

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

**Daily
Meditations**



FEBRUARY 2026



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*Partners in Hope Recovery Society
is a Christian community
outreach organization
offering hope, support, and healing
through Jesus Christ
to victims of
harmful circumstances and dependencies,
as they reclaim the gift of their life.*

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JUST FOR TODAY

Just for today I will try to live in conscious contact with God praying only for knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out.

Just for today I will strengthen my mind. I will take a few minutes to read and meditate on God's word, seeking God's perspective for my life today. I will take note of one helpful thing God is saying to me and seek to behave accordingly.

Just for today I will be joyful, optimistic, and grateful. I will take time to notice the gifts in me, in others, and in my surroundings and let the rest go.

Just for today I will adjust myself to what is and not try to adjust everything else to my desires. I will trust that God is working all things for good in my life.

Just for today I will be agreeable. I will not criticize, not find fault, and not try to improve or control anybody except myself. I will pray blessing on one person with whom I struggle to relate.

Just for today I will have a quiet half hour all by myself to relax and enjoy all that God is giving me.

Just for today I will be unafraid, believing that as I trust in God with all my heart and lean not on my own understanding, He will lead me along a good path.

Just for today I will seek to serve others with kindness, doing what is right, and walking humbly with God.

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. Ephesians 2:10 NLT

SOME AREAS OF ADDICTION AND DEPENDENCY

FEBRUARY I

For a variety of reasons, many of us have an underlying structure of disorder that is damaging us and others. We invite God to show us the truth about ourselves so we can personally receive God's forgiveness to set us free and healing to make us strong.

SUBSTANCE ADDICTIONS:	BEHAVIOUR ADDICTIONS:
Alcohol	Anger/Rage/Bullying
Caffeine	Cutting
Injected or smoked substances such as: Crack, Crystal Meth, Heroin	Crime
Marijuana	Eating Disorders: Bulimia, Anorexia, Binging, Obesity
Prescription Medications	Gambling
Sugar	Hoarding
Tobacco	Sex/Pornography
	Verbal Abuse: Gossip, Lying, Accusing, Blaming, Condemning
	Violence (physical, verbal, cyber)
SOFT ADDICTIONS:	RELATIONSHIP ADDICTIONS:
Digital Use: (Time or Content) TV/Phone/Tablet; video games, Social Networking; Cyber-bullying; Online shopping; Gambling, Pornography	Abusive Relationships: Includes: Intimidation, Isolation, Domination, Blaming, Humiliation, Withholding, Forcing acts against one's will
Exercise	Approval dependency
Food (See Eating Disorders)	Attention Seeking
Isolating/Sleep	Codependence/Rescuing
Money: Debt/Fraud	Power/Control
Religion	
Shopping	
Sports	
Work/Achievement	

PRAYER FOR HEALING AND RESTORATION

Loving God, Thank You for rescuing us from the dark power of Satan and bringing us into loving relationship with Your Son, Jesus. We ask for wisdom and understanding from Your Spirit in order to live as people who honour You. Heal us. Make us new. Make us strong followers of Christ. Root us deeply in Your love. We place our trust in Your power that can do far more in us than we dare ask or imagine. Amen.

THE BENEFIT OF DOING THINGS GOD'S WAY OVER THE LONG HAUL

How many times have we spoken before we thought and, as the saying goes, "put our foot in our mouth?" For too long we've held narrow views of life and our place in it. God created us for community and caring relationships. In the scriptures He has given us all the knowledge we need to live well every day.

If you listen closely to my wisdom and good sense, you will have sound judgment, and you will always know the right thing to say. (Proverbs 5:1-2 CEV)

In Step 11 of the 12-Step program we are encouraged each day to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out. As we encounter God's wisdom in the Bible and put His ways into practice, we will have the satisfaction and joy of experiencing how practical God's Word really is. It's a challenge though to put God's ways into practice in some situations that may arise. God's way teaches us to be generous to others, which is opposite to the self-centered messages we have heard and told ourselves in addiction, and yet when we do things God's way, we discover His way is better.

The Lord watches your ways. He studies all your paths. Sinners are trapped by their own evil acts. They are held tight by the ropes of their sins. They will die because they refused to be corrected. Their sins will capture them because they were very foolish. (Proverbs 5:21-23 NIRV)

To walk with God requires that we discipline ourselves at certain times and in certain ways. The more often we make the choice to do things God's way, the more often we will see that it was exactly the right thing to do at that time. Everyone around us will benefit from our actions and our sense of what is right and good will grow clearer. It becomes part of the message we are to carry to others as we practice God's principles in all our affairs.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to not only meditate and pray for the knowledge of Your will but to have the courage to put it into practice in all my affairs. Help me to trust Your way even when it seems inconvenient or quite different from what I have known in the past. I choose once again to turn my will and my life over to Your care. Please direct me in all my ways. Amen

The more often we make the choice to do things God's way, the more often we will see that it was exactly the right thing to do at that time.

SAY WHAT WE MEAN AND MEAN WHAT WE SAY

Many of us have been in the company of others who think they know everything but when they open their mouths very little wisdom is detected. Know-it-alls have very little respect for those around them and lie through their teeth to save face when the truth about a situation is exposed. The person who wrote the following Psalm is asking God for help to deal with people like this who lived in his community.

Help, Lord! No one does what is right anymore. Those who are faithful have disappeared from the human race. Everyone tells lies to their neighbors. With their lips they praise others, but they don't really mean it. May the Lord close all lips that don't mean what they say. May he stop every tongue that brags. They say, "What we speak with our tongues will win the battle. What we say with our lips will keep us safe. No one will have victory over us." (Psalm 12:1-4 NIRV)

We need to learn to "say what we mean and mean what we say."

While living in a dysfunctional lifestyle, we often thought that those who were trying to help us were cramping our style. We moved away from anyone who spoke to us about doing what was right. We decided we knew what was best for us and that was the end of any discussion about the harm we were causing ourselves and our loved ones. We lied to others. We made promises we had no intention of keeping. Our self-will brought us to the place where we didn't know what was right anymore, and our life was totally unmanageable.

