

INTIMACY

When we talk about intimacy, we are usually referring to a close, familiar, protective, loving relationship between two persons. Jesus had this type of relationship with His Father and showed it by choosing to be obedient to Him in all His ways. Jesus often spoke of the works He was doing and said that He was simply doing what the Father had given Him to do. Because of His Father's great love for us, Jesus was willing to set aside His eternal majesty and come to earth to redeem us from our sin.

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. (Philippians 2:5-7 NIV)

Our Heavenly Father desires to have an intimate relationship with us. At one time, in the cool of the evening, humans walked with God in the Garden of Eden. However, the intimate relationship they had with God was severed by their listening to the lies of the evil serpent and then choosing to disobey God's instructions. How many of us have ruined our relationships by listening to the voice of the deceiver and disobeying the commandments of God?

Yes, Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone. (Romans 5:18 NLT)

Our intimate relationship with God is restored when we believe that Jesus took all our sins to the cross and paid the penalty for them. We have been born again into a new life with our Heavenly Father who is extravagant in His love and care for us. As we practice God's principles in all our affairs, we grow to be more like Jesus and obey His command to carry the message to others.

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them. (John 3:36 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please forgive me for my sins and restore me to eternal life so I can have an intimate relationship with You. Please help me to be more like Jesus and set my own agenda aside, so I may obey Your principles and start living life to the full. Amen

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TAKING RESPONSIBILITY – WHO'S TO BLAME

Accepting responsibility for our behaviour is difficult for most of us even in recovery. It seems that when we have sustained past hurts, we have tended to use the pain suffered to excuse our bad behaviour. Because of the injustices that life brought our way, we expected our loved ones and others to tolerate our anger and mood swings. Often, by the time we became adults, the victim role was well established. Unfortunately, we are often comfortable continuing in the same manner until we are challenged by emotional upheaval or a deteriorating lifestyle. Peace and freedom will only be found when we take responsibility for the choices we have made and deal with the consequences that have resulted.

God says to each one of us, ***"Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live! You can make this choice by loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and committing yourself firmly to him. This is the key to your life."*** (Deuteronomy 30:19-20 NLT)

In the Bible we read about King David who, after committing the sins of adultery and murder, took responsibility for his actions and said to the prophet Nathan, ***"I have sinned against the Lord."*** Nathan replied, ***"Yes, but the Lord has forgiven you."*** (2 Samuel 12:13 NLT)

Understanding, as King David did, that the sins we personally have committed, and the ones that have been committed against us, are offences against God will help us come to God and ask for forgiveness and healing. As we humbly accept forgiveness from our Heavenly Father for our own sins, we can then choose to forgive those who have sinned against us. We can then turn all of these people and their offences over to the Lord who is the righteous judge. When we do this, we free ourselves from the destructive power of bitterness. This will be the beginning of a new life of taking responsibility for our own well-being and, in so doing, we will find the peace of mind and heart we are seeking.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I repent of my unwillingness to forgive. Today I choose to forgive those who have harmed me and accept that You are the righteous judge of all things, and I am not. Please come and heal me in the depths of my being and restore me to new life. Amen

LIFE WITH GOD
IN RECOVERY
DAILY MEDITATIONS

Week 42

Monday

PRACTICING AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Practicing an attitude of gratitude – is this just a happy little catchphrase or something to think about one day a year on the Thanksgiving holiday, or is it a way of facing each day that changes our perspective on life?

Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NLT)

As we go forward in recovery there are many battles in our lives that are bigger than we alone can handle. Often our automatic response might be to worry, work, lie, cheat, or scam our way through the circumstances we estimate to be overwhelming. God has a better way. He wants us to remember that we belong to Him, that He has been good to us in the past, and if we trust Him, He will be good to us in each current situation. He will show us a good way forward.

And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19 NIV)

Why give thanks while still facing challenges? That's how we acknowledge the truth that God is our provider and that everything we have comes from Him. That's how we remind and encourage our hearts that God truly is with us and we do not face our problems alone.

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7 NLT)

Believing and acting on the truths contained in God's Word will eliminate fear and produce stability and security in our lives.

Heavenly Father, Thank You for all that You do for me. Thank You for providing my daily needs of food, clothing, and shelter. Thank You for fighting battles on my behalf and helping me stand firm on Your Word. Thank You for giving me clean hands and a pure heart. Thank You for strengthening me to be a person of character and dependability. Thank You for blessing me so I can truly be a blessing to others. Amen

Tuesday

THANKSGIVING – A WAY OF LIFE

Wednesday

CHEERFUL

Thursday

JUST FOR TODAY – I WILL BE UNAFRAID

Just for today I will be unafraid, believing that as I trust in God with all my heart and lean not on my own understanding, He will lead me along a good path.

