

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY DAILY MEDITATIONS



Week 44

DOING IT RIGHT

Does it really pay to do what's right? Up to now our current practice has been to do whatever worked to get what we wanted. It is a hard habit to break, and we may ask ourselves if it is really worth it. Doing the right thing may make life more challenging and inconvenient in the moment but, as we take the long-term view in this new life we are building, we will find that doing what is right has far more lasting benefits than we could ever have imagined.

Doing right makes life better for those who are good, but the wicked are destroyed by their own wicked ways. Doing right sets honest people free, but people who can't be trusted are trapped by their greed. People who do what is right are on their way to life, but those who always want to do wrong are on their way to death. (Proverbs 11:5-6, 19 ERV)

As we inventory our past in a fearless and honest way, we will have to admit that our difficulties and destructive lifestyle were the result of our repeated choice to do wrong. We would agree with these words from the Bible that we were trapped:-trapped by our addiction; trapped by our fear of what others would do to us if they found out how we had wronged them; and trapped in the darkness of frustration and hopelessness that resulted from one bad situation building precariously on top of another.

God wants us to live in freedom from sin. When we try to do what is right, God tells us He is pleased with us, and most people around respond similarly. God pours out blessings upon us when we try to do things His way and when we ask for His assistance, He willingly comes alongside to help.

The Lord hates those who love to do evil, but he is pleased with those who try to do right. People are pleased with those who try to do good. Those who look for trouble will find it. (Proverbs 11:20, 27 ERV)

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to be conscious of Your principles for life in all my affairs. Help me to purposefully choose to do the next right thing, trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your will. Amen

Tuesday

PROMISES OF GOD

When we encounter a promise of God in the Bible, do we stop and think about what God is saying? Some of God's promises are conditional and we need to look at what our part may be, so we can make claim to the promise.

So I say, live by the Holy Spirit's power. Then you will not do what your desires controlled by sin want you to do. (Galatians 5:16 NIRV)

If we live by the Holy Spirit's power, we will not be controlled by the sin we want to do. When we first come into recovery it is almost impossible not to think about our former dependency. We lived so long under its power that it is still seeking to control us. How can we stop thinking about it? God has made us such that we cannot focus on two things at once. So, what we need to do is to change our focus and our attention to proclaiming the promises God has made to us. We also pray and seek the Holy Spirit to strengthen us to do what God says.

Finally, my brothers and sisters, always think about what is true. Think about what is noble, right and pure. Think about what is lovely and worthy of respect. If anything is excellent or worthy of praise, think about those kinds of things. (Philippians 4:8 NIRV)

When we are driving a car and turn our eyes away from the road the car will veer in the direction we are looking. The same is true when we keep focusing on our past.

The Holy Spirit is willing and ready to help us concentrate on those things that are right and pure.

For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him. (2 Corinthians 3:17-18 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me to live by the Holy Spirit's power so that I can focus on those things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Amen

Wednesday

KNOW-IT-ALL

The longer we live in sobriety the more we recognize that we have lots to learn. It is interesting though, that in early recovery some of us become "know-it-alls" who think a sponsor is unnecessary, their advice inconvenient, and not what we require.

This kind of arrogance is rooted in denial and insecurity. Underneath our outward smugness we may have realized there truly is a lot we don't know, but we feel we dare not admit it. Those who desire to be solidly grounded know that there is a great deal to learn and they will have their ears and hearts open to the experience, strength, and hope that others are willing to share with them.

Be friendly with everyone. Don't be proud and feel that you are smarter than others. Make friends with ordinary people. (Romans 12:16 CEV)

How do we know we are living humbly rather than as a know-it-all? One obvious way is seen in our level of willingness to learn from God how life truly works. The Bible was written to help us, to correct us, and to show us how to live. Are we consulting it, or do we think we can do fine with our own understanding of how things work? As we learn what God says is the right way to do things, are we willing to adjust and adapt our life habits accordingly, or do we simply want to carry on as we have in the past?

Everything in the Scriptures is God's Word. All of it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and showing them how to live. (2 Timothy 3:16 CEV)

God's Word is full of wisdom and His way of doing things is much higher than ours. Are we living in that truth today? Our Step Ten inventory each evening is one way we can observe our behaviour and determine how willing we are to learn from God and others.

The Lord says: "My thoughts and my ways are not like yours. Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, my thoughts and my ways are higher than yours. (Isaiah 55:8-9 CEV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Your thoughts are so much wiser than mine and Your ways are so much better than any way I could figure out on my own. Help me to live humbly in this truth and learn all I can from Your Word and from those who are walking with You. Amen

Thursday

GOD'S WILL IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS – IS IT POSSIBLE?