When we came into recovery, we were broken but may have reasoned that we could still have victory by continuing to do things our way. However, the only sure way to win the battle is by becoming a person who is faithful to God, to others, and to living as the person God created us to be. We need to learn to "say what we mean and mean what we say." We need to seek God to guide us, and as we do, we will find that He is faithful to keep us safe and give us strength to persevere in being the person who does as we say we will do.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I repent of my arrogance in thinking that my ways are better than Your ways. Today I acknowledge that in You are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Help me to seek Your will and to be a person who faithfully does what I say. Amen

How To Enjoy New Life With God In Recovery

God created us to have a wonderful life. In love, God planned for us and carefully put us together. God has always been calling out to us to enter into a relationship of love with Him. He doesn't force us but He invites us. Many of us have learned what a painful and confusing wreck our lives become when we try to live independently from God. Today is a good day to begin to live the full and rich life God intended for us. Nothing in our past can keep us from this life, if we want it and choose for it.

The 12-Steps remind us that our lives are unmanageable without the loving care of God and that we can get to know and come to believe that He is a power greater than ourselves. As we turn our will and our lives over to God's care, we find a solid foundation upon which to build a new life.

When we confess our sin and brokenness to God, repent and turn towards God, He gives us new life. When we invite God to come into our lives we find that He is ready and waiting for us. A simple prayer like the following, offered sincerely, establishes this new relationship with God that will last forever.

God, my life is unmanageable without you. You created me to live in relationship with you. There really is no good way to live on my own. Forgive me for not including you. I turn from my independent ways and surrender my will and my life to you. Thank you Jesus for dying on the cross for my sins and making a way for me to have new life and be filled up with Your Holy Spirit. Come into my heart and wash me clean. Teach me to do your will. Transform my way of thinking. Strengthen me to obey You in all I do. Amen

If you prayed that prayer sincerely from your heart, God forgives you and receives you. God makes you His son or daughter. God wants to show you how to live well and give you strength to do that every day. We would love to provide you with some information to support you as you move forward in your journey with God. Please contact us. You'll find our contact information on the front cover of this booklet.

NOTES

FEELINGS OF SADNESS

We are often overwhelmed with feelings of sadness when we first enter recovery. We feel sad because of the road we have travelled and the harmful choices we have made. We recognize our complete disregard for the well-being of ourselves and our loved ones. The guilt we feel contributes to feelings of sadness. We condemn ourselves because we think we should have been stronger. Had we been stronger the people we care about would not have suffered and we would not be in the mess we find ourselves in today. These negative feelings often contribute to our inability to do the daily things we need to do as we stay clean and sober, and unless we are careful, may lead us to relapse. How can God help in these circumstances?

Each morning I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly. The Lord is a shelter for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. Those who know your name trust in you, for you, O Lord, do not abandon those who search for you. (Psalm 5:3, 9:9-10 NLT)

When we accept Jesus as our Saviour and Lord, God totally forgives us all our sins and frees us from all condemnation. To allow self-condemnation or guilt to continue when we have received God's forgiveness conflicts with what God says and what Jesus did for us on the cross. Jesus opened our future and permanently closed our past. We need to renew our minds with these facts and move forward in the lavish grace that God is pouring out on us. We need to fix our thoughts on good things. We need to determine in our hearts to do those things which contribute to our well-being, whether we feel like doing them or not. We need to remember: God is always with us. We need never face our problems alone.

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all the marvelous things you have done. I will be filled with joy because of you. I will sing praises to your name, O Most High. (Romans 8:1; Psalm 9:1-2 NLT)

Today, let's give God praise and rejoice in the future He has opened for us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You that through Jesus I am totally forgiven. Help me to live in the peace and joy that freedom from condemnation and guilt brings. Amen

**So now there
is no
condemnation
for those who
belong to
Christ Jesus.**

Romans 8:1

HELP FOR THE HOPELESS ADDICT

NOTES

Do I matter? Does anyone notice me? Does anyone care? These are questions we might ask and that individuals who struggle with hardship and pain have asked for centuries. The longer we have struggled with addiction, the more times we have faltered and failed, the harder it is to have hope.

The good news is that as long as we are living and breathing, there is hope for us today. God is inviting us to a new life with Him. We may think that temptation is too much for us to handle but God says that if we come to Him, he will make a way of escape for us.

The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. (1 Corinthians 10:13 NLT)

As long as we are living and breathing, there is hope for us today.

What is God's way?

1. Look to God for help and saving: *Let all the world look to me for salvation! For I am God; there is no other.* (Isaiah 45:22 NLT)
2. Spend time reading and learning God's way: *I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.* (Psalm 119:11 NLT)
3. Welcome the new perspective on life that the Holy Spirit is showing us: *Let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes.* (Ephesians 3:23 NLT)
4. Make our hearts available to hope: *When doubts filled my mind, your comfort gave me renewed hope and cheer.* (Psalm 94:19 NLT)
5. Give it our best effort: *Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.* (2 Corinthians 13:11 NIV)
6. Live in gratitude: *Let all that I am praise the Lord; may I never forget the good things he does for me. He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies. He fills my life with good things.* (Psalm 103:1-5a NLT)

Let's choose to give God's way a chance. Remember, with God nothing is impossible.

Prayer: Gracious God, Please give me hope and strength to live according to Your Word. Help me to take practical steps to make room for hope in my heart and mind. Amen

A BRIGHT NEW WAY OF LIFE

We lost our way. That's an obvious fact. We fell into an addictive and destructive lifestyle. We hid in dark and isolated places. Sometimes that was in dark corners and streets, but even if it was under bright lights, we were still lost in the dark places in our minds and hearts. We were lost in this darkness and powerless to find a way to the light. Who can show us the way out of darkness into the light? Jesus says He is the Light and if we follow Him, we won't have to walk in darkness but will have the Light that gives life.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life!" Jesus answered. "Without me, no one can go to the Father. I am the light for the world! Follow me, and you won't be walking in the dark. You will have the light that gives life." (John 14:6, John 8:12b CEV)

Simon Peter answered, "Lord, there is no one else that we can go to! Your words give eternal life."

