

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations



September 2018

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

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SEPTEMBER 2018

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2018

JUST FOR TODAY – I WILL TRY TO LIVE IN CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH GOD

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.

On a daily basis, what decisions are we making to try to live in conscious contact with God?

People who love each other will spend as much time together as possible. Because of God's love for us, God desires to spend time with us. When we love God in return, we will want to spend time with Him. Persons who are in love want to share all of who they are, and what they experience, with each other. Experiences build the memories that nourish the life they share together. Each one gets to know the likes and dislikes of the other. Each one marvels at what their loved one does, and they delight in what they share together.

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)

As men and women who are learning to live in a loving relationship with God and have a desire to know His will, it is important to speak with God in prayer. We honour God by expressing our joy and thanksgiving about what He is doing in our lives. We can ask God for wisdom and guidance as we share our plans with Him. As we walk in conscious contact with Him, God is faithful to complete what He has begun in us. God is ever present with us and will tenderly direct and encourage us when we bring our plans to Him and are willing to respond to His input.

Prayer: Loving God, I want to live in conscious contact with You. Help me to recognize Your presence with me and Your will for my life. Fill me with Your power and grace to carry out those things You have planned for me to do. Amen

***As we walk
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SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2018

SUNDAY PSALM – SECURITY

We tend to base our security on the experience of our personal relationships with others. If we grew up with attentive loving parents, we learn to trust others and have a good sense of healthy boundaries. If we grew up in dysfunctional families, we tend to be wary of others because we experienced, or witnessed, violations of personal boundaries in our homes. As children, some of us also had to deal with unmet needs. Now, as responsible adults, we need to assess and recognize those persons that we can trust.

Keep me safe, O God, I've run for dear life to you. I say to God, "Be my Lord!"

***Keep me safe, O
God, I've run for
dear life to you.
I say to God, "Be
my Lord!"***

***Without you,
nothing makes
sense.***

(Psalm 16:1 MSG)

Without you, nothing makes sense. And these God-chosen lives all around—what splendid friends they make! Don't just go shopping for a god. Gods are not for sale. I swear I'll never treat god-names like brand-names. My choice is you, God, first and only. And now I find I'm your choice! You set me up with a house and yard. And then you made me your heir! (Psalm 16:1-6 MSG)

When we admitted that we were powerless over our addiction and dysfunctional lifestyle, we looked for a secure place where we could be restored to sanity. Some of us choose for a place where there are God inspired people all around. These people become our friends. Their desire is for us to turn our will and our lives over to the God they know can be trusted. The person writing today's Psalm found out that when he chose to trust God, he was actually God's choice. He is amazed that being in relationship with God makes him a child of God, and an heir of all His promises.

Today, let's consider if we have found our security in the God who loves and cares for us, or are still shopping for an alternate god. Without the living God in our lives, nothing in life really makes sense.

Prayer: Loving God, I confess that at times I still seek my security in people and things. Help me to choose you alone, first and only. Amen

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2018

LABOUR DAY

Today in North America we honour and give thanks for the collective labour-force of people within our families, our communities, and our nation.

The gift of work is seen first with God. God created the earth and its inhabitants in six days and then rested on the seventh day. What beauty there is to admire and enjoy because of God's creative nature in our environment, in the night sky, in animal life, and in one another.

Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good! On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested from all his work. (Genesis 1:31, 2:2 NLT)

God has given each of us skills and talents which enable us to work to provide for ourselves, our families, and to take care of the earth. We are instructed to work hard, to give our work the best effort we can, and to be contented with what we have.

Lazy people want much but get little, but those who work hard will prosper. Work brings profit, but mere talk leads to poverty Don't love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, "I will never fail you. will never abandon you." (Proverbs 13:4, 14:23, Hebrews 13:5 NLT)

Too many of us have lived between the extremes of either working too much or working too little. God doesn't want us to run after money as the ultimate source of our security. He advises us to work hard and not squander the time and talents He has given us.

Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans. (Colossians 3:23, Proverbs 16:3 NLT)

As we celebrate Labour Day, let's offer our work – studies, paid employment, volunteer work, recovery work etc. – to the Lord and ask His blessings on all that we do, so that our labour may contribute to honouring God and building up our community.

Prayer: May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us — yes, establish the work of our hands. Amen (Psalm 90:17 NIV)

We are instructed to work hard, to give our work the best effort we can, and to be contented with what we have.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2018

GUILT THROUGH CONDEMNATION

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1 NLT)

When we permit our thoughts to be controlled by any power other than the Holy Spirit, we give permission to that evil power to accuse us of our past misdeeds and fill us with endless guilt. Condemning thoughts flood our minds such as, "You will never be free from those sins. You will never be what God created you to be. God is disappointed in you. You are weak willed. How long can you expect God to put up with you?" These assaults are vicious attacks on our minds from Satan who seeks to destroy us.

We need to encourage ourselves with the truth of God's word rather than allow feelings of inadequacy and lingering guilt to control us.

When we were controlled by our old nature, sinful desires were at work within us, and the law aroused these evil desires that produced a harvest of sinful deeds, resulting in death. But now we have been released from the law, for we died to it and are no longer captive to its power. Now we can serve God, not in the old way of obeying the letter of the law, but in the new way of living in the Spirit. (Romans 7:5-6 NLT)

We need to encourage ourselves with the truth of God's word rather than allow feelings of inadequacy and lingering guilt to control us. When we accept Jesus' death as payment for our sins, we are freed from all condemnation. Taking time to pray and acknowledge that we are empowered by the Holy Spirit will grow our faith and produce strength in us to live in the freedom we have in Christ. We seek progress each day, not perfection. Slogans such as, "Let go and let God" remind us that God seeks a heart that is fully surrendered to Him.

