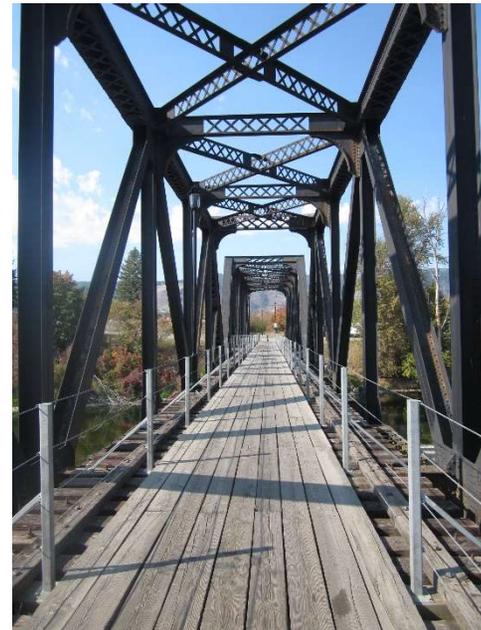


LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations



JUNE 2019



These meditations are available online
for computer, tablets, and smart phones
at:

www.pihtoday.blogspot.com

*Partners in Hope Recovery Society
is a Christian community
outreach organization
offering hope, support, and healing
through Jesus Christ
to victims of
harmful circumstances and dependencies,
as they reclaim the gift of their life.*

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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

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY Daily Meditations

JUNE 2019

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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VOLUME 04, NUMBER 06

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.

NOTES

SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 2019

FACING PROBLEMS WITH GOD

God is always with me. I need never face my problems alone. Together, with God, any difficulty can be worked out and overcome.

When we face difficulties and problems, we often ask ourselves some questions: Does God care? Does God care about me? Does God care about my situation today? It's easy to get consumed by the pressure of problems and fail to seek the help that God is offering to give us.

Sometimes we respond to problems by complaining and believing the lie that we have been rejected and abandoned by God and others and now we have to "figure it out on our own." Things don't work the way we think they should have, and we blame God and others for not helping us. In challenging moments it's important to remember that God is always with us and not let the emotions of the moment cloud that truth.

God's desire is to help us, and if we seek Him, He will act on our behalf to make a way where there seems to be no way. His word says, ***"The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him."*** (2 Chronicles 16:9 NLT)

We are responsible with God's help to faithfully work on problems until they are resolved. God will be with us and will give us wisdom to know how to handle the problem. God may also bring a knowledgeable person alongside to help us. Some problems will be resolved quickly, and others will take consistent work over time. God will give us the strength to do what we need to do today, and for each step we need to take in the future. Our challenge is to trust and obey Him as He leads us forward.

So don't get tired of doing what is good. Don't get discouraged and give up, for we will reap a harvest of blessing at the appropriate time ... For I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need. (Galatians 6:9, Philippians 4:13, NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for your promise to never leave me alone. Help me to trust You when I face problems and allow You to show me the way forward. Help me to seek Your solutions and not try to force my own. Your ways are always better than mine. Amen

***Together,
with God,
any
difficulty
can be
worked
out and
overcome.***

SUNDAY, JUNE 2, 2019

SUNDAY PSALM – DELIBERATE SINS

NOTES

Sometimes we have a blind spot to our wrong doing. We have lived and relied on our own understanding for years and now it has become a way of life that we find no fault with. Our lifestyle may even be acceptable to society in general. However, when our behaviour goes against the teaching of the Bible, we need to become willing to change our ways.

**Because
Jesus'
sacrifice on
the cross has
paid the
price for all
sin, even
deliberate
sin, we are
promised
complete
forgiveness
when we
repent.**

How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart? Cleanse me from these hidden faults. Keep your servant from deliberate sins! Don't let them control me. Then I will be free of guilt and innocent of great sin. May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. (Psalm 19:12-14 NLT)

We may make all kinds of excuses to continue our ungodly behaviour, but the Holy Spirit will consistently make us conscious of any behaviour that is not pleasing to God. Then we have to make a choice. If we continue in deliberate sin, we will not prosper, and we will forfeit our claim to the blessing of God. If we choose to surrender to God's way, His Holy Spirit will work in us to keep us from doing wrong. Because Jesus' sacrifice on the cross has paid the price for all sin, even deliberate sin, we are promised complete forgiveness when we repent.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Brothers and sisters let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case. (Matthew 5:8; Galatians 3:15 NIV)

As we turn from our stubborn ways and choose to follow God's ways we will begin to experience the blessings God has promised.

Dear friends,.....Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. (Philippians 2:12-13 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, Keep me from deliberate sin. I surrender my stubborn will and choose to live by Your will. Give me the desire and power to honour You in all I do and say. Amen

SUNDAY, JUNE 30, 2019

SUNDAY PSALM – GOD DOES WHAT HE PROMISES

How encouraging it is for us to know that God is on our side and God always does what He promises.

This I know: God is on my side! I praise God for what he has promised; yes, I praise the Lord for what he has promised. I trust in God, so why should I be afraid? What can mere mortals do to me? I will fulfill my vows to you, O God, and will offer a sacrifice of thanks for your help. For you have rescued me from death; you have kept my feet from slipping. So now I can walk in your presence, O God, in your life-giving light. (Psalm 56:9b-13 NLT)

***God is on
our side
and God
always
does what
He
promises.***

We come into recovery because our life is unmanageable, and we are powerless to fix it. Many of us never knew that there was a God who was willing to rescue us and restore us to sanity. A wonderful part of this new way of life is the process of coming to believe in a power greater than ourselves, this discovery of a loving and faithful God who is for us, not against us.

Part of the spiritual awakening so many give witness to as they work through the 12-step program is that God was working on their behalf long before they recognized it. We're alive today because God kept us alive for His plan and purpose. When we didn't care about our life, God did.

While, at one point, we may have been unsure about God and what He promised, God proved Himself faithful to do all that He said. He rescued us from the slimy pit of addiction and continues to keep our feet from slipping. Every day we are coming to realize more and more what an awesome God He is and to trust and obey His moral guidance.

