LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations

NOVEMBER 2022

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

www.pihtoday.blogspot.com

View our daily video blog at:

www.pihprayer.blogspot.com

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

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

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

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.

SUBSTANCE ADDICTIONS:	BEHAVIOUR ADDICTIONS:
Alcohol **Caffeine** **Injected or smoked substances such as:** Crack, Crystal Meth, Heroin **Marijuana** **Prescription Medications** **Sugar** **Tobacco**	**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)
SOFT ADDICTIONS:	**RELATIONSHIP ADDICTIONS:**
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**	**Abusive Relationships:** Includes: Intimidation, Isolation, Domination, Blaming, Humiliation, Withholding, Forcing acts against one's will **Approval dependency** **Attention Seeking** **Codependence/Rescuing** **Power/Control**

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.

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations

NOVEMBER 2022

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Evelyn Leeburn, Elsie Quick

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Scriptures taken from:

Holy Bible, Contemporary English Version (CEV), Copyright © 1995 by American Bible Society
Holy Bible, Easy-to-Read Version (ERV), Copyright © 2006 by Bible League International
Good News Translation (GNT), Copyright © 1992 by American Bible Society
The Living Bible copyright © 1971 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.
New American Standard Bible (NASB), Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation
New King James Version® (NKJV), Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
Holy Bible, New International Version®(NIV),® Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.
New International Reader's Version (NIRV), Copyright © 1995, 1996, 1998, 2014 by Biblica, Inc.®. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.
Holy Bible. New Living Translation (NLT) copyright© 1996, 2004, 2007, 2013 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.
New Life Version (NLV), Copyright © 1969, 2003 by Barbour Publishing, Inc.
New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
The Message (MSG), Copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002 by Eugene H. Peterson

PHOTOS
Cathie Bolan © 2022 Cathie Bolan
Elsie Quick, Evelyn Leeburn, Linnea Groom © 2022 Partners in Hope Recovery Society

© 2022 Partners in Hope Recovery Society. All rights reserved. Printed in Canada.

VOLUME 07, NUMBER 11

How To Enjoy New Life With God In Recovery

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

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

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

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

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

NOTES

DON'T WORRY ABOUT TOMORROW

Some of the most welcome words in life and certainly in recovery circles are, "One day at a time" or "Just for today." These are principles that help take the weight of the past and the future off our shoulders and help us deal with today in a way that is more realistic. These sayings are ways in which the teachings of Jesus are expressed.

So don't worry about tomorrow. Each day has enough trouble of its own. Tomorrow will have its own worries. (Matthew 6:34 ERV)

The above words can be found in the most famous record of Jesus' teaching called, "The Sermon on the Mount." Jesus had just been speaking about some of the things we worry about – money, clothes, food – and encouraged His followers to believe that God cared very much for them and would provide for their need. Jesus uses examples of birds and flowers to remind us of how much attention to detail we can expect from God.

Some of the most welcome words in life and certainly in recovery circles are, "One day at a time" or "Just for today."

Instead of worrying, Jesus' advice is to seek God and His plans for the day and do what God says. If we do, we can trust God to take care of everything else.

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. (Matthew 6:33 ERV)

We are not encouraged to live in denial and bury our heads in the sand. There are things we will need to deal with today and not all of them will be easy. But God will meet our need and at the end of the day we will have further instances to share of God's faithful care and guidance.

As we learn to live one day at a time it is essential that we come to God with a willingness and intention to surrender our will and our life to His care. He might stretch us more than we think in a certain situation because He knows best how to mature our faith, but He will never give us more than we can handle.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Your Word tells me not to worry about my life or the things of tomorrow. Forgive me for my lack of confidence in Your ability to work everything together for my good. Please help me to deal with those things I can, and to make changes where necessary. Help me to leave those things I cannot change in Your care. Amen

NOVEMBER 2, 2022

FLEXIBILITY

To be flexible means that we are adaptable and willing to yield when circumstances require short or long-term change. When we first come into a recovery program, people and our surroundings are often not what we are used to. In our addiction we usually did what we wanted, when we wanted. Now we are asked to follow a fixed schedule. Other people may not do things the way we would. If we really desire to turn our lives around, we will need to persevere and be flexible.

So prepare your minds for service. With complete self-control put all your hope in the grace that will be yours when Jesus Christ comes. In the past you did not have the understanding you have now, so you did the evil things you wanted to do. But now you are children of God, so you should obey him and not live the way you did before. (1 Peter 1:13-14 ERV)

When we are flexible, we can learn new things.

In sobriety our flawed opinions and views on life may be quite different than those held by the people around us. Being powerless over our dependency may not be something we are willing to admit. Accepting that there is a power greater than ourselves who can restore us to sanity may be something that we are not sure we agree with. We need to be flexible as we listen to those who have been in the program for a while. They were probably like us when they came in, but were willing to learn from their mentors, counsellors, peers, and others.

Show me your paths and teach me to follow; guide me by your truth and instruct me. (Psalm 25:4-5a CEV)

When we are flexible, we can learn new things. We need not reject what others are saying just because it is something we haven't heard before. We can test the truth of what we are hearing against God's word as recorded in the Bible. If we ask Him, God will give us clarity and understanding of His Word.

Jesus said: ***I will not judge those who hear me but don't obey me, for I have come to save the world and not to judge it.*** (John 12:47 NLT)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Teach me to listen and be flexible so I can learn about Your ways and benefit from the wisdom of others around me. Amen

NOTES

THRIVING IN TOUGH TIMES

Mother Teresa got it right when she said, "A joyful heart is the inevitable result of a heart burning with love." Joy is a gift from God. Joy results when we surrender every part of our lives to God and entrust every detail to His care. Joy bursts forth when we know we have no confidence in ourselves or anything else, but wholeheartedly trust in the Lord. Joy is a sign that a person is thriving rather than just surviving.

Taste and see that the Lord is good. Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him! (Psalm 34:8 NLT)

It's up to us to call on God when we are in trouble so that we can move beyond surviving to thriving. Even in times of illness or hardship, God is our refuge and strength. Giving up on God should never be an option. God invites us to depend on Him and rest in the ultimate security that He provides for all our needs. People are joyful when they follow the principles written in the Scriptures and live a life of integrity.

