

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY



# Daily Meditations



OCTOBER 2020

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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.*

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# Daily Meditations

**OCTOBER 2020**

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### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2020

## TUTORED IN THE BASICS OF LOVE

As we get to know the Lord Jesus our self-centered attitude begins to change and with care and compassion we become more aware of what is happening in the lives of others. We respond to others with kindness even when they are unkind to us because we are familiar with the place they are at.

***I will bless the Lord who counsels me; he gives me wisdom in the night. He tells me what to do.*** (Psalm 16:7 TLB)

All of us have had to humble ourselves before God as we learned the error of our ways. We have had to admit that our standards for right living were not God's standards and were influenced by our old nature. To follow God's ways, we needed to change our way of thinking and doing and responding to God and others. We needed to allow our new nature, tutored in the basics of love, to guide and direct us in all our ways.

***This plan of mine is not what you would work out, neither are my thoughts the same as yours! For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than yours, and my thoughts than yours.*** (Isaiah 55:8-9 TLB)

Kindness towards others requires us to be generous with our forgiveness of all insults or injury. We refuse to hold on to bitterness or act in vindictive ways towards those who have harmed us. God has forgiven us because Jesus paid the penalty for our sin with His life and therefore we, with thankful hearts, now live willing to forgive others.

**But I say: Love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way you will be acting as true sons of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust too.** (Matthew 5:44-45 TLB)

In our new life with God in recovery, we can be kind to others because Jesus is perfecting His enduring love in us.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for teaching me the basics of love. Help me to love and forgive others as You continue to love and forgive me. Amen***

***Love your enemies!  
Pray for those who persecute you!***

***Matthew 5:44  
TLB***

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2020

## TRANSITION

Transition is difficult. It requires that we leave something behind and move into something new. What is known to us is comfortable, even though it may not be good for us and certainly is no longer what is best for us. Everything that grows goes through transition. A seed is put in the ground and it dies in order that a new life form can begin to grow. A flower or fruit develops and is picked and unless the fruit is used for food, both will wither and die. On a farm, dead plants are often plowed back into the ground to provide nutrients for the next crop to come. Transition takes place from one season to the next.

***I am creating something new. There it is! Do you see it? I have put roads in deserts, streams in thirsty lands.***

***Isaiah 43:19 CEV***

***The Lord will lead you. He himself is with you. He will not fail you or leave you. Don't worry. Don't be afraid!*** (Deuteronomy 31:8 ERV)

In recovery we are transitioning not only from the misuse of substances, but also from things like: a lifestyle of isolation to one of looking for and accepting peer support; from trying to figure out the "big questions of life" about meaning and purpose and destiny to consulting God and learning how God answers those questions. We are transitioning from avoiding the pain in our hearts to confronting it, and receiving comfort and healing. We are moving away from impulsive and obsessive thinking to gratitude and solutions which develop as we pray and learn – and the list goes on.

***The Lord says, "I will teach you and guide you in the way you should live. I will watch over you and be your guide.*** (Psalm 32:8 ERV)

Without God's promise to teach and guide us in the way we should live and watch over us, the burden of this new way of life would be too great for us. That is why it is important to remember every day of our lives that we are powerless and that on our own our life is unmanageable. Each day it is necessary for us to take time to read the Scriptures and to get to know the God who can restore us to sanity and moment by moment, day by day, practice turning our will and our life over to His care.

***Prayer: Loving God, as I face this day, give me the strength and courage to make whatever transition is necessary in my heart, in my thinking, and even in my circumstances so that my character defects will go and Your will becomes the desire of my heart in all my affairs. Amen***

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2020

## WISDOM: RETRAIN AND REPOSITION

Coming out of addiction and living life in sobriety is always challenging and should be lived one day at a time. Our addiction kept us busy fulfilling its demands and now our thought patterns need to be retrained in ways of healthy living. Our bodies are in a state of shock. We miss and grieve the familiar way of addictive life and the people who used to be around us. New beginnings require planning and help in order to move from one place to the next, so it is always wise to seek help.

***Leave your simple ways behind and begin to live; learn to use good judgment. Wisdom will multiply your days and add years to your life.*** (Proverbs 9:6, 11 NLT)

Living in recovery requires that we keep away from our old stomping grounds and from the people who are still out there. Initially we may think that seeing a familiar face is good for us and we might even be able to influence someone to also seek recovery. It is more likely that they will lead us back into addiction than we will influence them for good. It is much wiser to seek the company of someone who has been in recovery for a time and can share their experience in avoiding the pitfalls that lead to relapse.

***So don't bother correcting mockers; they will only hate you. But correct the wise, and they will love you. Instruct the wise, and they will be even wiser. Teach the righteous, and they will learn even more.*** (Proverbs 9:8-9 NLT)

Looking back at our life with guilt and shame will only bring us misery and stifle our growth unless we chose to repent and give our will and life over to the care of God. Jesus died in our place so we could be free from the penalty of sin. Accepting the things we cannot change, but are forgiven by God, will help us move forward in recovery because the penalty for our sin is paid in full.

***Fear of the Lord is the foundation of wisdom. Knowledge of the Holy One results in good judgment.*** (Proverbs 9:10 NLT)

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, I'm not afraid to leave my past behind because I know You will care for me and teach me to use good judgment. Amen*

***Leave your simple ways behind and begin to live; learn to use good judgment.***

*Proverbs 9:6 NLT*

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2020

## RESPONDING TO LIES

The following Psalm was written by the future King David of Israel at a time in his life when he was being pursued by those who sought to kill him. David called out to God to help him and was explicit in his desire for God to act with revenge against those who were hounding him and speaking lies against him.

***I say to the Lord, "You are my God." Hear, Lord, my cry for mercy. Sovereign Lord, my strong deliverer, you shield my head in the day of battle. Do not grant the wicked their desires, Lord; do not let their plans succeed. Those who surround me proudly rear their heads; may the mischief of their lips engulf them. May burning coals fall on them; may they be thrown into the fire, into miry pits, never to rise. May slanderers not be established in the land; may disaster hunt down the violent. I know that the Lord secures justice for the poor and upholds the cause of the needy. Surely the righteous will praise your name, and the upright will live in your presence.*** (Psalm 140:6-13 NIV)

***Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."***

*Luke 23:34a NIV*

Some of the slander that grieved David concerned a priest to whom he had gone for help. An onlooker who was there at the same time exaggerated what he saw to David's enemy, King Saul. Unfortunately, the outcome was that the help given by the priest resulted in the priest's entire family, except one son, being put to death. David had to flee and he and the men who gathered with him were hunted like animals. In his grief, David is asking God to bring disaster on his enemies and not let their plans succeed.

