoy the freedom and happiness we have been given.

Heavenly Father, Thank you for my sobriety and for freedom to live in a new way of peace and blessing towards others. Help me to stay strong, trusting You to continue to work in my life, and to bring peace into the lives of those I have harmed. In Your love and care may we all find freedom and happiness. Amen

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17, 2021

SUNDAY PSALM – TRUST IN GOD

When we are troubled and looking for help, who or what first enters our mind? Do we look first to ourselves, another person, the court, or some other agency to solve whatever we are dealing with? When we have exhausted all other options, do we only then look to God for a solution? The Bible tells us that the person who first looks to God and trusts God for a solution is the one who will be blessed. That should be reason enough to seek Him first when we are in any trouble.

The Lord is with me; he is my helper. I look in triumph on my enemies. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in humans. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes. All the nations surrounded me, but in the name of the Lord I cut them down. They surrounded me on every side, but in the name of the Lord I cut them down. They swarmed around me like bees, but they were consumed as quickly as burning thorns; in the name of the Lord I cut them down. (Psalm 118:7-12 NIV)

When problems surround us on every side and there seems to be no way out, we need God's understanding and wisdom to guide us. Jesus told us that in this world we would have trouble so we should assume at some point, trouble will come our way. When it does, we should be aware that it is better to seek God's help and direction than to trust in human advice.

In many places in the Bible we are told to call on the name of the Lord for help. When we are children of God, we are assured that our Heavenly Father cares for us and will meet all our needs. In faith, we are to stand firm and persevere through the trials we face believing that what God has said, He will do.

Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods. (Psalm 40:4 NIV)

Prayer: Loving God, When I am overwhelmed by troubles, help me to trust in You, for You alone have the wisdom and power to relieve my troubled heart and free me from my anguish. I am forever grateful that You love and care for me. Amen

The person who looks to God and trusts God for a solution is the one who will be blessed.

MONDAY, JANUARY 18, 2021

DEVELOPING CHARACTER – LOYALTY

What is loyalty? Someone who is loyal is dependable and will do what they have committed to do. They are supportive us even when the going gets tough. When we think about loyalty, do we see it as something to be desired or does it bring a negative emotional response

In our addiction, loyalty and keeping our commitments was not something we had time for. Our only loyalty was to meet the demands of our dependency. Nothing else mattered to us. In contrast, our dependency was never loyal to us for it did not fulfill its promise of a lasting feeling of well-being. As we faithfully fulfilled our dependency's demands, it was never satisfied and only wanted more. It made us sick in body, mind, and spirit.

We have a fresh opportunity to not just “talk the talk” but to “walk the walk” as we promise to be loyal to God and to others.

Your father is the devil, and you do exactly what he wants. He has always been a murderer and a liar. There is nothing truthful about him. He speaks on his own, and everything he says is a lie. Not only is he a liar himself, but he is also the father of all lies. (John 8:44 CEV)

When we give our will and life over to the care of God, we make a commitment to God and He makes a commitment to us. God is loyal to fulfill all the promises He makes to us. Do our actions show loyalty in following the ways of God? Are we willing to give the same kind of loyalty in our commitment to God as we were to the demands of our dependency?

Today we have a fresh opportunity to not just “talk the talk” but to “walk the walk”. If we remain in God's love and care and follow His principles in all our affairs, we will develop the character quality of being loyal to God and to others. We will then have the fullness of life we are seeking.

Your love reaches higher than the heavens, and your loyalty extends beyond the clouds. Answer my prayers and use your powerful arm to give us victory. Then the people you love will be safe. (Psalm 108:4, 6 CEV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for loving and caring for me. Your loyalty never fails for You work everything together for my good. Help me to be unyielding in my loyalty to You and Your ways in all I do and say. Amen

TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2021

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 outlook 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 is 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 to God for all He has done, and continues to do in our lives, our first response when trouble presents itself? Trusting in God's power and seeking His direction are life recovery principles we need to apply in every challenging situation. Like this king and his people who trusted God to act on their behalf, 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 or forsake me. Help me to acknowledge every good thing You have done for me. I am grateful that as I seek You, and not lean on my own understanding, You will direct my path in every challenge I may encounter in life. Amen

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

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2021

POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES

We all need hope. Today we are affirming the hope within us that what has been impossible for us to do on our own becomes possible when we reach out for help to a power greater than ourselves.

