

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Happy New Year! One of the ways people seek to make the New Year better than the old one, is to make New Year's resolutions which are commitments to personal goals, projects, or the reforming of a habit. The only problem with looking to self-determined New Year's resolutions is that statistics tell us that after only 9 days there is a 75% failure rate in keeping the resolutions.

If we think that's bad news, what about the statistic that tells us that 100% of people fail to live according to God's righteous laws? The result of that failure isn't just a few more pounds in weight on our bodies or a little more debt – it means death and eternal separation from God.

It is no wonder that we love to celebrate Christmas—the birth of Jesus Christ. It is truly a wonderful life-changing event because the Bible tells us: ***But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children.*** (Galatians 4:4-5 NLT)

Today is a good day to seek restoration with the God who created us, who alone can "open up our future and close our past." If we accept Jesus' death on the cross as payment for our sins, we are assured of God's forgiveness, and will experience life with Him forever. May this New Year's Day of 2027 be the beginning of a truly "Happy New Year" for each of us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for Your beloved son Jesus who was willing to pay the debt of death for my sin. I choose to surrender my will and life into Your care and trust that as I faithfully follow You, Your good plans for my future will open up, and the year ahead will be my best year yet. Amen

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HAPPY NEW YEAR – EVERY DAY

Today as we begin to embrace this New Year and recover from the festivities of saying good-bye to the old year, let us reflect on what we would like to achieve in the months ahead. How can we do as Jesus commanded, and choose to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and to love our neighbour as ourselves? God loved us so much that He sent His son Jesus into the world to be our saviour. We can ask God to teach us how to love as He loves. Our Loving God will show us what needs changing and how to go about it.

Love covers a multitude of sins and goes beyond mere words. Sometimes love is demonstrated in silence, or in an understanding touch as one comes alongside another who has strayed from the recovery path. Love doesn't point a finger of accusation but encourages the one who has relapsed to get back on the road and continue the journey.

I cried to the Lord with my voice, and He heard me from His holy hill. Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand. (Psalms 3:4; Isaiah 41:10 NKJV)

We have a wonderful opportunity today, and in each day of this year, to be effective witnesses to God's love for us and our life with Him in recovery. To achieve this, we must daily spend time with God in His word and seek His direction for our lives. Welcoming the input of others will help as well. As we humbly and gently share our message, and learn from the experience, strength, and hope of others, one moment at a time, one day at a time, we will build our lives and have a successful, satisfying year.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, As I go forward in this new year I purposefully put my hand into Your hand and choose to walk with You in the path You have prepared for me. I welcome Your Holy Spirit to be my guide in the way I should take. Amen



LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY DAILY MEDITATIONS

Week Between Christmas and New Years

Monday

GETTING HELP AND GIVING THANKS

Those of us who have acted on the saying, "God could and would, if He were sought", have witnessed the blessing of God in our lives. In our desperation we sought God about our powerlessness over what was going on and are thankful for His counsel, compassion, and love, as He showed us how to live in freedom from the bondage to our addiction. Through faith in Jesus, God received us into His family and now we are thankful to be called sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father.

I will praise God's name by singing to him. I will bring him glory by giving him thanks. That will please the Lord more than offering him an ox. It will please him more than offering him a bull with its horns and hooves. Poor people will see it and be glad. The hearts of those who worship God will be strengthened. The Lord hears those who are in need. He doesn't forget his people in prison. Let heaven and earth praise him. Let the oceans and everything that moves in them praise him. (Psalm 69:30-34 NIRV)

God cared so deeply about the state of the souls of the people He created that He sent Jesus into the world to reconcile us to Himself. God is not willing that any person should perish but that all would receive the gift of life forevermore. It is most comforting to know that costly sacrifices are not required to please God. It's our thankfulness that brings Him glory.

Our aim should be to walk with God in righteousness and true holiness. If, for whatever reason, we fail to keep His ways, He invites us to humbly come before Him and ask for His mercy and forgiveness. When we do, He will be faithful to forgive and restore us. God is on our side and always deals graciously with us. Therefore, as His sons and daughters who have breath, let us unceasingly praise the Lord. He is good, and His love endures forever.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I give You praise and thanks that when I am in trouble and call on You, You answer me and show Yourself strong on my behalf. Amen

GOD RESPONDS TO MY PRAYERS

Most people who are in recovery desire to learn from the experience, strength, and hope of others. When it comes to learning how to pray, one hero we might look at is a prophet in the Bible named Daniel. Three times a day Daniel prayed. Even when he knew continuing to pray might cost him his life, he went to his house and, as was his custom, opened his windows and prayed, not caring who saw him. It did cost him an overnight trip to the lions' den, but God protected him from the lions and Daniel was later raised to a place of prominence in the government.

Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. (Daniel 6:10 NIV)

Daniel prayed for numerous things and often confessed his own sins and the sins of his nation. He prayed beyond his own needs. He asked God to give him wisdom and understanding. He needed guidance and God gave it.

While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the Lord my God for his holy hill—while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, ... came to me ... He instructed me and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. As soon as you began to pray, a word went out, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. (Daniel 9:20-23a NIV)

While you and I may not see an angel or hear words as directly as Daniel did, his example of constant prayer is what Step 11 encourages us to do—seek through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God. Daniel's custom of praying regularly shows us the power of prayer. In the above Scripture God heard Daniel and communicated with him. God answers us in a way that might be different from what we would prefer — but always in a way that perfects God's plan for us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am grateful that You listen to the prayers I offer up to You. Help me to be honest as I unburden my heart to You, knowing that You hear my prayers and will respond to me according to Your perfect will and timing. Amen

WAITING FOR THE NEW YEAR

How long are we prepared to do the daily ordinary things we need to do while we wait for God to bring about the plans He has prepared in advance for us to do?

Anna, a prophetess, was also there in the Temple that day. She was the daughter of Phineas, of the Jewish tribe of Asher, and was very old, for she had been a widow to eighty-four years following seven years of marriage. She never left the Temple but stayed there night and day, worshipping God by praying and often fasting. She came along just as Simeon was talking with Mary and Joseph, and she also began thanking God and telling everyone in Jerusalem who had been awaiting the coming of the Savior that the Messiah had finally arrived. (Luke 2:36-38 NASB)

What must it have been like for Anna who for 60+ years waited to see the fulfillment of God's plans regarding the Messiah? Anna was likely in her teens when she married. She was widowed after only 7 years of marriage and then she entered the Temple, probably in her early twenties. From then until she was 84 she had faithfully worshipped God, fasted and prayed, and served at the Temple. Before seeing the child Jesus, Anna had waited expectantly each day for 60+ years doing ordinary daily tasks. She truly was a patient committed believer in the plan of God.

We don't know how long you or I need to wait for the fulfillment of God's promises in our lives. What we do know is that God's plans are good, and God's timing is perfect. God truly has a purpose in each event of our lives. God is in control.

"He is the God who made the world. He also made everything in it. From one man he made all the people of the world. Now they live all over the earth. He decided exactly when they should live. And he decided exactly where they should live. God did this so that people would seek him. (Acts 17:24a, 26-27a NIRV)

Prayer: Loving God, as I come to the end of this year and move into the next, I set myself wholeheartedly to do those tasks You have given me to do and will trust You to fulfill Your plan for my future in Your perfect timing. Amen

CERTAINTY IN AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

Many of us face a new year wondering about the unknown. If we're honest, there's a bit of uncertainty and tension that lies beneath the excitement and anticipation that the New Year brings. What difference does relationship with God bring to our confidence in the events of the year ahead?

In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. (John 1:1-5, NLT)

The same power that created the universe is available to help us deal with the events of the year ahead. Jesus is the light of the world. He will expose any darkness that tries to manipulate and control our lives. He will cause light to shine upon our unknown future. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus' power has already overcome the power of death and darkness, therefore we have nothing to fear. When we stand firm on the finished work of Jesus, we can accomplish what God has planned for us. God is faithful in His love and care for us. What better way is there to enter the New Year than in the strength of our awesome God?

He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. (John 1:10-12 NLT)

God's power and wisdom are infinite. In the coming year God will not expect us to create our own solutions for living life to the full. The Bible tells us that Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is the guiding light to show us the way forward.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I welcome and acknowledge the Light of the World in my life. I have nothing to fear in the year that lies ahead because You hold me by Your righteous right hand. Keep me mindful of your unfailing love for me and lead me in the way I should go for I wholeheartedly commit my life to You. Amen