

Conversation That Changes Me

If you need wisdom – if you want to know what God wants you to do – ask Him, and He will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking.

As Christians in recovery we believe prayer is a relationship with God, who is our Heavenly Father. The time we spend with God is what we call prayer. It's a simple conversation where we tell God about our day, tell God what we appreciate about Him, ask for forgiveness or whatever else we need, and simply share life with Him. We pray to spend time with the One who loves us and whom we love. God is pleased when we talk with Him, both expressing our appreciation for His friendship and asking for His help and guidance.

Life is more than us. God wants us to be like Him in all the wonderful character qualities that give life and hope to the world around us. God wants us to work together with Him to make and remake things that need touches of care and healing. Prayer is God's way of helping us co-operate together to get the job done. God acts in answer to prayer. Whose life has been touched by my prayers today?

If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and heal their land.

Prayer is not designed to change God. It is designed to change us. Prayer is not calling on God to bless our activities. Rather, prayer brings us close to God, shows us His will, helps us understand life in a new way, and prepares us to obey this new plan. Prayer reminds us that God is the creator and we are the created. God is in charge and our lives work when we work for God.

In addition we live for ourselves. In true recovery, we live for God. Addiction isn't just chemicals or a habit. The real root of addiction is living for myself. True recovery is making that essential change and choosing to live for God first. Prayer and obedient action in response to prayer opens the door to true recovery and real life. Anything else is a relapse waiting to be

exposed. Humility, expressed in seeking God's will, and then turning from our own wicked ways are the conditions for forgiveness and healing.

Jesus promised: ***When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. ... He will convince the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness.*** (John 16)

When we pray God tells us the truth. Our minds have listened to false information so long we are convinced that is how life really operates. We need to have the "familiar" changed for reality. God wants to show us both our true limits and His wonderful possibilities that will transform us and our way of approaching life. God wants to give us the power to choose for new thoughts, new attitudes, and new behaviours.

What matters to God? What's on God's heart? How can we live our day in a way that responds to the many ways God has cared for us and helped us? We both benefit when we pray. God's kingdom of love and peace is extended and we experience the purpose and joy that God intended for us. Only God knows what shape and form our lives need to be in to

receive His goodness. We can spend lots of time telling God all the things we "want God to do for us" OR we can ask God to show us life as He sees it and to help us pray things that He knows are truly good. God wants to be our friend and live in a love relationship with us. Prayer is God's way of nurturing that relationship.

What should I say when I pray?

- List the many things in today that are good and for which I am thankful.
- Tell God things that I appreciate about Him.
- Tell God the truth about my choices, thoughts, and behaviours. Ask forgiveness for wrongs I've done or food I've not done.
- Receive God's forgiveness, God's healing, and God's power to change what is going on inside me
- Ask for power and willingness to face what is ahead
- Pray for God's will and God's plan in situations around the world

Questions For Reflection and Discussion

1. In a healthy recovery the focus changes from me and my plans to God and His plans. How does my conversation with God reflect that?
2. Surrendering my current state of mind and circumstances to God and choosing to act by His new principles is key to actually living a new life. What's the connection for me between prayers of surrender and new actions?
3. In what new areas would it be helpful for me to start praying and seeking God?