Jesus prayed for us who would believe in Him, ***"Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth"***. (John 17:17 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, Thank you for being merciful to me, rather than condemning me for my sinful ways. Today I choose to let go of the guilt I carry about my past sins and stand on the truth that, through Jesus, I have been set free from all condemnation. Amen

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2018

GUILTY OR NOT GUILTY

Jesus died on the cross for our sins, so we would be made right with God. Our sin debt was fully paid by Jesus; no part of it is outstanding. From the cross Jesus said “Paid in full”. Why then do we allow guilt about our former debt to clutter our thoughts? These are not thoughts based on truth. They are the charges of the accuser whom the Bible tells us accuses us before our God night and day. Thankfully, Jesus currently sits at the right hand of God and is our advocate before His Father. He says, “This one is my child! I shed my innocent blood for him, for her.”

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: “Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.”
(Revelation 12:10 NIV)

Though we are inadequate in ourselves to face the allegations of the accuser, we are more than conquerors through Jesus. He has not left us as orphans to cope on our own. Jesus sent His Holy Spirit to be with us and in us, so that we could be helped and guided by Him. As we allow ourselves to be directed by the Holy Spirit, He will be our faithful teacher and friend and will help us stand firm in the truth of God’s word.

“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.” (John 14:15-17 NKJV)

Let’s acknowledge the fact that when Jesus sets us free from our sins, we are declared “not guilty”, and those whom the son has set free are free indeed!

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I choose to let go of the evil’s one’s accusations about the wrongs I have done. Through my acceptance of Your finished work on the cross, I have been forgiven and set free. Thank You for Your Holy Spirit working in me to bring me to understanding of Your word. I turn away from sin and turn to You for help to build my new life with You in recovery. Amen

[God] is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.

(Ephesians 1:7 NLT)

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2018

I CAN’T. GOD CAN. I THINK I’LL LET HIM.

The familiar slogan “*I can’t. God can. I think I’ll let Him*” describes the first three steps of the Twelve Step program of Alcoholics Anonymous. We can apply these words to many situations we encounter in our daily lives.

The story is told of how one rainy afternoon, a father came up with an idea to entertain his bored eight-year-old daughter. He tore a large map of the world

into small pieces, mixed them up, and told her to put them back together like a jigsaw puzzle. To her father’s surprise, the girl completed the puzzle in just a few minutes. “How did you do it?” the father asked. “It was easy,” she said. “At first I couldn’t fit all the lines and dots and colors together on the map. Then I saw part of a man’s face on the back of one of the pieces. So, I turned all the pieces over. When I got the man on the back of the pieces together, the world on the front took care of itself.”

When we choose to apply the simple principle, “I can’t. God can. I’ll let Him” we’ll experience a new and satisfying life – life with God in recovery.

Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you. He will make your innocence radiate like the dawn, and the justice of your cause will shine like the noonday sun. (Proverbs 37:5-6 NLT)

God sent His son Jesus into the world to redeem sinful, broken, screwed-up individuals like us. By dying on the cross, Jesus paid the price for all our sin. When we believe that Jesus’ payment is sufficient to set us free from sin, we will receive the new life that God promises. Alternatively, we can continue to live in frustration as we try to sort out our complicated lives by ourselves. When we choose to apply the simple principle, “I can’t. God can. I’ll let Him” we’ll experience a new and satisfying life – life with God in recovery.

Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. (James 1:17 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I admit that I am powerless over people, places, and things. I invite you to live in me and work in me, so I can fulfill Your good purpose for my life. Amen

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2018

DETOXING SPIRITUAL POISON

In sobriety, we become aware of how much spiritual poison we've allowed to build up in our hearts and minds. We have many misguided desires and false ideas about life. The most toxic spiritual poison we have fed ourselves is the belief that we know how to live life on our own, without God.

Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. But, when God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. (Titus 3:3-6 NLT)

The truth is, we were created for a relationship with God. Other relationships we have used while trying to gratify our desire for fulfillment, have proven to be as defective and destructive as the use of alcohol and drugs. Like harmful substances, these relationships and activities did not fulfill our desire for a meaningful life and our souls need to be cleansed from the false hope that we've attached to them.

God created us to live in relationship with Him, submitted to His ways. That's why the founders of AA framed the 12 steps to begin with admitting our powerlessness to face life on our own, and the need to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God. These first steps are the foundation that our recovery is built on. The Bible confirms these teachings.

There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death. Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. (Proverbs 14:12, John 14:6 NLT)

Prayer: Gracious God, I admit that I am powerless on my own and my life has become unmanageable. Help me to get to know You and the truth of Your word, and to turn my will and my life over to your care. Amen

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2018

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR AVOIDING TEMPTATION

God promises to supply what we need to overcome temptation. He will empower us to keep on the right path even during difficult times of temptation. What God starts, God will finish. Where we are weak, God will show Himself strong on our behalf. The most powerful strategy for overcoming temptation is reminding ourselves, as often as necessary, that God's grace is sufficient to meet all our needs.