Joy is a sign that a person is thriving rather than just surviving.

God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. Be still and know that I am God! (Psalm 46:1,10a NLT)

We can fill our hearts and minds with the hope of this new way of life even though it may currently seem impossible for us to achieve. If we resolve to seek Him in all our ways, God will make everything beautiful in His time.

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NIV)

We often get discouraged when things don't work out as we think they should. At times like these we need to ask ourselves, "How is God teaching me to thrive in this situation?" As we trust God and obey His word, God assures us that He is with us and is working for good in everything that concerns us. God's desire for us is that we would thrive and not simply survive.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I know that Your desire for me is to thrive and be filled with joy and purpose. When times are tough, help me to follow Your principles and listen for Your guidance. You are my hope for a blessed life in which I thrive and not just survive. Amen

STEP FIVE – HOLDING NOTHING BACK

Step 5 is often a tough step to complete. With great apprehension we have made a fearless moral inventory of ourselves and now we must admit to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. To expose what has gone on in our lives to others, or even to ourselves, is humbling for we feel awkward and ashamed about some of the things listed on our inventory.

Let there be tears for the wrong things you have done. Let there be sorrow and sincere grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy. Then when you realize your worthlessness before the Lord, he will lift you up, encourage and help you. (James 4:9-10 TLB)

Allowing ourselves to grieve over the events we have participated in is part of the healing process. It means we see the error of our ways and have a desire to change. God will encourage and help us heal from the source that set us on the downward spiral to addiction. He will also free us from those things which have been part of our lives but are no longer in keeping with God's will for us. The Power of God working in us will enable us to do those things that please God.

Allowing ourselves to grieve over the events we have participated in, is part of the healing process.

For the Holy Spirit, God's gift, does not want you to be afraid of people, but to be wise and strong, and to love them and enjoy being with them. (2 Timothy 1:7 TLB)

Those who have travelled this path before us say we should hold nothing back because of guilt or shame. The Lord Jesus endured the shame of our sin on the cross so that we might share in His glory. When we consider the price Jesus paid to give us new life, why would we hold on to guilt and shame when we could be gloriously free?

Jesus led many of God's children to be saved and to share in his glory. (Hebrews 2:10b CEV)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Thank you for enduring the guilt and shame of my sin on the cross. Help me to humble myself and admit the exact nature of my wrongs so that I can be gloriously free in Your presence for evermore. Amen

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2022

BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

In many occupations it is necessary to wear a uniform to identify the type of position that is represented and for protection against the elements a person may encounter in that profession. Some uniforms identify the authority that has been conveyed to a person wearing that particular uniform. When we give our will and life over to the care of God, the Scriptures tell us to put on the whole armour of God so that we can stand solidly against Satan's schemes.

Stand firm therefore, having belted your waist with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness. (Ephesians 6:14 NASB)

In our unmanageable lifestyle we were bitter and angry and perhaps blamed the actions of others as the cause of our decline into addiction and lawlessness. The truth is, according to the Scriptures, we were being led not by flesh and blood but by the powers of darkness in this world and the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly realm. We gave them power over us by our thoughts and actions and eventually became slaves to the way of life we were living until we encountered a Power greater than ourselves.

Stand firm therefore, having belted your waist with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness.

(Ephesians 6:14 NASB)

Our fight is not against people on earth. We are fighting against the rulers and authorities and the powers of this world's darkness. We are fighting against the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 6:12 ERV)

To be free from our former ways we need to put on the breastplate of righteousness which covers our hearts and determines our actions. We know that Jesus' life on earth was lived in righteousness for the Scriptures tell us there was no sin in Him. Because of His right living all power in heaven and earth was given to Jesus. Therefore, putting on Jesus' righteousness by faith is the authority we have been given to stand firm against the forces of darkness.

In Christ. God put the wrong on him who never did anything wrong, so we could be put right with God. Once you're convinced that he is right and righteous, you'll recognize that all who practice righteousness are God's true children. (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 John 2:29 MSG)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, My desire is to stand in the righteousness that comes through faith in Jesus. Please help me! Amen

NOVEMBER 29, 2022

ACQUITTED OF ALL WRONGDOING

We know that God watches over all the earth and sees the wickedness that causes His anger to burn against those who inflict pain and injustice on others. God's eyes also see those who walk in His ways administering true justice, with mercy and compassion for others. To save mankind from God's fearful justice against evil, Jesus came to earth to die in the place of all those on earth. Those of us who believe in Jesus' death in our place are made right with God and praise Him for giving us a new nature filled with love for one another.

From heaven you sentenced your enemies; the earth trembled and stood silent before you. You stand up to judge those who do evil, O God, and to rescue the oppressed of the earth. Human defiance only enhances your glory, for you use it as a weapon. Make vows to the Lord your God, and keep them. Let everyone bring tribute to the Awesome One. For he breaks the pride of princes, and the kings of the earth fear him. (Psalm 76:8-12 NLT)

We have been acquitted of all wrongdoing and God will bring no further condemnation against us.

All of us who have given our will and life over to the care of God are welcomed into the family of God. We have been acquitted of all wrongdoing and God will bring no further condemnation against us. Each of us needs to confidently uphold this truth when the evil one seeks to accuse us and fill our hearts with guilt and shame which hinders our relationship with God.

We need to read the Scriptures daily and allow God's principles to define the way we live our lives. Those things that we have told God we will do – we need to do. We need to pray for knowledge of God's will for our lives and ask Him to strengthen us by the power of His Holy Spirit to carry it out. As we grow in the knowledge of God – who He is and what He does – we will be more confident to carry this message to others and to practice God's principles in all our affairs.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You that the truth of Your Word has set me free from the bondage to my past. Please strengthen me to uphold the Scriptures in every situation and obey Your principles in all my affairs. My desire is to share this life-giving message with others. Amen

NOVEMBER 28, 2022

INFIDELITY

For many of us infidelity in a relationship harmed us. It doesn't matter if we are the unfaithful partner, the uninvolved partner, a child of parents experiencing infidelity, or even an extended family member, infidelity harms all of us in ways that we never anticipated. Even when a divorce agreement between two partners has been agreed, in many instances the hurt continues. What would God say to any one of us who have suffered the pain of infidelity?