And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him. (Hebrews 11:6 NLT)

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The Bible tells us that the key to life is in the "higher power" we look to. The God of the Bible is all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-loving. He is the one who created the world. He is the God who planned for each of us to have a loving and caring relationship with Him, and with others. He is the one who made provision, through Jesus, for forgiveness of the sins of all human beings. Step Two of the 12-Step program of A.A. invites us to get to know this powerful God who is rich in love and mercy towards us.

We will be more eager to come to God, our Higher Power, if we see Him as the one who proclaims, "**he rewards those who sincerely seek him**". Our faith may not have matured to this point, but we can start by asking God to help us have more faith.

Belief in the God of the Bible will result in forgiveness for our sins, acceptance of who we are in Christ, and God's strength and unending love to help us be the person He created us to be.

"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." (Hebrews 11:1 NLT)

Prayer: Dear God, I am not sure about who You are right now, but I am coming to believe that there is a power greater than myself who can restore me to sanity. I believe You brought me to this point in my life and I have hope that You will make me new as I trust You and follow Your ways in all my affairs. Please help me! Amen

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 2021

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

***When we
are poor in
spirit we
humbly
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favour of
God.***

FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 2021

FINDING HEALING IN THE CARE OF GOD

In the Bible we read of all the good things that God does for those who have given their will and life into his care. God has forgiven all our sins and made us new – as if we had never sinned. Accepting Jesus as our Saviour and Lord means we are committed to following His principles in all our affairs in this life. This is the path to healing for all the wounds we have sustained and tried to deal with in our own powerless way.

My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body. (Proverbs 4:20-22 NLT)

***It is in getting
to know how
much our
Father cares
for us that we
can ask Him to
heal our deep
wounds and
restore us to
sanity.***

Our Heavenly Father has adopted us into His family and now we are the children of God. In His lavish love for us, we inherit His grace and favour which He promises to those who love him. Through prayer and meditation on the Scriptures, we will improve our conscious contact with God and become familiar with His ways. It is in getting to know how much our Father cares for us that we can ask Him to heal our deep wounds and restore us to sanity.

Let all that I am praise the Lord; may I never forget the good things he does for me. He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies. He fills my life with good things. My youth is renewed like the eagle's! (Psalm 103:2-5 NLT)

When we seek God and genuinely believe that He exists and will do as He says, God promises to reward us. We need to persevere through our doubts and fears and believe that God is the power greater than ourselves who will restore us in body, mind, and spirit. We need by prayer and petition with thanksgiving to present our requests to God.

Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus. (Acts 4:30 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I commit to meditate on Your Words and by faith believe what You say, for with You all things are possible. Amen

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 2021

HALF MEASURES AVAILED 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 availed 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 to give You every opportunity to transform my life. Amen

***"... we
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fearless
and
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from the
very
start."
Big Book of
AA***

SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 2021

SUNDAY PSALM – LOVED THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES

When problems arise it is easy to forget that God cares. We often feel alone and vulnerable. Daily life continues regardless of the heartache we are experiencing 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 often believe He 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,
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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 almost everyone we know. Perhaps we have 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 beside us.

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 firmly hold us 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. Hold me close to Your heart. Take my hand and steady me as Your unfailing love brings healing to my pain. Amen

MONDAY, JANUARY 25, 2021

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 need and expect Him to respond 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.