May God himself, the God who makes everything holy and whole, make you holy and whole, put you together—spirit, soul, and body—and keep you fit for the coming of our Master, Jesus Christ. The One who called you is completely dependable. If he said it, he'll do it! God says, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."* Therefore, I will *boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.* (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 MSG, 2 Corinthians 12:9 NIV)

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Some practical ways we can express our trust in God's care and move beyond temptation:

- Recognize what's going on – the devil is trying to destroy us. Do we want him to succeed, or do we want victory over Him?
 - Stop obsessing on whatever is tempting us and pray instead. Ask God for strength, healing, comfort, and insight.
 - Reach out for support and solutions. Seek help until we connect with someone who can help.
 - Be willing to see any problem in perspective. We need to consider the positive outcome of handling a problem as soon as it arises. We also need to see the negative consequences that will result from avoiding or mishandling a problem. One fleeting moment of pleasure has a high cost.
- Distract ourselves with healthy thoughts and choose, just for one day, to believe God's word and act accordingly. One day quickly grows to two and then a week, a month, a year, and even a lifetime.

God will hear our prayer when we sincerely come to Him and ask for help. If we obey what God says, He will deliver us from the power of temptation.

Prayer: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one." Amen (Matthew 6:9-13 NIV)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2018

SUNDAY PSALM – OVERCOMING IMPATIENCE

How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? Look on me and answer, Lord my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death, and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," and my foes will rejoice when I fall. But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing the Lord's praise, for he has been good to me. (Psalm 13:1-6 NIV)

Impatience with our progress in recovery may cause us to keep our minds focused on what we still have to do, rather than on the growth we have already experienced. Fears may arise as we begin to journal some of our step work. With sober minds, we remember the person we were, and the pain we caused others by our actions. This may bring feelings of sorrow and shame. A desire for immediate relief from our anxiety may cause us to dwell on our drug of choice and how it might numb the pain. If we wrestle with these thoughts without seeking help, we may find ourselves giving in to the enemy of our souls and relapsing.

Recognizing that we are under attack from evil forces seeking to draw us back into darkness is the first step in controlling our impatient thoughts. Asking for God's help is the next. Talking with a mentor who understands will help us get back on the path of recovery.

But God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life. (1 Timothy 1:16 NLT)

Each time we have victory over our impatience we will begin to sing praises to God for His help and sustaining power.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, When I am in trouble and wrestle with feelings of anxiety, please strengthen me by the power of Your Spirit so I can avoid shipwreck. I am grateful that when I call on You for help, You have promised to answer me. Thank You for Your unfailing love and care for me. Amen

Recognizing that we are under attack from evil forces seeking to draw us back into darkness is the first step in controlling our impatient thoughts.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2018

WISDOM FOR THE JOURNEY – CONTROL WHAT YOU SAY

What are we saying and why are we saying it? After years of either saying nothing out of fear or bursting out with anger or complaints, one of the things we need to learn in recovery is what to say and when to say it. We need to learn to control what we say and speak in ways that encourage others; we need to speak the truth to others in a loving way; we need to give attention to what is important and needs to be said.

Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones. A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Those who guard their lips preserve their lives, but those who speak rashly will come to ruin. (Proverbs 16:24, 15:1, 13:3 NIV)

A good rule to follow is to speak to others as we would wish to be spoken to.

Gossip and blaming don't help in any situation. Using our words to lie and manipulate and get what we want is more destructive than helpful. It's time to give these up.

With their mouths the godless destroy their neighbors, but through knowledge the righteous escape. A lying tongue hates those it hurts, and a flattering mouth works ruin. (Proverbs 11:9, 26:28 NIV)

It's not just words that come out of our mouths we need to watch. In this age of social media, it's easy to let our words run wild when we think we are anonymously sending tweets or texts. We would do well to think about the impact of our words on others and what our words reveal about us.

Fools give full vent to their rage, but the wise bring calm in the end. Do you see someone who speaks in haste? There is more hope for a fool than for them. (Proverbs 29:11, 20 NIV)

So, what should we be talking about and how should we be saying it? A good rule to follow is to speak to others as we would wish to be spoken to. There's always a place for kindness and for courtesy. God's word promises that when we take time to consider what we say, and speak kindly to others, it will bring health to our own bodies.

Prayer: May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. Amen (Psalm 19:14 NLT)

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2018

WHO AM I?

Who am I? Who do I say I am? Who do others say I am? Who does God say I am? What difference does it make what anyone says about who I am?

When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner." (Luke 7:36-39 NIV)

The woman in this story had a bad reputation in the community. We are told that she lived a sinful life. How bad is our reputation? How sinful are we? How much of the ugliness in our thoughts and actions do others know about? What would they think if they did know? The challenge in our life with God in recovery is coming to terms with who we are and what we've done, and what it means for us to live before God and others in an honest transparent way. Are we setting ourselves up for failure?

In the light of her past sinfulness, this woman's generous action filled with love and gratitude can teach us a lot. We need to remind ourselves that Jesus is all about forgiveness and new life. Jesus' death and resurrection opened the way for us to have relationship with God, and eternal life. This woman demonstrated her thankfulness and great love for Jesus because she knew, her sins which were many, had all been forgiven. Today is a good day to come to God with all our baggage and receive the forgiveness God has provided through Jesus. Nothing is greater than God's grace to forgive.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You know all about my sinful life and in Your amazing grace offer me forgiveness and a new beginning. I repent and turn away from my rebellious ways and choose to receive all that You have provided for me through the death and resurrection of Jesus. Amen

Today is a good day to come to God with all our baggage and receive the forgiveness God has provided through Jesus.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2018

TAKING A DECISIVE LEAP OF FAITH – GOING GOD'S WAY

When we were active in addiction, many of us took risks which were unhealthy and some of us continue to live with the consequences of our actions. If we are to live well in recovery we need to step away from any further unhealthy acts. It takes a decisive leap of faith to listen attentively to God and others and, on a regular basis, put the principles we hear about into practice. Avoiding this bold step forward may give us some short-term comfort, but it means we will miss an opportunity for learning and growing. The slogan, "If nothing changes nothing changes", is a challenge to us to take some bold first steps to recovery, even though they are steps into unknown territory.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. (Hebrews 12:1 NLT)

We are taking a decisive leap of faith when we turn our will and our life over to God's care.

