

Life With God In Recovery

GOING FORWARD



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Having had a spiritual awakening, we are endeavoring to practice the principles we have learned, and to also carry the message to others. As we move forward in our life's journey, we need to take time to reflect on where we have been and where we want to go from here. Like any journey we plan to take, we need to know our starting place, our destination, and the way to get there. If we do not plan our course we will wander along paths that may lead us in a way we don't want to go and consequently, we'll end up lost or in a dangerous place.

This is what the Lord says your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: "I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go. (Isaiah 48:17 NIV)

The Bible reveals how God interacted with the children of Israel when they were in trouble. They cried out to God when they were slaves in Egypt and asked Him to deliver them from their hard taskmasters. Through amazing interventions God enabled them to be released from slavery. His presence led them forward during the day in the form of a cloud and at night as a pillar of fire. God also heard us when we cried out to Him in the bondage of our addiction and, by His sovereign intervention, He led us to the place where we started our journey to freedom. God did not leave us as orphans but gave us His Holy Spirit to be with us, and in us. His Holy Spirit will be our guide on our way forward.

....when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. (John 16:13 NKJV)

After their release from Egypt the Israelites set out on a journey to the land God had promised to their forefathers. As they journeyed, they encountered a few problems. God met their needs but they began to reflect on what they remembered as 'good' back in Egypt. They forgot the hard taskmasters and the fact that they were slaves. They began to lust after those things they did not have on their journey and complained that they would be better off back

in Egypt. How quickly they forgot the miraculous things God did to release them from their life of slavery to Egyptian masters.

We too can forget where we have come from and what it was like when we were in the pit of our addiction. At times, we may reflect on what was 'good' about our life in addiction. We forget the chaos and the slavery to our drug of choice or to a dysfunctional relationship or lifestyle.

Offer yourselves to sin, for instance, and it's your last free act. But offer yourselves to the ways of God and the freedom never quits. All your lives you've let sin tell you what to do. But thank God you've started listening to a new master, one whose commands set you free to live openly in his freedom! (Romans 6:16-18 MSG)

When we came into recovery we had a spiritual awakening. We realized that because of the sin in our lives we were separated from God. Up to this point we never thought about God or consulted Him about the plans He had for us when we were created. We travelled along the road of life living as if God did not exist. Now we realize that He is the Higher Power who will accompany us as we move forward in our life in recovery. Not only do we need His caring presence with us, we are desperately in need of His guidance and direction. Our belief in Jesus is foundational to our ongoing recovery, not only as the one who saved us out of our wreckage but also as the one who knows the healthy way forward. We need the power of the Holy Spirit to help us be doers of the Word and not hearers only, or as the AA slogan says, "Don't just talk the talk but walk the walk".

Jesus said, ***"These words I speak to you are not incidental additions to your life, homeowner improvements to your standard of living. They are foundational words, words to build a life on. If you work these words into your life, you are like a smart carpenter who built his house on solid rock. Rain poured down, the river flooded, a tornado hit—but nothing moved that house. It was fixed to the rock. But if you just use my words in Bible studies and don't work them into your life, you are like a stupid carpenter who built his house on the sandy beach. When a storm rolled in and the waves came up, it collapsed like a house of cards."*** (Matthew 7:24-27 MSG)

Because of our spiritual awakening, we experience the difference that results in our daily lives when we follow the ways of God. To obey God is more acceptable to Him than all the "good deeds" we may perform in his name. When we obey Him we can leave all the consequences of our actions with Him.

As we journey along, we'll find our lives filled with good things we want to share about. Telling our story is a way to encourage others who are still living in darkness without God. We can tell them how we once lived in that same darkness but found our way to life in the light of God's presence. As we tell our story of God's amazing grace given to us, we will realize the joy of our salvation keeps building.

God says to each of us; ***Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.*** (Isaiah 41:10 NKJV)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What plans or strategies have I considered to help move me forward with God in recovery?
2. In what positive ways can I keep myself aware of what life in addiction was really like?
3. In what specific ways am I welcoming God to accompany me in my new life in recovery?
4. What life changes am I experiencing as I follow the ways of God?
5. In what ways am I making God's word the foundation of my recovery?
6. Am I seeking opportunities to encourage others who are still living in darkness?

Heavenly Father, Thank you for hearing me when I cried out to you from the bondage of my addiction and for rescuing me. May I never forget Your continued presence with me as I move forward in my recovery. Help me to build my life on the solid foundation of Your word as recorded in the Bible. Empower me to not only talk the talk, but to walk the walk. May the light of Your love shine through me as I carry this message to others. I am forever grateful that You care. AMEN