David's prayer is quite different from that of the Lord Jesus who experienced lies being told about Him. Because of His great love for us, Jesus allowed Himself to be rejected, beaten, and nailed to a cross, even though He had done no wrong. In His great concern and love for those who crucified Him, Jesus prayed, ***"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."*** (Luke 23:34a NIV) How many of us have caused trouble by telling lies about another? If lies were told about us, how would we respond? There is no greater love than we would lay down our lives for our friends. What about our enemies?

*Prayer: Gracious God, Help me to love my enemies and pray for those who persecute me so that I may behave like a true child of my Father in heaven. Amen*

MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2020

## INTIMACY

When we talk about intimacy we are usually referring to a close, familiar, protective, loving relationship between two persons. Jesus had this type of relationship with His Father and showed it by choosing to be obedient to Him in all His ways. Jesus often spoke of the works He was doing and said that He was simply doing what the Father had given Him to do. Because of His Father's great love for us, Jesus was willing to set aside His eternal majesty and come to earth to redeem us from our sin.

***In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*** (Philippians 2:5-7 NIV)

Our Heavenly Father desires to have an intimate relationship with us. At one time, in the cool of the evening, humans walked with God in the Garden of Eden. However, the intimate relationship they had with God was severed by their listening to the lies of the evil serpent and then choosing to disobey God's instructions. How many of us have ruined our relationships by listening to the deceiver and disobeying the commandments of God?

***Yes, Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone.*** (Romans 5:18 NLT)

When we believe that Jesus took all our sins to the cross and paid the penalty for them, our intimate relationship with God is restored. We have been born again into a new life with our Heavenly Father who is extravagant in His love and care for us. As we practice God's principles in all our affairs, we grow to be more like Jesus and obey His command to carry the message to others.

***Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.*** (John 3:36 NIV)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to be restored to eternal life so I can have an intimate relationship with You. Please help me to be more like Jesus, to set aside my own agenda, and to obey Your principles for living life to the full. Amen***

***Our  
Heavenly  
Father  
desires to  
have an  
intimate  
relationship  
with us.***

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2020

## STEP ONE – FINDING A WAY OUT

"Where is life going from here?" is a question we may ask ourselves when we come to admit that we are powerless over our dependencies and that our life has become unmanageable. We are aware that there are very few options left open to us. We have used up our resources and abused both family and friends so we could keep doing what we were doing. We have finally admitted that there is nothing good in our lives while we are in addiction.

***You used to live as sinners when you followed the ways of this world. You served the one who rules over the spiritual forces of evil. He is the spirit who is now at work in those who don't obey God. At one time we all lived among them. Our desires were controlled by sin. We tried to satisfy what they wanted us to do.*** (Ephesians 2:2-3a NIRV)

***My  
troubles  
are like a  
prison. Set  
me free so I  
can praise  
your name.***

***Psalms 142:7 NIRV***

When we realized our life's journey was taking us on a downward spiral to a place we might never get back from, we called out to God and asked Him to help us find a way out. God, in His grace heard us, and made a way for us to get the help we needed. He showed us a way to break the chains we had forged for ourselves.

***My troubles are like a prison. Set me free so I can praise your name. Then those who do what is right will gather around me because you have been good to me.*** (Psalm 142:7 NIRV)

We did not become powerless over our dependencies in a day, and it is certain we will not get freedom from them in a day. We need to learn about God and His power to free us. We also need to hear from people who have knowledge of the path we are on and are willing to share their experience with us.

***Lord, teach me how you want me to live. Do this so that I will depend on you, my faithful God. Give me a heart that doesn't want anything more than to worship you.*** (Psalm 86:11 NIRV)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for giving me hope of turning from my sinful ways and embracing Your ways that lead to freedom. Amen***

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2020

## BEING DECISIVE

Making decisions and taking responsibility for our choices requires courage. It was easy in our addiction to bully people for things we needed to feed our habit but a healthy weighing up of facts and coming to a reasoned decision that is good for everyone brings out our vulnerabilities. There are just so many things we don't know about ourselves and life. We hate both physical and emotional pain and still want to do whatever we can to avoid it. How do we come to that place of focus and clear sight that let's us know that this or that way is the route we should take?

In simple terms, we seek wise counsel from God and then make the best choice available to us. God promises to watch over us and guide us and if we start to head in the wrong direction, He will whisper a correction into our hearts.

***The Lord shows his people how to live, but the wicked have lost their way. If you wander from the right path, either to the right or to the left, you will hear a voice behind you saying, "You should go this way. Here is the right way." (Psalm 1:6, Isaiah 30:21 ERV)***

It is not God's plan that we swing between the extremes of being pushy or being passive. Too often we are willing to say, "Whatever happens happens" and even to add in "for a reason." The truth is, sometimes things happen because of choices we made that could have been made differently.

***Lord, help me learn your ways. Show me how you want me to live. Guide me and teach me your truths. You are my God, my Savior. You are the one I have been waiting for.*** (Psalm 25:4-5 ERV)

We take a daily inventory of how things went so we can learn and do better on another day. We pray for conscious contact with God and for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out for a reason. Both of these practices help us to find balance and to be decisive in a healthy way.

***I praise the Lord because he taught me well. Even at night he put his instructions deep inside my mind. I always remember that the Lord is with me. He is here, close by my side, so nothing can defeat me.*** (Psalm 16:7-8 ERV)

***Prayer: Loving God, help me to know You and Your ways and walk in them. Amen***

***It is not  
God's plan  
that we  
swing  
between  
the  
extremes of  
being pushy  
or being  
passive.***

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2020

## IMPULSIVE

Many of us, especially early in recovery, find it difficult to control impulsive behaviour. Our history of relapses is a stark reminder of this fact. Sometimes we get caught out while doing well in controlling use of our substance of choice, but we find ourselves acting out in areas such as gambling, sex, rage, over-eating etc. To be successful in recovery we need to change how we manage the thoughts and emotions that lead to impulsive behaviour.