When life changing decisions need to be made we may be asked to take a huge leap of faith. It's new to us to believe that there is a loving God who is close to us and wants to live in relationship with us. It takes a decisive leap of faith to turn our will and our life over to God's care but when we do, God promises us many blessings.

Seek the Lord while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near. Let the wicked change their ways and banish the very thought of doing wrong. Let them turn to the Lord that he may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God, for he will forgive generously. (Isaiah 55:6-7 NLT)

We take a giant leap forward when we say "No" to our familiar short-cut solutions and instead patiently and consistently follow God's principles for life. God wants our lives to be built on a solid foundation based on His Word as recorded in the Bible. Are we willing to go God's way today?

Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am thankful that the will and the power to do what is right comes from You alone. Thank You for giving me the courage to take a leap of faith and wholeheartedly follow Your principles in all my affairs. Amen

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2018

DEALING WITH DENIAL

Denial is described as a refusal to admit the truth or reality of a situation. Denial is a coping mechanism people use to help them deal with uncomfortable memories or circumstances.

The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? But I, the Lord, search all hearts and examine secret motives. (Jeremiah 17:9-10 NLT)

Denial of our dependency on a substance and/or a person, is the first obstacle we must overcome in recovery. Others may have identified the negative impact our dependency has on us, but we continue to deny that a problem even exists. Step One reminds us: *We admitted we were powerless over our dependency and that our life had become unmanageable.* Failure to acknowledge this keeps us from seeking the help we need and taking the necessary steps to get well.

For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. (Romans 7:18-20 NIV)

God calls us to live in truth. When we put our faith and trust in Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes to live within us and He will reveal the truth we need to acknowledge about ourselves

Jesus said, ***When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future.*** (John 16:13 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please reveal to me where I am vulnerable to denial of the truth and the effect it is having on my life and relationships. Fill me with the life-giving truth of Your Word and help me to walk in Your ways. I desire to be free from those things that hinder my walk with You and my recovery. Amen

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2018

BREAKING THROUGH DENIAL

Denial keeps us in slavery because we are lying to ourselves. We often lie to others in an attempt to cover up our glaringly evident addictive behaviour. It is only when we break the cycle of denial and become brutally honest with ourselves about our bondage to our dependency that there is any chance for real freedom.

People ruin their lives by their own foolishness and then are angry at the Lord. (Proverbs 19:3 NLT)

It is only when we break the cycle of denial and become brutally honest with ourselves about our bondage to our dependency that there is any chance for real freedom.

Denial comes in many forms. How can we identify denial in ourselves or in someone we love? It takes time to see a pattern of denial in our own lives or even in the life of another. Following are some signs:

Avoidance: We seek to focus the conversation on “anything but my real problem.”

Arguing: We easily get into arguments and believe that denying a problem will make it go away or change what someone else is seeing.

Complete Denial: Addicts refuse to admit they have a problem. They believe that others have misinterpreted their situation.

Minimizing: An addict will minimize how much or how often they use their substance of choice or how bad an impact their problem is having.

Rationalizing: Addicts rationalize their behaviour hoping that their reasoning will be enough to avoid taking action. “I can do what I want because I’m not hurting anyone except myself.”

Blaming: Addicts try to blame their behaviour on the actions of others.

Comparing: Addicts attempt to demonstrate they don’t have a serious problem by showing that someone else’s problem is greater than their own.

Bargaining: Addicts often make deals with themselves or others, “I’ll just have one. I’ll stop tomorrow. I just need a bit to get through today.”

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to fearlessly reject the lies that have kept me in bondage to my addiction. Help me to accept the truth of the finished work of Jesus as payment in full for my sins so I can live in the freedom from condemnation that haunts me. Amen.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2018

REBUILDING SELF-ESTEEM

Many events in life seem to destroy our value and puncture holes in our self-esteem. A significant part of living with God in recovery is restoring our understanding of our true value, which has been established by the God who created us.

No matter what we've done in our past or for how long we did it, when we accept forgiveness from Jesus we become new people and God says, "You are forgiven. Nothing can separate you from My love. You are created to do good work. My plan and purpose for your life is to give you a future with hope."

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. (Romans 8:1-2, 38 NLT)

We need to tell our hearts and minds these truths until incorrect thought patterns are transformed and we are resting secure in God's unfailing love and care.

See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are! And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows. (1 John 3:1a, Luke 12:7 NLT)

As beloved children of God we need to exchange our self-will for God's will. When we focus on what God says works, and put those things into practice, we will begin to experience a life that is satisfying and meaningful.

Don't shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. Look up, and be alert to what is going on around Christ—that's where the action is. See things from his perspective. Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your real life—even though invisible to spectators—is with Christ in God. He is your life. (Colossians 3:2-3 MSG)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to daily focus on Your word and put it into practice. Amen

A significant part of living with God in recovery is restoring our understanding of our true value, which has been established by the God who created us.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2018

SUNDAY PSALM – OUR REPENTANCE AND GOD'S FORGIVENESS

During the time we were in active addiction our record of living in loving and faithful ways was likely non-existent. Some of us ended up with a rap sheet in the courts and others of us ended up with one written on our hearts. The guilt and shame attached to our failures and destructive behaviour took hold of us, and if we are honest, many of us still struggle with those memories.

Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight!

Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty! I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the Lord." And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone. (Psalm 32:1-2, 5 NLT)

It's time to not only be honest about what we've done in the past, but also to be honest about what God has done on our behalf.

God invites us to a new way of living, not just with new behaviours, but also with new ways to deal with thoughts and memories from the past. It is God's plan that we live free from the burden of guilt and shame. That doesn't mean we don't care about what happened or how we've harmed others. It means we own what we've done and humbly ask God to remove our character defects. As we then live according to God's principles, others will observe how God has changed us.

The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. So rejoice in the Lord and be glad, all you who obey him! Shout for joy, all you whose hearts are pure!" (Psalm 32:8, 11 NLT)

It's time to not only be honest about what we've done in the past, but also to be honest about what God has done on our behalf.

Prayer: Heavenly Father. You know all about me – past, present, and future. I lay down my own opinions about how life should have been and confess that I failed to live according to Your ways. I receive Your forgiveness through Jesus' finished work on the cross and lay down all condemnation and false guilt. I am forgiven. I am truly free to be the person You created me to be. I am forever grateful that You love and care for me. Amen

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2018

COURAGE

Early in recovery, just attending to an unfamiliar daily routine is challenging. However, God promises He will give us the courage we need to take care of everyday responsibilities that were often neglected in the past.

But when I am afraid, I will put my trust in you. I praise God for what he has promised. I trust in God, so why should I be afraid? (Psalm 56:3-4 NLT)

In the Bible we read of a young man named Gideon who was hiding from the enemies of his people (Judges 6). He was afraid to be seen at his workplace where he sifted wheat because he knew his enemies would seize the wheat from him if they knew he had it. The angel of the Lord visited Gideon and called him a mighty warrior and told him to go in the strength of the Lord and save his people from their enemies. Gideon doubted the Lord's word and said that his family was the weakest of his clan and he was the smallest in his family. But, in spite of how fearful he felt, Gideon was obedient to the Lord's instructions and became the mighty warrior the Lord had said he would be.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. (Joshua 1:9 NIV)

Even though we may feel weak and fearful, God is with us. One day at a time, in the ordinary events of our lives, God will teach us His ways and lead us in the paths He has directed for our feet. We can dare to let go of all our fears because God promises to give us the strength and courage we need to do what He has asked us to do. With God's help we can overcome all our obsessions and dependencies and live life to the full, as God intends.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to live in the security that you are with me, giving me the courage and strength to do what You are directing through Your word and the counsel of others. When I am afraid, I will continue to trust in You. Amen

We can dare to let go of all our fears because God promises to give us the strength and courage we need to do what He has asked us to do.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2018

MOTIVATED BY GOD'S WILL IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS

The desire to express our love for God and our neighbour should be the motivation behind what we do each day and how we work through our daily agenda. At the end of each day we should take inventory of how well we demonstrated God's love in our interactions with others. When we do an honest assessment, we can be pleased with those things we managed to do well. In those areas where we know we fell short we can ask God to help us improve.

The desire to express our love for God and our neighbour should be the motivation behind what we do each day and how we work through our daily agenda.

See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. (Hebrews 3:12-13 NIV)

What standard do we use for evaluating how we are honouring God in all our affairs? Jesus said we are to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Did each of us wake up this morning loving God with our whole being and desiring to be a part of what God wants to do through us today? Did we ask God for guidance in all those things we planned to do? When unplanned events occurred, did we function in a way that was pleasing to God and encouraging to our neighbour? Were we conscious of God being with us as we carried out the events of the day?

Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know. (Jeremiah 33:3 NIV)

God's word assures us that when we call upon Him for help with our daily agenda, He will answer us and give us wisdom and discernment to do those things that please Him.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am grateful that You give me the desire and the will to do what pleases You. Help me to love You with all my heart and to seek You in all my ways. Help me to encourage and love others as You love and encourage me. Amen

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2018

DESIRE TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT

Having a loving relationship with God and praying with Him about everything we do is the foundation for those who seek to live with God in recovery. When we begin to experience the love, joy, and peace that an intimate relationship with God brings, the desire to do the hard work to restore and maintain other relationships will be stirred up within us as well.

Jesus said: ***You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate. Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn others, or it will all come back against you. Forgive others, and you will be forgiven.*** (Luke 6:36-37 NLT)

We have all been hurt and let down by others. It's part of being around humans in our world. Some of us have lived so long focused on how we've been victimized and how others have hurt us that we fail to see how we've also hurt others and ourselves in the process. God invites us to stop running, acknowledge the pain and brokenness in our past relationships, and deal with the hurt that was caused.

When we ask God to help us recall the people and circumstances where we caused harm, God will do so without accusation or condemnation. God will help us identify our part in the painful event. When we confess and humbly take responsibility for the wrongs we have done, God will forgive us and bring healing. He will also supply the grace we need to become willing to make amends.

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

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for helping me acknowledge the harm I have caused in my relationships and for giving me the desire and the will to make amends. Please work for good in the lives of those I have injured in any way. Amen

God invites us to stop running, acknowledge the pain and brokenness in our past relationships, and deal with the hurt that was caused.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2018

HUMAN LIMITATIONS

The night before Jesus died he shared a meal with his friends, including one of his closest companions, Peter. Then the group headed over to the Mount of Olives where Jesus knew He would face arrest and sorrow. Part of that sorrow was the knowledge that most of His friends would desert him.

