

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY



Daily Meditations



MAY 2022

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offering hope, support, and healing
through Jesus Christ
to victims of
harmful circumstances and dependencies,
as they reclaim the gift of their life.*

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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MAY 2022

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Evelyn Leeburn, Elsie Quick

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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MAY 1, 2022

TREASURE

What are we thinking about every day? What are we longing for? What do we think we need in order to be happy? Jesus tells us to consider what we treasure most because: ***Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.*** (Matthew 6:21 NLT)

For too long the sole object of our desire has been our drug of choice. In recovery, lots of us think that a particular relationship, a good job, and more money are what we need for life to go well for us. Many have stumbled out of recovery over fretting about these and other types of worldly treasures.

The first thing God wants us to know and understand is that the foundation of a settled and satisfying life is coming to experience the truth that we are God's special treasure.

For you are a holy people, who belong to the Lord your God. Of all the people on earth, the Lord your God has chosen you to be his own special treasure. (Deuteronomy 7:6 NLT)

When we truly believe this, we will have come to know the Higher Power who will restore us to sanity and, in that moment of clarity, turn our will and life over to His care. As we walk with God and treasure what He treasures, we will find great joy and delight in our daily living.

Cry out for insight, and ask for understanding. Search for them as you would for silver; seek them like hidden treasures. Then you will understand what it means to fear the Lord, and you will gain knowledge of God. Your laws are my treasure; they are my heart's delight. (Proverbs 2:3-4, Psalm 119:111 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to live in the reality that I am special – I am Your special treasure. Help me not to be anxious about anything but to attach my heart and mind to this truth. Help me to walk in Your paths of righteousness and seek understanding like hidden treasure. Help me to follow Your principles in all my affairs so that each day I can know the joy and delight of life with You in recovery. Amen

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure that a man discovered hidden in a field. In his excitement, he hid it again and sold everything he owned to get enough money to buy the field.

Matthew 13:44 NLT

MAY 2, 2022

CREATIVITY

The restoration of "The Night Watch," a masterpiece by the painter Rembrandt, began in 2019 and the public were invited to view the procedure and give feedback on the restoration process. All of us in recovery are like the people depicted in that painting. We are worn and stained by the impact of the world around us. Each one of us requires individual attention as we are being restored to the person God created us to be.

Know that the Lord is God. He made us, and we belong to him. We are his people. We are the sheep belonging to his flock. (Psalm 100:3 NIRV)

Being creative is a God given ability because we are made in God's image.

As infants we likely did things that brought delight to those around us. As the years went on, we got worn out and stained by our environment. In addiction, the person we once were got taken over by the person we became. God has given each person creative ability which tends to get lost behind the protective screen we put up. Perhaps we can paint, or play an instrument, or sing, or excel at a sport, or build a house, or use another skill that God has given us. God has a plan for us on this earth and we can expect that the purpose will show itself during the recovery process.

The Lord has given them special skills as engravers, designers, embroiderers in blue, purple, and scarlet thread on fine linen cloth, and weavers. They excel as craftsmen and as designers. (Exodus 35:35 NLT)

The restoration of the painting above was viewed by the public who gave input on its progress. In our recovery we have people around us who are willing to share their experience, strength and hope with us. God's desire is that we discover His original plan for our lives and allow Him to fully restore the person He created us to be.

The Lord will work out his plans for my life — for your faithful love, O Lord, endures forever. Don't abandon me, for you made me. (Psalm 138:8 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, When I look around, I am amazed at the work of Your hands. Please restore me to be the person You created me to be, so that I might take my rightful place in Your creative plan. Amen

MAY 3, 2022

STEP FIVE – COMING TO TERMS WITH OUR LIFESTYLE

Coming to terms with our lifestyle in addiction requires us to admit that, where our dependencies are involved, we have zero self-control. Self-will alone is not enough to stop us from continuing on this dark path. The demon inside our heads is insistent that we do whatever is necessary to fulfill its demands or suffer the consequences. We obey rather than suffer and give in to its demands. Recovery begins when we admit that the power behind our addiction is beyond our control.

You followed the ways of this world and obeyed the devil. He rules the world, and his spirit has power over everyone who doesn't obey God. Once we were also ruled by the selfish desires of our bodies and minds. We had made God angry, and we were going to be punished like everyone else. (Ephesians 2:2-3 CEV)

Friends and family members have spoken to us about our lifestyle and suggested we get help. Because we thought we were in control, we paid no attention to their concerns. But, when we tried to stop what we were doing, it was evident that we were not the one in control. We were ruled by the selfish desires of our mind and body. There are two powers at work in this world. One wants to destroy us and the other wants to give us eternal life. Which power will we choose to obey?

This is what I told them: Obey me, and I will be your God, and you will be my people. Do everything as I say, and all will be well! But my people would not listen to me. They kept doing whatever they wanted, following the stubborn desires of their evil hearts. They went backward instead of forward. (Jeremiah 7:23-24 NLT)

When we admit that we are “powerless over our dependencies” we are making a true statement. Thankfully, there is a Power greater than ourselves, and if we obey Him, all will be well. Today is another opportunity to turn our will and life over to God’s care and experience His life-changing Power at work within us.

Prayer: Gracious God, I need a Power greater than myself to restore me to sanity and give me a meaningful life. Please strengthen me to follow Your ways for I know I am powerless to help myself. Amen

Recovery begins when we admit that the power behind our addiction is beyond our control.

MAY 4, 2022

WEARING THE SHOES OF PEACE

In the Bible we are instructed each day to put on helpful equipment so that we can stay safe and fight the good fight of faith. Included in that equipment are shoes of peace.

For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. (Ephesians 6:15 NLT)

In their homes many folks take their shoes off and either go barefoot or wear socks or slippers. We want our feet to be comfortable and feel safe at home because we have smooth floors. However, when we go outdoors, we know that we need to put on shoes that will protect our feet from the weather and from uneven surfaces that may injure our feet and cause us pain. Our shoes will also need to have good support and give us a firm grip as we steadily move along.

For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared.

As we move through each day, we need spiritual protection that only the peace of God can give us.