***In the past you were slaves to sin—sin controlled you. But thank God, you fully obeyed what you were taught. You were made free from sin, and now you are slaves to what is right.*** (Romans 6:17-18 ERV)

***When anyone  
is in Christ, it is  
a whole new  
world. The old  
things are  
gone;  
suddenly,  
everything is  
new!***

***(2 Corinthians 5:17  
ERV)***

Due to our previous lifestyle our brains may have suffered change or even damage that led to an imbalance in our impulse control. In Step Two, as we pray for God to restore us to sanity, this is one area where we can expect to see God help us. It is not easy to learn how to live in our new life in recovery, but God has promised to help us find and maintain a life of doing what is right and to enjoy the peace that goes with it.

***Be alert and think straight. Put all your hope in how kind God will be to you when Jesus Christ appears. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.*** (1 Peter 1:13 CEV, Hebrews 12:11 NIV)

One of the areas we will first become aware of our impulsive behaviour is in our emotions and reactions to what others say or do. With God's help and power to control ourselves, we can stop, step away from the situation, and give God a chance to show us a better way to respond.

If we are to learn about controlling our impulses, the experience, strength, and hope of those who have walked this journey before us is important to seek out and put into practice. Their months and years in recovery are a testament to what God can do and will give us hope in learning to control our impulsive behaviour.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to grow in grace towards others and be consistent in making choices for good reasons rather than acting impulsively on my emotions. Amen***

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2020

## CHEERFUL

All of us who have weathered the storm of an addictive lifestyle know that our days were filled with trials of one sort or another. Each day required that we meet the need of our dependency from whatever source we were able to find. We also had to cope with negative thoughts about those who loved us and wanted us to act responsibly towards those who were dependent on us. Our powerlessness over the demands of our life left little space for anything remotely cheerful.

***All the days of the oppressed are wretched, but the cheerful heart has a continual feast.*** (Proverbs 15:15 NIV)

When we decided to turn our will and life over to the care of God things started to change. We were set free from our dependency and enabled by the Holy Spirit, the Power greater than ourselves, to begin the healing process of reconciliation with those we had harmed. Asking God to remove all our shortcomings and making amends set us free to seek the will of God for our lives. Through Jesus we found peace, joy, and comfort because God accepted us as His beloved children and promised to meet all our needs from His rich resources.

***Those who serve Christ in this way are pleasing to God. They are pleasing to people too.*** (Romans 14:18 NIRV)

As we follow God's principles in all our affairs our hearts will be filled with joy and peace as the hope we have in Jesus floods our whole being. Our cheerful faces will begin to reflect the measure of God's love in us and our actions will reveal that God's love tends to overflow to others. We will gladly carry the message to others of what God has done for us, so they also can experience the joy of the Lord.

***A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.*** (Proverbs 17:22 NIV)

Jesus takes us from a crushed spirit to a cheerful heart. The good medicine of the Word of God enables our spirit to soar like an eagle so we can run and not be weary.

***Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for bringing me from darkness into Your glorious light and for the joy in my heart that gives me a cheerful face. Amen***

***Our cheerful faces will begin to reflect the measure of God's love in us.***

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2020

## WORDS, WORDS, AND MORE WORDS

Whether or not we say words with our mouths or use our fingers on social media, we seem to be people of many words. God has help for us as we take an inventory of the words that come out of our hearts and are expressed in these ways. In Proverbs, a book of wisdom, we are given a number of comparisons of good and bad words. They help us sort out what words to keep and what words to learn to eliminate.

***People sometimes lie to hide their hatred, but saying bad things about someone is even more foolish. The words of good people are like a spring of fresh water, but the words of the wicked only hide their violent plans.*** (Proverbs 10:18, 11 ERV)

***Words from good people are like pure silver, but thoughts from the wicked are worthless.***

*Proverbs 10:20 ERV*

Many of us have been guilty of hiding anger and resentment and hatred behind lying words, not just during active addiction but even now in recovery when we don't have drugs or alcohol to rely on. God reminds us this is a foolish way to live. God promises that if we speak the truth in love, peace and understanding will follow. It may not always come in an instant, but it will surely come when the words spoken in truth and love are given a chance.

***If you fail to speak the truth, trouble will follow. If you speak openly, peace will come. Good people say things that help others, but the wicked die from a lack of understanding.*** (Proverbs 10:10, 21 ERV)

Sometimes it's just a matter of not using too many words. We often speak when we are feeling nervous or when we have allowed someone else's opinions to trigger strong emotions in us. In some situations we might do well to just listen or walk away and not use words.. Often it is wise to just be quiet.

***A person who talks too much gets into trouble. A wise person learns to be quiet. Wise people are quiet and learn new things, but fools talk and bring trouble on themselves.*** (Proverbs 10:19, 14 ERV)

***Lord, help me to choose my words wisely and to be quick to listen and learn and slow to speak. Especially in difficult situations, help me to speak in ways that bring peace and understanding or remain quiet. Amen***

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2020

## FINDING COMFORT IN HAZARDOUS TIMES

Our God is a God of comfort to all who trust in Him. When life is troublesome, God invites us to draw near to Him, trust that He sees everything, and acts on our behalf. The Covid-19 pandemic has caused much fear throughout the world and much suffering has been caused by the restrictions imposed by world governments. God oversees it all and this is a time to seek His comfort and guidance as we endure the pandemic and the impact on each of our lives.

*You who sit down in the High God's presence, spend the night in Shaddai's shadow, Say this: "God, you're my refuge. I trust in you and I'm safe!" That's right—he rescues you from hidden traps, shields you from deadly hazards. His huge outstretched arms protect you—under them you're perfectly safe; his arms fend off all harm. Fear nothing—not wild wolves in the night, not flying arrows in the day, not disease that prowls through the darkness, not disaster that erupts at high noon. Even though others succumb all around, drop like flies right and left, no harm will even graze you.* (Psalm 91:1-7 MSG)

The only way one can be in anyone's shadow is when the other person is close by. When we draw near to God, He promises to draw near to us. The above Psalm lists numerous ways God will protect us when we are walking in His ways. This does not mean we can ignore the preventative measures implemented by the leadership of our countries. In His word God tells us to obey our leaders except when to do so would cause us to disobey God's principles.