Peter's expectation of himself was that, no matter what anyone else did, he would be loyal and stay at Jesus' side. However, before that night was over, Peter had denied three times that he was ever with Jesus or even knew him. At the time he said it, Peter meant what he said to Jesus, but he was relying on his own power to be a faithful friend. When he was alone Peter was intimidated by the threat of unfriendly people and their accusations, and his fear caused him to deny His Lord.

God accepts us as we are and invites us to rely on His power to help us live successfully.

Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. (Romans 12:3 NIV)

How often do we have the same desire and the same bitter defeat as Peter? Thankfully we can turn our will and our lives over to the care of God because we recognize that we are powerless on our own, and our lives are unmanageable. God accepts us as we are and invites us to rely on His power to help us live successfully.

For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. (Jeremiah 29:11-12 NIV)

God doesn't leave us in our broken state. God works with us to identify those defects of character that lead us to act and react in unhealthy ways. As we come humbly before God each day and inventory our lives with Him, He will help us make the necessary changes to get rid of our character defects and anything else that limits healthy growth in our recovery.

Prayer: Gracious God, I want to get to know You and Your will for my life. Fill me with Your power to do those things that please You. Help me to grow in my conscious contact with You and to seek You in all my ways. Amen

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2018

CARING FOR UNEASY FEELINGS

When we live in depression our number-one enemy is our emotions. Emotions are unreliable. They change from day to day and feelings often don't convey the truth, or at least the complete truth, of what is going on in our lives. Acknowledging the truth of our emotional state to God, and asking for His help, will bring His wisdom into the situation, together with healing, encouragement, and blessing.

I look to the Lord for help. I wait confidently for God to save me, and my God will certainly hear me. Do not gloat over me, my enemies! For though I fall, I will rise again. Though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be my light. (Micah 7:7-8 NLT)

When we feel tired or discouraged we should not fall into the trap of telling ourselves, "I feel depressed," or, "It's too hard for me to face this day." God invites us to look at the very same feelings and say, "God, I feel tired and discouraged so I place myself in your care. Thank You Lord that Your unfailing love and tender mercy are available to me right now. Show me the way forward. Fill me to overflowing with a sense of Your goodness. "

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. (Psalm 23:5-6 NIV)

From time to time we all have uneasy feelings, but we can make our feelings line up with our decisions. That's why God gives us the fruit of self-control.

The Bible tells us, ***Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*** (James 4:7 NIV)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, You are a man of sorrows and understand my grief. I am thankful that there is no condemnation from You when I feel sad or discouraged. Please draw me close to Your heart and fill me with Your peace, endurance and strength. I choose to stay close to You and ask that You comfort me and make me whole. Thank You that I can rely on You to restore my soul. Amen

From time to time we all have uneasy feelings, but we can make our feelings line up with our decisions.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2018

MOVING AWAY FROM DEPRESSION

We are unable to control all our circumstances, but we don't have to let what happens spoil our day. We can deal with most situations that cause discouragement when we turn our hearts and minds towards God's generous promise of help to meet our need. The Bible tells us how: ***"we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."*** (2 Corinthians 10:5 NIV)

Sometimes we feel depressed because we think we can't face the truth, and on our own we probably can't. However, when we seek God, He will give us all the strength we need to face the truth of our circumstances. We will begin to overcome depression when we see things from God's perspective and stop looking for someone to blame for how we are feeling.

God offers us new life as we focus on His love for us, rather than dwelling on the events that have taken place in our lives.

Shout for joy, you heavens; rejoice, you earth; burst into song, you mountains! For the Lord comforts his people and will have compassion on his afflicted ones. (Isaiah 49:13 NIV)

We are not stuck. We are not damaged for life. We are not broken beyond repair. God offers us new life as we focus on His love for us, rather than dwelling on the events that have taken place in our lives. He is ready and willing to fill us with peace of mind and heart regardless of what has happened.

Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31b-32 NIV)

No harm or injustice is bigger than God's ability to heal and restore. We need to let go of the incorrect beliefs we have held about some situations in our lives and ask God to heal the pain. We need to forgive those who have harmed us and stop blaming them for the problems that life has brought our way. We need to acknowledge that it is God who gives us a future with hope. As we focus on what God says to us, life will improve, and our emotions will be impacted.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that I have allowed lies to keep me in bondage to fear. I want the truth of Your word as written in the Bible to set me free. Please help me to know and speak the truth into each situation that distresses me. Thank You that You love and care for me. Amen

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2018

SUNDAY PSALM – COMMITTING EVERYTHING TO GOD

God invites us to live a satisfying life by making and honoring healthy commitments. Commitment is asked of us in numerous areas throughout our lives, for example: marriage vows, appointments, bill paying, getting to work or school on time, etc. Sticking with our commitments takes effort.

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

We live in a world that expects us to look out for ourselves, take the best deal when we can get it, and only worry about the next guy when it doesn't get in the road of our own progress. In our culture, commitment seems to have become something to avoid, something that is likely to result in future inconvenience.

God's word tells us to love and be with each other through good times and bad. God invites us to stick with our promises and wait patiently for things to work out. Sometimes that means remaining in a job even though there are some relationship issues. Sometimes it requires staying with a recovery program that currently doesn't make much sense to us. At other times it's doing what a trusted friend or sponsor suggests, even when we don't agree or feel like it is worth doing.

Commitment involves the hard work of honouring what we have committed to, even when other possibilities come along that seem more attractive. God sees when we are faithful, and He is the one who is working all things together for our good.