You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you! Trust in the Lord always, for the Lord God is the eternal Rock. (Isaiah 26:3-4 NLT)

Ephesians 6:15 NLT

In life, all of us will face unexpected hardships and trouble. On our own, we are as vulnerable to pain as we would be walking outside in bare feet on broken glass or on paths that are covered with all kinds of garbage. As we put on the shoes of God’s peace and walk in the way God directs, we will miss many hazardous occurrences on our journey. God knows what is ahead of us and cares about our safety. He has given us understanding of the way to walk courageously through life situations that are unstable. We need not be afraid of the future or of injury if we are fully prepared with the shoes of peace.

...the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am so glad I can live in the reality that I have everything I need to journey safely through whatever I will face today. Thank You for the shoes of peace that come from knowing Your Word. Help me to do right and walk humbly with You. Amen

MAY 5, 2022

REASONS FOR OPTIMISM

When we come to know God, the Higher Power who will restore us to sanity, our whole being is turned from darkness to light. In the past we were wandering through life in a dejected state and now we are feeling optimistic about our future. We are eager to get rid of our old thoughts and habits and are ready to be renewed in our minds. What we once thought we could never live without, we are determined, with God's help, to leave behind because we have found something better. Can we dare to be optimistic that we will succeed?

But all these things that I once thought very worthwhile — now I've thrown them all away so that I can put my trust and hope in Christ alone. (Philippians 3:7 TLB)

Through belief in everything that Jesus accomplished on our behalf, we have been restored to the likeness of God, our Heavenly Father. We are like newborn children ready to discover a whole new world. We need to remain close to our Heavenly Father and allow Him to teach us how to walk in our new-found freedom and choose to obey the principles of His word. We can dare to be optimistic about our new life because, through the Power of His Spirit, God will guide and direct us in the way we are to go.

Follow God's example in everything you do just as a much loved child imitates his father. Be full of love for others, following the example of Christ who loved you and gave himself to God as a sacrifice to take away your sins. (Ephesians 5:1-2a TLB)

When troubles come our way, let's choose not to fear, because our Heavenly Father watches over us and will help us persevere through each situation that arises. He knows the end from the beginning and is always present to help us. As we grow stronger in our faith, we will be eager to share with those who struggle about the God who made our lives complete.

I always remember that the Lord is with me. He is here, close by my side, so nothing can defeat me. So my heart and soul will be very happy. Even my body will live in safety. (Psalm 16:8-9 ERV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You that I can be optimistic about my future. You are always with me to watch over me, to strengthen me, and to hold me steady. Amen

He [the Lord] is here, close by my side, so nothing can defeat me

Psalm 16:8 ERV

MAY 6, 2022

FRIEND OF SINNERS

Probably the most encouraging words that folks who have struggled and fallen need to hear is, that they still have a friend. Over the years many of us have damaged or even gave up on our relationship with family members. When we come into recovery we leave all our "drinking and using buddies" behind, and it takes a while for us to build trust with people we are just getting to know.

Jesus went to great lengths to demonstrate with both His words and actions that He was a friend to those who were sinners and strugglers. His reputation took a hit because of it, but He stayed true to being there for those like us who needed a friend.

I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners and need to repent."

Luke 5:31-32 NLT

The Son of Man goes around eating and drinking, and you say, "That man eats and drinks too much! He is even a friend of tax collectors and sinners." Jesus said: "The Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost." (Matthew 11:19 CEV, Luke 19:10 NLT)

Jesus acted on our behalf long before we were ready to admit our need for His help and His friendship.

Most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. (Romans 5:7-8 NLT)

Jesus not only sticks with us, He also helps us. He shows us a way forward that is just perfect for each person.

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30 NIV)

God does not make unrealistic demands on us. He stands ready to strengthen us to deal with the mistakes we have made and continue to make. Our part is to admit that we are sinners in need of a friend and reach out our hand for Him to guide us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Before I even knew I needed a friend, You stood ready to be my friend. Thank You for helping me walk according to Your Word and Your ways. Amen

MAY 7, 2022

STOPPING GOSSIP

Almost everyone says they hate gossip and yet many of us are easily drawn into conversations that are unkind. How can we be a person who stops gossip rather than one who contributes to its spread?

But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. Without wood a fire goes out; without a gossip a quarrel dies down. (Colossians 3:8 NLT, Proverbs 26:20 NIV)

We need to decide that we won't participate in a conversation about a person who is absent, when the words that are being said about that person would be painful for them to hear if they were present. We can end gossip by simply not passing on any of the words and rumors we have heard. If the conversation around us moves towards gossip, we can change the subject and talk about something else -- anything else that is positive.

We can make a point to counteract negative things said about an absent person by speaking positive things that we have observed in them. We can encourage a gossip to speak to the person they are gossiping about if it might help the situation. It may help the gossip to consider what they are saying if we simply suggest, "I don't feel comfortable talking this way about this person."

Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers. Drive out the mocker, and out goes strife; quarrels and insults are ended. (Psalm 1:1, Proverbs 22:10 NIV)

We need to ask ourselves: "When do I find myself engaging in gossip? How many of my words would pass the 3-question test for wise speech? 1) Is it true? 2) Is it kind? 3) Is it necessary?" It may be helpful to remember that those who gossip to us will definitely gossip about us. Let's make every effort to stop gossip today.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I ask Your forgiveness for the times I have found fault with others and gossiped about them. I am grateful for the compassion and mercy You showed to me when my own character defects were revealed. Help me to encourage others rather than judge and gossip about them. Amen

How can we be a person who stops gossip rather than one who contributes to its spread?

MAY 8, 2022

CAN A MOTHER FORGET A NURSING CHILD?

Today in our nation, we celebrate Mothers' Day and ask God to bless all mothers everywhere. Many things may hinder us from having a loving relationship with our mother. Addiction or destructive habits break down relationships. War and terrorism kill many mothers around the world. Diseases leave many orphans. Divorce and disability can rob us of time and nurturing interactions with our mothers. We don't always know why a mother would leave her child in the care of someone else. No matter the reason, it's a heart-rending situation. God knows the depth of pain a mother and child may experience when they are separated. In the scriptures, God gives us the following words of comfort.

