

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY



Daily Meditations



MAY 2019

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

For your personal print copy send your request to:

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

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

Email: pihrecovery@gmail.com

Phone or text: 604-215-0335



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CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Evelyn Leeburn, Elsie Quick

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, 2019

A LIFE OF INFINITE VALUE

My life is of great beauty and infinite value. God has a plan for my life that is meaningful, purposeful, and joyful.

God's love for us is not dependent on the qualities we possess or whether we are rich or poor. God loves us because He created us, and we have infinite value in His sight. When we were still rebellious sinners, God affirmed His love for us by sending Jesus into the world to save us from the penalty of sin, which is eternal separation from God.

Here is what love is. It is not that we loved God. It is that he loved us and sent his Son to give his life to pay for our sins. (1 John 4:10 NIRV)

When we turned our will and life over to Him, God adopted us as His precious children. Unfortunately, we often fail to act like God is our Heavenly Father. At times we take off the new clean clothes we have been given and put on the dirty rags of self-will that were part of our old life.

But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? (Galatians 4:9 NKJV)

The good news is our Heavenly Father is a merciful Father. We are so precious to Him that if we will turn away from our sins and turn to Him, He will forgive us and purify us from all our wrongs.

But if we confess our sins, God will forgive us. We can trust God to do this. He always does what is right. He will make us clean from all the wrong things we have done. (1 John 1:9 ERV)

We are so wonderfully made that the Bible tells us God rejoices over us with singing. Let's live as beloved and valued sons and daughters of our loving Heavenly Father as we faithfully follow Him in all our ways.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am thankful that I am of infinite value in Your sight. Help me to be a faithful follower of Jesus and wholeheartedly commit to love You with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love my neighbour as myself. Amen

When we turned our will and life over to Him, God adopted us as His precious children.

THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2019

REJECTING CONDEMNATION

Steadily moving forward in recovery is not easy. As we awaken out of the haze of years in addiction our minds are often filled with memories of things done to us and things we have done to others. We tend to live in self-condemnation and the disapproval of those we have harmed. Sleepless nights and restless days challenge us. Painful memories often surface when we write out an honest moral inventory. However, if we will give our will and life over to the care of God, there is hope for us to leave the past behind and move forward to become the person we were created to be.

Remember your promise to me, your servant. It gives me hope. You comfort me in my suffering, because your promise gives me new life. (Psalm 119:49-50 ERV)

There is hope for us to leave the past behind and move forward to become the person we were created to be.

The Bible is a handbook filled with guidelines for living wisely as our creator intended and though we may faithfully follow God's laws, storms and struggles may still sometimes arise. Jesus told us that in this world we will have trouble. So, when trouble arises, we need not do the devil's work and blame or accuse ourselves. The devil is a liar. We should not join with him in his condemnation just because we have encountered a problem. God has promised to give us direction in the way we should go, and God's instructions are reliable.

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. (Romans 8:1 NKJV)

God's words of comfort and His faithful promises of forgiveness and restoration are the basis for our hope and strength to move forward in life in recovery. We need to encourage ourselves with the truth that God will work all things together for our good. God is the one who opens up the way before us. His endless love and guidance will bring us to a safe and successful destination.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, My desire is to follow You in all my affairs. When the devil seeks to taunt and disturb my life with condemning accusations, I will refuse His lies and trust You to lead me forward in the truth of who I am in Jesus. Amen

FRIDAY, MAY 3, 2019

DISCRETION

We are not always the best judge of what confidences need to be held or which need to be disclosed. Most things shared in confidence need to be kept close to our hearts and shared only with our Heavenly Father as we pray for the good of the person who shared with us. Some things are required to be disclosed to the appropriate authorities, particularly if a person's life is in danger. When a friend shares their character defects with us, although they may not have specifically stated that they are sharing in confidence, we should use our discretion and keep that information to ourselves, leaving it up to our friend to disclose their shortcomings with whom they choose.

Discretion is a life-giving fountain to those who possess it, but discipline is wasted on fools. From a wise mind comes wise speech; the words of the wise are persuasive. (Proverbs 16:22-23 ERV)

We have not always behaved wisely with what we shared about others. Often, we threw discretion to the wind in order to feed our own pride as "someone in the know." Sometimes when asked about another person, we set aside sound judgment and disclosed things which would have enabled others to use the information against them.

Who may worship in your sanctuary, Lord? Who may enter your presence on your holy hill? Those who lead blameless lives and do what is right, speaking the truth from sincere hearts. Those who refuse to gossip or harm their neighbors or speak evil of their friends. (Psalms 15:1-3 NLT)

We need to ask ourselves what our motivation is when we share things that we ought not to. We need to think about the consequences of our actions and the harm we may cause. To be kind to our neighbour, we need to be discreet in the way we speak about others.

Lord, guard my mouth. Keep watch over the door of my lips. (Psalm 141:3 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I ask You to help me have discretion in sharing what I know about others. Forgive me for the harm I may have caused by my thoughtlessness. Help me to be more like Jesus whose words give life. Amen

To be kind to our neighbour, we need to be discreet in the way we speak about others.

SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2019

TELLING SOMEONE ELSE

When we confess the exact nature of our wrongs, the terrible isolation we've lived with for most of our lives will be exposed. Getting honest helps us break down the barriers we have erected against acceptance, forgiveness, and understanding. None of us is perfect. We have much to offer one another if we will approach each other with an attitude of truth, humility and grace.

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. (James 5:16 NLT)

Admitting our character defects to another human being helps us get past our self-pity and self-deception.

For more years than we realize, we have been rationalizing our bad behaviour and giving ourselves permission to continue in the same pattern. Admitting our character defects to another human being helps us get past our self-pity and self-deception. It brings us to a place where we are willing to admit we need help and are choosing to receive it. We experience God's blessing and freedom when we live honestly before God and others.

Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:1-2 NLT)

More acceptance, more realism, more humility, more openness to learn and grow in new ways, these are just some of the benefits of admitting to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.

Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty! (Psalm 32:1-2 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Give me the courage to be radically honest with You, with myself, and with another human being, about the exact nature of my wrongs. Deliver me from self-pity and self-delusion. Give me a teachable heart and a willing spirit to walk with You on the path of life. Amen

SUNDAY, MAY 5, 2019

SUNDAY PSALM – GUARANTEED INHERITANCE

When we have walked with the Lord for a period of time our natural inclination is to praise Him for all He has done for us. We remember how He lifted us out of the pit we dug for ourselves. Now we rejoice in our inheritance as His precious children.

Praise the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the Lord or fully declare his praise? Blessed are those who act justly, who always do what is right. Remember me, Lord, when you show favor to your people, come to my aid when you save them, that I may enjoy the prosperity of your chosen ones, that I may share in the joy of your nation and join your inheritance in giving praise. (Psalm 106:1-5 NIV)

When we seek the Lord, He comes to our aid, saves us and sets us on a new path. God pours out His grace and favour on us and, through Jesus, brings us to new life. Together with other believers we worship and praise this amazing God. We share the joy of knowing we are part of the family of God. We have tasted the goodness of God and the power of the Holy Spirit and we have obtained an inheritance that lasts forever.

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation, and we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. (1 Peter 1:3-4 NLT)

God keeps careful watch over us and has given us the assurance that our inheritance in the Kingdom of God is guaranteed.

Prayer: Loving God, I am thankful that my inheritance is secure through faith in Jesus. I praise Your name that Your unfailing love endures forever. Thank You that I can face this day with confidence and joy because of what You have done for me. Amen

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MONDAY, MAY 6, 2019

LIVING IN SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Even though we usually associate individuals living in addiction as “party people” the truth is that using substances almost always takes away from our ability to relate to other people, to form friendships, and to do meaningful things with them. For a short while we may think that drugs or alcohol help us lower our inhibitions and be the “life of the party,” but they actually take us to a place of guilt, shame and isolation. As we live with God in recovery, He will show us how to truly be part of a group and have mutually enjoyable relationships.

But 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. Once you were not a people. But now you are the people of God. Once you had not received mercy. But now you have received mercy. (1 Peter 2:9-10 NIRV)

We find our self-worth and our identity in the love and care of God – the God who names us as His special treasure. We belong to God and are family with everyone else who belongs to God. God fills our hearts with love. We no longer need to desperately run after attention and affirmation from others in unhealthy ways. We are taken care of by God and can reach out and be of service to others. We find our circle of friends growing and we become respected as one of the people of God.

This transformation doesn't happen overnight, but it does increase every day that we walk with God and with others who are seeking recovery. As each person shares their experience, strength, and hope, we will find common experiences of vulnerability and joy that will bind our hearts together as a group, a family, a people.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for inviting me into relationship with You and placing me in a family with others. I now recognize that living in isolation is dark and depressing and, even though forming relationships may have its challenges, I know You are helping me make good choices for community and relationship. Thank You for caring for me. Amen

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TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2019

SEEKING APPROVAL

Deep within each person is the desire for approval from others – particularly from those we consider significant to us. This need goes deep for those who have been misunderstood, hurt, or rejected by others. It can produce a drivenness in them for approval from others in order to feel okay about themselves. They co-dependently try to care for the needs of others and do things other's desire, even though they know it's not good for them.

God wants to help us find a new way forward. It begins with knowing that our deepest needs for approval are met by God and not by others who can be fickle or uncaring.

God was pleased to trust us with his message. We didn't speak to please people, but to please God who knows our motives. (1 Thessalonians 2:4, CEV)

God has chosen us, given us life, and called us back from dark and unhealthy places. God has given us a story to tell others that reflects what a powerful God He is and what dramatic changes He makes in the lives of those He has rescued. We share our stories, not because we are perfect, but because we are loved by the God who created us and made us feel more secure than we ever thought possible. God has work for each of us to do today that will bless others and give us deep satisfaction. God created us for this. God wants us to share with others the love and grace we have found in Him.

Do your best to win God's approval as a worker who doesn't need to be ashamed and who teaches only the true message. When you do good deeds, don't try to show off. If you do, you won't get a reward from your Father in heaven. (2 Timothy 2:15, Matthew 6:1 CEV)

As we serve God according to His plan and purpose, He will affirm us in what we are doing, regardless of whether others notice or not, or how they may respond.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to come close to You and experience the satisfaction of belonging to You. You love me. You accept me. I have nothing to prove in order to receive from You. Help me to become more conscious of Your love and affirmation and look only to You for approval. Amen

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2019

LIVING ONE DAY AT A TIME

A saying we often hear in stormy life circumstances and recovery circles is "live one day at a time." In many meetings someone will read "Just for Today" – a list of positive actions that we may give focused attention to each day. When we pray the full version of the Serenity Prayer, we quickly come to a line that says, "living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time." God's Word encourages us to daily surrender our will and our life into His care.

Trust in the Lord and do good. Then you will live safely in the land and prosper. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart's desires. Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you. (Psalm 37:3-5 NLT)

***We are
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To live one day at a time, it's essential that we continue to come to God with a willingness and intention to surrender our will and our life into His care. What does that mean? What does a life surrendered to God look like? What steps can we take to implement it in our daily lives? It's important to confess our sins daily and receive God's forgiveness, mercy and fresh cleansing. Each day we have a new opportunity to make God's priorities our priorities.

More than anything else, put God's work first and do what he wants. Then the other things will be yours as well. (Matthew 6:33 CEV)

Each day also has the possibility of bringing something into our lives that we personally cannot change. We need to come to terms with the limitations of our humanity. We are human beings confined within the slice of time we call today. God has promised to take care of all our yesterdays and tomorrows. We simply need to live one day at a time under God's guidance and care. If we do this, we are assured that God will work all things together for our good, and according to His plan for our lives.