He will make your innocence radiate like the dawn, and the justice of your cause will shine like the noonday sun. Be still in the presence of the Lord and wait patiently for him to act. (Psalm 37:6-7a NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to trust Your plan for my life and follow Your ways with all my heart. Help me to humble myself and follow good advice from trusted friends or sponsors even when I think I know better. Amen

***God invites us
to live a
satisfying life
by making
and honoring
healthy
commitments.***

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2018

A GENTLE LIFESTYLE

If someone was to evaluate our daily interaction with others, would they describe us as gentle or harsh?

Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. (Ephesians 4:2 NLT)

It is not easy to change from being a self-centered, impatient and often unkind person, to being one who lives respectfully and gently with others, whatever the circumstances. There is a natural unwillingness in us to admit that we're not living and behaving well in community. We are also reluctant to acknowledge that we are powerless to make any change on our own and need God to work in us to help us do so.

***If someone
was to
evaluate our
daily
interaction
with others,
would they
describe us
as gentle or
harsh?***

What does a gentle lifestyle look like?

Forgiveness that expresses kindness to those who previously harmed us: ***Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.*** (Ephesians 4:32, 4:2 NLT)

Always speaking to or about someone with kindness and respect. ***They must not slander anyone and must avoid quarreling. Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone. A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare.*** (Titus 3:2, Proverbs 15:1 NLT)

Treating everyone with sincerity and generosity: ***But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere.*** (James 3:17 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, I want to be a strong and gentle person, but I know I often fall short. I am willing to have You work in me to remove my character defects and help me exhibit gentleness in my thoughts, my words, and my behaviour. Amen

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2018

SPIRITUAL FRIENDS

God has given us spiritual friends to accompany us on our journey in recovery. These friends teach us how to draw close to God and seek Him in all we do so we experience the joy and peace of His purpose fulfilled in our lives.

A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need. (Proverbs 17:17 NLT)

Jonathan and David are an example from the Bible of a selfless caring friendship. Jonathan was the son of King Saul. King Saul was jealous of David's military achievements, hated David, and tried to kill him. God had chosen David to succeed Saul as king of Israel and protected David from Saul's death threats.

Jonathan, as King Saul's son, should have inherited the throne of Israel. One would expect that Jonathan would be bitter and resentful at being disinherited by David. However, Jonathan honoured the plan of God for David's life and helped David escape from his father's attacks. When Jonathan and Saul were both killed in battle, David became king. Instead of killing all the family of the previous king, as was the custom, David honoured his friendship with Jonathan by taking Jonathan's crippled son into his palace and allowing him to eat at his table.

As we attend meetings and church fellowships, we will meet and get to know those who, like us, are seeking to walk with God. We need to keep our eyes open for those wonderful spiritual people God has prepared for us to build great friendships with and care deeply for, just as David and Jonathan did for each other. Some of them might seem the least likely to be such friends because they come from very different backgrounds than ours but God's plan, even though surprising, will be perfect. Let's ask God today to help us recognize and form such friendships.

The seeds of good deeds become a tree of life; a wise person wins friends. See that no one pays back evil for evil, but always try to do good to each other and to everyone else. (Proverbs 11:30, 1 Thessalonians 5:15 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God. Thank You for my family and friends and especially for those you have given me to guide me on my recovery journey. Help me to recognize and form friendships with healthy individuals and to become a person willing to support another on their journey with you. Amen

God has given us spiritual friends to accompany us on our journey in recovery.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2018

RESPONDING TO FRIENDSHIP

God has invited us to friendship with Himself through Jesus. As we respond to God's unfailing love and care, we will find peace and security. That security will help us grow strong and enable us to become a loving and caring friend to others.

We get an early example of this in the Bible through the story of Abraham. ***Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God's friend.*** (James 2:23 NIV)

We know that Abraham left his family and went to an unknown land because God had told Him to do this. Abraham stood strong and followed God through a number of very challenging circumstances. However, at certain times in the journey, like so many of us, Abraham gave into fear and stumbled. Though Abraham didn't always do what was right, God knew Abraham's desire to obey Him. Even when Abraham was unfaithful to God, God was still faithful to Abraham. That's a true friend.

Jesus has promised to be a friend to us, the closest friend possible.

Like Abraham, we need someone to help us as we try to be a friend but struggle to find our way. Jesus has promised to be a friend to us, the closest friend possible. Jesus will show us the way forward as we determine in our hearts to follow Him. He will teach us, will stay with us, and will help us. Jesus offers us friendship that will last for eternity.

The Lord is a friend to those who fear him. He teaches them his covenant. Jesus says: ***Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.*** (Psalm 25:14, Revelation 3:20 NLT)

Friends spend time together, share interests and concerns. Jesus invites us to walk and talk with Him throughout the day, welcoming Him to share what we are experiencing and learn from Him how to resolve issues that arise. Today is a wonderful opportunity to say "Yes" to friendship with Jesus.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, My desire is to have a lifetime of friendship with You. I welcome You to know my thoughts and feelings. I want to share my ideas with You and in turn hear what You have to say to me. Please help me to be a good friend as I choose to follow Your principles in all my affairs. Amen

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2018

FORGETTING WHAT IS BEHIND

When we first come into recovery, we tend to focus on our past behaviour and the things we have done wrong. For years we tried to cover our pain with addictive substances or destructive behaviour because, at that time, it seemed to work. We felt anger, guilt, and shame, often to an overwhelming degree. We suffered injustice and so we felt we deserved comfort and went after comfort in whatever convenient ways we were able to find it. We didn't question the impact our choices might have had on others. We did what we felt we "had to do" to survive and have a little happiness. Sadly, despite some momentary pleasure, we fell deeper and deeper into sin and our heartache increased. God now invites us to shift our focus from what was self-motivated destructive behaviour to a life focused on the healing power of Jesus.

Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:13-14 NIV)

God wants us to have a satisfying life. We all want that; who wouldn't? Or do we? We know we have problems – we've had them for most of our lives. Problems give us an excuse to think about using whatever we have chosen in the past to cover the pain deep within us. Are we ready to stop allowing our problems to steal the new life God is giving us? If we are, we need to be willing to give up our obsessive thinking about how to cover our pain and allow the healing power of God to restore us to new life.

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

God's call to us today is to take our focus off our problems and let Him show us solutions. Are we willing to make the shift?

Prayer: Loving God, You are reaching out to me today, encouraging me to receive the healing you are offering, and that which I desperately need. Help me to humbly surrender to You and choose to walk in Your ways. Amen

***God's call
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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2018

PAYING IT FORWARD

Living a life of goodness, peace and joy reflects the Kingdom of God within us. As God continues to pour His blessings on us we need to let those blessings overflow to others. For example, when we encounter someone who is troubled and in need of compassion and encouragement we are to comfort them with the same comfort we ourselves have received. God promises that as we give to others He will pour even more back into our lives.

Give away your life; you'll find life given back, but not merely given back—given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity. (Luke 6:38 MSG)

***God
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our lives.***

A person with goodness in their heart will naturally share that with others. Blessings and curses cannot come from a heart that is filled with goodness. When we pray we often ask God to forgive us our sins as we forgive the sins of others. Whether or not we choose to forgive others will have a major impact on our lives. Holding on to grudges or deep-rooted anger is the soil that allows bitterness to grow in our hearts. When we choose to let go of bitterness and resolve to keep ourselves free from this aggressive weed, we will be surprised by joy.

Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. (Ephesians 4:31-32 NLT)

As we accept God's amazing grace for ourselves and then grace others we will experience the joy and security of the generous life God has planned for us.

Make sure no one gets left out of God's generosity. Keep a sharp eye out for weeds of bitter discontent. A thistle or two gone to seed can ruin a whole garden in no time. (Hebrews 12:14 MSG)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You are a God of unfailing love and faithfulness. Help me to follow Your principles in all my affairs and to bless others as I have been blessed by You. Amen

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2018

HEALING BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS

Making amends is a responsibility we must take very seriously if we want to protect our sobriety. While making amends is not necessarily a comfortable process, it is necessary for our growth. If we sort out our part in what went wrong in our past relationships, there is a good chance that being aware of what we did will help us choose not to make the same mistakes again.

Suppose you are offering your gift at the altar. And you remember that your brother or sister has something against you. Leave your gift in front of the altar. First go and make peace with them. Then come back and offer your gift. (Matthew 5:23-24 NIRV)

For us to risk taking the first step in making amends with others would be impossible if God had not first demonstrated the way for us. Over and over again we failed to keep God's commandments and still God sent His Son Jesus into the world to atone for our sin so that we could be reconciled to Him. God has completed the work necessary for us to know peace and now He calls us to extend that peace to others in our circle of family and friends. God didn't wait for us to come to Him. He prepared in advance. He reached out to us with this wonderful gift of reconciliation when we didn't dare approach Him. As we begin the work of restoring our troubled relationships, we can reflect on God's way of offering forgiveness and peace.

For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:19 NLT)

When we make amends under the guidance of our loving God, everyone is blessed. Confessing our wrong to someone means they no longer need to carry around the lingering excess baggage of the event. The resentment we held towards one another will begin to disappear and each of us will experience more freedom in the future.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank you for sending Jesus into the world so that my relationship with You could be restored. Now I ask You to work in my heart so that my relationship with others may be made right. Amen

***When we
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blessed.***

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2018

SUNDAY PSALM – SING A NEW SONG

In the early days of recovering from our addictive lifestyle we often do not feel like singing. Our hearts are heavy, and we still feel the pain and shame of troubles we experienced, and the chaos we left behind. Troubles have followed us since the time we were children and too often we continue to replay these events in our heads. God knows all about our troubles and He cares. He has brought us this far and He will not desert us.

God's desire is that we bring our troubles to Him and leave with Him everything that hinders our life in recovery. God is offering us fullness of life which includes freedom from the brokenness of our past. As we give our will and our life over to God's care we will soon be able to lift our voices in praise to Him for all He has done. We might even burst into song!

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Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him. Praise the Lord with the harp; make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre. Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy. For the word of the Lord is right and true; he is faithful in all he does. The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love. (Psalm 33:1-5 NIV)

Freedom comes from knowing the truth about who God created us to be. We are not children of accident or chance. God intentionally and lovingly formed us in our mother's womb. He planned the time and place of our birth. His intention was that we would seek Him and reach out and find Him.

Now that we know a little about God, hopefully we will be inspired to know more. As we get to know Him more intimately our hearts will be filled with joy and praise for this God who has unfailing love for us. We may even sing to Him a new song!

Prayer: Gracious Father, Thank you for loving me and bringing me to new life in You. You are a faithful God and my desire is to praise Your glorious name. May the song of my heart bring joy to Your ear. Amen

NOTES

NOTES

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.

2018

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Come and learn and grow with us:

Christian 12-Step Recovery Meeting

Wednesdays, 7:00 pm

325 6th Street

New Westminster, BC

Christian 12-Step Recovery Meeting

Thursdays, 7:30 pm

543 Powell Street

Vancouver, BC

*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