When God's people take refuge in His shadow, His unfailing love and comfort will be evident in each circumstance they encounter. We have this hope within us: if God is for us, who can be against us?

*You have kept my command to remain strong in the faith no matter what happens. So I will keep you from the time of suffering. That time is going to come to the whole world. It will test those who live on the earth.* (Revelation 3:10 NIRV)

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, May I always seek refuge in Your shadow and be aware of Your outstretched arms to protect me in every circumstance of my life. Amen*

**Our God  
is a God  
of  
comfort  
to all who  
trust in  
Him.**

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2020

## PRACTICING AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Practicing an attitude of gratitude – is this just a happy little catchphrase, something to think about one day a year on the Thanksgiving holiday, or is it a way of facing each day that changes our perspective on life?

***Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.*** (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NLT)

As we go forward in recovery there are many battles in our lives that are bigger than we alone can handle. Often our automatic response might be to worry, work, lie, cheat, or scam our way through the circumstances we estimate to be overwhelming. God has a better way. He wants us to remember that we belong to Him, that He has been good to us in the past, and that he will be good to us if we trust Him with the current situation. He will show us the way forward as we pay attention to His direction.

***Tell God  
what you  
need and  
thank him  
for all he  
has done.***

***Philippians 4:6b  
NLT***

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

Why give thanks while still facing challenges? That's how we acknowledge the truth that God is our provider and that everything we have comes from Him. That's how we remind and encourage our hearts that God truly is with us and we do not face our problems alone.

***Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.*** (Philippians 4:6-7 NLT)

Believing and acting on these truths, with an attitude of gratitude, will eliminate fear and produce stability and security in our lives.

*Heavenly Father Thank you for all that you do for me. Thank you for providing my daily needs of food, clothing, and shelter. Thank you for fighting battles on my behalf and helping me stand firm on your word. Thank you for giving me clean hands and a pure heart. Thank you for strengthening me to be a person of character and dependability. You have truly blessed me to be a blessing. Amen*

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2020

## STEP TWO – POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES

As we turn our hearts towards God, He strengthens us to do what we need to do. Our confidence is stirred to believe that there is a Power greater than ourselves who will restore us to sanity. God not only has the Power to restore us to sanity but is able and willing to do so. Our part is to allow Him to teach us His Word and to become willing to obey His principles in all we do and say.

***The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. Show me the right path, O Lord; point out the road for me to follow.*** (2 Chronicles 16:9a; Psalm 25:4 NLT)

The twists and turns of our past life will seldom match up with the God's ways. Often life itself may have seemed grossly unfair to us. Perhaps we looked at others with envy because of the things we were missing out on. Perhaps our unmet needs led us down the pathway of addiction. In Step 2 we are choosing to believe that God will work those years of hardship for good and will restore us to the sanity of living a joyful, purposeful life.

***Give me a sign of your goodness, that my enemies may see it and be put to shame, for you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.*** (Psalm 86:17 NIV)

God loved us so much that He sent Jesus into the world to redeem us from our sin. Jesus did not come to judge us for what we have done but to save us by paying the debt we owed. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is the power working in us to restore us to sanity. By believing in Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection we are made new in our nature and will one day go to live with Him forever in the place He has gone to prepare for us.

***This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!*** (2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, In Christ alone my hope is found for only through Jesus can my life be restored to sanity. I am eternally grateful that Jesus ever lives to intercede on my behalf before Your throne of grace. Amen***

***God not only has the Power to restore us to sanity but is able and willing to do so.***

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2020

## CREATING OUR SELF-IMAGE

Understanding the relationship between self-image and addiction is like a chicken and egg situation – trying to interpret which came first. Some of us tried to cover up for our low self-image by using alcohol or drugs. For others addiction contributed to our low self-image as we tried to deal with the guilt and shame of our unmanageable life. The Bible says God knows all about us and planned our time of birth and where we would live. Do we factor this into our self-image?

***From one man he made all the people of the world. Now they live all over the earth. He decided exactly when they should live. And he decided exactly where they should live.*** (Acts 17:26 NIRV)

***Our self-image should be based on why we exist at all.***

For all of us, our self-image should be based on why we exist at all. Do we believe that we are made in the image of God? Do we believe that God knew us before we were born and had a plan for us? The Bible tells us the story of Joseph who was rejected by his brothers because he was his father's favourite. To get rid of him they sold him as a slave and Joseph ended up in Egypt.

***Then he sent someone to Egypt ahead of them—Joseph, who was sold as a slave. They bruised his feet with fetters and placed his neck in an iron collar. Until the time came to fulfill his dreams, the Lord tested Joseph's character.*** (Psalm 105:17-19 NLT)

Joseph's self-image must have changed as he went from being the favourite son in a family to being a slave. Did God know Joseph had become a slave? The scripture above says God tested Joseph's character. After many years Joseph's life turned around and he became second in command in the land of Egypt. How might this have impacted Joseph's self-image?

***You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good.*** (Genesis 50:20a NLT)

As Joseph's story unfolds, we should be encouraged. Our self-image will change with life's circumstances, but as we allow God to direct our ways, we will become aware that our self-image reflects God's plan for our lives.

***Prayer: Gracious God, Thank You that You work my past, my present, and my future together for good and for Your glory. Amen***

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2020

## 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)***

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 the principles contained in God's Word. 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***

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

***John 14:6a  
NIRV***

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2020

## FEAR AND INSECURITY

As humans, we long for security in many forms; security within our own family, security about who we are inside our own heads, security of our position within any group we are a part of, security from any type of threat to our wellbeing, and from any other thing we may see as a threat. Lack of anything we consider necessary may make us feel insecure.

***In peace I will both lie down and sleep, For You alone, O Lord, make me to dwell in safety. (Psalm 4:8 NASB)***

***Life  
without  
God is  
uncertain  
and  
dangerous  
but, life  
with God  
is filled  
with  
peace,  
and hope,  
and a  
future, as  
we trust in  
Him.***

This is the security the founders of AA had in mind when they assured us that as we turned our will and our life over to God's care and walked in sobriety with God, fear of people and economic insecurity would leave us.

***And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ... So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you! Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised. (2 Corinthians 9:8 NIV; Hebrews 10:35-36 NLT)***

God can hold us steady while life shifts and turns around us and within us. God invites us to seek Him in the middle of unpredictable and insecure circumstances. God promises to provide all we need not only for ourselves but so that we can be productive and helpful in every good work. We are encouraged to confidently trust in God, knowing that as we focus on doing His will in all our affairs, all God's promises are rightfully ours.