Prayer: Thank you for the gift of this day. I choose to make your agenda my priority today. Help me to live one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time, trusting that You will make all things right as I surrender to Your will. Amen

THURSDAY, MAY 9, 2019

RELAPSE – OBSESSION TO USE

We may not see what goes on inside us, but the Bible tells us there is a battle going on for control of our minds. When we first came into recovery, we likely found it hard not to obsess on the substance, person, or thing that we were addicted to. Evil powers had control of our thinking and actions, and they were determined to remain in control. The good news is that when we invite Jesus into our lives, the Holy Spirit comes to live in us and one of His tasks is to set us free from the power of sin.

Deep inside me I find joy in God's law. But I see another law working in me. It fights against the law of my mind. It makes me a prisoner of the law of sin. That law controls me. (Romans 7:22-23 NIRV)

We do not visibly see the devil as he begins to oppose our new way of life, but we are certainly aware of his presence. In an unguarded moment He'll fill our minds with obsessive thoughts about our drug of choice. At other times a wrong done by someone against us will swirl around in our head and won't seem to let us go. The devil will do everything within his power to keep us in bondage to whatever He can. The unseen powers of darkness are no match against the power of the Holy Spirit, but their voices are louder, and initially more familiar to us, than God's voice.

To have victory over obsessive thoughts we need to stand firm in the power of the Holy Spirit and use the words of scripture against the enemy who is seeking to destroy us.

Put on all of God's armor. Then you can remain strong against the devil's evil plans. Our fight is not against human beings. It is against the rulers, the authorities and the powers of this dark world. It is against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly world. (Ephesians 6:11-12 NIRV)

Prayer: Gracious God, I desire to be free from every obsession that has held me captive. Please help me stand firm on the truth of Your word and declare that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. Amen

To have victory over obsessive thoughts we need to stand firm in the power of the Holy Spirit and use the words of scripture against the enemy who is seeking to destroy us.

FRIDAY, MAY 10, 2019

CHARACTER DEFECT – SELF-IMPORTANCE

Have you tried putting together a toy or a piece of furniture which came with detailed instructions which you ignored, and then near the end, found an important piece that actually needed to go in place at the start for the whole thing to fit together? Life is like that when we consider our own ideas and ways of doing things are more important than God's.

The counsel of the Lord stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations. (Psalm 33:11 NKJV)

When we are self-important in our own eyes, we are not fulfilling the command of Jesus to love God and others.

In our addictive lifestyle, some of us considered ourselves to be so important that the world revolved around us. When faced with a situation that involved others, we believed our rights mattered more than anyone else's. At times the most vulnerable in our families suffered because of our self-importance as we disregarded their personal rights and lied to them or stole from them.

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)

God has given each of us gifts, abilities, and knowledge but, when we don't follow His instructions, we never get to be the whole person He created us to be. When we are self-important in our own eyes, we are not fulfilling the command of Jesus to love God and others. We need to humble ourselves and be honest before God about who we truly are on the inside. If we choose to humble ourselves, God will lift us up at just the right time.

So be content with who you are, and don't put on airs. God's strong hand is on you; he'll promote you at the right time. Live carefree before God; he is most careful with you. (1 Peter 5:6-7 MSG)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for thinking too highly of myself and for being a lover of pleasure rather than a lover of God. Help me to follow You in all my ways and consider others as better than myself. Amen

SATURDAY, MAY 11, 2019

ENTIRELY READY FOR CHANGE

Relationship difficulties may have impacted our lives from the time we were very young children. In our addiction, these difficulties resulted in our tendency to criticize family members or friends, manipulate others to get what we wanted, repeatedly break any promises we made, and fail to consider anyone else's needs but our own. Our default position was lying, cheating, stealing and other expressions of self-interest. When we didn't like how a relationship was going, we easily said angry words, made sarcastic comments, told the other person what a jerk they were, and blamed them for our offensive behaviour. Now we need to ask ourselves, are we willing to challenge any harmful behaviour or negative words that we might say to another person in a difficult situation?

Teach me your ways, O LORD, that I may live according to your truth! Grant me purity of heart, so that I may honor you. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. (Psalm 14:2-3, Philippians 2:13 NLT)

To live well we need to establish a new lifestyle of integrity, kindness, and respect towards others. It seems an impossible task, a high standard that we are unable to attain. On our own it is! But God is willing to give us the desire and the power to complete the task if we will turn our will and our life over to His care.

Don't reject the Lord's discipline, and don't be upset when he corrects you. For the Lord corrects those he loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights. (Proverbs 3:11-12 NLT)

Character defects will slip away one at a time as we consistently surrender ourselves to God. Each time we notice one of our former defects in operation, we should bring it to God and invite Him to work powerfully in us, so He can work powerfully through us to help us think and behave in new ways.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank you for enabling me to enjoy life in a meaningful relationship with you and with others. Please remove my character defects and give me the desire and the strength to let go of all that hinders my life's purpose with You. Amen

Are we willing to challenge any harmful behaviour or negative words that we might say to another person in a difficult situation?

SUNDAY, MAY 12, 2019

SUNDAY PSALM – THE KINDNESS OF GOD

When we have admitted to ourselves and another human being the harm we have caused, the next step is to ask God to forgive us for our self-centered way of living. We need to switch from doing what is right in our own eyes to following the ways of God.

We have sinned, even as our ancestors did; we have done wrong and acted wickedly. When our ancestors were in Egypt, they gave no thought to your miracles; they did not remember your many kindnesses, and they rebelled by the sea, the Red Sea. Yet he saved them for his name's sake, to make his mighty power known ... He saved them from the hand of the foe; from the hand of the enemy he redeemed them. Then they believed his promises and sang his praise. (Psalm 106:6-8, 10,12 NIV)

The love and kindness of God is available to all who surrender their will and life to Him. Are we truly willing to believe and receive?

The effects of nations choosing to not follow God are visible all around us. Pride rules in human hearts and people come to believe that they know better than their Creator what is best for them. Some choose to believe that God does not exist, that faith in God is just a crutch for the weak. Others choose to believe that following God will not lead to a meaningful, purposeful life.

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)

The love and kindness of God is available to all who surrender their will and life to Him. He will rescue anyone who turns to Him for help and puts their trust in Him. Are we willing to believe God and receive new life from Him today?