God doesn't rescue us from addiction and then leave us on our own to figure things out. Through prayer and meditation, we can improve our conscious contact with Him, recognize His will for us, and receive the power we need to carry it out. We can give thanks for ongoing spiritual revelations as we continue to walk in God's presence, in His life-giving light.

Prayer: Gracious God, Thank You that You are faithful to do all that You have promised. Thank You for all You've done for me, even when I didn't recognize or give thanks for it. Help me to wholeheartedly trust You and follow your life-giving ways. Amen

MONDAY, JUNE 3, 2019

DEVELOPING OPTIMISM THROUGH FAITH

Early, if not first, on the list of qualities we need to build in our new life with God in recovery is optimism grounded in faith – faith that trusts in God, learns from God, and builds on the promises that God gives in the Bible. We are often encouraged to be optimistic rather than pessimistic. Faith is the key building block to this transition.

When we have faith, we can dare to see a glass half full instead of half empty. We can know that while we can't control people, places, or things, God is in control and He will make a way for us to move forward in our recovery. We don't know the future, but we know we are in God's hands and His plans for us are good. How do we get this kind of faith-filled optimism? We don't paste a fake smile on our face but truly expect good things from God in this day and in our future.

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)

Faith that gives us reason for a positive outlook in life is rooted in the fact that God exists, and that God cares about us. Without faith in God there's no reason to pray or expect to be protected from anything that might happen to us. Thankfully, God does exist and is watching over us each day. As we bring our hearts and the events of our lives before Him in prayer, God responds to our situations with wisdom and understanding beyond all that we could ask for or imagine.

Optimism rooted in faith grows in us as we not only hear but also act on the truth of God's word. Even if we don't understand how it all works together, we can confidently build our lives on the truth of the scriptures.

Jesus said, ***I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it would move. Nothing would be impossible.*** (Matthew 17:20 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to see my life and the circumstances around me with Your eyes. Give me the courage to act on the little faith I have and to look to You to direct my path. As You strengthen and bless me, help me to strengthen and bless others. Amen

***We don't
know the
future, but
we know
we are in
God's
hands and
His plans
for us are
good.***

TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 2019

THE PATHWAY OF PEACE

Each day in recovery is a new opportunity to respond to God's call to live in humility, desire reconciliation in relationships, walk in forgiveness and focus on cleaning my side of the street.

Honesty, balance, and realism are essential tools to keep at hand when we seek the way of peace in all our relationships. When we have a problem with others we should not lean towards self-righteous justification. In those moments we should remember the Golden Rule, **"Do to others as you would like them to do to you."** (Luke 6:31 NLT)

Honesty, balance, and realism are essential tools to keep at hand when we seek the way of peace in all our relationships.

God wants to teach us about ourselves as we bring our past, present, and future to Him with a humble desire to learn. The list of people we have harmed is an example of how we have failed when we have done things our own way. Humility says we have much to learn. Becoming willing to make amends is an expression of our deep desire to do all that is in our power to make peace and open a path for healing and reconciliation.

When we work a Step 8 or Step 9, we ask God to show us where we may have caused harm. We take responsibility for our part in the harm that was caused. This attitude of respect for the dignity of another and sincere sorrow for any actions that caused harm is what we need to demonstrate in both our words and our manner as we make amends and seek forgiveness.

Because of God's tender mercy, the morning light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace. (Luke 1:78-79 NLT)

As we put our trust in God and ask Him to guide us on this pathway of peace, we will experience great burdens being lifted from our shoulders and amazing peace filling our hearts.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I have so much to learn. Help me to be considerate towards those individuals I have harmed and not simply want what is best for me. My desire is that any actions I take will have the effect of healing and restoration. Amen

SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 2019

REST AND RECREATION

It's summertime – time for rest and recreation and hopefully some quality time with friends and/or family. We have daily rhythms of work and sleep, and weekly calendars that include work days and weekends. Some of us have at least one annual time of vacation where we take a week or more to really get away from the usual routines and enjoy nature and rest. A time to rest and come away from the daily routine is a need God created in us.

You may work six days a week to do your job. But the seventh day is a day of rest in honor of the Lord your God. So on that day no one should work. (Exodus 20:9-10 ERV)

Whether we are at work or play God wants us to be people who know peace and rest of soul. Knowing God and trusting Him is how we find peace in our souls. Life, even doing well in recovery, is more than we can handle on our own. That's why we make a habit of handing the stress and pressure of daily living over to God, inviting Him to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

It is surely true that I find my rest in God. He is the God who saves me. It is surely true that he is my rock. He is the God who saves me. He is like a fort to me. I will always be secure. (Psalm 62:1-2 NIRV)

When we put our trust in God, confess our sins, and turn away from them, we are forgiven. At times the enemy seeks to rob us of our peace of mind and rest of heart. He'll get us feeling guilty about this or that thing from our past. In those moments, God wants us to find peace by reminding ourselves that God's forgiveness is greater than any wrong we've done. Whatever this Saturday brings for us – work or play – may our hearts be quieted by God's love and care.

This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. (1 John 3:19-20 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of rest. I choose to honour You in my work and rest. I bring my anxious thoughts and troubled emotions to You, trusting that You will quiet my heart and fill my whole being with Your peace. Amen

A time to rest and come away from the daily routine is a need God created in us.

FRIDAY, JUNE 28, 2019

FURY OR FAITH WHEN FACING FRUSTRATION

Four friends loved a paralyzed man and wanted him to be healed. They heard about Jesus healing the sick and the lame and knew that the only hope their friend had was to get to Jesus. They worked hard to get their friend to where Jesus was but, when they got there, they were blocked by the crowds.

While he [Jesus] was preaching God’s word to them, four men arrived carrying a paralyzed man on a mat. They couldn’t bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, so they dug a hole through the roof above his head. Then they lowered the man on his mat, right down in front of Jesus. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, “My child, your sins are forgiven.” (Mark 2:3-5 NLT)

Jesus rewards our faith when we walk in difficult circumstances and continue to trust Him.

These four men and their paralyzed friend were so close to Jesus and yet so frustratingly far off. However, because they trusted completely in Jesus’ ability to heal their friend, they were willing to do the extraordinary. They tore up the roof and let their friend down in front of where Jesus was standing.