Even if my father and mother abandon me, the Lord will hold me close. "Can a mother forget her nursing child? Can she feel no love for the child she has borne? But even if that were possible, I would not forget you! See, I have written your name on the palms of my hands. (Psalm 27:10, Isaiah 49:15-16 NLT)

The Bible tells us that nothing can separate us from the love of God when we are in Christ Jesus. God loved us so much that He sent Jesus into the world to bear the punishment for all sin, past, present and future. Sin separates humans from God and negatively impacts all human relationships. The marks of the nails that went through Jesus' hands and feet remain there to remind us that God's love for us goes deeper than anything we could ever experience in this world.

Are we currently feeling the pain of our father or mother abandoning us? God wants to meet us at that place of pain and tenderly comfort us with His love. We can't make human relationships be more than what they truly are. However, the good news is that God can heal every heart-wrenching wound left by someone who let us down. God wants to hold us close and fill our hearts with His unfailing love. God has not forgotten us. God sees our pain. He has written our names on the palms of his hands.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for Your never ending love for me. Draw me close and comfort me. Please heal the wounds in my heart. Help me to honour my mother for giving me birth. Help me to know the abundant provision of grace I have received from You as I choose to grace and bless my mother from my heart. Amen

God can heal every heart wrenching wound left by someone who let us down.

MAY 9, 2022

ANGER AND PRIDE – BAD BUDDIES

How many of us have lashed out in anger against a person who has harmed us? Often when we see that person the anger is stirred up in us and we just want to get back at them. We see them as an enemy to be destroyed in any way possible. How can we get past the bitterness that is inside us and learn to love our enemies?

If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head, and the Lord will reward you. (Proverbs 25:21-22 NIV)

As we consider being kind to our enemies, our feelings may disagree with us. When we think of a person who has continually put us down and trampled all over our feelings we ask, “Why should I be kind to that person?” The main obstacle is simply that our pride would take a beating. Rather than seeing our actions as God’s way to freedom, we see them as giving in to this person. We must battle against willful pride if we are to obey what God says. Our pride may suffer, but God will reward us.

A person without self-control is like a city with broken-down walls. (Proverbs 25:28 NLT)

If we choose to remain filled with pride we bind ourselves to our past. Our focus remains on those former events and what other people might think rather than on what God says. Without self-control and the power and love of God in our hearts our brokenness will negatively influence us as we consider obeying God’s word. Jesus, who humbled Himself and died on a cross for our sins, prayed for forgiveness for those who crucified Him. Are we so filled with pride and concerned about how some people will see us that we refuse to obey God and have a life of goodness towards others, even our enemies?

The right word at the right time is like precious gold set in silver. Listening to good advice is worth much more than jewelry made of gold. (Proverbs 25:11-12 CEV)

Prayer: Loving God, Please give me wisdom to obey Your word and follow Your ways in all my affairs. Help me to love and be kind to everyone, especially those I once thought to be my enemies. Amen

***If we
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MAY 10, 2022

STEP SIX – WHAT DOES “ENTIRELY READY” LOOK LIKE

In Step-6 we say we are entirely ready to have God remove all the character defects we have listed in our fearless moral inventory. We are preparing for God to remove our defective old self, which was controlled by our lustful desires, so we can live as a new person controlled by the Spirit of God and operating in the will of God.

You were told that your foolish desires will destroy you and that you must give up your old way of life with all its bad habits. Let the Spirit change your way of thinking and make you into a new person. You were created to be like God, and so you must please him and be truly holy. (Ephesians 4:22-24 CEV)

***When we say
we are
entirely ready
to have God
remove our
defects of
character we
need to be
sure that we
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for some of
them to stay.***

Being entirely ready to start afresh is the key to Step 6. We are making a complete life change. We have been travelling roads that are familiar to us and now say we are entirely ready to travel roads that are unfamiliar. We do not travel alone for God will always be with us and the Holy Spirit will guide, direct, and teach us everything we need to know to have a successful new life in recovery.

You said to me, “I will point out the road that you should follow. I will be your teacher and watch over you. (Psalm 32:8 CEV)

When we say we are entirely ready to have God remove our defects of character we need to be sure that we are not making room for some of them to stay. Often pride, loitering within us, will tell us that one or more of our characteristics are OK because that is just who we are. We need to be totally honest with ourselves about what is harmful to others and ask God to remove it.

You are God’s people, so don’t let it be said that any of you are immoral or indecent or greedy. (Ephesians 5:3 CEV)

Prayer: Gracious God, I ask You to show me what I need to let go of. Help me to get to know You and follow Your ways as I navigate my new life with You in recovery. Amen

MAY 11, 2022

GOD'S PROMISES ARE FULFILLED

The nations are in chaos, and their kingdoms crumble! God's voice thunders, and the earth melts! The Lord of Heaven's Armies is here among us; the God of Israel is our fortress. Come, see the glorious works of the Lord: See how he brings destruction upon the world. He causes wars to end throughout the earth. He breaks the bow and snaps the spear; he burns the shields with fire.
(Psalm 46:6-9 NLT)

One would think the first sentence above came from today's newscast instead of the Bible. It seems most countries in the world are struggling with internal and external problems. The citizens elect new governments believing they will fulfill the promises the candidates made during the election. Elected leaders may annul agreements that previous governments believed in and worked hard to accomplish. Times change and the new government becomes the old government, and on and on and on it goes.

When we admitted that our lives had become unmanageable, we sought help. We came to believe that God is the power greater than ourselves who can restore us to sanity. We then became willing to turn our will and our lives over to His care. God made us promises and He will faithfully fulfill them. God's word never changes and, as we continue to follow His principles for life, we will find that we are never disappointed. Jesus said in this world we would have trials and sorrows and He was not wrong. He also told us to live in peace and not fear, because He has overcome the world.

I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world. (John 16:33 NLT)

When our behaviour reflects the fact that we have put our faith in God and trust Him to keep His promises, we will have a stable new life that will last forever.