John 6:68 CEV

Darkness is not a thing of itself. Darkness is the absence of light. In pioneer days people lit a candle, put a glass orb around it, and the light spread out across the room. When we invite God to come and live in us, He is the light in us that reflects brightness to everyone around us. As others see us living in the light of God's love, they will be drawn to that light. Darkness in our hearts and in our circumstances must give way to the light of Christ as surely as darkness leaves a room when we flip a switch and turn on a light.

In recovery we can find a new way to live by reading the Bible and seeing how Jesus lived and then follow His example. God's Holy Spirit will give us the power we need to live in this way. Jesus gives light and life on our journey, and He will get us to our destination. Jesus not only knows the way, He is the Way.

The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. (Romans 8:11 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for seeing me when I was lost in darkness and for sending Jesus who is the light that shows me the way to You. I surrender myself to You and choose to follow Your plan for my life. I ask for the empowering of Your Holy Spirit to do Your will, so I may bring light into the darkness of those around me. Amen

BUILDING CONFIDENCE FOR SUCCESSFUL RECOVERY

Moving forward in identifying character defects and allowing God to help us develop our true character is no easy process. Few of us are all that confident in our ability to succeed. We have too many examples of our trying and failing and if we are honest, we wonder if this time will be the time we will be able to maintain our sobriety. Many of us slipped into addiction to cover up our lack of confidence and low self-esteem. It's no easy task to look ourselves in the mirror once again and believe that we can be something other than what we have been.

In His kindness, God affirms repeatedly in the Bible that there is a way forward for us and that He will be with us every step of the way supplying all that we need.

The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you." (Psalm 32:8 NLT)

God knows us better than we know ourselves. God knows that on our own we will fail but as we surrender our will and life to His care, He will show us a new way. God will support us each step of the way and, as we experience success, our confidence will grow.

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (1 John 5:14, Hebrews 4:16 NIV)

We are not aware of what we really need. Our understanding is too clouded by our pain and the destructive patterns of our life in addiction. God has never lost sight of the truth of who we are and what we need to succeed. We can be confident of living the wonderful life God has for us as we stay close to Him and allow Him to guide us along the way.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I cannot do this on my own. We both know that. Help me to trust Your view of me and who You say I am. Help me to listen carefully to the voice of Your Spirit in my heart as He teaches me how to apply Your Word to my actions and circumstances. Give me the courage and humility to return to You again and again for help in my time of need. Amen

God will support us each step of the way and, as we experience success, our confidence will grow.

TURNING FROM WORTHLESS THINGS

Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain. Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word. Fulfill your promise to your servant, so that you may be feared. Take away the disgrace I dread, for your laws are good. How I long for your precepts! In your righteousness preserve my life. (Psalm 119:35-40 NIV)

While we operated in the chaos of our addiction all our attention was focused on worthless things. We longed for the good life. We thought that our substance of choice would give us freedom from pain and fill us with pleasure. The insanity of our addiction was that no matter how often we used, we never found complete freedom from pain or the pleasure we sought. All that resulted was increased desperation and suffering. The Bible clearly describes this way of life as seeking after worthless things which put our lives in danger.

As we leave behind worthless things and begin to put God's principles into action, He will give us the courage and strength to continue to do what is right.

By God's grace, in the chaos of our addictive living, we became aware that something better was available – something right and good which leads to a purposeful life. This was the quiet voice of God inviting us to the meaningful, satisfying life He created us to live. God also promises to teach us about this new way of life He planned for us to live.

Our old ways are flawed. We have numerous triggers in us related to fear and pain that, left on their own, will have us moving towards unhealthy behaviour before we even think through what we are doing. The God who created us knows exactly what we need. Through His Word God teaches us His principles for a good and pleasing life.

As we leave behind worthless things and begin to put God's principles into action, He will give us the courage and strength to continue to do what is right. We begin to discover that the good life we were always seeking is found in wholeheartedly obeying God's word.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Teach me Your ways that I might delight in You and follow You all the days of my life. Amen

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S HELP

God's way is uncomplicated if we will simply follow His principles. As little children trust the good and caring hearts of their parents, so in life with God in recovery we need to make a choice to believe God is good and act accordingly.

Then he said, "I tell you the truth, unless you turn from your sins and become like little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven. (Matthew 18:3 NLT)

When our thinking and God's word clash, we lay down our thoughts and choose for God's direction. We match our behaviour to our new understanding of how life works. We read the Bible and see how God says we can achieve this.

The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:4-5 NIV)

Without God's help, we will never be able to choose the correct path to a fulfilling life. We have too many incorrect beliefs imprinted on our minds and hearts. Only obedience to the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit can keep us from returning to familiar patterns. Are we willing to wholeheartedly surrender to God and obey His Word?

But what happens when we live God's way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely. (Galatians 5:22-23 MSG)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me to change my thought patterns so they are in line with Your ways. My desire is to be guided by You in all my affairs. Thank You for working in me and giving me the desire and the power to do what pleases You. Amen

Only obedience to the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit can keep us from returning to familiar patterns.

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY – RANDOM OR RATIONAL

Did life as we know it today come about through a series of random acts of fate? What keeps the delicate balance of life steady in the solar system as well as around us – just a lucky day held together by a fortunate lining up of powerful forces? The Bible says that God created the world and sustains it by His power.

He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. There is one God, the Father, by whom all things were created, and for whom we live. And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were created, and through whom we live. (Colossians 1:17, 1 Corinthians 8:6 NLT)

Scientists say: We never observe orderliness occurring by accident, without an intelligent cause to direct the order. No amount of power or energy is enough to bring order out of chaos. The earth's rotation, the moon cycle, and the changing seasons are just a few of the ordered processes observable in nature. Are these processes random happenings or are they divinely caused and sustained by God?