How many times have we been angry because we’ve gotten *SO* close to what we needed, only to bump into some obstacle or wall? Jesus is a kind and loving Saviour and a powerful healer. He knows us. He cares for us. He has the solution for every problem we face. Most of us agree with these statements but when troubles come, when sickness shows up, when loneliness brings tears to our eyes, our faith fails us, and we feel abandoned and alone. Today we are invited to press on and not give up.

If we trust who Jesus is and what He has said, and act accordingly, God will do amazing things for us, far beyond all we could ask or imagine. Jesus rewards our faith when we walk in difficult circumstances and still continue to trust Him.

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (Hebrews 11:6 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to trust You today no matter what challenges I face. You are there for me and You will meet my deepest needs. Help me not to give up when the going gets tough but to continue to trust You. Amen

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 2019

ONGOING SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Many of us thought we would never sink so low in our destructive lifestyle and yet we ended up there by our own choosing. Sometimes we still wonder if a recovering addict can ever reach the abundant life that Jesus said He came to give us. God tells us that what we choose is a significant factor in how we are experiencing abundance. Every day we must decide, are we satisfied with where we are right now, or do we want ongoing spiritual growth?

Give me the knowledge to make wise decisions. I trust your commands. Before I suffered, I did many wrong things. But now I carefully obey everything you say. (Psalm 119: 66-67 ERV)

Seeds can germinate, sprout, and grow into a wonderful harvest if they are planted in healthy soil, are weeded and watered, and fed. It is the same with us. We can have ongoing growth both physically and spiritually if we live in a clean environment, feed ourselves with healthy food, and spiritually guard our hearts by reading and obeying the word of God. If we starve ourselves of nourishment, either physical or spiritual, we will suffer decline and there will be no growth in the life God has planned for us.

Dear friends, we have these promises from God. So, we should make ourselves pure—free from anything that makes our body or our soul unclean. Our respect for God should make us try to be completely holy in the way we live. (2 Corinthians 7:1 ERV)

We have an enemy who wants to destroy us before we can become all that God intends us to be. Let’s not let that happen by being lazy or complacent. Let’s give God thanks for all He has done in our lives and choose again today to keep on learning and growing spiritually.

He makes both us and you remain strong in the faith because we belong to Christ. He anointed us. He put his Spirit in our hearts and marked us as his own. We can now be sure that he will give us everything he promised us. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22 NIRV)

Prayer: Loving God, I am thankful that Jesus came into the world to give me new life. My desire is to follow Your guidance in all my affairs. Help me to understand more and more all that You are, all that You do, and all that You have planned for me to do. Amen

Are we satisfied with where we are right now, or do we want ongoing spiritual growth?

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2019

ISOLATION VERSUS RELATIONSHIP

In our addiction, long periods of isolation became a way of life for us. While we may have been around people while we were using, we knew we didn't trust them, there was little or no emotional connection with them, and we certainly didn't feel cared for or understood by them. A part of leaving behind a life in addiction is coming out of isolation and entering into healthy relationships. It might be as simple as attending a meeting and saying "hello" to another person. It certainly means taking time to get to know others and allowing relationships at various levels to bring joy and richness to daily life. We also take a step out of isolation when we sincerely pray the Serenity Prayer and progressively come to know this amazing God, who can restore us to sanity.

Jesus said: ***"I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.*** (John 15:5 NLT)

Let us consider how we can stir up one another to love

We need to form a relationship with our Heavenly Father and learn how to receive and respond to His love. God's love is unending. As we open our hearts to His kindness, we begin to relax and take a risk to share ourselves with others and offer friendship. Sometimes it is through the gentle spirit of another human being that we see God's love and come to believe that God really cares for us.

Hebrews 10:24

Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. (Philippians 2:4, Galatians 6:2 NLT)

To demonstrate the power of relationship over isolation the Bible uses the picture of a body where each part works together and supports the other parts. Where one part is weak, the other offers strength. As we live with and help each other, we are strengthened and encouraged by all that we can accomplish together.

Let us consider how we can stir up one another to love. Let us help one another to do good works. And let us not give up meeting together. Some are in the habit of doing this. Instead, let us encourage one another with words of hope. (Hebrews 10:24-25 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Give me the courage to reach out and be a friend. As You love and encourage me, help me to gently reach out to others with love and encouragement. Amen

THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 2019

LOOK AT THE BIRDS

We seldom have a day when we aren't worried about something. We may have health issues that concern us, financial challenges that seem impossible, relationships that aren't yet sorted out, or just worries about how to find our way in our life with God in recovery.

In His kindness, God offers us comfort and peace of mind no matter what we are facing.

So I tell you, don't worry about the things you need to live—what you will eat, drink, or wear. Life is more important than food, and the body is more important than what you put on it. Look at the birds. They don't plant, harvest, or save food in barns, but your heavenly Father feeds them. Don't you know you are worth much more than they are? You cannot add any time to your life by worrying about it. (Matthew 6:25-27 ERV)

We are loved and cared for by God. He promises to provide everything we need as we turn our will and our life over to His care. The birds all around us remind us of God's attention to our daily needs. God is watching us. God knows what we have today and what we will need tomorrow, and He promises to make that available to us each day. It may not be name brand jeans or Starbucks coffee, but our daily needs will be provided for.

God invites us to bring our needs to Him. When Jesus' friends wondered what they should say to God when they prayed, one of the things Jesus told them to say was, ***"Give us this day our daily bread."*** Elsewhere in the Bible we are encouraged to ***"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."*** (1 Peter 5:7 NIV)

Let's take a moment today and look at the birds and let them lift our hearts in gratitude to the God who cares for their every need, and for our needs as well. Let's tell God what we need and trust Him to supply it.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, it's hard to trust You when my experience has been one of poverty and lack. Increase my faith to believe that You are a generous God who takes care of His children. Help me to bring my needs to You and have faith that You will provide for me as You do for even the littlest of birds. Amen

And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 4:19 NIV

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2019

GRATITUDE AT EVERY STAGE OF THE JOURNEY

In sharing our recovery journey at meetings, we often look to the model of "what life was like in addiction, what happened, and what does life look like now." In each of these stages of our recovery journey it does us good to acknowledge God's input in what is going on and thank Him for all He has done.

Thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.
(1 Corinthians 15:57 NLT)

Only God could have brought us to a place where we recognized that we were powerless and that our lives had become unmanageable. God, in His wisdom, brought someone across our path to share a message of hope with us or He simply stirred a desire in us for something other than what we were living. God gave us the strength and courage to seek help and here we are. One day at a time, one moment at a time God gives us sobriety and a new life worth living. Have we taken time today to thank God for all of this?

**It does us
good to
acknowledge
God's input
in what is
going on and
thank Him
for all He has
done.**

But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. Everything you say and everything you do should be done for Jesus your Lord. And in all you do, give thanks to God the Father through Jesus. (Romans 6:17 NIV, Colossians 3:17 ERV)

There's no doubt that the power of our addiction brought us to a place of being a slave to our drug of choice, to a lifestyle of doing whatever was necessary regardless of the harm caused to others. That slavery was broken by the power of God as we put our trust in the forgiveness and healing that Jesus won for us on the cross.

As we studied God's word and put His principles into practice in all our affairs, we have found freedom to speak and behave in new ways we never would have imagined. We can wake up each day with a heart filled with gratitude and offer our experience, strength, and hope to others.

Prayer: Loving God, I can't begin to tell you how grateful I am for what You have done for me. Each breath I take is a gift from You. I don't want to take my sobriety for granted. Today, and every day, I want to thank You for my life and my recovery. Amen

FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 2019

OVERCOMING A VICTIM MENTALITY

People who suffer from a victim mentality often confuse love with pity or rescue. They think good things only happen to others. They feel overly sensitive and anxious. Can God make a way for them to have a satisfying and meaningful life? Yes! Yes! Yes!

Jesus suffered and died on the cross to deal with sin and injustice and to enable us to be free and have life with God forever. Jesus willingly gave His life for us, so we no longer need to live as a victim. Jesus paid in full the price of sins committed by us, and injustices done to us.

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:4-6 NIV)

It is very challenging for those of us who have spent years living with a victim mentality to move into the experience of being an overcomer. Why? We have become familiar with a lifestyle of wanting someone else to do things for us. The thought of taking responsibility and using our own initiative raises anxiety within us. Underneath our conscious fear of rejection is often an unconscious layer of anger, not just against our abuser, but also against those who "should have" protected us and did not.

God wants to release us from the bondage of a victim mentality and help us grieve painful losses. Rather than continuing to blame others, He invites us to receive healing for the wounds, and forgiveness for the resentments we've held. As we bring our troubled situations to God for His help and healing, He will take hold of our hand and say, "**Do not fear; I will help you**". (Isaiah 41:13 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to turn from protecting myself at all costs and learn how to live life with realistic expectations and safe boundaries. Teach me Your ways and help me live without fear. Thank You for caring for me. Amen

**Jesus
willingly
gave His
life for us,
so we no
longer
need to
live as a
victim.**

SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 2019

ACCEPTING HARSHIP AS A WAY TO PEACE

When we pray the full version of the Serenity Prayer, what are we asking God to do for us? "... *accepting hardship as a pathway to peace; taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is not as I would have it, trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your will...*"

Many of us came into recovery because the hardships of life in addiction became more than we were able to cope with. Getting sober and cleaning up took care of some of the problems but other painful issues we had buried for a long time suddenly became front and center in our thoughts and emotions. Health and money problems, education and employment issues, and relationship breakdowns are all issues that are painful and hard to deal with, especially by those of us who previously chose to bury them in the haze of addiction.

God will give us all we need to face hardship, rather than run away from it.

But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one. He [God] gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. (2 Thessalonians 3:3; Isaiah 40:29 NIV)

Jesus faced hardship in his life on earth. He was persecuted by the evil and sin that brought Him to die on the cross. However, Jesus overcame death and rose to life again. Jesus' resurrection changes everything for us because we can now have this amazing power of God living in us, strengthening us to be overcomers as we courageously face painful challenges.

As we face the adversity of worry, irritation, stress or anger, together with the God who cares for us, we will find that He is faithful in all His ways. God gives us everything we need to get through the hardship and what a joy it is to experience the peace that awaits us on the other side.

You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (1 John 4:4, Philippians 4:6-7 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I'm through running. I put my trust in You to give me the strength I need to stand firm and face whatever comes my way. Amen

TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 2019

CARRYING THE MESSAGE

A common recovery saying is that "you must give it away in order to keep it". How are we to carry the message today?

God's power transforms lives. Our personal story of the journey from bondage to freedom is one example. As we tell our story of how God rescued us and how God continues to sustain us in recovery, we become a source of hope and inspiration to those who struggle. Our way to new life may shine a light on the path others seek to follow. Our joyful witness to how things changed for us when we put our hand into the hand of God and let Him lead us, may inspire others to reach out their hands to God also.

Jesus said: "I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life." (John 8:12 NLT)

We may wonder if what we share can be of help to someone else. We may struggle to get beyond the shame of our past. We may be hesitant to share with others, especially if we are new to recovery and aren't yet confident that we will be able to maintain this new way of life. But our story is our story to tell. We know where we have come from and the spiritual awakening God has given us. God's word tells us that He rescued us and chose us to be a witness to others.

The Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted and to proclaim that captives will be released, and prisoners will be freed. (Isaiah 61:1-2 NLT)

God lives in us and through the transformed life we now live, God calls out others who suffer. By watching God at work in us, others may find hope stirring in their own heart. As we live in conscious contact with God and put His will into practice in all our affairs, we will learn how we can support others in their journey of turning their will and life over to the care of God.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank you for bringing me out of darkness into the light of your presence. Let Your word be a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Help me to shine brightly as I gently and humbly share with others how You transformed my life. Amen

God's word tells us that He rescued us and chose us to help others.

MONDAY, JUNE 24, 2019

CHARACTER DEFECT – INSINCERITY

We all long to be genuine and sincere in our relationship with God, others, and ourselves, and yet we often find ourselves being fake and insincere. Self-centeredness, fear, co-dependency, approval seeking, irritation and control issues are just a few of the things that push us over the slippery slope to that ugly place where we are not truthful in what we are saying, and are actually hiding what is going on inside.