***For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:6 NASB)***

Life without God is uncertain and dangerous, but life with God is filled with peace, and hope, and a future, as we trust Him in all our ways.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to trust You to provide all I need, at all times, in all things, so I can do the good work that You've prepared for me and receive the rewards You promise those who do Your will. Amen***

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2020

## DOING IT RIGHT

Does it really pay to do what's right? Up to now our practice has been to do whatever worked in the moment to get what we wanted. It is a hard habit to break and we may ask ourselves if it is really worth it. Doing the right thing may make life more challenging and inconvenient in the moment but, as we take the longer view in this new life we are building, we will find that doing what is right has far more long-term benefits than we ever could have imagined.

***Doing right makes life better for those who are good, but the wicked are destroyed by their own wicked ways. Doing right sets honest people free, but people who can't be trusted are trapped by their greed. People who do what is right are on their way to life, but those who always want to do wrong are on their way to death.*** (Proverbs 11:5-6, 19 ERV)

As we inventory our past, in a fearless and honest way, we will have to admit that difficulty and destruction were the result of our choices to do wrong. We have to agree with these words from the Bible that we were trapped: trapped by our addiction; trapped by our fear of what others would do to us if they found out how we had wronged them; and trapped in the darkness of frustration and hopelessness that resulted from one bad situation building precariously on top of another.

God wants us to live in freedom from sin. When we try to do what is right, God tells us He is pleased with us, and people around us will also be pleased with us. God pours out blessings upon us when we try to do things His way and He willingly comes alongside to help us when we ask Him to.

***The Lord hates those who love to do evil, but he is pleased with those who try to do right. People are pleased with those who try to do good. Those who look for trouble will find it.*** (Proverbs 11:20, 27 ERV)

*Prayer: Loving God, I pray to be conscious of Your principles for life in all my affairs. Help me to choose to do the right thing, trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your will. Amen*

***People who do what is right are on their way to life, but those who always want to do wrong are on their way to death.***

***Proverbs 11:19  
ERV***

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2020

## RICH AND POOR ALIKE

The writer of the following Psalm starts by calling everyone to listen to what he has to say. He says he has words of wisdom to share and insight to give. It appears he is addressing one of life's baffling problems. This problem affects both rich and poor alike.

***Listen, everyone! High and low, rich and poor, all around the world—listen to my words, for they are wise and filled with insight. I will tell in song accompanied by harps the answer to one of life's most perplexing problems:***

***There is no need to fear when times of trouble come, even though surrounded by enemies! They trust in their wealth and boast about how rich they are, yet not one of them, though rich as kings, can ransom his own brother from the penalty of sin! For God's forgiveness does not come that way.*** (Psalm 49:1-7 TLB)

***Being rich or poor does not make a difference when trouble comes to a person or a nation.***

Being rich or poor does not make a difference when trouble comes to a person or a nation. The national restrictions implemented worldwide due to Covid-19 applied to everyone and for a time, no one could travel for pleasure outside of the area where they lived. The person writing this Psalm wants to calm those he is addressing by telling them there is no need to fear when times of trouble come. Those of us who have given our will and life over to the care of God need to take note of this. When fear arises from whatever source, we need to take it to God and allow Him to help in our time of trouble.

The writer continues by saying that even a rich king is unable to ransom his own brother from the penalty of sin. God's forgiveness does not come that way. The Scriptures tell us the penalty of sin is death. To pay the required penalty, Jesus paid with His life and God accepted forever this one sacrifice for sin. Whether rich or poor we cannot buy forgiveness for sin or eternal life, only belief in the finished work of Jesus is sufficient to wipe out the debt we owe.

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, I thank You for Jesus and all He has done for me. Forgive my arrogance in thinking there may be a different way to obtain forgiveness than the way of the cross. Please help me to humble myself and accept Your gracious gift. Amen*

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2020

## HAVING FUN

Life In recovery is not only about working hard. God's plan for a satisfying and fulfilling life has always been that we would find enjoyment in daily living while always remaining vigilant about threats to our sobriety.

***A cheerful heart makes you healthy. But a broken spirit dries you up. The best thing we can do is to enjoy eating, drinking, and working. I believe these are God's gifts to us.*** (Proverbs 17:22 NIRV, Ecclesiastes 2:24 CEV)

Too many people think that all the fun gets left behind when we are no longer going to bars and parties where substances are used and abused. What many of us have discovered is that there is much more enjoyment in the fun times of life when we experience them sober rather than when we were "under the influence."

***There is a time to weep and there's a time to laugh. There is a time to be sad and there's a time to dance.*** (Ecclesiastes 3:4 NIRV)

Having fun helps us to bond with others who appreciate the same things we do. Friendships deepen as we play together and enjoy shared interests. There is more to recovery than sharing our stories in meetings, as important as that is. We were created to enjoy God, each other, and creation and it is important to take time to do that in light-hearted ways.

There is an old saying, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Play relieves stress. Our brain works better when we give it a rest and enjoy leisure activities that bring us pleasure.

***This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be happy today!*** (Psalm 118:24 ERV)

Different people find relaxation in different things therefore, we need to experiment with what is fun for us. God's invitation to us today is to find time and a way to lighten up and have some fun.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to find the right balance of working hard and having fun. Give me the heart of a child to enjoy simple pleasures and make the most of what each day has to offer. Amen***

***For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.***

***Ecc 3:1 ESV***

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020

## STEP THREE – NO HOLDING BACK

Turning our will and life over to the care of God as we understand Him is just the beginning of our new life with God in recovery. We have much to learn and as we wholeheartedly seek to know God's principles for life as recorded in the Bible, He will give us discernment to do what is right in all our affairs.

***Yes, if you cry out for discernment and lift up your voice for understanding; if you seek her as silver and search for her as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.*** (Proverbs 2:3-5 NKJV)

***When we give our will and life over to the care of God and repent of our sins nothing should be held back.***

When we give our will and life over to the care of God and repent of our sins, nothing should be held back. Holding back means we are not fully committed to the cleansing process of the blood of Jesus. This mindset will keep us sitting on the fence with one foot in our past life and one foot in our new life. To move on we need both feet on the path of righteous living in the power of the Holy Spirit, the power greater than ourselves. If we knowingly hold back anything, we are not supporting the decision we are making and are leaving ourselves open to relapse.

***Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.*** (James 1:7-8 NLT)

God supports a pure heart even when our decision is a timid one. As we truly desire to follow Him, God encourages us and works on our behalf to bring restoration and healing in those places that have been broken. It is not in our own power to amend who we are. That is only done by the Power greater than ourselves. He's the one who restores us to a good, pleasing, and perfect life.

***Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.*** (2 Corinthians 13:11 NIV)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I give my will and life fully into Your care. Please carry on Your renewing work in every part of my being until I am perfected in You. Amen***

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2020

## PROMISES OF GOD

When we encounter a promise of God in the Bible, do we stop and think about what God is saying? Some of God's promises are conditional and we need to look at what our part may be, so we can make claim to the promise.

***So I say, live by the Holy Spirit's power. Then you will not do what your desires controlled by sin want you to do.*** (Galatians 5:16 NIRV)

If we live by the Holy Spirit's power, we will not be controlled by the sin we want to do. When we first come into recovery it is almost impossible not to think about our dependency. We lived so long under its power that it is still seeking to control our whole being. How can we stop thinking about it? God has made us such that we cannot focus on two things at once, so what we need to do is to choose to focus our attention on finding out what God's ways are and allow the power of the Holy Spirit to help us do what God says.

***Finally, my brothers and sisters, always think about what is true. Think about what is noble, right and pure. Think about what is lovely and worthy of respect. If anything is excellent or worthy of praise, think about those kinds of things.*** (Philippians 4:8 NIRV)

Allowing our focus to be on our past dependency or environment will keep us in bondage to whatever we are thinking about. If we seek the Holy Spirit to help us think on things that are right and pure, He will help us. When we are driving a car and turn our eyes away from the road the car will veer in the direction we are looking. The same is true when we keep focusing on the desires of our flesh.

***For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him.*** (2 Corinthians 3:17-18 NLT)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me to live by the Holy Spirit's power so that I can be free from the control of sin in my life as God promises. Amen***

***If we seek  
the Holy  
Spirit to  
help us  
think on  
things that  
are right  
and pure,  
He will  
help us.***

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2020

## KNOW-IT-ALL

The longer we grow in sobriety the more we recognize that we have lots to learn. It is interesting though, how in early sobriety some of us become a "know-it-all" who hardly needs a sponsor, and certainly does not need the advice a sponsor gives when it is inconvenient.

This kind of arrogance is rooted in denial and insecurity. Underneath the egotism we might realize that there truly is a lot we don't know, but we feel we dare not admit it. People who are solidly grounded know that there is a great deal to learn and they have their ears and hearts open to the experience, strength, and hope that others are willing to share.

***Be friendly with everyone. Don't be proud and feel that you are smarter than others. Make friends with ordinary people.*** (Romans 12:16 CEV)

***The  
longer we  
grow in  
sobriety  
the more  
we  
recognize  
that we  
have lots  
to learn.***

How do we know we are living humbly rather than as a know-it-all? One obvious way is in our willingness to learn from God how life really works. The Bible was written to help us, to correct us, and to show us how to live. Are we consulting it, or do we think we can do fine with our own understanding of how things work? As we learn what God says is the right way to do things, are we willing to adjust and adapt our thinking and life habits, or do we simply carry on as we have in the past?

***Everything in the Scriptures is God's Word. All of it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and showing them how to live.*** (2 Timothy 3:16 CEV)

God's thoughts are full of wisdom and His ways of doing things are much higher than ours. Are we living in that truth today? Our Step Ten inventory each evening is one way we can observe our behaviour and determine how willing we are to learn from God and others.

***The Lord says: "My thoughts and my ways are not like yours. Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, my thoughts and my ways are higher than yours.*** (Isaiah 55:8-9 CEV)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Your thoughts are so much wiser than mine and Your ways are so much better than any way I could figure out on my own. Help me to live humbly in this truth and learn all I can from Your word and from those who have walked with You. Amen***

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2020

## STAYING CONNECTED

Trying to stay connected and maintain a close and healthy relationship with anyone else in active addiction was impossible. Only our drug of choice had our full attention. As we come into recovery, God invites us to regain the beautiful plan He has for us to live in a loving and caring relationship with Him, and then with others with whom we form a relationship. Jesus prayed about this long ago, echoing what God's heart was from before creation:

***I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me.*** (John 17:21 NLT)

Staying connected means we come close and allow ourselves to be attached. We do not hide. We joyfully open up our thoughts and feelings to someone with whom we feel safe and accepted. We also look for ways to get to know this person. We want all that each of us are to be known and shared.

***And this is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth.*** (John 17:3 NLT)

Jesus left heaven to come to earth so we would know the depth of God's love for us. We get to know God and His gracious heart towards us as we learn and obey what He tells us works, and avoid those things that harm us.

***I can do nothing alone. I judge only the way I am told. And my judgment is right, because I am not trying to please myself. I want only to please the one who sent me.*** (John 5:30 ERV)

Are we willing to live connected to God today? What would it take for us to only do those things that were on God's heart for us to do? The truth is, we have no life outside of this connection to God through Jesus. This step-by-step, moment-by-moment connection with God is the only way we will overcome our addiction and maintain sobriety.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please heal my heart and help me to respond to Your kind invitation to live close to You each day and follow Your ways in everything I do and say. Amen***

***For in  
him we  
live and  
move  
and  
have our  
being.***

***Acts 17:28  
NIV***

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2020

## AVOIDING EVIL

Most of us would agree that evil is the opposite of good. Sometimes it is helpful to think of evil as the absence of good. We live in a mixed-up world where people mix good and evil for their own purposes and it is hard to know which is which. That is why it is so valuable to have God's word to help us sort out what is truly evil and avoid it.

***Good people are honest and fair in all they do, but those who are evil lie and cannot be trusted. Evil people use their words to hurt others, but the words from good people can save others from danger. The wicked are trapped by their foolish words, but good people escape from such trouble.*** (Proverbs 12:5-6, 13 ERV)

***Stop doing  
anything  
evil and do  
good. Look  
for peace  
and do all  
you can to  
help people  
live  
peacefully.***

***Psalms 34:14 ERV***

God says that when we lie we are acting in an evil way. The same is true when we say things that are angry, mean, and hurtful. We need to regularly consult with God to sort out what is foolish and what is helpful, or we will find ourselves trapped in the trouble we create.