I have swept away your sins like a cloud. I have scattered your offenses like the morning mist. Oh, return to me, for I have paid the price to set you free. (Isaiah 44:22 NLT)

What would God say to any one of us who have suffered the pain of infidelity?

Often our emotional response to infidelity will cause us to further add to the harm we have sustained. Hate rises in our hearts and we determine never to forgive the unfaithful person. Resentment and malice disturb our sleep. Our thoughts are obsessed with the situation and we are filled with resentment and bitterness. Previously we might have tried to cover up the pain and trauma with our medication of choice. How can we get relief from this situation and remain faithful to life with God in recovery?

Don't let me do what I know is wrong. Don't let sin control me. If you help me, I can be pure and free from sin. (Psalm 19:13 ERV)

Our God is a redeeming God and whatever painful circumstances we may endure, His love and comfort will sustain us. Infidelity in a relationship will harm many people and we will need to make amends if we have been an unfaithful partner. If we are a victim of infidelity, we need to bring our hurts before God, repent of our unforgiveness, and seek His healing for all our woundedness.

Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sins are put out of sight. (Romans 4:7 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for loving and caring for me. I repent of any harm I have caused due to the pain of infidelity in my life. Help me to live in the joy that my personal sin record has been cleared by the blood of Jesus and I am pure and free. Amen

NOVEMBER 5, 2022

LIVING IN CONSCIOUS AWARENESS OF GOD'S LOVE FOR ME

Being conscious of who we are and our place in life is often considered to be "self-perception." We develop self-perception by noting how the important people in our lives interact with us. If we grew up in a dysfunctional family, their skewed view of us may have warped our self-perception and our ability to see ourselves as God sees us. God created us for a reason and has an amazing plan for our lives. The Bible tells us God's thoughts towards us cannot be numbered. To be conscious of being loved, valued, and honoured as the person God created us to be will change the way we live our lives.

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:16-19 NIV)

To be conscious of being loved, valued, and honoured as the person God created us to be will change the way we live our lives.

God cares about us and the things that matter to us. The God who created the universe gazes on us with love and delight. God wants us to know how precious we are to Him and to see ourselves in the light of His love. The greatest demonstration of how precious we are to God is that Jesus gave His life that we might be reconciled to God and live with Him forever. Are we living in conscious awareness of this great love?

Reading and meditating on scripture each day informs us of all that God promises to be and do for us. God's desire, through these daily spiritual exercises, is to confirm His heart of love for each of us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, My desire is to know Your will for my life and have the power to carry it out. I trust the plans You have prepared in advance for me to do and that You will direct my steps in the way I should go. Once again, I choose to surrender my will and my life to Your care and give myself wholeheartedly to obeying You in all I do. Amen

NOVEMBER 6, 2022

GOD'S NAME – ALPHA AND OMEGA

Many people like to read historical writings about people or events that happened in the past but how many books have we read which contain history *plus* predicted future events that did not happen for hundreds of years? The Bible is a book which contains the history of the nation of Israel and their covenant relationship with God plus foretold events that happened hundreds of years after the revelation of the writings. Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, so it is not surprising that many prophesies in the Bible were about His life and death.

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. (Revelation 22:13; Isaiah 53:5 NIV)

Jesus prayed:

"Father, you are the one who always does what is right."

John 17:25

Jesus knew the death He would suffer and yet He humbled Himself on our behalf and allowed Roman soldiers to nail His hands and feet to a cross. The Bible tells us that Jesus is the author and perfector of our faith. Do we think He might be trustworthy of our faith in Him to work all things together for our good?

Let us keep looking to Jesus. He is the one who started this journey of faith. And he is the one who completes the journey of faith. He paid no attention to the shame of the cross. He suffered there because of the joy he was looking forward to. Then he sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2 NIRV)

Many of us who have come out of an unmanageable lifestyle have turned our will and life over to God's care. The Bible is God's gift of a handbook to us which contains reliable instructions for guidance on our journey of life. Let's believe the Scriptures and be assured that Jesus is the Alpha and Omega who knows the beginning and the end of our journey.

Your word is like a lamp that shows me the way. It is like a light that guides me. (Psalm 119:105 NIRV)

Prayer: Gracious God, I pray to wholeheartedly believe and be guided by the Scriptures. Please give me the will to follow Your principles in all my affairs. Amen

NOVEMBER 27, 2022

HOPING FOR HELP

To some degree, all of us rely on ourselves to do those things that are important for life and happiness. That is why we are reluctant to seek help when we are troubled by an event that has caused us pain. We tend to look to our own solutions and allow the pain to increase. When we came into recovery it took a giant step for us to admit that we were powerless over our dependency and that our life had become unmanageable. When we felt powerless we became hopeful that we would find someone who is powerful enough to help us.

We put our hope in the Lord. He is our help and our shield. Let your unfailing love surround us, Lord, for our hope is in you alone. (Psalm 33:20, 22 NLT)

In our time of need someone may be willing to help us by giving us a bed for the night, or a meal, or valuable counsel, but who, other than God, can give us hope for a new life? We can work on doing a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves but when it is exposed, what hope do we have that the garbage we have uncovered can be removed? We can tell another person about the garbage but what hope do we have that they can do anything about it? A surgeon may be skillful at healing a broken leg but who can heal a broken spirit?

Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Savior and my God!

Psalm 43:5 NLT

Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Savior and my God! (Psalm 43:5 NLT)

God wants us to have hope in His ability to restore our fractured spirit. He demonstrated His great love for us by sending Jesus into the world to take our sin and brokenness upon Himself. When our sin is exposed and repented of, we do not keep it. We give it to Jesus who was sentenced to death as its penalty and, in exchange, receive His gift of new life.