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

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

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2021

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 are aware that God has promised to meet all our needs. Are we willing to let Him do so? When we feel vulnerable, where are we first seeking to find 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 we were powerless over the destructive dependencies we were using, we chose to get help and came into a recovery program. Our life had become unmanageable and we felt empty inside. We stopped using our substance of choice and began the journey of living in a healthy way. Now we are wondering if it is possible to handle our life situations without the help of our dependency. 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. The peace we desire will come when we completely 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 and receive all that You are for me. Amen

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2021

COMING BACK

In the Bible Jesus told a story about a father and two sons. (Luke 15:11-31) The younger of the two boys became dissatisfied with life in his father's household and believed life away from home was more desirable. He asked for his inheritance before it was due to him, and then went out and squandered all he had on wild living. While he had money, he had friends, but his money soon ran out and he found himself alone.

Often when we come into recovery, we find ourselves where the prodigal son was, alone and worn out by sin, with a life that is unmanageable.

God offers us a purposeful life, but we want our own way and think that God's way is restrictive rather than protective. We just want to have fun and give no thought to the consequences of the choices we make. The sad truth is, we end up broken and needy by following self-will rather than God's will.

Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live. (Isaiah 55:2-3 NKJV)

The father of this boy was always waiting for the return of his son and when he saw him coming back, he ran to meet him. God is always pursuing us with His love, and when we turn to Him and repent of our rebellion, He welcomes us with open arms and gives us the privilege of being called His precious child.

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! (1 John 3:1 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for the times I have rejected You in favour of my own self-centeredness. I ask for Your forgiveness. Thank You for adopting me as Your precious child. Help me to follow Your ways in all my affairs. Amen

Often when we come into recovery, we find ourselves where the prodigal son was, alone and worn out by sin, with a life that is unmanageable.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2021

PRACTICAL WISDOM FOR EVERYDAY LIVING

In the middle of the Bible, just after Psalms, we find the book of Proverbs which contains all sorts of practical wisdom about everyday living. Since there are 31 chapters in Proverbs, some people choose to read a chapter of Proverbs on the corresponding day of the month. (i.e. on January 28 they read Proverbs 28)

We want our minds to be developed so we know what is right and wrong and how to respond in difficult situations. This is what we are promised when we regularly read and apply the practical principles we find in Proverbs.

These are the proverbs of Solomon, the son of David and king of Israel. They will help you learn to be wise, to accept correction, and to understand wise sayings. They will teach you to develop your mind in the right way. You will learn to do what is right and to be honest and fair. These proverbs will make even those without education smart. They will teach young people what they need to know and how to use what they have learned. Even the wise could become wiser by listening to these proverbs. They will gain understanding and learn to solve difficult problems. (Proverbs 1:1-5 ERV)

Our growth in any area of life is not gained by self-effort alone. It is based on the principle that on our own we are powerless. We need a higher power who can restore us to sanity. As we turn our will and life over to God we will find new and successful ways to live each day. To be wise is to get to know God's word and do what He says. We are foolish if we do otherwise.

If you really want to gain knowledge, you must begin by having respect for the Lord. But foolish people hate wisdom and instruction. (Proverbs 1:7 NIRV)

For too long we have lived in our destructive and addictive lifestyle. As the saying goes, "If nothing changes, nothing changes." As we choose to meditate on Proverbs, we will learn the best changes we can make and experience God's power to help us put them into practice.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I acknowledge that I can never know enough to live life on my own. I need Your wisdom. I need Your power. Help me to learn how to live in a new way by reading Your word and putting Your principles into practice in all my affairs. Amen

To be wise is to get to know God's word and do what He says. We are foolish if we do otherwise.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 2021

PRAY

Often people who have no relationship with God will pray when they are in trouble or when they urgently need help in a time of great distress. Does God hear their prayer? Yes! Will He answer their prayer? Yes! How God answers their prayer is up to God for He knows the heart of the person praying and will answer according to His perfect will for that person. God is much more generous than any human being and He alone knows the end from the beginning. When we give our will and life over to the care of God we are promised that His eyes always watch over us and His ears are attentive to all our prayers.

The Lord watches over everyone who obeys him, and he listens to their prayers. But he opposes everyone who does evil. Ask me, and I will tell you things that you don't know and can't find out. (1 Peter 3:12; Jeremiah 33:3 CEV)

We who have accepted Jesus as our Lord and Saviour are God's beloved children. Like any good parent, God is aware of His children's needs. The closer we get to our Heavenly Father the more He will speak with us. God's desire is that we will grow in knowledge and wisdom through prayer and meditation on His word. He also gives us His Holy Spirit who helps us understand and obey the principles of His Word. God also enables us to love and care for others as He loves and cares for us.