God gives us many examples of good and evil behaviour in the Bible and He does this so we can learn how to follow His ways and be safe. Our task is to learn from these examples and put God's proven ways into practice in all our affairs. People who practice evil end up with tons of trouble but those who work for good find peace and happiness.

***People who work for evil make trouble, but those who plan for peace bring happiness. The Lord will keep good people safe, but evil people will have many troubles.*** (Proverb 12:20-21 ERV)

Knowing the difference between good and evil and making a choice for good is not always easy or convenient but God will help us, if we ask Him.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me today to avoid doing evil things by practicing what You say is right and good. Help me to be conscious of Your guidance when I am heading down a wrong path. Give me the willingness to turn away from evil and to pursue good. Amen***

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2020

## FACE TO FACE WITH THE STATE OF OUR HEART

The following words were written by King David after he had allowed his lust for a woman to lead him down the path of sexual immorality and murder. It would appear he asked for sacrificial blood to be sprinkled on him, so that he could be made clean before his God.

*Sprinkle me with hyssop, then I will be clean. Wash me, then I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear you say, "Your sins are forgiven." That will bring me joy and gladness. Let the body you have broken be glad. Take away all my sins. Wipe away all the evil things I've done. God, create a pure heart in me. Give me a new spirit that is faithful to you. Don't send me away from you. Don't take your Holy Spirit away from me. Give me back the joy that comes from being saved by you. Give me a spirit that obeys you so that I will keep going.* (Psalm 51:7-12 NIRV)

David did not acknowledge all that he had done until he was confronted by the prophet Nathan. Like us, he just kept going until he was brought face to face with the state of his own heart. When making a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves, many of us are horrified by the things we have done. Who or what brought us to that place where we admitted we were powerless over our dependencies and our lives were unmanageable?

Like David, did we call out to God to wipe away all the evil things we have done? In His mercy, God waits for us to turn from sin and turn our will and life over to His care. David asked to be given a new spirit that was faithful to God, so that he could have the joy that comes from being saved by God. When we repent and give our lives over to God, He gives us His Holy Spirit to be with us and to live in us. The Holy Spirit teaches us God's ways and strengthens us to be faithful to all His principles. With the Spirit greater than ourselves working in us we will have the power to obey God and keep going forward in our new life in recovery.

*Prayer: Gracious God, I pray for the knowledge of Your will for my new life and the Power to carry it out. Thank You that as I move forward in recovery I can rely on Your Holy Spirit to guide me and help me obey Your principles in all my affairs. Amen*

**Take  
away all  
my sins.  
Wipe  
away all  
the evil  
things  
I've done.  
God,  
create a  
pure  
heart in  
me.**

*Psalm 51:9-10  
NIRV*

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2020

## GRIEF AND LOSS

In 1969, psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross introduced what became known as the "five stages of grief." This is a list of feelings those who have faced death and tragedy seem to face. Based on her years of working with terminal cancer patients, Kübler-Ross proposed the following pattern of phases many people experience:

- Denial: "This can't be happening to me."
- Anger: "Why is this happening? Who is to blame?"
- Bargaining: "Make this not happen, and in return I will \_\_\_\_."
- Depression: "I'm too sad to do anything."
- Acceptance: "I'm at peace with what has happened."

Even though we may know about these stages and even be able to identify where we are today, it still remains difficult for us to deal with the grief and loss we are experiencing. A seemingly insignificant loss may unexpectedly trigger overwhelming emotions from other occasions of loss.

**You who  
are my  
Comforter  
in sorrow,  
my heart  
is faint  
within  
me.**

Thank God He is with us through every stage of life and He understands our grief. He has experienced it all Himself.

*He was hated and men would have nothing to do with Him, a man of sorrows and suffering, knowing sadness well. But you, God, see the trouble of the afflicted; you consider their grief and take it in hand. The victims commit themselves to you; you are the helper of the fatherless.* (Isaiah 53:3 NIV, Psalm 10:14 NIV)

*Jeremiah 8:18  
NIV*

Not only has God experienced grief and sorrow but He pays attention to what we are going through because He loves us and wants to tenderly comfort us through our difficult times.

Our emotions may go up and down, but God's love and care is forever constant. Each day we have an opportunity to bring our sorrows to God for His comfort and care. For as long as it takes God will not condemn us for the feelings we have but will encourage and support and comfort us. That is the kind of caring God He is.

*My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word.* (Psalm 119:28 NIV)

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, You alone totally understand what I'm going through. When my heart is heavy with grief and loss help me to turn to You for Your comfort and support. Amen*

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2020

## STEP FOUR – FEARLESS FOCUS ON MYSELF

When we come to Step 4 in the 12-Step program we are asked to focus on ourselves and make a searching and fearless moral inventory. We are not to focus on anyone else or on the impact they may have had on our lives. We are to concentrate on ourselves and truthfully admit that it was our own decision making that got us to where we are today. We are the ones who chose our way of life and in some instances ignored any good advice that others may have offered us.

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

The reason we look at ourselves is to measure how our judgment measures up with the principles contained in the word of God and in society in general. Taking responsibility for our actions is a step in the right direction. As we look at situations where we made irresponsible choices, we can assess our thinking process at that time and give some thought as to why we chose the route we did. In some instances, we may have acted without even thinking about the consequences.

***We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ.*** (2 Corinthians 10:4-5 NLT)

Most of us want to avoid self-examination. It is much easier to blame others for the harm they caused us, which we believe contributed to our defects of character. It is true that some of us suffered traumatic events which we tried to mask with all sorts of sedatives. Masking the grief will not bring about health. We need to speak of what happened to a trusted friend or counselor and allow recovery to begin. Our wounds will not heal until we give them to Jesus who took them upon Himself.

***Come to me, all you who are tired and are carrying heavy loads. I will give you rest.*** (Matthew 11:28 NIRV)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to be honest in my self-evaluation and allow the healing process of my life with You in recovery to begin. Amen***

***Taking  
responsibility  
for our  
actions  
is a step  
in the right  
direction.***

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2020

## SHARING THE BLESSING BY PRAYING FOR OTHERS

God tells us to pray for one another, so what does that look like? Are we supposed to tell God what to do? How do we even know what others really need? We don't know, but God does. We don't know what the best plans are for a person, but God has already prepared a way forward for those we love and are praying for. Our task in prayer is to ask God for His love and wisdom and pray for open doors for Him to work in the lives of our family, friends, and even our enemies.