For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:21 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You that through Jesus my sins are no longer counted against me. I am grateful that I have cause to hope in Your unfailing promise of a new life. Amen

NOVEMBER 26, 2022

UPDATING OUR OUTLOOK

Life is not perfect and has its challenges. It is easy to let the obstacles and struggles of life get us down, but there is another way to live that is so much better. While we can't control people, places, or things, what we can control is how we respond to them, and this is where developing a positive outlook is helpful. We can certainly do that better when we are sober than when we are drunk or high. The ninth promise we are given if we live in sobriety for a while is *"Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change."* (Promises of AA)

We pull down every proud obstacle that is raised against the knowledge of God; we take every thought captive and make it obey Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:5 GNT

A happy heart makes a face look cheerful. But a sad heart produces a broken spirit. (Proverbs 15:13 NIRV)

There is plenty of literature on the effect of a positive outlook on life. Stress is reduced. All sorts of physical problems diminish or disappear altogether. Relationship issues tend to be resolved quicker and more satisfactorily when we are looking for what is good rather than blaming, complaining, and seeing the worst possible outcome.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; I will fear no one. The Lord protects me from all danger; I will never be afraid. (Psalm 27:1 GNT)

God will guide us with His light and love. We do not have to be afraid of facing the past, present or the future. God will surround us and protect us from all danger. We can confidently let go of the fear that keeps us looking at life in a negative way because God is always with us.

When I was burdened with worries, you comforted me and made me feel secure. (Psalm 94:19 CEV)

Going forward, God will not only show us what we need to know and do, but when life is challenging, He will comfort us and help us feel secure. We can dare to hope that God has solutions, God has healing power, and God sticks with us when we are struggling. It is time to update our outlook on life with the unending care of God who will never leave us or forsake us.

Prayer: Loving God, I am willing to trade in my pessimistic outlook on myself and life because You have promised me a future with hope. I trust Your love for me and Your ability to work out Your plans in my life. Amen

NOVEMBER 7, 2022

FACING FAILURE

There is a desire in each one of us to succeed, to win, to excel, yet often when we have been asked to do something, we allow thoughts of failure to overcome us before we even start. The fear of failure terrifies us and takes away our hope.

We risk failure when we set our goals too high. A sense of inadequacy follows, and we find ourselves filled with shame and embarrassment because we failed to accomplish the impossible goal we set. God created us and knows each of our limitations. His expectation is that we use the gifts we have been given and, with His help and guidance, do the best that we can in each circumstance we encounter. Trying to be what God never intended us to be is a sure recipe for failure.

This I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every Morning; great is your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:21-23 NIV)

Trying to be what God never intended us to be is a sure recipe for failure.

Another kind of failure we face is the failure that comes from sin. We settle for less than we could be or have. We wallow in resentments. We hold grudges. We cling to unhealthy ways of living. We live according to our own human plans instead of God's good, pleasing and perfect plan. We often embrace violence instead of peace, self-centeredness instead of caring, hatred instead of love, despair instead of hope.

The power of the Holy Spirit has made me free from the power of sin and death. This power is mine because I belong to Christ Jesus. We thank God for the power Christ has given us. He leads us and makes us win in everything. (Romans 8:2, 2 Corinthians 2:14a NLV)

When we choose to live God's way rather than our own way, we will no longer set ourselves up for failure. We will have the satisfying experience of peace in our hearts. As we submit to God, He will direct us in the way we are to go, and we will accomplish those things He has planned in advance for us to do.

Prayer: Loving God, Forgive me for the times my sin has caused me to live in failure. Help me to live in Your plan for my life, doing just those things You have planned for me. Help me to commit myself to instruction and to listen carefully to Your words of knowledge. Help me to choose those things You have given me to do. Amen

NOVEMBER 8, 2022

FREED FROM ACCUSATION AND JUDGMENT

Why do we look at another's sin and want them punished for what they have done and then look at our own sin and want compassion and forgiveness? We particularly want to see punishment inflicted on those people who have harmed us. The problem is, we compare ourselves with others and think we measure up better than them, but the real standard we are to use is what God's word says. The Bible tells us that we all have fallen short of God's standard.

For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. (Romans 3:23-24 NLT)

The Bible tells us that we all have fallen short of God's standard.

On a day when Jesus was teaching in the temple courtyard, the teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman that was caught in the act of adultery. They made her stand before the group. Then they told Jesus that the law of Moses commanded them to stone such a woman and asked Jesus what He thought. Jesus did not oppose the law of Moses, as they supposed He might, but invited the woman's accusers who were without sin to cast the first stone. From the oldest to the youngest they all left. Like us, not one of them met the criteria to cast the first stone. Jesus alone could have cast the first stone, but instead He had compassion on the woman and told her to go and sin no more.

Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?" "No, Lord," she said. And Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more." He himself is the sacrifice that atones for our sins—and not only our sins but the sins of all the world. (John 8:10-11; 1 John 2:2 NLT)

What a relief for that woman as she went from being condemned for her sin to being set free! That is exactly what Jesus does for each of us.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Thank You for coming into the world to save me from the penalty of my sin. Help me to stand firm on the truth that when You set me free, I am free indeed! Amen

NOVEMBER 25, 2022

HAS GOD FORGOTTEN TO BE MERCIFUL?

We wonder if God is listening to our prayers when traumatic situations arise, and we are trying to navigate our way through them. We have brought the situation to God in prayer and are waiting for Him to give us an answer we can act on. When it looks like God is taking time to answer, we begin to wonder if He is angry about something we have done and perhaps withholding the solution we are seeking.

Has God forgotten to be merciful? Has he in anger withheld his compassion?" Then I thought, "To this I will appeal: the years when the Most High stretched out his right hand. I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will consider all your works and meditate on all your mighty deeds." Your ways, God, are holy. What god is as great as our God? (Psalm 77: 9-13 NIV)

Faith in God requires that we trust what He says and wait for Him to act.

Giving our will and life over to the care of God means that we allow God to determine what is good for us, believing that He works all things according to His will for us. If what we prayed for happened as soon as we prayed, we might get puffed up by believing we are the ones directing God on how to provide for our need. God is a wise Father, and He has a good plan for our lives. He is working every situation in our lives according to His overall plan for us.

If we read the Bible and get acquainted with how God works, we will learn that God honours and acts on behalf of those who have faith in what He says. God does this in His perfect way at just the right time.

When Abraham had no children, God told Him that His descendants would be as the stars in the heavens, too many to count. Abraham believed God would do what He said, but Abraham was almost 100 years old and his wife past childbearing age before Isaac the child of promise was conceived.

