

LIFE WITH GOD IN
RECOVERY
DAILY MEDITATIONS



Week 45

Monday

DEFEATING OUR ENEMIES

When we were living a rebellious lifestyle, we gave little thought to our spiritual enemies who were working to keep us from doing what is right and good. That is because our lives were being lived in the evil way they desired. Now that we have given our will and life over to the care of God and moved into the Kingdom of Light, they are fighting hard to reclaim us.

Jesus won the battle over our enemies of sin and death and by believing in Him, our constant boast must be that we have the victory over those who desire to cause us harm. How can we make this claim? The Word of God is a shield for those who take refuge in Him. We cannot depend on our own thoughts but need to bring every thought captive to make it obedient to Christ.

Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and salvation are more than words. Learn how to apply them. You'll need them throughout your life. God's Word is an indispensable weapon. In the same way, prayer is essential in this ongoing warfare. (Ephesians 6:14-18a MSG)

Tempting us to do wrong and then causing us to feel guilt and shame when we do so is how the enemy wears us down. To defeat him we need to do a daily inventory and promptly admit any wrongs to God who can be depended on to forgive us and cleanse us from every wrong. As we seek the Holy Spirit's guidance in all our ways, we will have the power to overcome any temptation that comes from the lust of our flesh.

Prayer: Gracious God, I can never thank You enough that You are a shield around me and the One who lifts me up each time I fall down. Amen

Tuesday

PEACE IS POSSIBLE

When we eventually arrive at that place where we live in peace with those around us, we may still encounter some people who are hostile towards us. Despite our caring comments and gestures, they insult us or accuse us and just go out of their way to irritate or hurt us. How should we respond? How can we maintain peace?

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. (Romans 12:18 NIV)

The first phrase in the above verse is: "***If it is possible.***" This indicates that there may be times when peace with another person is not possible. The person may not be interested in a peaceful environment, or they may even enjoy causing harm to others. Our responsibility is to maintain peace in our own heart. We remember and hold fast to God's kindness to us and keep our thoughts filled with kindness, goodness and forgiveness towards the other person.

But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness. (James 3:17-18 NLT)

The second phrase in the same verse is, "***as far as it depends on you.***". We are not meant to co-dependently prop up someone in their sinful or harmful behaviour or attitude. We can walk away from a person who is belligerent, but we must be careful to do so with peace in our own heart. Irritation and condemnation need to go. God's healing and peace need to be received so the effects of the hostile environment can be soothed.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to live at peace with everyone. Help me to resolve conflict with others when it is possible, and if it depends on me. My desire is always to be peaceable, loving and gentle. As You have given grace generously to me, help me to give grace generously to those I find hard to love and not expect anything in return. Amen

Wednesday

KNOWING GOD'S WILL

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.

So don't be foolish with your lives, but learn what the Lord wants you to do. (Ephesians 5:17 ERV)

The founders of AA were very clear that we needed to both know God's will for us and have the power to carry it out. The first principle we should acknowledge is that we need help to do God's will. We need to ask for the gift of understanding and allow God to teach us what we can do for ourselves.

We keep asking God to fill you with the knowledge of what he wants. We pray he will give you the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives. (Colossians 1:9b NIRV)

We need to lay down our own perspective on what is needed in any given situation and be willing to see things from God's perspective. Our old ways of understanding life are flawed. They may be familiar, but they took us to dark and destructive places. We need what is new, even though that means embracing different and unknown strategies for living life to the full.

Each time we stretch ourselves to follow God's will as laid out in the Bible, we increase our deposit of peace and trust and will soon discover that God is faithful to do all that He has promised.

Walk in obedience to all that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days. (Deuteronomy 5:33 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to humble myself and let go of my own perspective of life. I desire to know Your will for my life and put it into practice in all my affairs. Please give me the gift of understanding how to do this. Amen

Thursday

DEALING WITH ANXIETY

Every one of us deals with anxiety at some point in our lives. Many of life's circumstances can cause us to feel anxious. When the mind and body come under stress, adrenaline is released into the bloodstream. We feel jumpy, our hearts beat faster, our breathing becomes irregular, and we feel nervous. Often, our sleep is affected. While it's normal to feel anxiety in certain situations, for some of us this condition is experienced often, and has become our normal life's experience.

The Bible tells us: ***Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*** (Philippians 4:6 NIV)

How can we ever hope to achieve a condition where we are not anxious about anything? Isn't that an unrealistic expectation? Aren't we just setting ourselves up for failure? God says the way to deal with anxiety is to deal with its root cause. If it's anxiety over past mistakes, then God invites us to confess them and receive forgiveness. If we're worried about a current condition or circumstance and we don't know what to do about it, God's solution is to bring it before Him in prayer, obey whatever He tells us to do, and trust Him to work out the rest.

We can ask God to help us sort out what's going on in our minds. He'll not only show us what's going on but will comfort us in the middle of our troubled thinking and calm our anxious thoughts.

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. Whenever I am anxious and worried, you comfort me and make me glad. (Psalm 139:23-24 NIV, 94:19 GNT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Your desire is that I choose to live in peace and feel secure in Your care. Help me to understand my anxious thoughts and bring them to You, for You are my refuge and my deliverer and will guide me in the way I should go. Please help me! Amen

Friday

TAKING CARE AS WE MAKE AMENDS

When we come to the point of making amends, fear can overwhelm us as we remember those we have harmed. God has forgiven us for the wrongs we have done and now we need to make amends and, if possible, reconcile with others.

At one time you were separated from God. You were his enemies in your minds, because the evil you did was against him. But now he has made you his friends again. He did this by the death Christ suffered while he was in his body. He did it so that he could present you to himself as people who are holy, blameless, and without anything that would make you guilty before him. (Colossians 1:21-22 ERV)

When we are reconciled to God we have the power of the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen us to do what we need to do. God cares for the people we have harmed. We need to make amends to those we have harmed, except when to do so would further injure them or others. We need to pray and seek advice from God, our sponsor, or another trusted friend, as to when and how we can appropriately make our amends.

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. (Romans 13:8 NIV)

Though we may dread doing the work of reconciliation, in the end it will give us peace in our hearts. Hopefully the people we have harmed will offer us forgiveness, but if they choose not to, that choice remains with them. We have chosen to make amends and when we have done what God requires of us, we can leave the outcome of our obedience with Him.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, As I do the work of making amends with those I have injured, I ask for the courage to do whatever needs to be done. Together with my amends, please help me to demonstrate love and care for those I have harmed and truly desire what is best for them. Amen

Weekend

EXCELLENCE VERSUS PERFECTIONISM

All of us want to be successful and do things well. When we accept an affirmation for a job well done or a goal achieved, we feel good about what we accomplished and that is how it should be. Unfortunately, some of us set goals that are unreasonable. We fail to see the progress we have achieved because we are blinded by perfectionism.

We need to recognize that perfectionism is something quite different than excellence and is much more sinister. Excellence is the noble effort any of us make to "live one day at a time, one moment at a time, accepting hardship as a pathway to peace." Perfectionism is that fear-driven approval-seeking obsessive pressure that overwhelms us until we are defeated and choose to quit.

And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him. (Hebrews 12:1b-2a; 5:8-9, NIV)

God wants us to acknowledge our failures and have an open heart to His forgiveness, cleansing and restoration. That is life at its best for whoever chooses it.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to live well, but I know that I can't do life perfectly. You know that too and so You sent Jesus to suffer and die for my sins so I could receive forgiveness and healing for the failures You knew would happen. I put my trust once more in You, for only in Your power can I live a life of excellence with joy. Amen

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