

Blueprint For Living

God invites us to life, a life that is wonderful and filled with many beautiful and satisfying gifts. He created us for that. When our world and our lives became broken through sin, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ to deal with sin and suffering and to offer us a new way back to loving relationship with God, our Heavenly Father. The program of the Twelve Steps is a spiritually based program of recovery for individuals seeking healing from a variety of addictive lifestyles. It is based on these assumptions: human beings are sinners; human beings can be changed; confession is a prerequisite to change; the changed person has direct access to God; the age of miracles is with us; those who have been changed are to change others.

This is a program that helps us rediscover and deepen our understanding of God and learn to live our lives according to the guidance of God. We bring together the wisdom of Bible truths and the proven effectiveness of Twelve-Step principles. When we reach out to God in these ways, we believe that they form a powerful process for allowing God to heal us and to give us a life of balance and order, happiness and health.

When the Holy Spirit controls our lives he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. If we are living now by the Holy Spirit's power, let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. (Galatians 5)

These characteristics are a product of the Holy Spirit's work in a life submitted to God and his plan. Just as a tree bears fruit by means of God's silent work behind the scenes, we experience these fruits of the spirit by means of God's power at work in us. Our part is to entrust our life to Him. When the Holy Spirit begins to bear these fruits in our life, our dependencies lose their power. With joy and peace we overcome the pain of our broken past. With love, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and gentleness we restore our relationships and make amends. With patience we persevere through the difficult times. With self-control we stand against our tendency

toward a relapse. God's Spirit can supply everything necessary for a successful recovery.

For God is at work within you, helping you want to obey him, and then helping you do what he wants. I can do everything God asks me to with the help of Christ who gives me the strength and power. (Philippians 2 and 4)

Some of us may wonder if we can ever have "the good life". Our battle against addiction seems endless and hard. When we get discouraged and recognize that recovery is too hard for us to achieve alone, we can return to these promises for renewed hope. God wants us to make progress in recovery and He has the power to help us do it. With God, nothing is impossible.

Remember this, the wrong desires that come into your life aren't anything new and different. Many others have faced exactly the same problems before you. And no temptation is irresistible. You can trust God to keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it, for he has promised this and will do what he says. He will show you how to escape temptation's power so that you can bear up patiently against it. (1 Corinthians 10)

Facing temptation is a part of accepting reality. When we receive Christ as our Saviour, God gives us a new nature, but it is unrealistic to believe that our old sinful nature just disappears. When we put away the belief that temptation will magically disappear, we will be more aware and better able to avoid falling under temptation's power. We need to prayerfully seek God's help in dealing with this reality of life.

Questions For Reflection and Discussion

1. What is the life I long for? What keeps me from it?
2. Which parts of God's view of life and the basis assumptions of the Twelve-Step program are difficult for me to live?
3. In what ways am I growing in my experience of the life God wants me to have?
4. Why do I participate in this Christian Twelve Step recovery program?
5. What experience do I need of the fruits of the Holy Spirit in order to overcome my dependencies?