Even though we may desire to daily walk with God and follow His ways, we will still need God's help to accomplish that goal. King David, who was named, "a man after God's own heart" repeatedly called out to God for help.

Be good to your servant, that I may live and obey your word. Open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in your instructions. I am only a foreigner in the land. Don't hide your commands from me! I am always overwhelmed with a desire for your regulations. You rebuke the arrogant; those who wander from your commands are cursed. Don't let them scorn and insult me, for I have obeyed your laws. Even princes sit and speak against me, but I will meditate on your decrees. Your laws please me; they give me wise advice. (Psalm 119:17-24 NLT)

God gives us His Holy Spirit to live in us and guide us, so we can know what is right and true. As we turn our will and our lives over to His care, God works in us to give us the desire and the strength to follow His ways.

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

We live in a world where people are arrogant and think they don't need to seek God. They rebel against God's principles and choose to do what is right in their own eyes. If we are to remain steady and strong in the plan that God has for our lives, we will need to seek Him in all our affairs and rely on His strength to support us as we choose to do what is right.

We need to daily read and meditate on God's word and surrender our self-will to the Holy Spirit's power and guidance. As we do, God works in us and around us to achieve His good plan for our lives.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Turn my eyes away from worthless things and lead me in the way I should go. Let me rest in Your unfailing love for me as I grow in the knowledge of Your Word and Your ways. Give me sound judgment in all my affairs. Amen

FRIDAY

RATIONALIZING EXCUSES FOR POOR CHOICES

In active addiction we seldom made the right choice and even now in recovery it is still a learning process. God has provided a way for us to learn and grow. That way is to first receive forgiveness for the sins we have committed by accepting that Jesus died in our place to pay the penalty incurred for all our wrong choices. We need to stand in the truth of who God says we are – flawed human beings but precious and valued sons and daughters of God who are washed and cleansed from all our sins.

There is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. (Romans 8:1-2 NLT)

Without accepting forgiveness of our sins and a right relationship with God we will continue to rationalize what we have done because we are afraid of the shame, the pain, the embarrassment, and the disappointment that has resulted from our poor choices.

It seems easier to make excuses for our behaviour or to blame someone else, so the burden is "off our shoulders." If rationalizing makes us feel better, we deceive ourselves into thinking that the situation has improved. To be honest and confess that we have made poor choices may threaten our comfort zone in the short term or even cause us great embarrassment. However, regardless of these feelings, we need to come clean and admit to all our wrong-doing.

Sometimes we've rationalized our behaviour for so long that it has become an unconscious process rather than an attempt to deliberately deceive. We need to seek God to awaken us to the harmful choices we are unwilling to disclose. He knows the poison stored in the roots of our destructive actions and reactions.

God loves to show us truth and help us to rise above rationalizing and excusing. He knows that living in the truth is the most free and most satisfying way to live.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to give up excusing and rationalizing my behaviour and take responsibility for my actions. Help me to accept the truth of Your Word and live in the grace and freedom that is mine through the finished work of Jesus on the cross. Amen

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Weekend

DETERMINED DECISIONS

God is willing to support and strengthen us as we lay down our self-directed ways and invite Him to lead us along the path He has chosen for us. It's helpful to regularly take inventory of our lives and determine what decisions and changes we need to make to get us to where we want to be.

For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. (2 Chronicles 16:9 NKJV)

What has God already said in the Scriptures that we can act on? Have we resolved to surrender our self-will to God and ask for His will to be done in our lives? Are we prepared to be patient while working through the variety of circumstances that are part of our life today, and allow God to show us a new way forward?

For you are my hiding place; you protect me from trouble. You surround me with songs of victory. The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control." Many sorrows come to the wicked, but unfailing love surrounds those who trust the Lord. (Psalm 32:7-10 NLT)

If we decide to proceed with what God tells us to do, no matter how incredible it might seem, we will experience the joy of seeing God work in ways we never thought possible. God is always with us. That is a fact. We don't have to face any difficulty alone. That is a fact. Together with God any difficulty can be worked out and overcome. That is a fact. The question is, will we determine to live in a way that gives God an opportunity to demonstrate these facts?

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)

Prayer: Loving God, Create in me a clean heart that is devoted to You. I am ready to surrender my self-will and ask that You instruct me in Your ways of wisdom. Please lead me along a straight path for I choose to put my hope in You. Amen