People will love only themselves and money. They will be proud and boast about themselves ... They will have no love for others and will refuse to forgive anyone. They will talk about others to hurt them and will have no self-control.

They will be cruel and hate what is good. People will turn against their friends. They will do foolish things without thinking and will be so proud of themselves. Instead of loving God, they will love pleasure. They will go on pretending to be devoted to God, but they will refuse to let that "devotion" change the way they live. Stay away from these people! (2 Timothy 3:2-6 ERV)

It's time to stop pretending. We need to say what we mean and mean what we say.

It's time to stop pretending. We need to say what we mean and mean what we say. We need to speak the truth with kindness, admit when we are wrong, and forgive others when they fail. If we make plans, we need to keep them, even when it is inconvenient. When we say we care, we need to really listen and perhaps lend a hand. We need to watch our words and quit the negative talk and gossip. If we have a problem with someone, we need to learn how to talk it out in a healthy way. We don't know everything, and we can't always attend to someone else's needs. We need to become genuine and humble, admitting our limits. We need to remember what we can do in the light of how far we have come. Rather than making insincere and

foolish promises we know we can't keep; we need to have respect for the circumstances and say "No" or "I can't" to the person asking for help.

Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. (Romans 12:9, 1 John 3:18 NIRV)

Prayer: Loving God, you are faithful and sincere in all Your ways. Teach me to be truthful and kind in every circumstance. Please forgive me when I falter. Amen

SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 2019

SUNDAY PSALM – FAITHFUL IN TIMES OF NEED

How many times in our addictive lifestyle were people looking for us, seeking to do us harm? Perhaps we cheated them, stole something from them, or twisted their words so that we got something we wanted. Maybe we lied or made promises we knew we couldn't keep in order to get out of a situation. Perhaps there's simply been a misunderstanding, but now they are after us. No matter the reason, we can call out to God for help

O God have mercy on me, for people are hounding me. My foes attack me all day long. I am constantly hounded by those who slander me, and many are boldly attacking me. But when I am afraid, I will put my trust in you. I praise God for what he has promised. I trust in God, so why should I be afraid? What can mere mortals do to me? They are always twisting what I say; they spend their days plotting to harm me. They come together to spy on me—watching my every step, eager to kill me. (Psalm 56:1-6 NLT)

Before he became king of Israel, King David was hounded by many enemies who wanted to take his life. When he wrote the above Psalm, he was on the run from someone who hated him and was trying to kill him, even though David had not done any wrong against this person.

David told God about his circumstances, admitted to being afraid, but then affirmed that even though he was fearful, he would trust God. David was building faith in God by reminding himself of the promises God had made to him, and of the fact that God was faithful to keep His word.

We may be in a place where we are calling out to God because of the troubles that surround us. Perhaps we are wondering if God will fulfill His promises to us. God fulfilled His promises to David and He will do the same for us. Today, in spite of our fears, let's once again put our trust in God, praise Him for what He has promised to do, and watch as He keeps His word.

Prayer: Loving God, There are lots of challenges before me. I lack faith and find myself getting stressed and worried. I'm asking You to help me and trust that You will do what You have promised. With You by my side, I have nothing to fear from people around me. Amen

I praise God for what he has promised. I trust in God, so why should I be afraid?

(Psalm 56)

MONDAY, JUNE 10, 2019

SELF-JUSTIFICATION

In certain situations, when our behaviour is challenged, we are quick to try to justify ourselves. If we are challenged for doing wrong, we justify it by saying, "This is just the way I am." We justify anger by saying "He or she made me mad." We justify being rude by saying "I just speak my mind." Sometimes we are unwilling to see the exact nature of our wrongs.

Suppose we claim we are without sin. Then we are fooling ourselves. The truth is not in us. But God is faithful and fair. If we confess our sins, he will forgive our sins. He will forgive every wrong thing we have done. He will make us pure. (1 John 1:8-9 NIRV)

It's time to admit that wrong is wrong, and that we are guilty of wrong thinking and wrong behaviour.

In our addiction, we often lied to others after failing to fulfill the commitments we made. We became experts at making up believable excuses and even justified lying to ourselves. Self-justification is rooted in our thinking we are better human beings than we truly are. It's time to admit that wrong is wrong, and that we are guilty of wrong thinking and wrong behaviour.

I, the Lord, am the one speaking to you. Come, let's discuss this. Even if your sins are as dark as red dye, that stain can be removed and you will be as pure as wool that is as white as snow. (Isaiah 1:18 ERV)

When we acknowledge and repent of the exact nature of our wrongs and accept forgiveness from God for our self-justification, we will then be free to become the person God desires us to be. God is with us to help us change. We can bring every deceptive thought captive to Jesus and be transformed in our thinking. When our thinking is right, our behaviour will follow.

God has given me a special gift, and that is why I have something to say to each one of you. Don't think that you are better than you really are. You must see yourself just as you are. Decide what you are by the faith God has given each of us. (Romans 12:3 ERV)

Prayer: Gracious God, Help me to see myself as I truly am and resolve not to justify my wrong behaviour. I want to be transformed in my mind so that I am no longer captive to self-justification. Amen

SUNDAY, JUNE 23, 2019

SUNDAY PSALM – CLEANSE ME FROM MY SIN

Throughout the Twelve Steps we are brought face to face with the reality that we have struggled and fallen short in the way we have lived before God, others, and ourselves. Foundational to recovery, is the decision to invite God to forgive us and cleanse us from all our faults and defects.

For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. (Romans 3:23 NLT)

In order to help us identify what is wrong, the Bible uses lots of different words for our sins and failures. The meaning of the word sin is to "miss the mark" and we've done that by failing to do what we knew was right to do, or by choosing to do something which harmed others, and likely hurt ourselves at the same time.

Sometimes we deliberately or intentionally decide we are going to do what we want to do, even though we know it's wrong. We break the law, we transgress. For example, we chose to drink and drive thinking we can get away with it just this one time.

Then there is sin referred to in the Bible as iniquity. It's more deeply rooted. Through rebellion, usually motivated by bitterness or hatred, we choose to act in a way that is wrong and evil in its purpose. Iniquity is self-will that just doesn't care anymore.