The earth is located the right distance from the sun to sustain life. If it were any further away from the sun, we would all freeze. Any closer, and we would burn up. The Earth remains this perfect distance from the sun while it rotates around the sun at a speed of nearly 67,000 mph. It is also rotating on its axis at 1,040 mph, allowing the inhabitants of the earth to experience sunrises and sunsets every day. Random or intelligent design?

We come to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

What about our lives? Random happenings or creatively designed? Are we spinning around on our own or is God working in everything that takes place so we can know purpose and goodness and meaning today, and every day of our lives? "We come to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." Maybe the founders of AA were on to something. Like a man in the Bible facing a crisis of how to respond to God we too can pray, "***I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!***" (Mark 9:24 NLT)

Prayer: God of all Creation, I praise You that before the world began You had a plan and that plan included my life. When things around me are not perfect and it is hard for me to believe You are still in control, please help me overcome my unbelief. Amen

A PROPERLY FUNCTIONING CONSCIENCE

God created us to be moral beings. He has given us a conscience that, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is intended to help us recognize when our behaviour is morally right or wrong.

The purpose of my instruction is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith. (1 Timothy 1:5 NLT)

Unfortunately, we live in a world that has been infected and broken by sin. We hear all kinds of false messages and we spend years becoming familiar with ways of living that are contrary to God's way. Our conscience gradually becomes corrupted, and we can no longer rely on its direction for good in our daily lives.

Everything is pure to those whose hearts are pure. But nothing is pure to those who are corrupt and unbelieving, because their minds and consciences are corrupted. (Titus 1:15 NLT)

An important part of life with God in recovery is reestablishing truth to our conscience. A renewed conscience clearly indicates what is morally right and good and gives warning when we are straying into wrongdoing. What is the process of restoring this proper function to our conscience? We feed our minds with God's word and choose for His way each time our thinking and His word differ.

Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. When outsiders who have never heard of God's law follow it more or less by instinct, they confirm its truth by their obedience. They show that God's law is not something alien, imposed on us from without, but woven into the very fabric of our creation. There is something deep within them that echoes God's yes and no, right and wrong. (Psalm 119:105, NIV, Romans 2:14-15 MSG)

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for forgiveness of my sins and the new life you offer me through Jesus. Help me to listen to, and act on, the guidance of Your Holy Spirit so that I am filled with truth and once again have a reliable and good conscience. Amen

A renewed conscience clearly indicates what is morally right and good and gives warning when we are straying into wrongdoing.

TOGETHER WE CAN

Life in addiction is life in isolation. We figure things out on our own. We seek to get what we want when we want it, regardless of the impact on others. In recovery God invites us to a new way of living which includes sharing our thoughts, our needs, our desires, and our daily lives with God and others.

Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 NLT)

Alone we could never accomplish what is possible when we work together in love and build each other up.

It's important to learn from others who have walked the recovery path before us. Since we become like the company we keep, it is important to have friends we respect and who are modeling the qualities of honesty, perseverance, and accountability. These friends, who have chosen to walk in the ways of God will challenge us to get the help we need as we move forward. When we are made aware of our shortcomings, we will need these friends for support as we adjust our attitude and behaviour towards others. They will encourage us to become a person who shares and cares about others.

Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ. The way of foolish people seems right to them. But those who are wise listen to advice. Foolish people are easily upset. But wise people pay no attention to hurtful words. An honest witness tells the truth. But a dishonest witness tells lies. The words of thoughtless people cut like swords. But the tongue of wise people brings healing. (Galatians 6:2, NLT, Proverbs 12:15-18 NIRV)

As we choose to support and encourage one another we will be strengthened to move forward in recovery. Alone we could never accomplish what is possible when we work together in love and build each other up.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, I want to embrace Your plan for my life. Help me to be accountable to Your Word and listen to the guidance and counsel of reliable friends. Help me to love others and care for them as You love and care for me. Amen*

PUT IT ON THE LIST

Little by little as we walk with God and work the steps, we gain new information about ourselves and how we relate to other people. As we prayerfully review our lives with God, He will reveal where we have caused harm, and when we need to make amends with someone. He will also teach us new ways to live in relationship with Him and others.

I, the Lord, search all hearts and examine secret motives. I give all people their due rewards, according to what their actions deserve. (Jeremiah 17:10 NLT)

It is God who knows our hearts and what we can expect from each person when we are making amends. If we consult Him and listen to what He says, God is willing to share His wisdom and good plans with us

Show me the right path, O Lord; point out the road for me to follow. Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you. (Psalm 25:4-5 NLT)

God invites us to live in honesty, courage, accountability, and forgiveness as we admit our mistakes, forgive those who have harmed us, and compassionately work out a plan for making necessary amends.

Any person involved in the above process is on a journey of facing and dealing with trauma which has challenges that require care and time. We don't want to be either too late or too early in the action we take.

The Lord is good to everyone who trusts in him, So it is best for us to wait in patience—to wait for him to save us
Lamentations 3:25-26 GNT

It is always the right time to be willing to see what God sees and agree with Him about making things right. However, it takes much prayer and the wisdom of God to know when to involve a person who has been injured.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to be willing to face how I have harmed others and be available to make things right with them in the way and time that You know is best for all of us. Help me to learn from my mistakes and be more considerate of others. I ask You for healing for all those to whom I need to make amends, and for myself. Encourage all of us to love and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Amen

TRUSTED SERVANTS and ULTIMATE AUTHORITY

As we hear Tradition 2 read in each AA meeting, we are reminded that, "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern." Whether we are those who jump in and try to get our own way in a situation or those who step back because we feel inferior to others, this principle invites all of us to share and do our part in the group.

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but they all come from the same Spirit. There are different ways to serve the same Lord, and we can each do different things. Yet the same God works in all of us and helps us in everything we do. (1 Corinthians 12:4-6 CEV)

This love recognizes the gifts that God gives each person, and our need for one another, so we can be complete.