Faith in God requires that we trust what God says and wait for Him to act.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You are a God who honours Your word. Give me the wisdom to not rely on my own understanding, but to trust You and practice the principles contained in Your Word in all my affairs. Amen

NOVEMBER 24, 2022

STEP EIGHT – AN ACCURATE VIEW OF OUR RELATIONSHIPS

An important part of recovery is coming to an accurate view of what went wrong in our relationships. Regardless of the excuses we may make for our behaviour, we need to admit that at times we caused harm to others. We need to understand the underlying causes of our actions. We need to take responsibility for our part in the breakdown of relationships. As we go forward, we need to learn how to behave differently in order to begin to build healthy interactions and caring relationships.

An important part of recovery is coming to an accurate view of what went wrong in our relationships.

Speaking in anger or using silence or distance has the impact of wounding others. While outright cheating and stealing may not be part of our life now, it's still too easy for us to lie and deceive and manipulate things for our own advantage. Have we learned to let complaining and blaming go or are we still using them to excuse our poor attitude?

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

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

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

We should undertake to put the following principles in place as we go forward in building caring and healthy relationships: Admit our part in any action which caused harm to another and receive forgiveness and healing from God; Live respectfully with others; Forgive those who have offended us; Where necessary, make amends to others for our part in any event or situation that caused them harm.

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

NOVEMBER 9, 2022

WISDOM – STANDING WITH THOSE IN AUTHORITY

We are all looking for a peaceful life and God's word has a lot to say about how living well under authority with proper respect for leaders brings that to us.

People who always want more stir up conflict. But those who trust in the Lord will succeed. Those who trust in themselves are foolish. But those who live wisely are kept safe. I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for all people — for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. (Proverbs 28:25-26 NIRV; 1 Timothy 2:1-2 NIV)

In our life in addiction, we often broke laws and chose whatever way it took to get what we wanted. In our new life with God in recovery, if we don't agree with the decisions of some of our leaders, God's way of handling this is to pray for them, rather than simply disregarding what they are saying or establishing. God wants us to bring blessing into our own lives by praying for understanding and wisdom towards those who are in authority over us.

A country has many rulers when its people don't obey. But an understanding ruler knows how to keep order.

Proverbs 28:2 NIRV

When godly people win, everyone is very happy. But when sinners take charge, everyone hides. (Proverbs 28:12 NIRV)

Some issues in our society are complex and challenging and require the expertise of many to interpret. Part of our new life with God in recovery is to pray that God will keep evil people from coming to leadership and raise up those who will champion the cause for both the "haves and the have-nots." It is time for us to lift our eyes from our own self-centeredness and ask God to help us support what makes our society better.

A ruler who is mean to his people takes money from them by force. But one who hates money gained in the wrong way will rule a long time. (Proverbs 28:16 NIRV)

Do we want a peaceful life in recovery? It's time for us to step up and do whatever we can for the common good including praying for and working with those who are in authority.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, It's challenging to live under authority because I am so used to wanting things my own way. Help me to learn how to work with those who are in authority so that, I and others, can have a peaceful life. Amen

STEP SIX – ENTIRELY READY FOR DEFECTS TO BE REMOVED

Asking God to remove all our defects of character is requesting that He rid us of everything within that hinders our ability to live life to the full. By reading God's Word we have come to know that God loves us and is committed to taking care of us. We are precious in God's sight. Focusing on this enduring relationship of unfailing love and care will enable us to obey His commands and walk in His ways.

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)

Character defects are removed as we become willing to follow God's principles instead of our own way.

To experience life to the full we must choose for God's way each time His direction conflicts with what we believe is a better way. Character defects are removed as we become willing to follow God's principles instead of our own way.

"Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6:10 NIV)

Any other conversation with God is our way of defending, rebelling, bargaining**,** or engaging in a useless exercise of trying to manipulate the God of heaven and earth to consent to what we want.

Becoming willing to have God remove all our defects of character is a bit like dealing with dirty clothes. We don't put clean clothes on top of dirty clothes. That would give the appearance of change while we are just covering up what is dirty and needs to be removed. When sinful habits and defects of character are revealed, we need to give God permission to remove these, cleanse us fully, and then put on our new self which has been renewed in the knowledge of God our creator.

Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Oh, give me back my joy again; you have broken me—now let me rejoice. (Psalm 51:7-8 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to be willing to have all my defects of character removed. Help me to live each day as a new creation, entirely surrendered to your will and your ways. Amen

THE ABILITY TO ENJOY

In the past, one of the lies we bought into was that the party life was where the greatest enjoyment of living could be found. Later, caught in the slavery of our addiction, we found out just how wrong we had been. The good news is that it is not too late to change and have a life full of joy. In fact, it's the life that God created us to live. As we surrender our will and life into God's care, we have the assurance of ever-deepening joy and well-being coming alive in us.

And it is a good thing to receive wealth from God and the good health to enjoy it. To enjoy your work and accept your lot in life—this is indeed a gift from God. (Ecclesiastes 5:19 NLT)

As we surrender our will and life into God's care, we have the assurance of ever-deepening joy and well-being coming alive in us.

This does not mean the absence of problems to face, challenges to overcome, and strained emotions to go along with that. However, it does mean that in any ordinary day we will find ourselves becoming more and more aware of things we are grateful for. We will recognize beauty in ways we previously did not. We will feel the joy of honouring and being honoured as we notice and celebrate new character qualities in one another. We will laugh at our mistakes instead of being lost in fear and shame because of them. Surrendering to God and receiving forgiveness for our sin and rebellion will bring us relief, freedom, and great joy. We will be amazed at what Jesus achieved for us on the cross and by His resurrection. Simple pleasures will bring a smile to our hearts as well as our faces.

For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of living a life of goodness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Romans 14:17 NLT)

Each day, as we allow ourselves to be embraced by the love of God, fear and insecurity will slip away and the ability to enjoy work, family, nature, and recreation will fill us up. We will be blessed by God to enjoy life to the full.