God offers to forgive us for all the ways we fall short. Let's ask the Holy Spirit to search our hearts and help us acknowledge what we see in the light of God's word. Doing an honest set of steps is a must in this process.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge. (Psalm 51:1-4 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I have sinned and need Your forgiveness. Help me to make an honest confession and receive Your forgiveness for the wrongs I have done. Amen

God offers to forgive us for all of these ways we fall short.

SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 2019

GENTLENESS – ONLY FOR THE STRONG

Strong people with a true sense of their identity are often the gentlest souls around. They don't have to pretend to have courage in loud aggressive ways because they are confident in who they are and what they believe. They know themselves to be imperfect and so they graciously make allowances for the faults of others. They know they are learning and growing, and they make space for others to do the same.

A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare. Gentle words are a tree of life; a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit. Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. (Proverbs 15:1, 15:4, Ephesians 4:2 NLT)

People who are secure in themselves don't have to fight on every point.

People who are secure in themselves don't have to fight on every point. They can agree to disagree and be pleasant about it. They don't have to try to build themselves up by saying one thing to a person's face and then something else behind their backs. They are genuine people of integrity. Gentle people are some of the most admired by their colleagues and associates. Far from being weak, a gentle person exhibits an immense amount of self-control and patience.

They [Leaders] must not slander anyone and must avoid quarreling. Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. (Titus 3:2, James 3:17 NLT)

God invites us to leave harshness, super-sensitivity, sarcasm, and insincerity behind, and enter into a life of harmony with His plan – a plan that promotes gentleness in all our dealings with others.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You chose me to be holy. I want to grow in Your grace and become known as a person who has a tender heart. I desire to be filled with kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. I need Your help! Amen

TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2019

DAILY INVENTORY

Some time may have passed since we completed a Step Ten and we may now assume we have it all figured out and are well on our way in recovery. Alternatively, we may be so early in recovery that we still feel a bit dazed and confused about what life in recovery looks like on an ongoing basis. Regardless of where we are in our journey, making a regular daily inventory by measuring ourselves against God's tried and true principles will help us monitor our progress.

Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak. I listen carefully to what God the Lord is saying, for he speaks peace to his faithful people. But let them not return to their foolish ways. (Mark 14:38, Psalm 85:8 NLT)

God has given us principles by which we learn to think, speak, and act. As we begin each day it's good to ask God to help us live according to His ways. At the end of each day an inventory helps us recognize and give thanks for successes. It also helps us to know how far we've fallen short and ask for forgiveness.

The fruit the Holy Spirit produces is love, joy and peace. It is being patient, kind and good. It is being faithful and gentle and having control of oneself. Always think about what is true. Think about what is noble, right and pure. Think about what is lovely and worthy of respect. If anything is excellent or worthy of praise, think about those kinds of things. (Galatians 5:22-23, Philipians 4:8 NIRV)

God is interested in our thoughts and feelings because He knows they motivate our behaviour. Prayerfully making a daily inventory with God will help to maintain our sobriety and support our ongoing spiritual growth. More and more we will discover a life that is meaningful, purposeful, and joyful.

Prayer: Gracious God, May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life. Amen (Psalm 19:14, Psalm 139:23-24 NLT)

Prayerfully making a daily inventory with God will help to maintain our sobriety and support our ongoing spiritual growth.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 2019

DON'T QUIT BEFORE THE MIRACLE HAPPENS

"Don't quit before the miracle happens" is a slogan that's been around Alcoholics Anonymous for quite a while. Someone has added this phrase to it, "Anything worthwhile takes time and patience." These words apply to more than choosing not to go back to our substance of choice.

Be strong. Don't give up. God will reward you for your work. Let us not become tired of doing good. At the right time we will gather a crop if we don't give up. (2 Chronicles 15:7, Galatians 6:9 NIRV)

***New
healthy
behaviours
take time
to become
normal
actions.***

Good things take effort and patience. As cute as they are to watch, little folks playing hockey do more falling down on the ice than shooting pucks and scoring goals. Some of those little folks will stick with the game, and one day in the future, end up in the NHL. In between, there is lots of practice at the rink in the early morning hours of cold winter days, plus hours of training at a gym, and time watching videos of games, and so on. Everything worth doing takes time and patience.

Finding the life that God has planned for us is even more important than getting good at a sport. It takes time and practice to recognize what life looks like as a dependable person. We'll try some things and leave them behind. We'll struggle to do other things until we master them, and they become routine. New healthy behaviours take time to become normal actions. In one study it was found that on average it took 66 days for a new behaviour to become normal. The time could be as short as 18 days and as long as 254 days.

God promises: ***Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.*** (Isaiah 41:10 NIRV)

God is working in us. Step Two reminds us that it is God who is restoring us to sanity. He will hold us steady and encourage us while we learn. Let's stick with God until the miracle happens.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me remember today that You are with me supporting and strengthening me as I establish new and healthy ways of living. Give me patience with myself and others as I grow and learn. Amen

FRIDAY, JUNE 21, 2019

HALF-HEARTED

"Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked His protection and care with complete abandon." (Big Book page 59)

When we give our will and our life over to the care of God, we invite Him to develop those qualities in us that will help us love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and love our neighbour as ourselves. For that to take place, we need to surrender to God's ways as recorded in the Bible. There is no such thing as half-hearted surrender. We are either surrendered to God's ways or we are not.

Be careful to obey every command I have told you to follow: Love the Lord your God, follow all his ways, and be faithful to him. (Deuteronomy 11:22 ERV)

As we study God's word, we will learn what is right or wrong, harmful or good, and we can adjust our thoughts and behaviour accordingly. It may take time to make the changes we need to make but, as we determine to follow God's ways, with God's help, we will succeed. We need to be prepared to battle against our old self and its ways of saying and doing things, so that the new self triumphs over the old. Perseverance may not have been a quality we exhibited in our past but, as we determine to be faithful to God's ways, He will give us the strength we need to be wholehearted.

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. For when we died with Christ, we were set free from the power of sin. (Romans 6:6-7 NIV)

As we obey God's will, our hearts are being renewed and God's Holy Spirit enables us to change from being half-hearted in what we do, to being fully surrendered to God. This gracious gift is available to all who believe in the finished work of Jesus.

