

Tuesday

## UPDATING OUR OUTLOOK

Life is not perfect and has its challenges. It is easy to let the obstacles and struggles get us down, but there is another way to live that is so much better. While we can't control people, places, or things, what we can control is how we respond to them, and this is where developing a positive outlook is helpful. We can certainly do that better when we are sober than when we are drunk or high. The ninth promise we are given if we live in sobriety for a while is "Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change." (Promises of AA)

***A happy heart makes a face look cheerful. But a sad heart produces a broken spirit.*** (Proverbs 15:13 NIRV)

There's plenty of literature on the effect of a positive outlook on life. Stress is reduced. All sorts of physical problems diminish or disappear altogether. Relationship issues tend to be resolved quicker and more satisfactorily when we are looking for what is good rather than blaming, complaining, and seeing the worst possible outcome.

***The Lord is my light and my salvation; I will fear no one. The Lord protects me from all danger; I will never be afraid.*** (Psalm 27:1 GNT)

God will guide us with His light and love. We do not have to be afraid of facing the past, present or the future. God will surround us and protect us from all danger. Because God is always with us, we can confidently let go of the fear within us that keeps us looking at life in a negative way. It is time to update our outlook on life and experience the unending love and care of God who will never leave us nor forsake us.

*Prayer: Loving God, I am willing to trade in my pessimistic outlook on life because You have promised me a future with hope. I trust Your love for me and Your ability to work out Your plans for my life. Thank You that You care for me. Amen*

Wednesday

## GRATITUDE FOR HARD TIMES

As some of us consider the history of our lives – whether before, during, or after active addiction – gratitude might not be the first response in our hearts. Each season of our lives has pain, often shame, and a real desire within us to avoid and just "not go there ever again."

***Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*** (James 1:2-4 NIV)

Fortunately, we do not always live under the pressure of trials and temptations. God has called us to peace and God wants to fill our minds and hearts with peace today.

***Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*** (Colossians 3:15-17 NIV)

Are we setting our hearts on God's faithfulness to us during the hard times and embracing the lessons we have learned? How have we learned to persevere through the past experiences we have had? How has God filled our lives with good things, even after the destruction we brought on ourselves and others through our words and actions?

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, I thank You for Your faithful love that has brought me through many trials and temptations to this moment. My desire is to be mature and complete, lacking nothing. Help me to keep my eyes fixed on You and Your goodness, and with a grateful heart enjoy this day You have given me. Amen*

Thursday

## DEVELOPING INTEGRITY

Integrity is one of the most valued character qualities a person can have. A person of integrity has strong moral and ethical principles. They are known to be honest regardless of their circumstances, the company they are keeping, or even when they are alone with no one watching. What you see on the outside is the same person that is on the inside.

***May integrity and honesty protect me, for I put my hope in you. I know that you are pleased with me, for my enemy does not triumph over me. Because of my integrity you uphold me and set me in your presence forever.*** (Psalm 25:21, 41:11-12 NLT)

People of integrity have the peace of a clear conscience. When we live according to the Word of God we experience a deep inner peace knowing that we have not violated our conscience by any wrongdoing. We are confident that when someone examines us, we will be proven innocent. In contrast, when our lives lack moral wholeness, we live in constant fear of being "found out" as frauds. People of integrity are not perfect. We occasionally make mistakes and sin, but we do not cover up our offences. We confess them and deal with any consequences that arise.

***Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out.*** (Proverbs 10:9 NIV)

Men and women of integrity can be depended upon. Others trust and respect them. Neighbours speak highly of them. They are known to be helpful in their community and in their workplace. Integrity in us can be built over time as we diligently apply God's teachings to the choices we make.