Prayer: Loving God, I want to believe You are real and trust You with all my heart. Please help me to remember Your love and kindness towards me so I may joyfully follow You in all my ways. Amen

MONDAY, MAY 13, 2019

IF GOD SEEMS FAR AWAY WHO MOVED?

Feelings cannot always be trusted. They often point us to an incorrect perception of who we are, who God is, and what is happening in our circumstances. God promises to never leave us and that nothing can separate us from His love.

The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. I keep my eyes always on the Lord. He is at my right hand. So I will always be secure.
(Psalm 145:18 NIV, Psalm 16:8 NIRV)

God's word gives us principles around which we can do an inventory to see if we have drifted from the closeness God is longing for us to experience with Him today. Perhaps we've been busy or distracted and it's been a while since we took time to sit down with God and focus on what He wants to say to us. Have we taken time to just be with God as a friend or do we simply reach out to Him in an emergency? Have we strayed into self-will and sinful attitudes or actions and not asked God for forgiveness? Have we been more focused on getting God's help for our agenda rather than taking time to consult God on what His agenda for our day or a particular situation might be? If we are running away from God's will then we will feel more distant from Him.

If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. Before I confessed my sins, my bones felt limp, and I groaned all day long. Then I admitted my sin to you. I didn't cover up the wrong I had done. ... and you forgave the guilt of my sin.
(John 15:10 NIV; Psalm 32:3,5 NIRV)

Sometimes we may be doing things right and actively seeking to know and follow God. In that case the next avenue to consider is whether the evil one is lying to us through our feelings about God's caring attention in all aspects of our affairs. This calls for us to affirm in our own hearts what God's word says. Our feelings will catch up with these truths.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for ever being close to me. You never stop watching out for me and are ready now, and throughout this day, to lift me up and show me the path You have chosen for me. Help me to remove any obstacles that I may have allowed in our relationship. Help me to take time to rest and find comfort in You. Amen

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TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2019

PARABLE – SOWER AND SEED

How many of us check out the soil in which we want to grow plants or vegetables? If we want healthy plants, we need to loosen up any packed down soil so that it will sustain air flow and retain water. In the Bible we read a story about a sower who scattered seeds that fell on different types of soil, each impacting the growth of the seeds in some way.

A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.
(Matthew 13:3-8 NIV)

***The soil in
this story is
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The soil in this story is compared to the condition of our hearts when we hear the Good News of why Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sin. Some hear what Jesus did but because their hearts are hard it makes no impression on them. Others are touched in their emotions, but their hearts remain unchanged. Some believe that what Jesus did for them was a great sacrifice. They become excited to follow His ways. However, as time goes on, they allow day to day happenings and responsibilities to choke their time and attention and they forget about Jesus. Eventually they relapse to their former ways. Those who grow and produce fruit in their lives hear and believe the Good News. They take time daily to be watered and fed by the Word of God. By following God in all areas of their lives, their hearts are completely softened and good fruit grows.

But the fruit that the Spirit produces in a person's life is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
(Galatians 5:22-23 ERV)

Prayer: Gracious God, Thank You that Jesus came to pay the penalty for my sins, and I am adopted as a child of God. Please soften my heart with the water of Your word so that I may bear much fruit for Your Kingdom. Amen

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2019

TWO ARE BETTER THAN ONE

Leaving behind a lifestyle of self-centered isolation and coming into community with others is both a gift and a challenge.

Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be warm alone? A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.

(Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 NLT)

Clearly God knows that we need one another in order to successfully get ahead. We need to be encouraged by one another's experience, strength, and hope and learn from each other. We need the mentoring and challenging of sponsors and those who have walked ahead of us and picked up useful lessons. We need the strength that comes from both giving and receiving comfort and understanding when times are tough. We need to hear warnings when we're going astray and affirmation when we have achieved tough goals.

Carry one another's heavy loads. If you do, you will fulfill the law of Christ. A friend loves at all times. They are there to help when trouble comes. We are many persons. But in Christ we are one body and each part of the body belongs to all the other parts. (Galatians 6:2, Proverbs 17:17, Romans 12:5 NIRV)

God's view is that we need one another just like a body needs each of its parts. We are called to work, pray, and worship together. If we try to live distant or disconnected, we harm not only ourselves but others. While we are all growing and learning how to let go of character defects it's difficult to tolerate each other, but God will help us. We'll grow stronger more quickly when we do our part in the community, together with others, as God planned.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for your gift of my brothers and sisters in recovery. Help me to see where I fit in and to become a useful member of my family and the recovery community. Amen

God knows that we need one another in order to successfully get ahead.

THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2019

REDUCING SELF-CENTEREDNESS

The Big Book of AA describes the significance of our problem with selfishness in this way: *"There often seems no way of entirely getting rid of self without His [God's] aid. Many of us had moral and philosophical convictions galore, but we could not live up to them even though we would have liked to. Neither could we reduce our self-centeredness much by wishing or trying on our own power. We had to have God's help."* (Big Book pages 62-63)

The Bible confirms what the Big Book says about needing God to help us deal with the destructive problem of selfishness and other shortcomings we have.

"Neither could we reduce our self-centeredness much by wishing or trying on our own power. We had to have God's help."

(Big Book of AA)

By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life ... because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires. (2 Peter 1:3-4 NLT)

God is God and we are not. Trying to be God and run our own affairs didn't work in addiction and it won't work in recovery. God has to be the one in charge. The more we practice letting God's plans and purposes shape our daily activities, the less self-obsessed we will be and the more fulfilling our work and relationships will become.

In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone. (2 Peter 1:5-7 NLT)

Prayer: Gracious God, Thank You for helping me deal with my selfishness. I surrender. Be the director of my life. Work Your will in me and through me so that I might share in Your divine nature. Amen

FRIDAY, MAY 17, 2019

FOCUSED AND EFFICIENT

Years of aimless living in addiction kept us from becoming focused, well-organized, and productive. As we move forward we need to be humble enough to admit that we have efficiency gaps in our current way of living and allow God and others to teach us new skills.

