

Tuesday

TIMES OF TROUBLE

No one likes trouble. We all want trouble to go away as quickly as possible. Sometimes people feel they should not have trouble when they are following Jesus. They assume that God will not allow any adversity to touch their lives. The truth is, sometimes God uses trouble and hardship to accomplish His purposes in our life.

Jesus said: ***"Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."*** (John 16:33b NLT)

We may see our difficulties as setbacks to our recovery, but God may be using them to help us mature and move forward. Jesus said we will experience trouble and problems in this world. We need to know and rely on the fact that God says He will never leave us or forsake us. When we turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, we are assured that God will be our refuge and strength in times of trouble.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea. (Psalm 46:1-2 NIV)

In our new life with God in recovery, trouble no longer needs to defeat us. We have a loving God who guides and supports us. He will empower us to face and overcome any difficulty. As we go to God first when trouble arises, we will know the benefit of His wisdom to handle the situation. Reading the Bible daily and applying God's principles to our lives will bring the swiftest and most satisfying solutions to any problems we may encounter. In addition, God wants us to reach out to others for comfort, support, and help. We are promised victory as we face trouble together with God and with people we trust to give us good advice.

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:15-16 NIV)

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for always being with me. When troubles come, help me to receive Your comfort and rely on Your wisdom in my time of need. Amen

Wednesday

A GOOD COUNSELOR – A WISE SPONSOR

The founders of AA and the 12 Steps were aware of Biblical principles and based on these, they structured the program of Alcoholics Anonymous to include peer counselors whom we call sponsors.

A good sponsor listens attentively to the person they are mentoring. They provide an objective point of view on troubling issues that arise and prayerful understanding about how healing can be attained and how life works.

The Bible teaches: ***Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*** (James 5:16 NIV)

In early recovery a sponsor is often the first person we seek help from when we need encouragement to take new steps that are unfamiliar to us. We have feelings we don't always understand and are hearing about new ways of doing things that really don't make sense to us. A sponsor sticks with us, encouraging us as we make good decisions and challenging us when we appear to be setting ourselves up for relapse.

Those who listen to instruction will prosper; those who trust the Lord will be joyful. The wise are known for their understanding, and pleasant words are persuasive. (Proverbs 16:20 NLT)

There's so much to learn about the recovery process and we only have limited time and energy each day. An essential part of God's care is providing us with wise people who will both model a healthy lifestyle and share principles for healthy living with us. These people help us reshape our thinking and behaving.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I need wise counsel as I sort out my issues and rebuild my life. Thank You for living in me and teaching me Your ways. Help me to find and pay attention to the wisdom of a new sponsor or mentor. Help me to listen attentively and obey Your promptings in my spirit as I move forward in my life with You in recovery. Amen

Thursday

LEST WE FORGET

Today we remember blood that was spilled on battlefields around the world by brave men and women who gave their lives for the cause of freedom and justice. Our hearts are touched as we watch many young people gather to honour the veterans of past wars. We see the memories etched in the veterans' faces and can only imagine the stories they will never forget. We don't have those memories in our hearts, so we need to hear stories and look at symbols that help us pay attention and remember. Poppies, moments of silence, and ceremonies at cenotaphs around the country all help us reflect and remember.

Often in the recovery process we receive key fobs and medallions to mark milestones in our journey. These symbols are indicators of time in recovery and help us celebrate our sobriety with others with whom we share the recovery journey. As Christians we have symbols of Christ's sacrifice of His life for us. These symbols remind us that Jesus paid the price of sin for all who come to Him. The bread and wine we share in the celebration of Communion in Christian congregations all around the world are symbols that remind us of Jesus' broken body and His shed blood on our behalf.