*Prayer: Loving God, Help me to consider the impact of my actions and behaviour on those around me. My desire is to love and care for others as You faithfully love and care for me. Help me to follow Your principles in all my affairs and to become a person of integrity. Amen*

Friday

## STAYING AWAY FROM ALL SEXUAL SIN

The book of Proverbs, which is in the Bible, is a book of great wisdom. Several chapters of the book give warnings about sexual immorality and the trouble we are lured into when we allow ourselves to be drawn into sexual activity outside of the lifetime commitment of marriage.

***Come, let's drink our fill of love until morning. Let's enjoy each other's caresses, for my husband is not home. He's away on a long trip ... Don't let your hearts stray away toward her. Don't wander down her wayward path. For she has been the ruin of many; many men have been her victims. Her house is the road to the grave. Her bedroom is the den of death.*** (Proverbs 7:18-19, 25-27 NLT)

Jesus was clear on the issue of sexual immorality when He taught that long before we climb into bed with someone, we have allowed our minds and hearts to lust after that person and therefore committed sin in our hearts.

***But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*** (Matthew 5:28 NLT)

As we go forward in our life with God in recovery, we have a choice to make. The God who loves to bless His children and fill their lives with good things says to wait until after marriage for the intimate giving of one's self to another. Whose voice will we obey, the voice of lust that leads to ruin or the voice of God that leads to honour?

***God's will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin. Then each of you will control his own body and live in holiness and honor— not in lustful passion like the pagans who do not know God and his ways.*** (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 NLT)

***Prayer: Loving God, You have the words of truth and life that will give us freedom as we follow Your will and Your ways. Help me to honour You with my body and make any necessary adjustments, so that I may live in sexual purity before You. Amen***

Weekend

## CONTROL WHAT YOU SAY

After years of either saying nothing out of fear, or bursting out with anger and complaints, one of the things we need to learn in recovery is what to say and when to say it. We need to speak the truth to others in a loving way and we need to give attention to what is actually important and needs to be said.

***Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones. A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Those who guard their lips preserve their lives, but those who speak rashly will come to ruin.*** (Proverbs 16:24, 15:1, 13:3 NIV)

Gossip and blaming don't help in any situation. Using our words to lie and manipulate and get what we want is more destructive than helpful. It's time to give up these ways of interacting with others.

***With their mouths the godless destroy their neighbors, but through knowledge the righteous escape. A lying tongue hates those it hurts, and a flattering mouth works ruin.*** (Proverbs 11:9, 26:28 NIV)

So, what should we be talking about and how might we be saying it? A good rule to follow is to speak to others as we wish to be spoken to. There is always a place for kindness and courtesy.

***Prayer: May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to You, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. Amen*** (Psalm 19:14 NLT)

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## LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY DAILY MEDITATIONS



Week 38

Monday

## LIKE NIGHT AND DAY

***Sin whispers to the wicked, deep within their hearts. They have no fear of God at all. In their blind conceit, they cannot see how wicked they really are. Everything they say is crooked and deceitful. They refuse to act wisely or do good. They lie awake at night, hatching sinful plots. Their actions are never good. They make no attempt to turn from evil.*** (Psalm 36:1-4 NLT)

When we were living destructively in self will we were co-operating with the evil one every day and often weren't even aware of it. We didn't care what people thought of us and what we were doing. We told ourselves that we weren't afraid of anyone – certainly not God. Deceitful and crooked are hardly strong enough to describe the choices we made and the things we did.

We are grateful that God, in His great love for us, never gave up on us but kept inviting us to come to Him and leave all that behind. But it's not enough to just know about God's love. We need to seize the opportunity today to embrace a loving relationship with God, rest in His shadow, and let Him fill us to overflowing with His goodness.

***How precious is your unfailing love, O God! All humanity finds shelter in the shadow of your wings. You feed them from the abundance of your own house, letting them drink from your river of delights. For you are the fountain of life, the light by which we see.*** (Psalm 36:7-9 NLT)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for Your unfailing love for me. You are the fountain of life and in Your Light I am refreshed and strengthened as I choose to give my will and life over to Your care. Help me to wholeheartedly follow You in all my ways. Amen***