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. (Ephesians 5:15-16 NIV)

Our attention runs in many directions. We've lived with distractions for years and now it takes effort to choose good priorities for the day, and focus on them one at a time until they are completed. We need to pay less attention to our phones, let others take care of what they are responsible for, and keep our attention focused on the task at hand. In the same way we push ourselves in the gym to build stronger muscles by pushing through pain and sweat, so we will have to "push through" and keep working on important things when we are tired and don't really feel like continuing. God will help us in these practical things if we will pray and ask for His help.

Our priority each day is to give focused time to God so we can communicate with Him and allow Him to encourage and guide us in the best path for that day. Spending time with God, reading the Bible and praying, will be challenging for us. Our first step to becoming more efficient, is just to begin.

Jesus kept a focused agenda, even when He was heading to painful suffering and death on the cross and we are encouraged to follow His example in our daily routine.

... fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2 NIV)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, You had many distractions to deal with each day but You stayed focused on what Your Heavenly Father had in mind for You to do. Help me to seek God's will, stay focused and live as You did. Amen

Jesus kept a focused agenda ... we are encouraged today to follow His example.

SATURDAY, MAY 18, 2019

COMING HUMBLY FOR GOD'S HELP

What does it mean to humbly ask God to remove our shortcomings? If we truly have come to that place where we want God to remove our shortcomings, then we will have given some thought to what they actually are. We will be aware of the negative effect they have had on our lives and strongly desire to have them removed.

The Lord is good and does what is right; he shows the proper path to those who go astray. He leads the humble in doing right, teaching them his way. The Lord leads with unfailing love and faithfulness all who keep his covenant and obey his demands. (Psalm 25:8-10 NLT)

When we think of the shortcomings in our character, is there a sense of regret or do we attempt to justify our behaviour?

When we think of our character shortcomings, is there a sense of regret or do we attempt to justify what we do? To humbly ask God to remove our shortcomings reveals that we have become aware of how far we have strayed from the ways of God, and from the person He created us to be. We are humbled by the price Jesus paid to set us free from our sin and make us right with God. We know that only by the power of the Holy Spirit living in us will we be able to live the purposeful life we have been given. We are truly humbled by the fact that God has provided everything we need to live a life devoted to Him.

We will strengthen the new foundation we have laid in recovery by daily admitting that without God we can do nothing. Obedience to God's word is the tried and true way to victory over self-absorption. God does not want us to focus on our faults. He wants us to focus on getting to know His will as it is revealed in His Word, and putting that knowledge into practice.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I recognize the shortcomings in my character and humbly ask You to remove them. I receive Your forgiveness for my sins and look to You for rest for my soul. I surrender my fear and worries to You. I ask You to change my thinking and believing until I am totally secure in your love and goodness. I choose to embrace life on your terms. Amen

SUNDAY, MAY 19, 2019

SUNDAY PSALM – THE SUN COMES UP

For some of us, coming into recovery has opened our eyes to the beauty of creation. In our former dysfunctional lifestyle, we lived in a darkness of soul where our mind was in bondage to the addiction that controlled us. The spectacular beauty of the sky never entered our thinking. Now we are coming into a new place and can begin to appreciate the beauty around us, and above us.

The heavens keep telling the wonders of God, and the skies declare what he has done. Each day informs the following day; each night announces to the next. They don't speak a word, and there is never the sound of a voice. Yet their message reaches all the earth, and it travels around the world. In the heavens a tent is set up for the sun. It rises like a bridegroom and gets ready like a hero eager to run a race. It travels all the way across the sky. Nothing hides from its heat. (Psalm 19:1-6 CEV)

Nothing is said to it, but every day the sun faithfully comes up to announce a new day. The sun not only gives us light but also gives warmth. It enhances the beauty that is all around us.

When we gave our will and life over to the care of God, light came into our darkness bringing with it the ability to notice simple beauty and enjoy what we see and hear each day. What a wonderful gift from God.

As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease. (Genesis 8:22 NIV)

Our lives truly change when we can appreciate and give thanks for the endurance and beauty of God's creation.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I praise You for Your awesome creation. You are a wise and wonderful God who loves and cares for all You have made, including me. Thank You that You truly are my glory and the lifter of my head. Amen

Our lives truly change when we can appreciate and give thanks for the endurance and beauty of God's creation.

MONDAY, MAY 20, 2019

CELEBRATING ON VICTORIA DAY

The British Commonwealth is made up of 53 countries with a combined population of about 2.4 billion people, almost a third of the world's population. Their head of state is Queen Elizabeth. In Canada and around the world, on the Monday before May 25, we have a holiday that is called Victoria Day. It was set in place in 1845 to give people an opportunity to celebrate the birthday of Victoria who was the reigning queen at that time. It is the day now appointed to recognize the birthday of whoever wears the crown and sits on the throne.

Jesus set aside the glory and honour of heaven to come to earth and die for our sins and restore us to His eternal Kingdom.

The Bible teaches us that Jesus is the King of Kings and he has power and authority above and beyond any earthly king or queen. While many rulers down through time have ruled for their personal gain rather than for the good of their citizens, Jesus demonstrated that He has our best interests at heart and has done everything necessary to bring life and peace for us today, and in our ongoing recovery.

But we do see Jesus already given a crown of glory and honor. He was made lower than the angels for a little while. He suffered death. By the grace of God, he tasted death for everyone. That is why he was given his crown. (Hebrews 2:9 NIRV)

Jesus set aside the glory and honour of heaven to come to earth and die for our sins and restore us to His eternal Kingdom. Jesus cares for each of us and can be trusted to walk with us in recovery, if we will invite Him to do so. He is a King worth celebrating on this holiday Monday.