The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (1 Corinthians 11:23b-26 NIV)

On Remembrance Day we hear the phrase, "Lest we forget." As Canadians, we should never forget the sacrifice of our brave soldiers who lost their lives in battle. As people in recovery, we should never forget the impact of our life in addiction and the new opportunities we share as we live life to the fullest each day. As Christians, we should never forget the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ who gave His life for our eternal salvation.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I pause to remember and live in gratitude for all the benefits I have received. Thank you for the symbols and events that help me to remember the cost of my freedom, my time in recovery, and my new life with You through Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour. Amen

FRIDAY

LIVING THE PROMISE

As we work our program, we find that life changes. Nothing happens in an instant but when we reflect on a month, or 90 days, or a year or more, and compare the person we once were with the person we are now, the transformation is striking. One area where we notice this change is given to us in the eleventh AA Promise when it says, *"We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us."*

Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32 NIV)

This change comes about as we put our will and life into God's care and receive His healing and guidance. As we do the work of coming to the awareness of truth in Steps 4 and 5 and then let go of the resentments and defects of character that have plagued us for so long, we give God a chance to introduce us to the person He created us to be. God will also make known to us His plan for our life. Whenever we live in the truth of who we really are we experience freedom and that results in us intuitively knowing how to handle situations that used to baffle us.

Be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will. (Romans 12:2b NIV)

As we have heard the truth of God's word and the witness of others who have shared their experience, strength, and hope with us, our own thinking and understanding of life has changed. Every time we give God the opportunity to heal an old wound, we get stronger and our minds get clearer. We have hope that this new way of life will work. We put God's principles into practice and experience the joy of witnessing how trustworthy God is. One situation after another that used to baffle us is now an opportunity to see how good and pleasing and perfectly things work out when we live in God's will.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to walk in the freedom of Your truth. Thank you for the opportunity to live one more day as the person You created me to be and to enjoy being cherished by You as I fulfill the good plan You have for my life. Amen

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Weekend

IN AND OF MYSELF

Trying to be self-reliant and seeking to sort out life on our own took many of us into lifestyles of isolation, addiction, denial, and destructive behaviour. We were never meant to co-dependently rely on others to fix us, but to humbly admit that without God in our lives we are powerless to do anything about our situation and our lives are unmanageable.

I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. (Romans 7:18 NLT)

We were created for life in relationship with God and He has given us His Holy Spirit to empower us to overcome the many temptations that come our way. When we choose to admit our inability to be self-sufficient, we can finally relax and allow God to care for us.

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)

We acknowledge that only a power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity. We admit our character defects and become willing to have God remove them. It is God, not us, who does the removing. We pray to know God's will and to have the power to carry it out. All these steps remind us that we need God and others if we are to go forward and be made whole. We consciously choose not to be self-reliant.

You are tempted in the same way that everyone else is tempted. But God can be trusted not to let you be tempted too much, and he will show you how to escape from your temptations. (1 Corinthians 10:13 CEV)

God will help us find balance today as we put our trust in Him, seek the support of others in the journey, and do the work that is ours to do.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me to fully turn my will and life over to Your care. I want to be faithful to do the work that I need to do and at the same time trust You to do in me the things that You alone can do. Amen

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY DAILY MEDITATIONS



Week 46

Monday

JUST DO THE NEXT RIGHT THING

In our life in recovery daily circumstances may often feel overwhelming and confusing. One way we can overcome our anxiety is by simply telling ourselves to, "Just do the next right thing." This is one way we can keep on track while we figure out what's really going on in our lives.

O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8 NLT)

How can we know what the next right thing is? If we seek God, He will give us directions as we read the scriptures. The Holy Spirit will help us understand what we read and will encourage us to apply what we are being taught to our life situations. Whenever we call out to God and ask for courage to do what is right, He will strengthen and help us.

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. (2 Timothy 3:16 NLT)

Jesus taught us to love God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind, and to love others as ourselves. These are the two principles on which everything else is based. This is a good place to start when we begin our journey with God in recovery.

Let every detail in your lives—words, actions, whatever—be done in the name of the Master, Jesus, thanking God the Father every step of the way. Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. (Colossians 3:17 MSG; Matthew 7:12 NLT)

In a moment of panic or temptation we don't have to figure out what is really going on. We can simply tell ourselves to "do the next right thing". God is with us to help and, as we remind ourselves of this truth, everything will get sorted.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank you for keeping things simple for me. Help me to stay focused on taking positive steps, one step at a time. No matter what is going on in me or around me, help me to "just do the next right thing". Amen