God's plan has always been for us to live in relationship with Him, loving Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and then loving our neighbour as ourselves. This love recognizes the gifts that God gives each person, and our need for one another, so we can be complete. Nothing seems less perfect than a jigsaw puzzle of a beautiful scene missing a few pieces when it is put together. We need to enjoy one another and do our part in what we have planned together.

I realize how kind God has been to me, and so I tell each of you not to think you are better than you really are. Use good sense and measure yourself by the amount of faith that God has given you. A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. That's how it is with us. There are many of us, but we each are part of the body of Christ, as well as part of one another. (Romans 12:3-5 CEV)

Thank God we can let go of the pressure of having all the answers, being right all the time, or always being in control. Without fear, we can confidently bring our perspective and our service, because God knows how to fit all the pieces together to accomplish His good plan.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have called us to serve You and one another in love. Thank You for the many different gifts each of us has been given. Help me to humbly offer my service to others with the gifts You have given me and welcome the gifts and service others bring. Together may we give full expression of all You have planned for us to do. Amen

STAYING SOBER – FACING TRAUMA

With the 24-hour news cycle on television and on our digital devices we are exposed daily to traumatic events around the world. Whether it's the devastation of a community through war or natural disaster, or something inflicted on one person by another, these are distressing experiences which cause long lasting trauma and pain. The news may also trigger memories in our own hearts of past experiences and events. Is there relief from this deep grief and pain?

What has been done cannot be undone. However, God can help us navigate today by giving us peace in our souls and healing in our bodies. Our first action is to turn our hearts and thoughts towards God and allow His love to encourage us as we listen to what He has to say through the scriptures as recorded in the Bible.

Whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm. So do not be afraid. I am with you. Do not be terrified. I am your God. I will make you strong and help you. I will hold you safe in my hands. I always do what is right. (Proverbs 1:33 NIV, Isaiah 41:10 NIRV)

While healing of the mind and soul is a process that takes time, we don't need to hide from the past and shove painful memories into the deep dark places in our soul. In God's presence, and often with the assistance of knowledgeable helpers, we can find help to live well today. We can be set free from the traumas of our past. Jesus died on the cross for all sin and was resurrected from the dead proving the power of God over all evil – and that includes the evil traumas inflicted on us. Today is a new opportunity to reach out and receive this amazing God who will provide healing from all suffering.

The Spirit of the God who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you. So the God who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your bodies. He will do this because of his Spirit who lives in you. God saves suffering people while they suffer. He speaks to them while they are hurting. (Romans 8:11, Job 36:15 NIRV)

Prayer: Loving God, it is most difficult to face the pain buried deep in my soul. Help me to come to believe that You are the Power who can restore me from the trauma I have experienced. Come and be with me in those dark and fearful memories. Today, help me to hear Your voice speaking peace to those places where I hurt. Thank you for caring for me. Amen

God saves suffering people while they suffer. He speaks to them while they are hurting.

Job 36:15 NIRV

WISDOM FOR THE RECOVERY JOURNEY – DON'T TRADE ADDICTIONS

The wisest man of his time King Solomon compiled sayings that can be found in the book of Proverbs in the Bible. Some of these address addiction issues. We often think that addictions are limited to drugs and alcohol, but we are coming to know there are many other substances and practices which we use to cover our feelings of pain. Food and money are two other common problem areas.

**God knows
what we need
in every area
of our life and
He promises
to take care
of us if we
will come to
Him first and
let Him work
out His will in
each
situation.**

Listen to me, my children! Be wise and have enough sense to follow the right path. Don't be a heavy drinker or stuff yourself with food. It will make you feel drowsy, and you will end up poor with only rags to wear. Give up trying so hard to get rich. Your money flies away before you know it, just like an eagle suddenly taking off. (Proverbs 23:19-21 CEV)

Trading socially unacceptable addictions for ones which are socially acceptable doesn't solve our real problem. Whenever we seek to sort out or avoid our feelings with anything other than the comfort and healing of God, we only create a path for continued suffering. God knows what we need in every area of our life, and He promises to take care of us if we will come to Him first and let Him work out His will in each situation.

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. The Lord is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me? Jesus said: Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 13:6, Matthew 11:28 NLT)

Today, let's come to Jesus with all our burdens and allow Him to give us rest.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, There are so many things in life that I don't understand and don't know how to sort out on my own. Help me to do the work of recovery that exposes what needs deeper healing. Give me the strength not to run but rather to reach out to you for the comfort and healing I need. Amen

AVOIDING TEMPTATION

God wants us to live in victory over temptation. He promises that in every situation this is possible. For those of us who have struggled with addiction and relapsed numerous times, that's incredibly good news.

The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. (1 Corinthians 10:13 NLT)

One of the best ways to overcome temptation is to stay as far away from what tempts us as we possibly can. How do we do that? Here are some practical guides:

- Realize that temptation will be an ongoing issue in life, not a one-time issue. *God's name is a place of protection. -- Good people can run there and be safe.* (Proverbs 18:10 MSG)
- Read the Bible and faithfully apply the truths we learn in our daily lives. *I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.* (Psalm 119:11 NLT)
- Pray and ask God to keep us conscious of what is helpful or what is harmful. *Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing but the body is weak* (Matthew 26:41 NLT)
- Avoid places, people, and actions that invoke tempting thoughts. *Stay away from every kind of evil. Avoid worthless, foolish talk that only leads to more godless behavior.* (1 Thessalonians 5:22, 2 Timothy 2:16 NLT)
- Be practical in everyday living. We need to eat well, exercise, get sleep, schedule events, do kind things, make reasonable plans and live in the discipline of each plan. Empty and unstructured time can easily make us vulnerable to temptation. *So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do.* (Ephesians 5:15-17 NLT)

**One of the best
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Prayer: Gracious God, I admit that I am weak and ask You to strengthen me by the power of Your Holy Spirit to overcome temptation. Give me the will and the desire to do what pleases You. Amen

DISCERNMENT

People with discernment usually do the right thing in each situation that arises. Spiritually discerning people, based on their knowledge of God and His ways, have the capacity to separate and sift what is good from what is best.