Prayer: Loving God, You have proved Yourself faithful in all Your ways. Help me to rest in Your promises that are backed by the honour of Your name. Amen

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MAY 12, 2022

LIVING SOBER – DEVELOPING NEW INTERESTS AND SKILLS

Living in addiction is chaotic. A person is never at peace either in mind or body. Each addict is continuously at work seeking to fulfill the demands of whatever is their master. The Bible tells us there is no peace for those who refuse to follow God's ways.

But the wicked are like the tossing sea; for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up mire and dirt. "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked." (Isaiah 57:20-21 ESV)

When we come into recovery, we need to find new interests and a new set of skills so we can be effective in our new life. As we check with others, they will name some individuals who will give us suggestions of programs or people that will help us through the recovery process. Some will be willing to teach us new skills related to employment. Others may share their recreational interests such as hiking or sports. Interests and skills are varied but we can all share those things we have learned to enjoy. Each of us can contribute in some way, even if it is just taking time to listen to others and explore possibilities with them.

So get rid of your old self, which made you live as you used to—the old self that was being destroyed by its deceitful desires. Your hearts and minds must be made completely new, and you must put on the new self, which is created in God's likeness and reveals itself in the true life that is upright and holy. (Ephesians 4:22-24 GNT)

Being in community brings a new set of skills to be learned. Living sober with selfless love needs to be a priority on our agenda. God is well pleased with us when we are patient and kind toward others, especially those who appear to be disadvantaged. As we seek God and his ways, He will encourage us to be interested in others and give us the skills we need to do whatever He has called us to do.

Prayer: Gracious God, Please empower me with the skills I need to do the work You have planned for me to do. Thank You for giving me new life and bringing me to a place where I want to look towards interacting with others for the good of all of us. Amen

***Whoever is
being taught
God's word
should share
the good
things they
have with
the one who
is teaching
them.***

Galatians 6:6 ERV

MAY 13, 2022

WHAT DOES MATURITY LOOK LIKE FOR ME?

As infants and toddlers, we were not aware of what was harmful and what was good for us. Our parents and others were the ones who taught us and created an environment of safety around us. As we matured, we continued to learn and observe the way things were done. In life, we normally have some good role models, and some not so good. Often our maturity may be stunted by the behaviour of a role model who is harmful to our well-being.

The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. (Luke 8:14 NIV)

How many of us got caught in this cycle? We are all born into the world with nothing but some of us, like the seed that fell into thorns which began to choke the life out of it, started to worry and fret about the things that happened around us. As we began to mature, we thought that the pleasures of this world held the answer to our problems, only to find out that they caused us even more heartache. When we finally reached that place where we knew our life was unmanageable, Jesus invited us to come to Him.

Come to me and I will give you rest—all of you who work so hard beneath a heavy yoke. Wear my yoke—for it fits perfectly—and let me teach you; for I am gentle and humble, and you shall find rest for your souls; (Matthew 11:28 TLB)

The Scriptures tell us that before we were born God knew us and nothing is hidden from His sight. When we come to believe in a Power greater than ourselves, we are becoming spiritually mature, and it is just the right time to put off the old self and be born again into the Kingdom of God. We can then grow and mature in our new life by practicing God's principles in all our affairs.

Let all who are spiritually mature agree on these things. If you disagree on some point, I believe God will make it plain to you. (Philippians 3:15 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to be spiritually awake and to practice Your principles in all my affairs. I want to press on to maturity in the new life You have given me. Amen

***We can then
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MAY 14, 2022

LOVE IS NOT DEMANDING

Many of us struggle to recognize the difference between asking and demanding. Demanding people believe they are entitled to what they deem to be their rights. They often require more from another person than that person wants to give. Demanding people might use manipulation and threats to get what they want. On the other hand, a person making a respectful request recognizes that granting the request is left to the discretion of the person being asked.

Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace. (Ephesians 4:2-3 NLT)

Demanding people are primarily concerned with their own needs. As children of God, we are told to also be concerned about the needs of others. That is why the Bible tells us to love one another as we love ourselves. Love requires that we give people freedom to be who they are without any imposed demands on them to meet our needs or to do things our way. If we love someone, we will allow them to make their own choices. That is what God does for us. He did not make us robots who are required to do what He demands. He gives us free will to choose to love Him and follow His ways.

***Love
is not
demanding
but selfless
in all
its ways.***

We pray that the Lord will make your love grow. We pray that he will give you more and more love for each other and for all people. We pray that you will love everyone in the same way we love you. (1 Thessalonians 3:12 ERV)

Jesus demanded nothing from us when He came into the world to save us from our sins. To be selfless like Jesus we need to remember that love is not demanding but selfless in all its ways. Selflessness is an attribute that respects others' boundaries and does not impose its expectations and desires on another. Love is never demanding!

Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love makes up for many of your faults. (1 Peter 4:8 TLB)

Prayer: Gracious Father, Please help me to be non-demanding in all my ways and to love and respect the boundaries and choices of others. Thank You for the love You lavish on me as You give me the will to choose to love You. Help me to be more like you. Amen

MAY 15, 2022

DON'T WORRY

When Jesus was here on earth He spoke clearly about our tendency to worry. Worry is one of those things that takes a great deal from a person but provides nothing in return. When we were powerless over our dependency, what was our primary worry at that time? It was mainly providing the “medication” we were addicted to. Food and clothing etc. were low on our “worry list” and could be obtained from others or from community sources who were willing to supply our need. In our new life with God in recovery, what are we now worrying about?

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. (Matthew 6:25 ERV)

In our addiction we sought our dependency above everything else. Now it is time to seek God above everything else and, when we do, God promises to supply all our needs. As we follow God’s principles in all our affairs, we get to know the gracious God whom we serve and what He says about worrying about things we need.

Don't worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks for what you have. And because you belong to Christ Jesus, God's peace will stand guard over all your thoughts and feelings. (Philippians 4:6-7a ERV)

God works everything together for our good and that includes our past, our present and our future. In the past, we may have relied on others to provide for our needs. Now that we are children of God, we can take every need we are anxious about to the Lord in prayer. Worrying achieves nothing, but God answers prayer.

What you should want most is God's kingdom and doing what he wants you to do. Then he will give you all these other things you need. So don't worry about tomorrow. (Matthew 6:33-34a ERV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I choose to give up worrying about my life and the things that I need. Today I submit my worries and cares to You and ask You to meet all my needs from Your abundant provision. Amen

Don't worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks for what you have.