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for calling me to a life that is filled with peace and joy. I surrender my life into Your hands and trust You for ongoing healing. I give thanks for the finished work of Jesus and for the ability to enjoy the good gifts You continue to give to me. Amen

THE GOD WHO KNOWS BOTH SIDES

Jesus came to earth to die in our place. Jesus knows the way to please our Heavenly Father and He knows the way humans displease Him. What a great privilege to have someone in Heaven who is praying for us and knows both sides of the life God called us to. Jesus tells us to live to please our Heavenly Father and then He will take care of meeting all our needs.

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. (Matthew 6:33 NLT)

Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts are higher than your thoughts.

Isaiah 55:9 ERV

God's ways are different from our ways. When Jesus was walking with His disciples on a Sabbath day, they saw a man who was blind from birth. They thought the man was blind because His parents had sinned, but Jesus explained that the reason for this blindness was so the works of God might be displayed. Jesus spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes and told him to wash it off in a nearby pool. When the man washed it off, he was able to see. This caused a commotion with the religious leaders. They didn't care about this wonderful miracle of God. They were just upset that the healing took place on the Sabbath day.

If you had known who I am, then you would have known who my Father is. From now on you know him — and have seen him! Then Jesus told him, I have come into the world to give sight to those who are spiritually blind and to show those who think they see that they are blind. (John 14:7; 9:39 TLB)

So many things in the above story reflect the way humans who do not know God think. That is why it is so important to get acquainted with what Jesus says. We may think we would change certain things in our lives if we could, but who knows maybe those very things are meant to be used by God to display His amazing power. Others then get to witness that power as we share our experience, strength, and hope of how God healed and changed us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to trust You in whatever life may bring my way because I know that Your way is perfect and pleasing. Amen

LEST WE FORGET

Today we remember blood that was spilled on battlefields around the world by brave men and women who gave their lives for the cause of freedom and justice. Our hearts are touched as we watch young faces on parade to honour the veterans of many wars. We see the memories etched in the veterans' faces and can only imagine the stories they will never forget. We don't have those memories in our hearts so we need to hear stories and look at symbols that help us pay attention and remember. Poppies, moments of silence, and ceremonies at cenotaphs around the country all help us reflect and remember.

Often in the recovery process we receive key fobs and medallions to mark milestones in our journey. These symbols are indicators of time in recovery and help us celebrate our sobriety in community with others with whom we share the journey.

We need to hear stories and look at symbols that help us pay attention and remember.

As Christians we have symbols of Christ's sacrifice of His life for us. These symbols remind us that Jesus paid the price of sin for all who come to Him. The bread and wine in the celebration of Communion in churches all around the world are symbols that remind us of Jesus' broken body and His shed blood on our behalf.

The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (1 Corinthians 11:23b-26 NIV).

On Remembrance Day, we hear the phrase, "Lest we forget". As Canadians, we should never forget the sacrifice of brave men and women who lost their lives in the service of our country. As people in recovery, we should never forget the impact of our life in addiction and the new opportunity we have to live life to the full each day. As Christians, we should never forget the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ who gave His life for our eternal salvation.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I pause to remember and live in gratitude for all the benefits I have received. Thank you for the symbols and events that help me remember the cost of my freedom, my time in recovery, and my new life with You through Jesus, my Lord and Saviour. Amen

FRIENDS IN TIME OF NEED

Yesterday, men and women who lost their lives in past wars were honoured with parades to the cenotaph in local communities. Prayers, poems, and solemn music were included in our Nation's Act of Remembrance. We were reminded again that in war we all need friends who will stand shoulder to shoulder with us and fight for freedom from oppression.

One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." (Proverbs 18:24, Hebrews 13:5b NIV)

We need to encourage each other by sharing our experience, strength, and hope on the journey to freedom.

In the fight to overcome our addiction we too need friends. Our recovery will not come easily. It's important not to be arrogant and think we are stronger or less vulnerable than others. We need friends to come alongside us, and we need to come alongside others who are challenged and need support as they face their struggles. We need to encourage each other by sharing our experience, strength, and hope on the journey to freedom.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (Romans 8:35, 37 NIV)

All of us need the friendship of God who promises to never leave or forsake us. We have God's Holy Spirit living in us to provide the strength we need to resist temptation. With God's power at work within us, we have the assurance that even though we face strong enemies of our soul, we will ultimately win the battle.

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to live in healthy committed friendships as I move forward in my recovery. Give me the wisdom to listen to, and apply as appropriate, the experience, strength and hope that others share. Thank you for your love that holds me close and shelters me in times of trouble. Amen

HANDLING STRESS

For all of us stress comes from many areas of life. We experience what seems like too much pressure with family or with work demands or work colleagues. Our sleep is disturbed, and we walk around with an uncomfortable level of anxiety. For most of us dealing with stress contributed to our drug and alcohol use, which eventually led us into addiction. The key to effectively handling stress is to lean on God's power at the initial stage of any problem.

The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning. I say to myself, "The LORD is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in him!" (Lamentations 3:22-24 NLT)

Strength to overcome stress will come as God stabilizes our emotions with His peace, infuses our hearts with His joy, and provides us with His wisdom to deal with any hardship in life. It's important to admit we're stressed, first to God, and then perhaps to someone we trust. God is with us. God cares. God has promised to act on our behalf when we give our will and life over to His care.

The key to effectively handling stress is to lean on God's power at the initial stage of any problem.

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. (Philippians 4:6 NLT)

When we are under stress, we need to be aware of those things we tend to project into a situation, things that currently don't exist, but are based on familiar worries and fears. We need to allow past events and hurts to go, and only concentrate on today's real challenges. Perhaps we need to set reasonable priorities and let some things go. Many of us dislike asking for help. This, however, may be a time to reach out for help and live in the reality of today.

God says: ***"Don't be afraid, I've redeemed you. I've called your name. You're mine. When you're in over your head, I'll be there with you. When you're in rough waters, you will not go down. When you're between a rock and a hard place, it won't be a dead end—Because I am God, your personal God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior.*** (Isaiah 43:1-3 MSG)

Prayer: Loving God, you know me and the pressures and stresses I face. Help me to trust You and let go of these stresses. Help me to be realistic about what is, and what I can achieve. Strengthen me in my resolve to develop wisdom in the handling of all my affairs. Amen

NOVEMBER 20, 2022

GOD GIVES – POWER

In Step 2 of the 12-Step program we came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. That is why we decided to give our will and life over to the care of God. We saw God as the person with the Power we needed to help us make a start in living life in recovery. At this point we likely knew very little about God, however, in our desperation we asked God to come into our life and help us get out of the overwhelming darkness we were in.