We were created to live securely by living in the care of God – the God who loves us perfectly, weaknesses and all. We are also called to live confidently in the knowledge that God will never leave us nor forsake us. He will walk beside us directing our way in every circumstance we encounter.

Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. (Joshua 1:9 NLT)

Actions or reactions that we exhibited based on our false belief system are something we now need to accept responsibly for and fearlessly record in our inventory. Instead of living life based on “I think” we need to risk believing what God says in His word. We need to come honestly before God and place ourselves in His care. When we experience God’s love we won’t want to lash out at others or allow our lives to be controlled by fear.

Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in you. (Psalm 56:3 NKJV)

To live without fear we must intentionally choose to believe God and receive the kindness and tenderness He offers us. We must bring every thought captive to Him and allow Him to renew our minds. We must affirm God’s forgiveness for our wrongs and His acceptance of us as His precious children. We must look to Him to give us peace of mind and heart. We must ask Him to give us the will and the power to forgive others and ourselves. We must affirm the truth that God does not condemn those who are in Christ Jesus.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I choose not to lean on my own understanding. When I feel afraid, I will trust in You. I believe that You are good and will lead me along a good path. I will trust that Your Word is true and ask You to give me the will and the power to do those things that please You. I accept that through Jesus I have become Your precious child. Thank You for promising to meet all my needs. Amen

When thanksgiving becomes a way of life rather than a day of celebration on the calendar, life will change for us. This involves seeing all that we “have” rather than what we “have not.” As we do this, we become more aware of God’s presence and care in our lives, and the result is peace and contentment in our hearts.

Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7 NLT)

The truth is, God loves and cares for us and has promised to meet all our needs. However, our day-to-day lives may still have problems and challenges, some of which tend to overwhelm us. How can we give thanks when the world around us seems to be falling apart? There are pressures in relationships, worries about finances, and anxious thoughts about whether we will have enough money for food and rent tomorrow. Life sometimes isn’t what we thought it would be. The furniture is breaking apart. The kitchen is cluttered. The kids are acting up. The laundry is piling up. How are we to give thanks in the middle of all this? What is there to be grateful for?

I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. (Philippians 4:12-13 NLT)

If we will pray and seek His help, God will work for good in amazing ways in all our difficulties. Now that is something we can be thankful for!

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank you that I don’t have to face tough times alone. Thank You for Your unfailing love and care for me. I am grateful that You promise to help me and work all things together for my good. You are a good, good Father. Help me to understand and accept how much I am truly loved by You. Amen

All of us who have weathered the storms of an addictive lifestyle know that our days were filled with trials of one sort or another. Each day required that we meet the need of our dependency from whatever source we were able to do so. We also had to cope with negative thoughts about those who loved us and wanted us to act responsibly towards those who were dependent on us. Our powerlessness over the demands of our life left little space for anything remotely cheerful.

All the days of the oppressed are wretched, but the cheerful heart has a continual feast. (Proverbs 15:15 NIV)

When we decided to turn our will and life over to the care of God things started to change. We were set free from our dependency and enabled by the Holy Spirit, the Power greater than ourselves, to begin the healing process of reconciliation with those we had harmed. Asking God to remove all our shortcomings and making amends to those we have harmed sets us free to seek the will of God for our lives. Through Jesus we found peace, joy, and comfort because God accepted us as His beloved children and promised to meet all our needs from His plentiful resources.

Those who serve Christ in this way are pleasing to God. They are pleasing to people too. (Romans 14:18 NIV)

As we follow God’s principles in all our affairs our hearts will be filled with joy and peace as the hope we have in Jesus floods our whole being. Our cheerful faces will begin to reflect the measure of God’s love within us, and our actions will reveal that God’s love overflows from us to those around us. We will gladly carry the messages to others of what God has done for us, so they too can experience the joy of the Lord.

A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones. (Proverbs 17:22 NIV)

Jesus takes us from a crushed spirit to a cheerful heart. The good medicine of the Word of God enables our spirit to soar like an eagle so we can run and not be weary.

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for bringing me from darkness into Your glorious light and for the joy in my thankful heart that gives me a cheerful face. Amen