Philippians 4:6 ERV

MAY 16, 2022

YOUR KINGDOM COME. YOUR WILL BE DONE.

In the prayer Jesus taught His friends when they asked Him how to pray there is a line that says, ***"Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."*** This really is what we are longing for and building our foundation on as we work through Steps 1 to 3 of the 12-Step program.

We recognize that God's way of doing things is the only way that works, and we make a decision to turn our will and our life over to His care. All the rest of our step work is a simple application of this principle. In Step 4 we do a searching and fearless moral inventory because we believe that God put principles for living together in a way that helps us do the right thing. Having behaved in harmful ways towards others we admit our wrongdoing. In Step 5 we make that admission as clearly as we can to ourselves, to God, and to another person. The

Bible tells us that when we have done wrong, we need to repent and turn away from those sinful actions so God can forgive us and restore us to new life.

"Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Matthew 6:10 NIV

If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin. (Romans 10:9-10, 1 John 1:7 NLT)

Steps 6 – 9 are specific ways we put into practice the reality of God's will being done in our lives. We allow God to change us, remove our character defects, and, where possible, help us put our relationships back together again.

Steps 10 – 12 remind us what needs to be done each day in order to live in God’s way. We look at our lives with God’s values in mind. We seek to learn from God each day and put His principles into practice in all our affairs.

Prayer: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours forever. Amen

MAY 17, 2022

STEP SEVEN – ASKING NOT TELLING

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

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

The construct for our new life with God in recovery is that we should come before Him and humbly speak to Him about our needs. Some of us, however, are more interested in our demands rather than asking God, in His wisdom, to meet our needs. We then wonder why we feel pressure and have little joy in our recovery. God promises that if we ask, we will receive, and our joy will be complete.

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

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

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

***We wanted
to change
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but were
not always
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God to
make those
changes in
us.***

MAY 18, 2022

ACTIONS THAT STRENGTHEN HOPE

Most of us think that we would be living happy and contented lives today if we had never known adversity and heartache. We believe that what we endured brought us to that place where we were powerless over our dependency and our life was unmanageable. In recovery, we are learning that it was the actions we took to compensate for whatever caused us pain that resulted in us being brought to that place of darkness. We are also learning that trusting God and having hope in His promises will help us endure whatever happens in the future.

We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles, because we know how troubles can develop passionate patience in us, and how that patience in turn forges the tempered steel of virtue, keeping us alert for whatever God will do next. In alert expectancy such as this, we're never left feeling shortchanged. Quite the contrary—we can't round up enough containers to hold everything God generously pours into our lives through the Holy Spirit! (Romans 5:3b-5 MSG)

***May the
God who
gives hope
fill you
with great
joy.***

Romans 15:13

If we have patience and trust Him to act on our behalf, God will steady us in the hard times of life. We get into trouble when we are impatient and start to look for our own solutions to life situations. When we begin to trust God and wait and have hope that He will act, we can leave everything in His care and anticipate the good He will bring to each situation we have entrusted to Him. In His time, we will see the result of our hope being fulfilled.

May the God who gives hope fill you with great joy. May you have perfect peace as you trust in him. May the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with hope. (Romans 15:13 NIRV)

As we follow God's ways, we will become aware of problems we didn't know existed. For example, we may discover that an attitude we are exhibiting towards someone is not in keeping with our new life in Christ. We should not be discouraged even if this seems to be a persistent problem. We have hope that, together with God, this and any other problem can be worked out and overcome.

Prayer: Gracious God, Thank You for the confidence You give me that, together with You, I can live a life of integrity and share the hope You have given me with others. Amen

MAY 19, 2022

HALF MEASURES AVOIDED US NOTHING – ENTIRELY READY FOR CHANGE

Half measures avoided us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked His protection and care with complete abandon.

Various 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 and blame others as we tried to manipulate them to get what we wanted. We failed to consider anyone else's needs but our own. Our default position was lying, cheating, stealing and other expressions of self-interest. Now we need to ask ourselves, are we willing to challenge all our harmful behaviour?

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 establish new life in sobriety we need to find a completely new lifestyle of integrity, kindness, and respect towards others in all our affairs. 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 immediately come to God and ask for His strength and protection as we invite Him to powerfully work in and through us to help us think and behave in new ways.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I need your protection and care in all my affairs and so I abandon myself to You today, all that I am and all that I am not; all that is working well and all that is not; all that I understand and all that is confusing. I bring everything, including myself, to You and surrender it all. I am trusting You to make something good out of it all. Amen

***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.***

Psalm 14:2-3 NLT

MAY 20, 2022

GOD GIVES HIS WORD

Often in our recovery journey our expectations of where life should be at this point in time is not what we anticipated. We feel discontented with life and are ready to give up. We claim we have completed the necessary steps according to God's Word and they are not working for us. At this point we need to stop and give an honest answer to the question, "Were we fully committed to obeying God's Word and His direction in all our affairs, or half-hearted, doing only what it took to get by or to get someone off our backs?"

Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another—showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God's way. (2 Timothy 3:16 MSG)

When we gave our will and life over to His care, God promised He would teach us His ways. Many of us were unfamiliar with both God and His ways, and we needed to wholeheartedly submit to God and allow Him to be our guide in the way we had chosen. At first, we tried this but then we began to doubt God and His ways, and truthfully just wanted God to do things our way. This attitude never works for the Word of God never changes.

God means what he says. What he says goes. His powerful Word is sharp as a surgeon's scalpel, cutting through everything, whether doubt or defense, laying us open to listen and obey. (Hebrews 4:12 MSG)

The ways of God are not our ways, and the Bible tells us that forever His Word is settled in heaven. A half-hearted commitment to God will not bring the joyful life he has promised. We need to humbly commit all our ways to God and allow Him to be our guide, for He alone knows the way to the life He has promised. All we need to do is follow.