Jesus said: "***I came into this world as a light. I came so that everyone who believes in me will not stay in darkness."*** (John 12:46 ERV)

We saw God as the person with the Power we needed to help us make a start in living life in recovery.

How do we get this Power that is greater than ourselves into our being? We believe in our hearts that Jesus came into the world to pay the penalty for our sin. We believe Jesus' death is an exchange for our death and by His sacrifice we are made clean and pure from sin. God then gives us His Holy Spirit, the Power greater than ourselves, to help us live according to His principles.

I pray to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is the glorious Father. I keep asking him to give you the wisdom and understanding that come from the Holy Spirit. I want you to know God better. (Ephesians 1:17 NIRV)

Knowing God better will help our understanding of why He sent Jesus into the world to save us. God loved us and knew that by ourselves we were powerless over sin and its penalty. He knew we needed a Saviour to pay the price of our sin and a Power greater than ourselves to overcome the tendency of all of us to sin.

Our good news didn't come to you only in words. It came with power. It came with the Holy Spirit's help. All of you must turn away from your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then your sins will be forgiven. You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (1 Thessalonians 1:5a; Acts 2:38 NIRV)

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for sending Jesus into the world to be my Saviour and for the Holy Spirit who gives me the Power to practice Your principles in all my affairs. Amen

NOVEMBER 13, 2022

MATURITY – TOOLS AT THE READY

Living life with God in recovery is a learning process. When we gave our will and life over to the care of God, the decision we made included dying to the person we had become and being born again into a new life with God where we grow and mature into the person God created us to be.

So don't remember what happened in earlier times. Don't think about what happened a long time ago, because I am doing something new! Now you will grow like a new plant. Surely you know this is true. I will even make a road in the desert, and rivers will flow through that dry land.
(Isaiah 43:18-19 ERV)

We have humbled ourselves and repented of our former ways before God. The change in our attitude and actions will confirm that we are no longer slaves to our past but are maturing in our love for God and for those around us. We are showing mercy and compassion in our relationships rather than exhibiting self-serving actions and bullying of those who are defenseless against our demands.

Our tools are ready at hand for clearing the ground of every obstruction and building lives of obedience into maturity.

Change your hearts! And show by your lives that you have changed. The ax is now ready to cut down the trees. Every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. (Luke 3:8a, 9 ERV)

As any newborn child, growth and maturity in our new life will take time. We will need the sustenance of God's written word and the help of others to grow and mature. On our own we will not survive, but with God, and others, and our willingness to persevere, we will grow and produce the fruit of peace and contentment in our lives. As we continue to mature, our desire will be to carry this message to others who are still being deceived by their own thoughts and need to be born again to a new life in which God's principles are honoured.

Our tools are ready at hand for clearing the ground of every obstruction and building lives of obedience into maturity. (2 Corinthians 10:6 MSG)

Prayer: Gracious God, Help me to die to my old self and persevere in the gift of new life with You. My desire is to honour You and walk humbly before You, showing justice and mercy to everyone I meet. Amen

NOVEMBER 14, 2022

LOVE REJOICES IN TRUTH

When Jesus was before Pilate the Roman Governor to whom the Jewish leaders had brought Him, Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?" It would appear that Pilate had no interest in hearing an answer to his question for he immediately walked away.

"You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." "What is truth?" retorted Pilate. (John 18:37-38a NIV)

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life.

John 14:6a NIRV

Truth is the state or character of what is true and cannot be altered. However, it can be manipulated! Many of us in our addiction had our own version of things that happened. Often, in order to get what we wanted we exaggerated our circumstances so we could benefit from the kindness of another. Many of us lied through our teeth when we were caught red-handed in a crime. When we made a decision to turn our will and our life over to the care of God, we repented of our former ways and now in truth we are seeking to know God and understand His ways, praying only for the knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out.

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

As we seek to know the truth, many other voices in our culture will conflict with what the Bible says. We need to ask the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, to reveal the measure of God's love for us, and to give us understanding of the principles contained in the Bible. When we know the truth of God's unfailing love for us and determine to obey God in all our affairs, we will be free from the power of evil to mess up our lives.

Jesus said: ***I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God's law will disappear until its purpose is achieved.*** (Matthew 5:18 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for giving us Your Word. Give me understanding of the Scriptures and help me to practice Your principles in all my affairs. Help me to live today in the joy of knowing the truth of the Good News of Jesus, who gives me everlasting life. Amen

NOVEMBER 19, 2022

ANGER IS BUT ONE LETTER FROM DANGER.

When we sober up and come into recovery, most of us quickly recognize that we have an anger problem. Losing our temper over something said or done and allowing anger to take control does great damage. While we may think that expressing anger is a sign of strength, it is actually allowing our weakness to show. For us to get well we need to learn new ways to handle stressful, irritating, and fearful circumstances.

Don't become angry quickly. Anger lives in the hearts of foolish people. (Ecclesiastes 7:9 NIRV)

It is equally damaging to keep anger bottled up inside. It hurts and keeps on hurting us and too often turns to resentment and bitterness that leads to emotional and physical illness. The longer we allow anger to live in us, the less effective we will be in the work that we were created to do that will bring us joy and satisfaction.

My dear friends, you should be quick to listen and slow to speak or to get angry. If you are angry, you cannot do any of the good things that God wants done. (James 1:19-20 CEV)

God's word tells us that selfishness is at the root of much of our anger.

Most anger management programs train us to deal with anger that has risen within us. God wants us to go one level deeper and let Him help us deal with the improper yearnings that fuel most of our angry outbursts. God's word tells us that selfishness is at the root of much of our anger. God's best anger management tool is prayer – to tell God what is going on and ask God for what we need.

Do you know where your fights and arguments come from? They come from the selfish desires that make war inside you. You want things, but you don't get them. So you kill and are jealous of others. But you still cannot get what you want. So you argue and fight. You don't get what you want because you don't ask God. (James 4:1-2 ERV)

Many of us are too familiar with getting what we want when we want it. With God's help, we can be gracious and patient with ourselves and others as we learn to trust God for all that we need.