When humans were created, we were meant to live forever in relationship with God. God graciously gave humans free will to choose to love and obey Him. Even though humans made a choice to disobey God and their relationship with Him was cut off, eternity remains in the human heart where it was planted when we were created.

Without God's wisdom, none of us know how to live purposefully in this life, or what will happen to us in the next.

God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end. (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NLT)

Many humans continue to function in this world as though they will live forever. They don't consult God with regards to what is best for them. They think they know intuitively what that is but end up suffering painful consequences for the unhealthy choices they make. The truth is, without God's wisdom, none of us know how to live purposefully in this life or what will happen to us in the next. What are we to do?

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16 NIV)

When we surrender our lives to Jesus Christ, God's Holy Spirit comes to live in us, and He teaches us the truth about life that we could never know on our own. It is this truth that results in us "having discernment." It is more than our conscience speaking to us, or "trusting our gut." This is God revealing truth to us, so we can live well. As we spend time in God's word each day, He gives us a discerning heart to know His ways and then put them into practice.

Deal with your servant according to your love and teach me your decrees. I am your servant; give me discernment that I may understand your statutes. (Psalm 119:124-125 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that You are the only wise God. Teach me Your ways so I may discern and choose what is the best path for my life. Amen

WHERE IN THE WORLD DO I BELONG?

How many of us feel like we truly belong? Much addictive and destructive behaviour is rooted in loneliness. Mother Teresa said, "Being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody, I think that is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty than the person who has nothing to eat. We must find each other."

Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. (Ephesians 1:4-5 NLT)

Feeling lonely is not restricted to the poor or the rich, the educated or the uneducated. God created us in His image so we could know love in relationship with Him, and with those around us. A broken relationship with God results in broken relationships with others around us and loneliness results.

God loves us with an everlasting love. He loved us so much that He sent His son Jesus into the world to die on the cross so that the wages of sin could be paid for, and our relationship with Him restored. We do not have to continue to live lonely. When we accept Jesus as our Lord we are adopted into God's family, and we become children of God. When we know we are loved and accepted, our hearts are touched, and we begin to experience peace and the security of belonging.

Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life. (Psalm 143:8 NIV)

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for sending Jesus into the world so that my sins could be forgiven and my relationship with You restored. In good times and in times of trouble, help me remember that I belong to You and You will never leave me alone. I am truly blessed to be part of Your family. Amen

When we know we are loved and accepted, our hearts are touched, and we begin to experience peace and the security of belonging.

NO REGRETS

The second promise found in the Big Book of AA tells us that if we diligently work the steps, “*We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.*” This echoes what we read in the Bible about our journey in this new life with God in recovery.

I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me. Friends, don't get me wrong: By no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward—to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back. (Philippians 3:12-14 MSG)

Because of God's unfailing love for us, we can look at our past with eyes wide open.

One of the greatest gifts we can give ourselves is accepting the fact that whatever has taken place in our past is done and cannot be changed. We can learn from it, and we can allow God to use it to bring about good, but we cannot change it. In fact, we can safely let go of the regret that we may continue to feel.

We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28 NIV)

Because of God's unfailing love for us, we can look at our past with eyes wide open. We can process what went on in some events and, where necessary take responsibility, and then just let the rest go. We can work on becoming ready to make amends for the harm we have done and seek healing and forgiveness for all who were involved. We can

keep our hearts and minds open to God's ongoing healing as He restores us to sanity. We can live with the knowledge of progress, rather than perfection. Above all, we can live in gratitude to God for one more day to enjoy His blessings and to carry this message to others who suffer.

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for opening up my future and closing my past. Thank You for giving me today. With Your help I will embrace everything this day brings trusting that you will guide me along a good path and use everything in my life, both the good and the bad, to bring about Your plan for my future. Amen

CHARACTER STRENGTH – BEING GENEROUS

God wants us to be responsible and generous with all He has given us – time, abilities, money, possessions. God does not want us to carelessly spend the money and resources we have received with little or no thought about what the future might hold. He also wants us to help others even though we might feel our resources are limited. God wants us to ask for wisdom and seek His will in how we use the resources we have been given. He promises to guide and bless us as we do.

Remember this: The one who plants few seeds will have a small harvest. But the one who plants a lot will have a big harvest. Each one of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give. You should not give if it makes you unhappy or if you feel forced to give. God loves those who are happy to give. And God can give you more blessings than you need, and you will always have plenty of everything. You will have enough to give to every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:6-8 ERV)

Farmers know they need to provide for their families from the crops they grow. They also need to retain enough seed to plant for a new harvest. God wants us to be responsibly generous and promises to give us all we need so we can share with others from what we have been given.

God also expects us to do some planning around what we have and not just do whatever we feel like doing in the moment. When we become aware of a need, we should ask God what our part might be in meeting that need, and then obey what God says. As we give to God and to others, God promises that we will receive back what we have given, abundantly multiplied.

Give to others, and you will receive. You will be given much. It will be poured into your hands—more than you can hold. You will be given so much that it will spill into your lap. The way you give to others is the way God will give to you. The Lord All-Powerful says, “Try this test. Bring one-tenth of your things to me. Put them in the treasury. Bring food to my house. Test me! If you do these things, I will surely bless you. Good things will come to you like rain falling from the sky. You will have more than enough of everything. (Luke 6:38, Malachi 3:10 ERV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for providing what I need for this day and for Your promise to continually meet my needs. I prayerfully ask You to direct me to where I can share those things You have given me with others. Amen

As we give to God and to others, God promises that we will receive back what we have given abundantly multiplied.

LIVING SOBER – WATCHING OUT FOR COMPLACENCY

As our time increases in recovery, one of the enemies we need to be aware of and guard against is becoming complacent. We think we are doing okay, so we skip doing those things that helped us get sober and find new life. We busy ourselves with earning money, and don't take time to go to church or meetings anymore. We used to take time for morning prayer, meditation, and reading our Bible but now we hit the snooze button one more time and then grab a coffee and get on with the day. We think we have got recovery because we are feeling fine. It's when we think like this that we are most vulnerable to relapse to our substance of choice, or habit, or of sliding into other unhealthy behaviours.