God's paths get you where you want to go. Right-living people walk them easily; wrong-living people are always tripping and stumbling. (Hosea 14:9b MSG)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me when I think I know better than You how life should be lived. Thank You for Your Word that never changes. Help me to trust You and through prayer and meditation get to know Your unchanging Word and Your faithful ways. Amen

MAY 21, 2022

FEELING VULNERABLE AND HELPLESS

Life in recovery is about living in truth, and the truth is that on our own our hearts are vulnerable. We struggle with fear and often feel powerless. We are assured by God and trusted people in recovery that there is a good way forward – a way that is grounded in the truth that God is with us, and we are never alone.

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. 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 12:1-2 NIV)

When feelings of pain and loss, loneliness, frustration, grief and dissatisfaction surface, we feel unable to cope. If we desire to live the life we are longing for, then our familiar response of hiding our feelings and weakness will have to change. How do we overcome that? As honestly as we know how we name our vulnerability to past painful events. We entrust ourselves to Jesus who promises to work everything together for our good. We bring the wounded areas in our soul to Him and in faith, receive healing and wholeness.

By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him ... 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)

How can we activate "everything we need for living a godly life"? It's not a complicated process. 1) We get to know God's promises by reading the Bible. 2) We practice "speaking truth to ourselves" rather than simply reacting to how we are feeling. 3) We put God's principles into practice daily, no matter how we are feeling. Little by little we discover that peace and freedom come. Our emotions quiet down and we begin to feel safe and grow stronger.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I often feel vulnerable and afraid, but Your word says You give strength to the weary and increase power to the weak. Please strengthen me according to Your word. Amen

***We
entrust
ourselves
and our
memories
to Jesus
who
promises
to work
all these
things
together
for our
good.***

MAY 22, 2022

JUSTICE, JEALOUSY, AND DAY LABOUR

Jesus told a story of a man who was hiring day laborers. He hired some at 9am and agreed to pay them a fair day's wage. Around noon, others were brought in to work with the promise of being paid whatever was right. As the afternoon wore on and others were still without work, the man hired them as well. At the end of the day when the wages were being handed out, those who were hired first thing in the morning expected much more pay than those hired late in the day. They were quite upset when the employer paid each person the same wage regardless of the length of time worked. (Read: Matthew 20:1-16)

All of us who have gone to a day labour office know that whether we are the first to get work or we have to sit in the office and wait, we all need to eat and pay for shelter. No landlord reduces the rent because we've found it difficult to get enough hours of work. We are all in desperate need.

***We
never
could do
enough
to turn
our lives
around
by our
own
efforts.***

The same is true for us who come into life with God in recovery. Whether we sober up and turn our will and our life over to the care of God at age 18 or 81, God promises all of us forgiveness and life with Him forever. All are desperately in need of God's saving and transformation of our lives. God's generosity is not based on what we can do, it is based on what Jesus did for us and offered equally to all.

All have sinned and are not good enough to share God's divine greatness. When people sin, they earn what sin pays—death. But God gives his people a free gift—eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 3:23, 6:23 ERV)

It would not matter when we started, we never could do enough to turn our lives around by our own efforts. We are powerless and our lives are unmanageable. But our generous God, if we are willing to respond to his offer, chooses to be generous to all of us and provide exactly what each person needs. This is justice on God's terms. There is no place for jealousy of someone who got the message early in life or only received God's kindness minutes before they died. We just need to rejoice that God offered it and we got it when we did.

Prayer: Loving God, You know what each person needs and, regardless of our age or our past, You offer us grace and forgiveness today. As I have been treated by You, help me to treat others in the same way. Help me always to be generous and forgiving. Amen

MAY 23, 2022

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.

The Bible teaches us that Jesus is the King of Kings and that He has power and authority above and beyond any earthly king or queen. While many rulers down through time have sought personal gain rather than the good of their citizens, Jesus demonstrated that through His life, death and resurrection, He has done everything required to bring life and peace to 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, 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 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. You are truly worth celebrating today. Amen

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.

MAY 24, 2022

STEP EIGHT – ACKNOWLEDGING BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS

God's desire is for us to enjoy loving and caring relationships with others. We have much to learn in this area. We've blamed others for the way they treated us in the past. However, we have not been mindful of how our behaviour harmed others. Transformation in our lives only comes when our words and actions conform to the principles contained in God's word.

Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift. (Matthew 5:23-24 NIV)

We must receive love and comfort and healing from God, or we'll never feel secure enough to forgive others or ourselves for failure to act in a loving way.

It is challenging to write down the name of each person we had a painful relationship with and seek to know and own our part in whatever happened. To become truly willing to make amends for any harm we caused in the relationship we must look for God in the middle of each circumstance or memory. We must intentionally connect with God who knows, who cares, who heals, and who can even make something good out of the hurtful events of our past. We must receive love and comfort and healing from God, or we'll never feel secure enough to forgive others or ourselves for failure to act in a loving way.

Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love. If someone says, "I love God," but hates a fellow believer, that person is a liar; for if we don't love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see? (1 John 4:7-8, 20 NLT)

It's time to turn from the wounding and the blaming and look to God for His guidance in rebuilding healthy relationships.

Prayer: Loving God, I humbly acknowledge my inability to give and receive love. I believe you care for me and have pursued me with Your unfailing love. Show me the changes I need to make in order that I may become willing to make amends. As I go forward, help me to build my relationships on the firm foundation of love. Amen

MAY 25, 2022

PRAISE THE LORD

Reading the following Psalm is a great way to start the day. The people of every nation on earth are encouraged to praise God for His kindness and great love towards them.

Praise the Lord, all you nations. Praise him, all you people of the earth. For his unfailing love for us is powerful; the Lord's faithfulness endures forever. Praise the Lord! (Psalm 117:1-2 NLT)

Those of us who have given our will and life over to the care of God know we no longer carry the baggage of our past sin and the accompanying guilt and shame. We have been forgiven and declared blameless by the kindness of God in sending Jesus into the world to set us free from the power of sin. We are no longer guilty. We who once lived in rebellion against the things of God are now reconciled to our Heavenly Father who lavishes His love on us. We are His cherished children. If that's not something to praise God for, what is?