But the Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin, so we receive God's promise of freedom only by believing in Jesus Christ. (Galatians 3:22 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for not surrendering all that I am to You. Help me to persevere in times of trial and determine to follow You in all my affairs. Amen

***God's Holy
Spirit
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fully
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to God.***

THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2019

SETTLING MY HEART BY SHOWING MERCY

Mercy is the act of being compassionate or kind toward someone who does not deserve it. God showed mercy towards us by sending Jesus into the world, not to condemn us for our sin, but to save us from it. How then should we respond towards others?

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Matthew 5:7, Ephesians 4:32 NIV)

When a person stands before a judge for a crime they have committed, what are they hoping for? Normally their lawyer will have prepared them for the likely penalty for the crime, but their hope is that the judge will have mercy and give a lesser sentence.

Showing mercy and forgiving is God's way for us to walk in His light. This will bring peace to our souls and settle our hearts.

God, the righteous judge, did not give us a lesser sentence than the one we deserved for our sin. Instead He sent Jesus into the world to be our substitute. Jesus paid the penalty for our sin in full and cleared our record. God's love and mercy towards us is freely given. We then should be like God and offer others forgiveness, love and mercy. Forgiveness and mercy come from a heart that has been changed by the extravagant love of God for us.

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. All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all. (Isaiah 53:5-6 NLT)

We are not acting with compassion and mercy if we chose to call others to account for every unkind thing they say or do, or if we desire they suffer for the things they have done.

Showing mercy and forgiving is God's way for us to walk in His light. This will bring peace to our souls and settle our hearts.

Heavenly Father, I confess that I have been reluctant to forgive those who have harmed me. Fill me with Your love and compassion so that I can be like you and show mercy from a generous heart. Amen

THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 2019

PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

Jesus told many stories of what the Kingdom of Heaven is like. In one He compared it to a merchant looking for fine pearls and when He found one valuable pearl, He sold everything he had to buy it.

How is a pearl formed? When an irritant, such as a grain of sand, enters an oyster it responds by coating the irritant with layers of a substance called nacre to make itself more comfortable. Nacre is a crystalline substance, which over the years hardens, and eventually becomes a precious pearl.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. (Matthew 13:45-46 NKJV)

In the parable that Jesus told, He is the one who gave all that He had to buy the pearl. Who is the pearl? We are! Jesus left the glory of heaven and came to earth to live and die for our sin. He paid the price of sin so that we could be reconciled to God and have eternal life in His Kingdom.

So he had to be made like people, fully human in every way. Then he could serve God as a kind and faithful high priest. And then he could pay for the sins of the people by dying for them. (Hebrews 2:17 NIRV)

When we first came into recovery, we probably were like the pearl of great price at the beginning of its existence, an irritant to those around us. We had lots to learn, but God poured out His grace like a covering over us. As we surrendered to His ways, He lavishly poured out more grace until we became more valuable to the Kingdom of God.

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. (2 Peter 1:5-7 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I seldom see myself as a pearl of great price, but I know a great price was paid for me. I ask that You continue to pour out your grace on me so that I may live in a way that brings honour to You and to Your Kingdom. Amen

In the parable that Jesus told, He is the one who gave all that He had to buy the pearl. Who is the pearl? We are!

FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 2019

HOW WE GOT TO WHERE WE ARE

We got to where we are today by our own irrational thinking and flawed solutions. When we allow God's truth to motivate our thinking and daily living, we can have a full life beyond all we could ask for.

It's true that moral guidance and counsel need to be given, but the way you say it and to whom you say it are as important as what you say. It's obvious, isn't it, that the law code isn't primarily for people who live responsibly, but for the irresponsible, who defy all authority, riding roughshod over God, life, sex, truth, whatever! They are contemptuous of this great Message I've been put in charge of by this great God. (1 Timothy 1:8-11 MSG)

Today we have a choice, to live by our unreliable feelings or live according to God's truth.

Who do the tapes playing in my head say I am? Who does God say I am? What are my felt needs right now? Does God promise to meet those needs? Where do I think my life is headed? What does God say about His plans for me? On the answers to which of these questions will I base my beliefs and actions today?

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:2 NIV)

God offers us a new way of life. It requires that we surrender to the truth. It requires conquering our feelings when they don't line up with truth. It requires that we lay down our familiar self-centered ways and follow God's life-giving ways. Today we have a choice to live by our unreliable feelings or live according to God's truth. The former leads to disaster. The latter leads to life.

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. (1 Corinthians 13:6 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that my irrational thoughts and flawed thinking have brought me to where I am today. My self-centered actions are primarily caused by my defective belief system about who You are and who You say I am. Today I choose to walk in the truth of who You are and who You say that I am. Give me a discerning heart to know the plans You have for me. I am forever grateful that You love and care for me. Amen

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 2019

JUST FOR TODAY – ENJOY

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

We are not the only people who failed to trust God and wander into a destructive lifestyle. In the Bible we read stories of human beings to whom God showed amazing grace and patience. Though they struggled and often failed, God was gracious to forgive and restore their relationship with Him.

Like us, when these persons realized what a mess they had made, they felt sad and guilty about their past behaviour and received God's forgiveness. They were then restored to have a joyful relationship with God and with one another. This was the case for the people we find in the book of Nehemiah. For many years the people wandered in ungodly lifestyles of self-centeredness and sin. This resulted in a complete breakdown of community life and a time of captivity and exile to another land. However, God did not write the people off, but raised up a person who called them to turn away from their sin and come back to Him.

God helped the people rebuild their lives in an amazing way. At one point during a community gathering the priest, a man named Ezra, stood up and read from God's word to the people. As they heard God's word, the people wept and mourned over how far they had wandered from the ways of God. But the leaders said something amazing to them that can serve as an encouragement to us today.

Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength. (Nehemiah 8:10 NIV)

We need to take time to read God's word and see all the promises God has made to us. Perhaps it's a time to repent, turn back to God, let guilt go, and welcome forgiveness. God has given us today; why not rejoice and be glad in it?