Sin and self-satisfaction bring destruction and death to stupid fools. (Proverbs 1:32 CEV)

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

Deuteronomy 6:5 NIV

Sometimes, the signal that we've become complacent, shows in an attitude. We get irritated and find ourselves reacting negatively towards others. We excuse our attitude and blame it on annoyance with those newer in recovery than ourselves. Perhaps we begin to isolate and find ourselves sleeping more or vegging out in front of a screen at a time when we usually got in touch with friends. We begin to tell ourselves that maybe we could have one drink or hang out at a bar with friends and just not drink. It's time to take an inventory and check in with someone who can speak the truth to us, whether it is convenient or not.

They have lost all feeling for what is right. So they have given themselves over to all kinds of evil pleasures. They take part in every kind of unclean act. And they are full of greed. (Ephesians 4:19 NIRV)

The Bible warns us to be alert and to stay on guard because our enemy is just waiting for an opportunity to get at us when we are vulnerable.

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. (1 Peter 5:8 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I need You just like I needed You the first day I came into recovery. Help me to reestablish my personal relationship with You today and get back on track with prayer and meditation, seeking only to know Your will for my life and have the power to carry it out. Amen

READY

Every week, or every other week, people put out trash cans and recycling bins, so they are ready for the scheduled collections in their community. God wants us to be able to get rid of the trash that accumulates in our lives, and the founders of AA recognized this when they included Step Six in the 12-Step program. *"We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."*

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life. (Psalm 139:23-24 NLT)

What does it mean to get ready for God to do this work? We must first seek God and give Him control in revealing what needs to go, as well as when, and how. That is the hard part. We're willing to work on our character defects but only on the bits we want to change and in the time frame we want them changed. In our mind, we have decided to take control of how to proceed.

Are we willing to consider that God might know the best way and the appropriate timing for whatever defects need to be removed? Much of what has gone wrong in the past is the application of our own flawed solutions to our incorrect understanding of our real problems. It's time to think about things from God's viewpoint. The Bible is the place to find the guidance we need.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV)

If we humbly come to God and surrender all that we are to Him, God will prepare a way and a time for us to let go of the trash we've accumulated.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I ask that You reveal my character defects and give me the desire and the strength to let go of all that hinders Your purpose for my life. Help me to be continually honest about what is going on inside me. I want to follow Your principles in all my ways. Amen

We must seek God and give Him control in revealing what needs to go, as well as when, and how.

FEBRUARY 14

VALENTINE'S DAY – HEARING GOD SAY, "I LOVE YOU"

Three of the most comforting, encouraging, and life-giving words in the English language are, "I love you". Spoken from a sincere heart, these three little words carry a tenderness and strength that will fill a lonely heart and bring a smile to a sad face. These are words that come from the hearts of loving parents when they see their new baby. They are whispered in the ear of someone frail as they lie on a hospital bed. They are words spoken with chocolates to a special someone, or perhaps with a "knowing gaze" shared across a room between partners in a caring marriage. They are words that every human longs to hear over and over again.

***As we pray
with a quiet
heart and
listen, we will
hear God's
voice echoing
in our ears "I
love you".***

As we go forward in recovery God wants us to hear Him tenderly tell us, "I love you." These words bring healing and peace to our body, mind, and spirit as we absorb the truth of what is being said. We will find, as we read God's Word in the Bible, that it repeatedly tells us of God's lavish and unfailing love for us. As we pray with a quiet heart and listen, we will hear God's voice echoing in our ears, "I love you".

I pray that your love will have deep roots. I pray that it will have a strong foundation. May you have power together with all the Lord's holy people to understand Christ's love. May you know how wide and long and high and deep it is. And may you know his love, even though it can't be known completely. Then you will be filled with everything God has for you. (Ephesians 3:17-19 NIRV)

We cannot begin to find words to describe the all-encompassing and tender love that God continues to pour out on us. This Valentine's Day, let's remind ourselves that love is available to us. God is with us. Let's live in God's love today, and every day.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for Your gracious love for me that is wide enough to embrace me wherever I go. Come and heal me in the place of my deepest wounding and disappointment. Accompany me in my brightest moments. Fill me with courage and comfort when I feel challenged. This I know for sure, You truly do love me! Amen

FEBRUARY 19

GOD GRANT ME THE SERENITY

What comes to mind when we say or hear the word "serenity"? A smile? A longing? A regret? Serenity, for many, speaks of a sense of tranquility or inner calm. How do we find and maintain inner calm in the ups and downs of life? The serenity prayer suggests that we learn to be content with things that cannot be changed and take responsibility for change where it is possible.

For even if the mountains walk away and the hills fall to pieces, My love won't walk away from you, my covenant commitment of peace won't fall apart." The God who has compassion on you says so. (Isaiah 54:10 MSG)

Some of us have never sought the healing and subsequent peace that God promises when we deal with the hurts of our past. We live in denial of the offences committed against us to avoid the pain, and inwardly rebel against who we are, or what has happened to us. Some of us have simply accepted the bad, the lies, the wounds, the defective self-image, even to the point that it feels normal and comfortable. Too often this results in repeated destructive cycles of addiction and co-dependent behaviour.

Give your burdens to the LORD, and he will take care of you. The Lord gives his people strength. The Lord blesses them with peace. (Psalm 55:22, 29:11 NLT)

Recovery is a time of learning to find serenity in our healing, and blessing God while also accepting life as it is, not as we would have it.

Recovery is a time of learning to find serenity in our healing, and blessing God while also accepting life as it is, not as we would have it. Life often isn't fair. What happened in the past cannot be changed. However, God cares for us and will use even our most difficult experiences to enrich our lives today and in the future. Our part? Surrender to God, receive healing and blessing, and live in faith that God is making all things right as we draw closer to Him.