How priceless your faithful love is! People find safety in the shadow of your wings. They eat well because there is more than enough in your house. You let them drink from your river that flows with good things. (Psalm 36:7-8 NIRV)

At times we may feel undeserving of the goodness of God. The truth is, when we believe in the finished work of Jesus to cleanse us from all our sins, we receive an eternal inheritance from God that Jesus purchased for us with His life. We don't deserve it, but God declares the price of sin is "paid in full" by Jesus.

Great blessings belong to those who live pure lives! They follow the Lord's teachings. Great blessings belong to those who follow his rules! They seek him with all their heart. (Psalm 119:1-2 ERV)

Let's improve our conscious contact with God and praise Him that, because of Him, we have goodness and mercy following us all the days of our life.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Let me not be silent. I am grateful for all that Jesus has done for me. I ask You to give me the will and desire to live my life in praise and thanksgiving for my inheritance through Jesus. Amen

The people of every nation on earth are encouraged to praise God for His kindness and great love towards them.

MAY 26, 2022

ATTRACTION RATHER THAN PROMOTION

Who would have thought that the way we are living in our relationships, taking responsibility for our actions, and doing the work that is required of us each day, would attract others to think about getting what we have? We lived for such a long time using bullying and manipulation and lies and pleas to get what we wanted. We hurt and disappointed so many people. No one wanted to come near us let alone learn from the way we were living. What a change God has brought about in us.

May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones. (1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 NIV)

When we live by God's principles we are blessed and goodness just naturally flows into all our activities and relationships. We are living in a world that is filled with anger and fear. When people encounter someone who has true inner peace and a simple heart to do the next right thing, they long for the same. Too many people hear negative words, listen to their negative thoughts, and live with despair rather than hope. What a gift we bring when we come alongside them with kindness, compassion, and strength that comes directly from inside us.

Let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father. (Matthew 5:16 NLT)

The answers people long for are not found with the "big-name million-dollar lifestyle" people. Simple people like us who have allowed God to work in our hearts and change them from the inside out are known only to a small circle of friends and loved ones but – we hold the message!

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to live today in a way that pleases You and blesses others. I want to carry the message of how You have not only given me sobriety but a whole new life in Christ. Amen

Our public relations policy is based upon attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.

AA 11th Tradition

MAY 27, 2022

STOP PROCRASTINATION IN ITS TRACKS – TAKE ONE STEP

It is one thing to talk about rebuilding our lives; it is quite another to do so. God is interested in our steps to change and will support them. By taking things one day at a time, one step at a time, even tasks that seem overwhelming become possible. The first step is always the most difficult, the next step almost as hard, to keep going almost impossible. However, if we focus on the task before us and do the next right thing, we can trust God to empower us each step of the journey.

The Lord shows us how we should live, and he is pleased when he sees people living that way. (Psalm 37:23 ERV)

Often our struggle is not deciding whether we should do something but in doing it now. We may have acknowledged our need to follow God and committed ourselves to doing what He says yet hesitate to act when God reveals His will to us. When God shows us what to do, now is the time to obey. Often we get caught up in the "paralysis of analysis" as we think about all the possibilities – both positive and negative – that surround our situation. We connect to the pain and disappointment of difficulties in the past. We worry about troubles in the future. We wonder how the whole situation can work out from where we are now to where we need to get to. We get caught up in seeking solutions to our problems with only our limited human knowledge.

If you plant goodness, you will harvest faithful love. Plow your ground, and you will harvest with the Lord. He will come, and he will make goodness fall on you like rain. (Hosea 10:12 ERV)

Effective rebuilding of our lives involves action. It involves following through on what we have been told will work and taking steps based on the advice of responsible and trusted advisors, even when we are not even sure of the outcome. Our life and will must be turned over to God. He knows possibilities we don't. He has solutions and connections that we cannot see right now. He will guide us to the right people and the right places at the right time. It's time to make a move today!

We must not get tired of doing good. We will receive our harvest of eternal life at the right time. We must not give up. (Galatians 6:9 ERV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to take the next step I need to take with You today. I want to keep things simple and just do the next right thing that You show me. Amen

Often our struggle is not deciding whether we should do something but in doing it now.

MAY 28, 2022

LIVING BEYOND VIOLENCE

God hates violence and His heart is grieved by the things humans do to one another. God's desire is that we live our lives without violence and do all we can to limit the spread of it.

The Lord examines those who are good and those who are wicked; he hates those who enjoy hurting others. (Psalm 11:5 ERV)

Most of us who have come out of a destructive lifestyle have needed (or still need) forgiveness for the way we acted abusively or violently towards others, their property, and their person. The list of ways we were violent with our words or our actions brings remorse as we make our inventories and realize how much harm we have caused. God is able and willing to forgive us and one of the best ways to stop ongoing violence is to let God heal our woundedness, so we live in His peace rather than in the darkness of our own heart.

God's desire is that we live our lives without violence and do all we can to limit the spread of it.

Jesus said, "***The things that make people wrong are the things that come from the inside. All these bad things begin inside a person, in the mind: bad thoughts, sexual sins, stealing, murder, adultery, greed, doing bad things to people, lying, doing things that are morally wrong, jealousy, insulting people, proud talking, and foolish living.***" (Mark 7:20-22 ERV)

We are wounded people mingling with other wounded people. The result is spiteful attitudes, words, and actions. While we don't want to condone violence in any way and need to set whatever healthy boundaries are necessary, we also need to humble ourselves and let God teach us about overcoming evil with good, rather than letting another's evil and violence draw a similar response from us.

Don't pay back evil with evil. Don't pay back unkind words with unkind words. Instead, pay back evil with kind words. This is what you have been chosen to do. You will receive a blessing by doing this. (1 Peter 3:9 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have shown me Your way of love and blessing in the face of violence. Help me to receive Your forgiveness for my own failings and live in the power of Your Spirit, so I can bless others rather than respond to evil with further evil. Amen

MAY 29, 2022

WHAT AM I DOING WITH WHAT I HAVE?