May grace and peace come to you from Jesus Christ. He is the faithful witness, so what he has shown can be trusted. He was the first to rise from the dead. He rules over the kings of the earth. Glory and power belong to Jesus Christ who loves us! He has set us free from our sins by pouring out his blood for us. (Revelation 1:5 NIRV)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I praise You for who You are, King over all kings and Lord over all lords. Thank you for your willingness to come to earth to die for my sins. I choose to go forward with You in my life in recovery. Please help me to follow Your ways in all my affairs. All power and glory belong to You and You are truly worth celebrating today. Amen

TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2019

BEATTITUDES – THIRST FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

Hunger and thirst are basic human needs. When basic needs are not met it's difficult or impossible to give ourselves to other tasks. For example, it's hard for children to study at school when they've had no breakfast or for recovering addicts to focus on work when they have no safe housing to return to at night.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. (Matthew 5:6 NIV)

Jesus teaches that the most basic foundation of life is the need to know and live as God intends. Whether we admit it or not, the guilt and shame that comes from living life out of sync with God's purposes leaves us feeling edgy and dissatisfied. We know something is wrong but we're not sure what. We've told ourselves we need more money, sexual gratification, a new toy, or our drug of choice. The hunger within us is God given, but we have been trying to feed it with the things that will not satisfy.

Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare. (Isaiah 55:2 NV)

The recovery journey of seeking God, getting to know His will, letting go of our character defects, building respectful and loving relationships and coming more and more into conscious contact with Him, is the only way we will truly be filled up and satisfied.

It sounds like a long and difficult challenge and we wonder if we are up to the task. Fortunately, we don't have to wait to be satisfied until we are successful in all these areas. We simply stay hungry and thirsty for what is right each step of the way. To be physically healthy, we need to drink several glasses of water and eat three healthy meals each day. To be spiritually healthy, we need to be in conscious contact with God each day through prayer and meditation on His word. How hungry and thirsty for righteousness are we today?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I have sought after many things to satisfy my aching heart. Please help me to seek Your food and drink today and every day, and live filled up on You. Amen

***We simply
have to
stay
hungry
and thirsty
for what is
right each
step of the
way.***

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 2019

TENDERNESS and COMPASSION

God is tender and compassionate. Knowing and believing that God tenderly watches over us with compassion will allow our hearts to be filled with peace. Comfort and healing for our pain will flow from the knowledge that God really does love and care for us like a good, good Father.

I myself taught Israel how to walk, leading him along by the hand. But he doesn't know or even care that it was I who took care of him. I led Israel along with my ropes of kindness and love. I lifted the yoke from his neck, and I myself stooped to feed him. (Hosea 11:3-4 NLT)

God treasures us as His beloved children and desires that we respond to Him as we would to a loving earthly Father. When Jesus looked at suffering people around Him, His heart was filled with love and compassion for them. When we decided to give our will and our lives over to the care of God, we were likely unaware of the kindness He was already making available to us. An important part of our new life with God in recovery is getting to know the generous grace of God offered to us through Jesus Christ.

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. (Matthew 9:36 NIV)

When we experience the extent of God's love for us, our recovery work will take on a new focus. Rather than simply trying to improve our outward behaviour, we will desire to know more of God's love and kindness. Our relationship with God will grow and we will choose to bring all our needs and desires to Him. With great wisdom, He will guide us in the way we should go.

For you are my hiding place; you protect me from trouble. You surround me with songs of victory. The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you." (Psalm 32:7-8 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I ask You to teach me Your ways so that my life will reflect Your power in me to honour You in all my ways. Thank You for your love and kindness to me. I am forever grateful that You care. Amen

***Comfort
and
healing for
our pain
will flow
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knowledge
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really does
love and
care for
us.***

THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2019

FACING FALSE ACCUSATION

How are we to deal with a person who falsely accuses us of something we did not do? We may react in anger, use strong language, or just mutter something under our breath and angrily walk away. Sometimes we counter a false accusation with an accusation of our own, or spread gossip about the person. We may stay silent but hold a resentment. What is God's way of handling a situation like this that will keep us moving steadily forward on our healing journey?

Give a kind and respectful answer and keep your conscience clear. This way you will make people ashamed for saying bad things about your good conduct as a follower of Christ. You are better off to obey God and suffer for doing right than to suffer for doing wrong. (1 Peter 3:16-17 CEV)

Our priority must be to live in a way that honours God and others. When we are accused of something, there often is a "kernel of truth" in what the person is saying. We may need to take ownership of the fact that we have wounded others and make amends for the hurt we have caused them.

God's word instructs us to give an answer with gentleness and respect. We need to take time to settle down and truthfully explain to the person where we are at. They should also be given the opportunity to respectfully explain how they formed the opinion that caused the accusation.

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. (Proverbs 15:1 NIV)

Even if the one accusing us refuses to accept the truth, we are encouraged to stay in obedience to God in both our attitude and our action. If we react according to God's principles, God will bring comfort and healing, and the truth we know in our hearts will set us free. In the end, we need to leave what others mistakenly believe about us in God's hands and watch Him work to bring light into the situation.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I know I am sensitive to the criticism and accusation of others especially when they judge me on the basis of my past behaviour. Forgive me for any resentment I hold towards another and help me to forgive as You have forgiven me. Help me to be kind to others and to treat everyone with gentleness and respect. Amen

How are we to deal with a person when they falsely accuse us of something we did not do?

FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2019

GOD'S VIEW OF LAZINESS

In the Bible Jesus told a story of three servants who were given various amounts of money to use or invest on behalf of their master. Two of the servants doubled the amount they were given and the third did nothing. We don't know if he was jealous that the others were given more, or if he held resentment against the master because of his high expectations, or a bit of both. The bottom line is, he didn't do anything with what he had been given. When the master came back, his condemnation of the man was not that he hadn't earned as much as the others but that he was lazy and had not done anything with what he had been given. (Matthew 25)

We may look around at others who had a better life when they were growing up, a better education, or better prospects than we ever had. In comparing our circumstances with theirs, we may feel sorry for ourselves and angry at the world that seems to have deprived us of a good life. God has given each of us opportunities and gifts we can use to serve one another and experience a fulfilled life. What have we chosen to do with what we have been given?

What are we going to do with the gift of today that God has given us?

