

Spiritual Refuge

Step 11 -- Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. (Col 3:16a)

Isaiah 40:27-31

"How can you say that the Lord doesn't see your troubles and isn't being fair? Don't you yet understand? Don't you know by now that the everlasting God, the Creator of the farthest parts of the earth, never grows faint or weary? No one can fathom the depths of God's understanding. God gives power to the tired and worn out, and strength to the weak. Even the youths shall be exhausted and the young will all give up. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint".

In the past we used our addictions as a hiding place when life became overwhelming. Now that we are in recovery, life can at times feel even more overwhelming. We'll need a new place of refuge to escape the storms and find protection. God can be that hiding place. When we were in distress, trapped in our own personal hell, we called out to God and God brought us to where we are today. He's always there, ready to shield and protect us whenever we call on him.

As we work the Twelve Steps, we spend a lot of time looking back. We often think about the wrong things we have done in the past. As we proceed in our recovery, we will need strength to move along the path God wants us to follow. Part of this strength will come as we visualize God's constant presence with us. Now when we look back we can remember the great things God does for us. We can remember how God destroyed our enemies. As we look around we will find God's goodness everywhere. In prayer we thank God for what he's done. We seek God for the strength we need today. We ask God to fulfill his promises for tomorrow. In meditation we remember our victories, ponder God's presence with us today, consider his faithfulness, and celebrate the hope that he gives us for each day.

We all want to recover as quickly as possible. It's hard to be patient as we wait for the process to work. We realize that we didn't get to the difficult spot we are in overnight. We understand that we cannot undo a lifetime of damage in a moment. But still, it is a challenge to wait patiently. Every part of our recovery requires time and patience. This step also requires that we learn to wait for God. Waiting for the Lord has its rewards. We can remain calm when it appears that nothing is happening in our recovery. We can learn to respond to life in new ways. As we develop a patient faith in God we will be able to endure.

Sometimes we don't want to know God's will because there are areas in our life that we aren't ready to deal with yet. We may be ready to pray for God's will in some areas but feel uncomfortable with having God's light shine into the areas that are still hidden in shame or hidden desire. Darkness is great when we are trying to hide something, but light is needed when we are trying to walk without stumbling. We need the light to keep us from stumbling. We don't have to be afraid, of God's light anymore since we can have his forgiveness through Jesus Christ. God wants to give us a wonderful new life. In order for that to come, all darkness must go. All self-will must be surrendered to God's will.

Questions For Reflection and Discussion

1. How am I experiencing life (conscious contact) with God today? How am I sharing my life with God?
2. What am I doing to know more and more of God's will, and what challenges am I facing as I seek to surrender more and more of my will to Him?

Meditation Thoughts Adapted from, **The Life Recovery Bible**, ©1992, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, IL 60189.