***That is why we always pray for you. We ask our God to help you live the good way he wanted when he chose you. The goodness you have makes you want to do good. And the faith you have makes you work. We pray that with his power God will help you do these things more and more.*** (2 Thessalonians 1:11 ERV)

***We ask our  
God to  
help you  
live the  
good way  
he wanted  
when he  
chose you.***

God has a good purpose for every day of our lives that is particularly suited to our personality and situation in life. God wants us to know His goodness and be blessed by His goodness so much that we will see it spill over into the lives of others. The more goodness we have the more good we will do. This is why we pray.

We all want to be wise and have spiritual understanding and live in a way that honours God and produces good. We also want to endure patiently when troubles come. These are things that grow in us as we pray.

The Bible is filled with prayers of blessing we can use to pray for others. We can insert the person's name in the prayer or just hold them in our thoughts as we pray these words over them. God is faithful to His word, so when we use His own words to bless others, we can be sure that they will experience something of great benefit.

***Prayer: We pray that God will make you completely sure of what he wants by giving you all the wisdom and spiritual understanding you need; that this will help you live in a way that brings honor to the Lord and pleases him in every way; that your life will produce good works of every kind and that you will grow in your knowledge of God; that God will strengthen you with his own great power, so that you will be patient and not give up when troubles come. Then you will be happy and give thanks to the Father. He has made you able to have what he has promised to give all his holy people, who live in the light.*** (Colossians 1:9-12 ERV)

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2020

## OPINIONS

So many people think they know so much and over time most of us in some of these areas are proved wrong. How wise of the founders of AA to take the position that AA would have no opinion on outside issues so the AA name would not be drawn into public controversy. God's word also encourages us to think twice about sharing our opinions.

***Fools find no pleasure in understanding but delight in airing their own opinions.*** (Proverb 18:2 NIV)

It's not wrong to have an opinion. We all need to think and wonder about things and form our thoughts around God's truth, but we all need to remember that we are on a journey in our minds as well as in every other area of our life. We are being transformed and that means that some of the opinions we hold today may not be those we hold at a later date.

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

The core of our thinking should be solidly based on God's word but in many areas of life it takes time for clarity to come in how we are to respond to certain groups or issues. Where God's word is clear we need to be clear and change our minds if we have previously held other opinions. At the same time, we need to respect others wherever they are at on their journey and who might differ from us at this point.

***Let us stop judging one another. Instead, decide not to put anything in the way of a brother or sister. Don't put anything in their way that would make them trip and fall.*** (Romans 14:13 NIRV)

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, I welcome You to show me Your will today. Help me to test what is right in Your eyes and make any necessary changes to my thinking. Give me grace to live with respect for others who differ with me in their ideas and opinions. Amen*

***Accept the person whose faith is weak. Don't argue with them where you have differences of opinion.***

***(Romans 14:1 NIRV)***

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2020

## LEARNING FROM OUR MISTAKES

We all make mistakes and it's what we do after the mistake that is the measure of who we are as a person.

***If you refuse to learn from your mistakes, you will be poor, and no one will respect you. If you listen when you are criticized, you will be honored.*** (Proverbs 13:18 ERV)

It is no surprise to God that we make mistakes. His plan is not for us to sit in a corner because we fear making a mistake. God desires that we limit our mistakes by seeking to know and do His will in all our affairs and when we do stumble, admitting the mistake and learning from it. God even promises us honour when we take this route.

***It's what we do after the mistake that is the measure of who we are as a person.***

The Bible is full of stories of people who made mistakes. God's people have never been perfect people. The stories of their mistakes are included in God's record of human history, not to shame the individuals but rather that we could learn from their mistakes and avoid making the same ones.

***The things that happened to those people are examples. They were written to be warnings for us. We live in the time that all those past histories were pointing to.*** (1 Corinthians 10:11 ERV)

Someone outlined a simple plan for dealing with mistakes that had these 5 points: Own it. Apologize. Accept the consequences. Learn from it. Let it go.

***Don't quit your job simply because the boss is angry with you. If you remain calm and helpful, you can correct even great mistakes.*** (Ecclesiastes 10:4 ERV)

God made a way for us to deal with our mistakes. Jesus died that we might be forgiven our sins and His blood cleanses us from our past wrongdoing.

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

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to work hard and to make as few mistakes as possible by seeking Your will in all I do. When I do get it wrong, give me the courage to deal with it quickly and let it go. Amen*

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2020

# NOTES

## HIDING BEHIND A MASK

Tomorrow night many children put on costumes and go door-to-door “trick-or-treating.” Some of them wear masks to complete their costume. Many adults also dress in costumes at their workplace and later in the evening may attend parties where a mask is used to disguise who they really are. Everyone wants to have a good time as they pretend to be someone they are not for a few hours.

Truth is, many of us don't just don masks at Hallowe'en. Sometimes we have worn masks for so long that we forget who we really are. A mask, of course, covers the truth of who we truly are with a lie. When we live behind a mask, we are denying our true self and rejecting the person God created us to be.

*You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it.* (Psalm 139:13-14 NLT)

God created us in love with a purpose for our lives. God invites us to let our unique personality complement each of our relationships, and all we undertake to do. This is what life with God in recovery is all about, becoming the person God created us to be and following the plan He has for our lives. When we dare to take off the mask and let our true self be known, we often experience freedom from the burden our false persona burdened us with.

The question for each of us is, do we want to tell the truth, remove the mask, and find out who we truly are, or do we want to continue telling lies and hiding behind the mask of a false persona?

*What this adds up to, then, is this: no more lies, no more pretense. Tell your neighbor the truth. In Christ's body we're all connected to each other, after all. When you lie to others, you end up lying to yourself.* (Ephesians 4:25 MSG)

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, from this day forward I commit to letting go of everything that hinders me from becoming the person You created me to be. Help me to tell the truth in every circumstance and leave the outcome with You. Amen*

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## SOME AREAS OF ADDICTION AND DEPENDENCY

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

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