God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly but understand what the Lord wants you to do. (1 Peter 4:10 NIRV, Ephesians 5:16-17 NLT)

Some people compare themselves with others and because they easily manage to do more than what they see others do, they choose not to do all they could. God knows what each of us is capable of. To do less than what we can is to be guilty of being lazy. God made us to experience satisfaction when we fully use the gifts and opportunities we have been given. Each of us is accountable for what we have been given.

Much will be required of everyone who has been given much. Even more will be asked of the person who is supposed to take care of much. (Luke 12:48 NIRV)

Every day is a gift and an opportunity. What are we going to do with the gift of today that God has given us?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of my life and the opportunities I have been given. Help me to do all I can to faithfully serve You and others each day. Amen

SATURDAY, MAY 25, 2019

WHERE HAVE I CAUSED HARM?

We have all been hurt and let down by others. It's simply part of being around humans. However, some of us are so focused on how we've been victimized and hurt that we fail to acknowledge how we've harmed others. To move forward in recovery, we must come to the place where we recognize the pain and brokenness in our relationships and deal with the harm caused to us, and by us.

“And why worry about a speck in your friend’s eye when you have a log in your own? How can you think of saying to your friend, ‘Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,’ when you can’t see past the log in your own eye? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend’s eye. (Matthew 7:3-5 NLT)

When we humble ourselves and forgive others, God will do a deep work of restoration in us. Others have failed us, but we have failed others too. Others have not lived up to their good intentions and have caused us pain. We have caused others pain as well. Are we better than those who have harmed us? Obviously not! Did Jesus take the suffering of all the wrongs done to us and all wrongs done by us to the cross? Yes! If we forgive those who have harmed us, we ourselves will be forgiven for the harm we have caused others.

If we ask Him, God will teach us how our way of relating is different from His plan for loving relationships. God will help us recall particular people and circumstances where we have caused harm. Writing down what happened, outlining our part in the event, and accepting responsibility for the wrong we did, will begin our healing process.

Today is another opportunity to ask God for healing and forgiveness so we can become willing to make amends to the individuals we have harmed.

Prayer: Loving God, I choose to forgive others as You have forgiven me. Your word says there is no fear in love, and I believe Your perfect love will cast out all my fear and help me become willing to make amends to those people I have harmed. Amen

We must come to the place where we recognize the pain and brokenness in our relationships and deal with the harm caused to us, and by us.

SUNDAY, MAY 26, 2019

SUNDAY PSALM – MORE DESIRABLE THAN GOLD

Some of us in recovery have transitioned from knowing little or nothing about the amazing God who pursued us with His love to completely giving our will and our life over to His care. We know that living a self-directed life brought us to a place of darkness where life was totally unmanageable. Now we are beginning to know this loving God and His way of light and life.

The instructions of the Lord are perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The commandments of the Lord are right, bringing joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are clear, giving insight for living. Reverence for the Lord is pure, lasting forever. The laws of the Lord are true; each one is fair. They are more desirable than gold, even the finest gold. They are sweeter than honey, even honey dripping from the comb. They are a warning to your servant, a great reward for those who obey them. (Psalm 19:7-11 NLT)

Now we are beginning to know this loving God and His way of light and life.

When we choose to make conscious contact with God, He directs our path and we experience joy in our hearts and peace in our souls. The Holy Spirit guides us, and our conscience once again becomes a trustworthy judge. We begin to make better choices and find freedom to become more transparent in the world around us.

They demonstrate that God’s law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right. (Romans 2:15 NLT)

God’s ways are perfect. When we follow God’s principles in all our affairs, we can leave all the consequences with Him. Great reward is promised to those who wholeheartedly trust and obey the Lord. Joy and contentment fill our souls, and life will be sweeter than honey dripping from the comb.

Prayer: Gracious God, I am convinced that Your ways give insight for living that lead to an abundant life. Help me to follow and treasure Your ways as I would the finest gold. Amen

MONDAY, MAY 27, 2019

THE POWER OF GRATITUDE

We will come to experience a secure and happy life in recovery as we learn to be grateful and appreciate the smallest blessing of each day. Being grateful and taking time to give thanks sustains healthy growth. No successful life in recovery was built on irritation and focusing on problems. Strength comes as we learn to give thanks to God, who is good, and whose love is available to us 24/7.

Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful. Give thanks no matter what happens. God wants you to thank him because you believe in Christ Jesus. Give thanks to the only one who can do great miracles. His faithful love continues forever. (Colossians 4:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Psalm 136:4 NIRV)

The miracle of being sober today is a gift from God. Have we given God thanks for our sobriety? Jesus died for our sins and offers us forgiveness for all the wrongs we have done. Have we accepted His offer and given thanks for the clean slate we have today?

Since the practice of gratitude is so powerful, how can we make it an intentional part of our daily living? At the top of our "To Do" list each day, why not put "Take time to be grateful." What a burst of energy and joy we receive when we take time to give thanks. Perhaps it's making a gratitude list in our daily journal or writing notes of appreciation to those who have helped us. As we make a phone call or send a text to thank them it might even lift them out of a dull or difficult moment that they are experiencing. For centuries, as individuals and families have gathered around a table for a meal, they have paused to give thanks before they begin to eat. Maybe it's time we added a moment of gratitude at our meal times.

It's important to be grateful today and every day. There's great power in the ongoing practice of gratitude.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have given me so many gifts in this day. I take this moment to remember and give You thanks. Thank you for loving and caring for me. Amen

Strength comes as we learn to give thanks to God, who is good, and whose love is available to us 24/7.

TUESDAY, MAY 28, 2019

LIGHTS IN THE SKY

The Bible tells us that on the third day of creation God spoke and vegetation was created on the earth. On the fourth day God created the sun, moon and stars in the heavens. These lights were created to separate the day from the night, and to serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years. Why would God create vegetation on the earth before He created the necessary elements to support it?

We have the opportunity each day to learn and be in wonder at the order in which God is working to sustain us in our new life with Him.

Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds". And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day. And God said, "Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years"... And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day. (Genesis 1:11,13,14,19 NIV)

When we observe the sun in the daytime and the moon and stars at night, what goes through our minds? Are we amazed by the God who created this sustainable earth whose vegetation is controlled by days, seasons and years?