Prayer: God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardship as a pathway to peace; taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your will; so that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with You forever in the next. Amen

FEBRUARY 18

EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH AND HOPE

He [God] gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. (Isaiah 40:29-31 NIV)

By attending 12-Step or support group meetings, we learn from the experience of others who have been in similar circumstances to us. We listen. We share. We hear and observe what is working for others. We learn from the wisdom gained by old-timers. We want to know what has helped others get strong and stay strong in life in recovery. As we move forward in our recovery, we may be asked to share what has brought us strength and hope.

Only God, with His infinite wisdom, can give us the experience, strength, and hope we need to be successful.

accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. (James 1:19-22 NIV)

In the past we may have treated the Bible like we would treat a motor vehicle manual, only consulting it when something goes wrong. However, today is an opportunity to take time to become familiar with God's principles as recorded in the Bible, and by practicing what we learn find the strength and hope for our on-going journey.

Prayer: Loving God, I humbly admit that Your wisdom is superior to mine. Help me to be a good listener and a willing learner and faithfully put into practice the wise principles I learn from reading Your Word. Amen

FEBRUARY 15

WISDOM FOR THE JOURNEY – PROTECT YOUR EYES

Good eyesight is a great gift. With our eyes we can see and admire the beauty that God has put in our natural environment. Sight helps us see what is needed to accomplish our daily tasks. We use our eyes to read and learn, to see love in the eyes of another, to make necessary changes when we look in a mirror. We use our eyes to see the wisdom sayings in the book of Proverbs which help us understand the treasure of God's truth.

My child, remember what I say and never forget what I tell you to do. Do what I say, and you will live. Be as careful to follow my teaching as you are to protect your eyes. Keep my teaching with you all the time; write it on your heart. Treat wisdom as your sister, and insight as your closest friend. (Proverbs 7:1-4 GNT)

When we can't see clearly, we get prescription glasses. When the sun is bright, we wear sunglasses. If pressure in our eye is too much it can destroy our ability to see, so many people put drops in their eyes to relieve the pressure. At times even surgery is required when things grow in our eyes (cataracts) or one part of the eye detaches from another part. We do our best to take good care of our eyes because our ability to see is precious.

Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. (Psalm 119:97, 119:11 NIV)

Give me understanding so that I may keep your law and obey it with all my heart.
Psalm 119:34 NIV

What will we do today to welcome God's truth into our lives and allow it to give us insight for moving forward? We schedule time to read from the Bible and ask the Holy Spirit to grow a love in our hearts for God's Word. We listen and learn from the experience, strength, and hope that others share. Learning is not the real objective. The real objective is putting into action what we have learnt. We listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit who gives us a clear vision of what is right or wrong. We come to God for His comfort when we feel pressured. We ask God to remove anything from our lives that is harming our ability to act on those things we are learning.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Your Word is precious and the wisdom and insight it brings to my life is essential. Help me to pay attention to what You are teaching me and to what I see around me. As the Holy Spirit shows me, help me to apply Your principles in every event in my day. Amen

FEBRUARY 16

FINDING THE STRENGTH AND HOPE WE NEED

When we were in our addiction we didn't take care of ourselves, and now we realize our need for getting healthy and emotionally strong. Some of us have diseases and wounds that still need healing. Others are suffering from poor eating habits and need proper nutrition to strengthen their bodies. Often, we feel worn out. Our minds are easily confused, and our emotions are ultra-sensitive. Early recovery is a time to rest and allow God to help. God is willing to give us the hope and the strength we need to move forward.

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (Matt. 11:28-29 NLT)

In the beginning of our recovery, we often comply with program guidelines simply because we believe that there has to be a better life than the one we have been living. We are willing to learn from the experience of others who have walked the path before us. We focus on simple things. We sleep and eat, read and pray. We exercise, go to meetings, and serve. Little by little we start to look better and feel stronger.

The sad truth is, at this point we can easily fall into the snare of forgetting that we are powerless over our addiction and begin to believe we got this far by our own efforts. We need to remind ourselves that it is only God's strength that sustains us. It's in the turning of our will and our life over to God, on a moment by moment, day by day basis, that we are safe under the protection of God. As soon as we take things back into our own hands and try to use our own solutions, we'll

quickly slide into troubled waters again.

For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you. (Isaiah 41:13 NIV)

Prayer: Gracious God, Thank You for bringing me out of the darkness and pain of my addiction. I am confident that, as I remain in You and You remain in me, the good work You have begun in me will be perfected. Amen

It's in the turning of our will and our life over to God on a moment by moment, day by day basis, that we are safe under the protection of God.

FEBRUARY 17

ASKING NOT TELLING

We came into recovery because we knew life wasn't working. Our lives were unmanageable, and we were powerless to change them. At many points we were aware of our character defects and the impact of our behaviour on ourselves, our loved ones, and even strangers. We wanted change but were not always willing to humbly ask God to make those changes in us.

So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete. (Luke 11:9, John 16:24 NIV)

The structure for our new life with God in recovery is that we should come humbly before Him and ask Him to provide for our needs. However, some of us are more familiar with getting what we want when we want it. We tell God what we need rather than reverently asking Him to provide for us. We then wonder why we feel pressure and have little joy in our recovery. God promises that if we ask, we will receive, and our joy will be complete.

God has the solution to our problems and knows the order they will follow for healing to come. That's why He tells us our first "ask" must be for forgiveness of sin and for the Holy Spirit to come and live in our hearts. A willingness to surrender to God's will at every point, in every circumstance, can only be attained if we have first asked for the knowledge of God's will and the power to carry it out. It's not a one-time "ask" in our morning prayers but a continuous invitation to God at points throughout the day to consciously know and welcome His input for each event.

For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. (Philippians 2:13 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, Forgive me for trying to fix my own life, for trying to tell You what to do, and for blaming You when things didn't work out. Today I come and humbly ask You, by the power of Your Holy Spirit who lives in me, to show me Your will for my life, Your view of my character defects, and Your plan for removing them from my thoughts and interactions with others. Please help me stay close to You and give me the will and desire to do what honours You in all my ways. Amen

We wanted change but were not always willing to humbly ask God to make those changes in us.