Prayer: Gracious God, Forgive me for the many times I look past Your gifts and fail to enjoy all that You are giving me. Help me to pause and notice and give thanks for what You bring to this day. Thank You for filling my life with good things. Amen

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

TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2019

THE PURPOSE OF PRAYER AND MEDITATION

When we turn our will and our life over to the care of God, He immediately begins to work to help us change. The discipline of prayer and meditation helps us hear from God and correctly interpret the ongoing events of our lives. As we put into practice what God's word says, we learn to recognize His voice and His way of guiding us.

The discipline of prayer and meditation helps us hear from God, and correctly interpret the ongoing events of our lives.

Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. (Jeremiah 33:3, James 1:5 NIV)

God has a wonderful plan for our lives. No day is wasted. In every moment there is a lesson for us as God rebuilds us according to His original plan. Even our past mistakes can be used by God to bless others and let them know how much He loves them. As we continue to pay attention to God and obey what He says, His will for our lives will become clearer. God promises that we will have a life that is better than we ever could have thought or imagined.

But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. (Jude 20-21 NIV)

Reading and meditating on scripture reveals to us the nature of God and His desire to affirm the unending love He has for us. In our daily devotions, we are not simply seeking to learn facts about God but are consciously seeking to get to know Him intimately.

As we become familiar with God's character and ways, we will be empowered by God's Holy Spirit to live fully surrendered to His ways.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I welcome the work of Your Holy Spirit in me as You reveal Your will for my life. Help me to live humbly before You and honour You in all my ways. Amen

SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 2019

THE WISDOM OF MAKING ONLY A FEW PROMISES

Whether it's a commitment we make to ourselves, to others, or to God, keeping at it until it's completed is tough for an addict. So, as God's word teaches us, it's important not to promise too many things.

Be careful when you make promises to God. Be careful about what you say to him. Don't let your feelings cause you to speak too soon. God is in heaven, and you are on the earth. So you need to say only a few things to him. If you make a promise to God, keep your promise. Don't be slow to do what you promised. God is not happy with fools. Give God what you promised to give him. It is better to promise nothing than to promise something and not be able to do it. (Ecclesiastes 5:2,4-5 ERV)

One day at a time we need to keep things simple, and steadily work on what's essential. When we make a promise, we need to treat it seriously and step by step do what's necessary to fulfill it. We may need to learn new things, accept suggestions from others about what will work to help us reach our specified goals, and come to God again and again for wisdom and strength to do what is right. We might even need to ask for comfort and encouragement when it's tough to keep on going. When we feel like the finish line is a long way off, we need to take time to notice the improvement we have already made.

Some of us will struggle to stay with a program of coming to know God and being willing to turn our will and our life over to His care every day, in every circumstance. For a long time we have lived on self-will and the lie that we could do "anything we wanted." Therefore, it takes time to root out what's false and stick with what is bringing positive change.

Keeping our word and seeing something through brings dignity, self-respect, and the blessing of God. One success gives us the strength to reach out for the next.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to be a person who is known to keep my promises. Help me to keep things simple. Help me to walk with humility and patience. Help me to be willing to learn new things and persevere until I fulfill each of my commitments. Amen

When we make a promise, we need to treat it seriously and step by step do what's necessary to fulfill it.

SUNDAY, JUNE 16, 2019

SUNDAY PSALM – HAPPY FATHER’S DAY

Today is a day to honour fathers. Some of us are fathers. All of us have a father. The relationship of a loving father to his child is a picture of God's heart for us.

Nothing stirs a father’s heart more than looking at his newborn child. We love to see a dad carrying his little one on his chest in a baby carrier. Squeals of joy come out of the mouth of a toddler as a dad throws them in the air and catches them again in his strong arms. There's a natural God-given desire in a father to care for his child, to protect that child even to the point of laying down his own life on behalf of the child. This is God's heart for you and me.

The relationship of a loving father to his child is a picture of God's heart for us.

A father is tender and kind to his children. In the same way, the Lord is tender and kind to those who have respect for him. (Psalm 103:13 NIRV)

Sadly, for many who struggle with addiction, the abuse or absence of a father is a significant issue in their healing journey. This is where God makes the gracious offer to be the good father we never had, to care for us and meet our needs for the safety and protection which our earthly father either couldn't or didn't provide. Only a father's love can meet that deep need within us.

Even if my father and mother abandon me, the Lord will hold me close. (Psalm 27:10 NLT)

Whatever our past, whether it’s being well-loved, or wounded and abandoned by our father, or even being disappointed in ourselves as a father, God invites us today to make a connection to His family. Our Heavenly Father will receive us as His precious children. He will love and care for us and heal our wounds.

For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother. (Matthew 12:50 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for inviting me into Your family. I receive Your love today. I want to live as Your beloved child. In the safety of Your loving care, help me to sort out any issues I may have with my earthly dad and find healing and restoration. Amen

MONDAY, JUNE 17, 2019

BEING AVAILABLE

One sure sign of growth in our life with God in recovery is making time to serve others and being willing to adjust our schedule or priorities when someone comes to us with a need. Admittedly, we require great wisdom in knowing which needs to respond to, so we don’t live in rescuing and co-dependent enabling. God desires us to be creative and kind in the service we give to others. This honours God. Are we making ourselves available to fulfill God’s agenda? Are we willing to hear the plans He has and follow His directions?

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I. Send me!” I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. (Isaiah 6:8, Romans 12:1 NIV)

It’s so easy to get caught up in our own needs and plans and turn God’s way of living upside down. We don’t have to use drugs or alcohol for that to happen. All it takes is for us to think we know what the day needs and then ask God to help us successfully complete our agenda. Unless we make our hearts and our schedules available to God for His plans, we will end up wasting time and doing things that don’t really help others or ourselves in the long run.

Instead of blindly rushing through our own agenda, we need to put God’s priorities at the top of our “to do” list. We need to make ourselves available to be used as God chooses. Initially it will feel strange and perhaps uncomfortable but, if we make it our habit to seek God’s will and follow His ways, He will direct us on a good path.

Jesus said to them, “Come with me! I will teach you how to bring in people instead of fish.” Right then the two brothers dropped their nets and went with him. (Mark 1:17-18 CEV)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I want to know Your will and follow Your direction today. You know what’s best for me. Help me to be available to You as I go about my work and errands so I honour You and love others as You intend. Amen

Are we making ourselves available to fulfill God’s agenda?