In our addiction, we seldom thought of God. Now we have the opportunity each day to learn and be in wonder at the order in which God is working to sustain us in our new life with Him in recovery.

Your thoughts are far beyond my understanding, much more than I could ever imagine. (Psalm 139:17 ERV)

Before we were born Jesus paid the price for our sins by dying on the cross and by His resurrection we are assured of eternal life with our Heavenly Father. God made provision for us to be free from the bondage of the sins we would commit before we even existed. None of us has an excuse for remaining in our brokenness and sin because God, at just the right time, made a way for us to be forgiven and restored to new life. God is beyond our understanding, but then He *is* God.

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to surrender to the order of Your ways in all my affairs. I praise You that I do not have to lean on my own understand but just believe and trust You. Amen

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2019

WHAT TO DO ABOUT SUFFERING

None of us will get through life without suffering. What are we to do about it? Many of us, when experiencing suffering, thought a substance or an addictive habit would bring us the relief we needed. Sadly, not only was the comfort temporary, but the associated problems with our self-medication increased our suffering.

Christ suffered here on earth. Now you must be ready to suffer as he did, because suffering shows that you have stopped sinning. It means you have turned from your own desires and want to obey God for the rest of your life. You have already lived long enough like people who don't know God. You were immoral and followed your evil desires. You went around drinking and partying and carrying on. In fact, you even worshiped disgusting idols. Now your former friends wonder why you have stopped running around with them, and they curse you for it. But they will have to answer to God, who judges the living and the dead. (1 Peter 4:1-5 CEV)

One of the biggest challenges in sustaining our sobriety is trusting God to help us when trouble and sorrow come our way. We may be unable to see an immediate solution to the problems we face and become fearful that the pain may overwhelm us. It really feels like suffering to have to go without what we think we need. Because we don't have experience in allowing God to meet our needs, we struggle to trust Him. There may be short-term pain in saying "No" to the obsession to use but God is faithful, and He will do what He promises. The solution we need will come at just the right time.

Jesus set us an example by the suffering He went through on our behalf. He trusted that God knew what He was doing and was prepared to follow God's will for His life. God knows where we are at in life and He will provide what is needed to see us through any circumstance that presents itself. Our part is simply to trust Him.

Prayer: Loving God, help me to trust you in everything, even the painful challenges of daily life. Help me to trust You to work all things together for good, even though that may mean temporary suffering for me. Amen

One of the biggest challenges in sustaining our sobriety is trusting God to help us when trouble and sorrow come our way.

THURSDAY, MAY 30, 2019

"MAYDAY! MAYDAY! MAYDAY!"

"Mayday! Mayday! Mayday!" This is the signal used around the world when an airplane or boat is in trouble - usually big trouble. It's often the last word heard on the "black box" before communication with air traffic controllers is lost. The use of this distress signal began in 1923 following the suggestion of an air traffic controller at an airport and he chose this word because it seemed to cross the English/French languages since "m'aider" means "help me" in French.

God invites us to make use of our own personal "Mayday" call whenever we find ourselves in difficulty. He is more than willing to listen and come to our aid.

God invites us to make use of our own personal "Mayday" call whenever we find ourselves in difficulty.

From a sea of troubles, I call out to you, Lord. Won't you please listen as I beg for mercy? I pray to you, Lord! You are my place of safety, and you are my choice in the land of the living. Please answer my prayer. I am completely helpless. (Psalm 130:1, Psalm 142:5 CEV)

The "Mayday" signal is to be said three times in a row so it can't be mistaken for some other communication that sounds similar. When we admit we are powerless and our lives are unmanageable we are truly calling out, "Mayday! Mayday! Mayday!" While we may be only hoping in desperation, we need to continue to call out for God's help until we come to believe that this power greater than ourselves has come to our rescue. God is with us. God is for us. Jesus forgives. Jesus heals. Jesus sets us free.

Rescue boats and helicopters can get to a ship in distress fairly quickly but it's only when those who called out "Mayday" actually co-operate with rescuers and allow themselves to be saved from their sinking vessel that they truly experience the help they need. Similarly, in our life in recovery, we only experience rescue when we turn our will and our lives over to God's care and begin following His directions.

Prayer: Gracious God, I need Your help today. I cannot get to real life on my own. Help me to truly believe what I've admitted so often – that I am powerless, and my life is unmanageable without You. Amen

FRIDAY, MAY 31, 2019

NOTES

I WILL NOT CRITICIZE, NOT FIND FAULT

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.

It is so easy to find fault with what others are doing and to criticize them. The truth is, it doesn't help to focus on anyone's flaws and failures, and it distracts from the time and energy we give to God's transforming work in our own lives. While we may think that we are controlling and changing other people by criticizing them, it rarely has that effect. God has a better option for us today.

God's grace has been given to me. So here is what I say to every one of you. Don't think of yourself more highly than you should. Be reasonable when you think about yourself. Keep in mind the faith God has given to each of you. If you say or do things that harm one another, watch out! You could end up destroying one another. Say only what will help to build others up and meet their needs. Then what you say will help those who listen. (Romans 12:3, Galatians 5:15, Ephesians 4:29 NIRV)

Today we are on a journey of recovering the life God created us to live. We each have different challenges and character flaws, but God is working in all of us. In the same way others accept us in our change process, it's important for us to accept others in theirs. When someone is struggling, instead of criticizing them, we should take the opportunity to pray for them and support their healing and growth. We may not immediately see any change in the person but at least we know we are part of the solution rather than part of the problem. When we pray, we open the door for God to work a miracle in someone's life.

If we are to follow God's command to speak only those words that build others up and meet their needs, we will need to allow God to change our thinking and give us a new perspective on how to treat our neighbours.

Prayer: Loving God, it is easy for me to find fault and criticize others. Forgive me for thinking I'm any less flawed than someone else. Thank You for Your grace that is available to transform my thinking and deal with my character defects. Make me more like Jesus. Help me to choose to bless others today. Amen

***Just for
today I will
be
agreeable.
I will not
criticize,
not find
fault.***

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