But I tell you to love your enemies and pray for anyone who mistreats you. Then you will be acting like your Father in heaven. He makes the sun rise on both good and bad people. And he sends rain for the ones who do right and for the ones who do wrong. (Matthew 5:44-45 CEV)

God cares about His creation and each of us are benefitting from His goodness in the world today. Can anyone imagine living in a place without God in it?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for being aware of all my needs even when I was in rebellion against You. Forgive me for the times I would not surrender my will and my life to Your care because Your principles were different from what I wanted to do. From today, I ask You to help me walk in Your ways and obey You in all that I do and say. Amen

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 2021

GROWING MATURE BY TRUSTING GOD'S PROMISES

A lot of destructive and addictive behaviours are based in the poverty mentality that results from our belief that our needs are not being met. Whatever the reasons for this experience in the past, it is time to live in the security of God's promises to meet all our daily needs.

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, no matter how many worldly things we have, as so many lives have given witness to, without God there is still an emptiness inside each one of us.

It is time to live in the security of God's promises to meet all our daily needs.

God's word teaches us that the way to escape the insecurity and inner drive that leads to much evil, brokenness, and pain in our lives is to trust God and all He promises to be and do for us. Addiction to substances is not the way to contentment 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 lives on those promises will we be able to live in a way that pleases God and gives us 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 things I have put my trust in rather than in You and Your promises. Help me to know You more and have faith in Your Word which declares that all Your promises are "YES" to me as I follow You in all my ways. Amen

SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2021

NOTES

SUNDAY PSALM – DOORWAY OUT OF DARKNESS

What a refreshing feeling it is to be free from the guilt of our addiction and dependencies. Before we came into recovery we could hardly look up because we were afraid to meet the gaze of someone who cared for us. At other times, we were arrogant and defiant against anyone who brought attention to our dysfunction. To us it is a mystery how we were ever brought to the place of asking God for help.

It is possible that even as we sunk deeper into our chaotic lifestyle someone was praying for us and asking God to draw us to Himself. Now in recovery we can give thanks to God for His enduring love for us. In His amazing grace God brought us out of the darkness of our hopelessness into the light of His glorious presence.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. Let Israel say: "His love endures forever." Let the house of Aaron say: "His love endures forever." Let those who fear the Lord say: "His love endures forever." When hard pressed, I cried to the Lord; he brought me into a spacious place. The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me? (Psalm 118:1-6 NIV)

When God tenderly brought us up from the pit we had dug for ourselves, doors that we had closed were unexpectedly opened to us. We were able to let go of those events and words that caused us to walk through doors of pain and despair. Now we are free to go through the doors of healing and restoration. The Lord is always with us, so we do not need to be afraid of what lies ahead.

This is the message from the one who is holy and true ...What he opens, no one can close; and what he closes, no one can open: "I know all the things you do, and I have opened a door for you that no one can close. You have little strength, yet you obeyed my word and did not deny me." (Revelation 3:7-8 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for Your enduring love for me. Truly Your love, is love at its best. Thank You for giving me strength to walk through those doors You have opened so I can receive healing and restoration. Amen

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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 style="text-align: center;">SUBSTANCE ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Alcohol Caffeine Injected or smoked substances such as: Crack, Crystal Meth, Heroin Marijuana Prescription Medications Sugar Tobacco</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">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 style="text-align: center;">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 style="text-align: center;">RELATIONSHIP ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Abusive Relationships: Includes: Intimidation, Isolation, Domination, Blaming, Humiliation, Withholding, Forcing acts against one's will Approval dependency Attention Seeking Codependence/Rescuing Power/Control</p>

PRAYER FOR HEALING AND RESTORATION

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

How To Enjoy New Life With God In Recovery

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

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

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

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

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

JUST FOR TODAY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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