In the Bible Jesus compared the Kingdom of Heaven to a man going on a journey to a far country. Before he left, he entrusted what he owned to his servants according to their abilities. He gave one servant five talents, another two talents and another one talent. While the master was away the servant with five talents traded and made five more talents. The one with two talents made two more. The servant who was given one talent dug a hole and buried it. Upon his return the master praised the first two servants for what they had done. The third servant made excuses for why he had not used his one talent. The master called him a wicked and lazy servant and took the one talent away from him. *(Read: Matthew 25:14-30)*

For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. (Matthew 25:29 NKJV)

God has given talents to each of us. We may be someone with five talents, someone with two talents, or someone to whom God has chosen to give one talent. God never judges on the number of talents we have. God judges on what we have done with what we have been given. Some of us think that our past reduces our usefulness to God, so we hide our talent so no one can see it. God has entrusted us with His precious word and the ability to invest in telling the good news to others. Are we willing to open our mouths and speak of what God has done for us? If we are, God will give us the words to say.

My mouth will tell of your righteous deeds, of your saving acts all day long—though I know not how to relate them all. (Psalm 71:15 NIV)

Today, let's seek opportunities to invest what we have been given in the Kingdom of God.

Prayer: Gracious God, Thank You for giving me new life and hope for the future. Forgive me for being fearful of speaking about You to others. I ask You to give me the courage to tell others about Your forgiveness and saving grace. I am forever grateful that You love and care for me. Amen

***God
judges on
what we
have done
with what
we have
been
given.***

MAY 30, 2022

WISDOM VERSUS POWER

Many of us who have lived a long time in addiction often feel like there's not much to live for and opportunities to do well in life have passed us by. Today we are encouraged to recognize how much influence we can have and how much good we can do even though we may not have a lot of money or prestige.

Once I saw what people really think of wisdom. It happened when a powerful ruler surrounded and attacked a small city where only a few people lived. The enemy army was getting ready to break through the city walls. But the city was saved by the wisdom of a poor person who was soon forgotten. So, I decided that wisdom is better than strength. Yet if you are poor, no one pays any attention to you, no matter how smart you are. Words of wisdom spoken softly make much more sense than the shouts of a ruler to a crowd of fools. (Ecclesiastes 9:13-17 CEV)

***Only one
life, 'twill
soon be
past, only
what's done
for Christ
will last.***

As long as God gives us life and breath, He has something good that He desires to accomplish through us. When we are faithful to use the opportunities and talents we have been given to encourage others and strengthen our faith, God's great plan is being fulfilled in and through us.

We don't have to push and shove to get ahead. In fact, words spoken softly make much more sense than shouts and threats. While it may seem that no one is paying attention, our responsibility is to simply offer the truth that God gives us and leave the outcome with Him. Each of us will have to give an account for the opportunities God gives us.

Each of us will give an account of ourselves to God. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (Romans 14:12, 2 Peter 3:18 NIV)

In the first Bible quote above, the people in the community may have forgotten the poor man's contribution when things settled down, but God didn't and here we are thousands of years later receiving encouragement from the record of what he did. We don't know the long-term influence of our obedience to God's plans and purposes, but everything done for God will last.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank you for all you have taught me in both pleasing and difficult circumstances. Help me to learn from Your principles for life and grow wise, so I can offer the same wisdom You have taught me to those who are searching for truth. Amen

MAY 31, 2022

NOTES

NO SHORTCUTS

The 12-Step Road often seems a long and winding one to us and some of us think we can reach our destination by taking shortcuts that are more agreeable. Some who have walked this road before us warn of the danger of taking shortcuts because they have tried them and found them to be treacherous. What makes us think that we could do any better than they?

Nothing in all the world can be hidden from God. He can clearly see all things. Everything is open before him. And to him we must explain the way we have lived. (Hebrews 4:13 ERV)

Some of us will make an inventory of certain events from our past and keep others hidden. We believe that admitting the exact nature of our wrongs will cause us trauma and overwhelming guilt and shame. A fearless moral inventory, however, requires the recording of everything that can be counted as a contributing factor to how we got to where we are. Taking shortcuts means we are not willing to reveal all. What we don't realize is that whatever we leave out is information that is essential to our long-term recovery. We need to ask ourselves the question that Jesus asked a man who had the same complaint for 38 years, "Do you want to get well?"

Christ carried our sins in his body on the cross. He did this so that we would stop living for sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you were healed. So now anyone who is in Christ Jesus is not judged guilty. (1 Peter 2:24; Romans 8:1 ERV)

If we decide that we will keep hidden those things that cause us the most pain, then we are just adding to our burden of deceit and will miss the joy of being set free, which results from telling the truth. Choosing the road that has proven trustworthy to many in the past and staying away from shortcuts will bring us to our desired destination of a purposeful new life.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please give me the wisdom to avoid taking shortcuts and help me choose to tread the narrow road that will lead to abundant life. Amen

***Staying
away from
shortcuts
will bring us
to our
desired
destination
of a
meaningful
new life.***

SOME AREAS OF ADDICTION AND DEPENDENCY

For a variety of reasons, many of us have an underlying structure of disorder that is damaging us and others. We invite God to show us the truth about ourselves so we can personally receive God's forgiveness to set us free and healing to make us strong.

<p style="text-align: center;">SUBSTANCE ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Alcohol Caffeine Injected or smoked substances such as: Crack, Crystal Meth, Heroin Marijuana Prescription Medications Sugar Tobacco</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">BEHAVIOUR ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Anger/Rage/Bullying Cutting Crime Eating Disorders: Bulimia, Anorexia, Binging, Obesity Gambling Hoarding Sex/Pornography Verbal Abuse: Gossip, Lying, Accusing Blaming, Condemning Violence (physical, verbal, cyber)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">SOFT ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Digital Use: (Time or Content) TV/Phone/Tablet; video games, Social Networking; Cyber-bullying; Online shopping; Gambling, Pornography Exercise Food (See Eating Disorders) Isolating/Sleep Money: Debt/Fraud Religion Shopping Sports Work/Achievement</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">RELATIONSHIP ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Abusive Relationships: Includes: Intimidation, Isolation, Domination, Blaming, Humiliation, Withholding, Forcing acts against one's will Approval dependency Attention Seeking Codependence/Rescuing Power/Control</p>

PRAYER FOR HEALING AND RESTORATION

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

How To Enjoy New Life With God In Recovery

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

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

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

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

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

JUST FOR TODAY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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