

# Conversation That Changes Me

**Why We Come #5: We gather to learn how to communicate with God, our gratitude, our needs, our plans, and our frustrations and to learn how to receive God's healing and guidance.**

Who of us in recovery doesn't need wisdom? We wandered and struggled for longer or shorter periods of time with addictions and destructive lifestyles because we just didn't know what to do with what life had brought our way.

***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. (James 1:5)***

God makes an incredible offer to us: if you need wisdom, ask me and I'll gladly tell you. Life is filled with so many different kinds of problems and relationships. So many things happen that we don't know much about. Our lives are impacted by what's gone on in our past and circumstances now as a consequence. Life is complicated. Do we need wisdom? Where do I sign up?

The next challenge, however, is how do we go about accessing that wisdom? How do we ask? How do we receive? How do we know we're now operating on the wisdom God is giving us? In a word: prayer. As Christians in recovery we can have simple conversations with God that come from a real place in our heart. God actually listens to us and God actually answers in ways we can understand and find useful.

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 just us. God wants to use us to bring life and hope to the world around us. It's what He originally created us to do and what He is now inviting us to do in recovery. Prayer is God's way of helping us co-operate with Him 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. (2 Chronicles 7:14)***

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.

## **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

Do I **need** wisdom? Pray. Do I **want** wisdom? When I pray I must ask myself if I am really wanting new wisdom from God or just looking for God to co-sign and support my familiar ways of thinking and acting. Am I asking God for what I need and telling Him how to go about that or am I presenting my needs to God and letting Him provide for me in any way that's effective but maybe different from what I've experienced before? 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. That's how to get wisdom.

The root of addiction is living for ourselves. Chemical dependencies and destructive habits

get powerful holds on our life but the real problem in all of us is choosing ourselves first instead of putting God first. True wisdom in recovery is making the essential change that chooses 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 and a wise life.

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)***

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? 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 for things that He knows are truly good for us. God wants to be our friend and live in a love relationship with us. Prayer is God's way of nurturing that relationship.

Do I need wisdom? Do I really want it? God is happy to give it to me.

## Questions For Reflection and Discussion

1. How does my conversation with God demonstrate a real desire for wisdom?
2. What's the connection for me between prayers of surrender and new actions of obedience to God?
3. In what new areas would it be helpful for me to start praying and seeking God?