Prayer: Loving God, forgive me for my selfishness and impatience which fuel my irritation and angry outbursts. Help me to bring my problems to You in prayer and receive the help and direction You are willing to give, so that peace may reign in my heart. Amen

WHAT HOPE DO WE HAVE?

Life is a journey and from its beginning to its end we are all influenced by the environment we live in. When we were old enough to choose our own way, our choices were likely impacted by what went on in our life journey to that point. What hope is there for us when what was sown into the early years of our life is what we are reaping today?

Lord, you know the hopes of the helpless. Surely you will hear their cries and comfort them. You will bring justice to the orphans and the oppressed, so mere people can no longer terrify them. (Psalm 10:17-18 NLT)

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

Hebrews 11:1 NIV

When we first gave our will and life over to the care of God we knew little, if anything, about God's ways. Our known ways and actions were like chains that bound and enslaved us to a life that was totally unmanageable. The only hope we have of eliminating our bondage is to unchain our mind from our actions and with God's help release ourselves from our former slave master. We need to keep saying no to the old path that dominates our thinking and continue treading the new path back to life. Each time we make that choice for the new path, it will become more firm under our feet and our old ways will be left behind.

Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you. (Psalm 25:5 NLT)

The scriptures tell us to have faith in God even when we are unable to see the way forward. The measure of our faith is the hope we have in the power, faithfulness, and love of God to strengthen us as we tread the pathway of the will of God for our lives. God will make a way for us to persevere through and live the life plan He has prepared in advance for us.

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

Prayer: Heavenly Father, My old ways need to be axed. Your word gives me hope to move forward in my life. Please strengthen me to wholeheartedly tread the new path You have marked out for me. Amen

KEEP ON ASKING

When Jesus was teaching His friends about prayer He said this: ***Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.*** (Matthew 7:7-8 NLT)

God wants us to bring our lives to Him to receive the healing and resources we need to live well today. Lots of people have taken the sentence above about prayer and asked for things they thought were right for them at that time. When what they hoped for didn't come, they began to question God about His power and His ability and willingness to help them.

Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for.

Matthew 7:7 NLT

Every day of our lives God wants to bless us. God wants to protect us. God is willing to lead us and guide us so we make good choices and desire what is best for us and the plan He has for our lives. The truth is, we are learning more about God and are only beginning to understand His will for us. We need to humbly admit that we have lots more to learn.

"My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the Lord. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9 NLT)

When it seems like God isn't answering our prayers it's time to go a little deeper and ask God for understanding about what's going on. Maybe the timing is not right for God to give us what we think we need. Maybe God has a better plan than what we have figured out at this point in our journey. The foundation for all our prayers is the truth that God is good, that God is listening, and that God has and will give us what He knows we need today.

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. Ask me and I will tell you remarkable secrets you do not know about things to come. (Matthew 6:33, Jeremiah 33:3 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to seek You and Your plan for my life. When I don't see the answer to my prayer, help me to trust You and keep bringing my needs before You because I knowYou love and care for me. Amen

LORD'S PRAYER – LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION

When His disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, the words that He used were full of wisdom on how to approach God in order that He both hear and answer their prayers. For example, when we ask God to forgive our sins while we continually hold unforgiveness toward another who harmed us, God is under no obligation to answer our prayer because forgiveness of our sin is conditional on us being willing to forgive others.

Forgive our sins, just as we have forgiven those who did wrong to us. Don't let us be tempted, but save us from the Evil One. (Matthew 6:12-13 ERV)

The next few words in the prayer include asking God not to lead us not into temptation. Many of us have an inflated image of ourselves. We think our way of doing things is better than God's way, or, without giving it much thought, we disregard another person's proven way. We are full of the very thing that caused Satan to fall from heaven. Satan was a created angelic being yet was tempted by 'pride of self' to establish his own way.

Each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed.

James 1:14 NIV

You were like the morning star, but you have fallen from the sky. In the past, all the nations on earth bowed down before you,….but now you have been cut down. You always told yourself, "I will go to the skies above. I will put my throne above God's stars. (Isaiah 14:12-13a ERV)

Jesus sent His disciples ahead of Him to towns and villages He was about to visit. When they returned, they were excited that demons were subject to them. Jesus warned them about the temptation of pride and instead to glorify God's work in them.

Jesus said to them, "I saw Satan falling like lightning from the sky. He is the enemy, but know that I have given you more power than he has…..And you can be happy not because you have this power, but because your names are written in heaven." (Luke 10:18-20 ERV)

We have a Power greater than ourselves to restore us to sanity. Let's humble ourselves and give glory to God for it, lest we be led into temptation.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Lead me not into temptation but give me the humility to acknowledge and give praise for all You have done through Jesus on my behalf. Amen

STEP SEVEN – BECOMING NEW

In Step-7 we come to God and humbly ask Him to remove our shortcomings. All of us were born into a sinful world with a fallen nature opposed to the ways of God. Each of us needs to be taught how to be kind and compassionate towards others, otherwise our selfish nature will cause us to act out of self-interest rather than being loving and caring. Some of us who were deprived of love and caring as children developed self-seeking character defects which contributed to our inability to get along with others.

Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it. (Proverbs 22:6 NLT)

In Step 3 we gave both our will and life over to the care of God and were born-again into a new life. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves and identified those things in our old nature that were not in keeping with the new nature God has given us. Now our desire is to be free of these shortcomings. If we are sincere, God promises to remove them from us.

Jesus died so we could be free from our old evil nature and clothe ourselves with a new nature of honesty and purity.

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)

As we journey with God in recovery, we need to be instructed in the truth of what Jesus accomplished for us by His death and resurrection. Jesus died so we could be free from our old evil nature and clothe ourselves with a new nature of honesty and purity. Through prayer and conscious contact with God the Holy Spirit who lives within us, we will understand God's will for us and have the power to carry it out.

For God is at work within you, helping you want to obey him, and then helping you do what he wants. (Philippians 2:13 TLB)

Prayer: Loving God, I humbly ask you to remove all my shortcomings and help me to be new in the attitude of my mind, so I may practice Your principles in all my affairs. Amen