

Friday

## MORALS AND VALUES

Is there really a God? Is there really a higher power to whom I can turn over my will and my life and receive in return a life worth living? In our addiction, we lived as though there was no God and we could do whatever we wanted, whenever we wanted. That didn't work too well for us! Trying to find life and recovery without God doesn't work well either. Why not?

Life without God means there are no morals and values—that is, no difference between right and wrong. In our world where lying and cheating seem common, this might seem convenient. However, if there are no morals and values then we cannot condemn any activity that a human chooses to do. That would include acts such as terrorism or child abuse. All of us, and especially those who are victims, know differently. Written into our souls from a power that transcends time and culture, are moral laws given by God.

***There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.*** (Proverbs 14:12 NIV)

Humans were created by God to live a moral life in relationship with Him and with one another, and deep within our souls, we know it. We know when something we say or do is right or wrong. Fortunately, the God who gave us moral principles for life also provides help for us when we fail to live up to them—as we inevitably will.

***If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.*** (1 John 1:8-9 NLT)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to trust You and live a meaningful life based on Your moral principles. Amen***

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Weekend

## GIVING GOD A CHANCE

How do we come to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity? Perhaps we've sat in recovery meetings and heard others share about their journey of coming to believe and we related to some part of their story but wonder how our life might fully relate to it all. In a world where people believe many things—including some who believe there is no god—how do I know there is a power greater than myself? How do I know that God has any interest in restoring me to sanity or even more important, has the ability to do so?

Our questions are valid and welcome. We're not the first to ask them and we won't be the last. Jesus Christ made bold claims about being God and about coming to earth to take the punishment for our sin and brokenness by dying on the cross. People who hung around with Jesus felt hope stirring in them that He was the one they had waited for centuries to see, but some had doubts. On a dark day when one of those people wondered if he had gotten it right, he sent some of his friends to Jesus to ask for confirmation of what he believed.

***"Are you the one we should be looking for? Or must we wait for someone else?" Jesus answered, "Go and tell John what you have heard and seen. The blind are now able to see, and the lame can walk. People with leprosy are being healed, and the deaf can hear. The dead are raised to life, and the poor are hearing the good news. God will bless everyone who doesn't reject me because of what I do."*** (Matthew 11:3-6 CEV)

How do we come to believe? We give God a chance to help us understand things we have been struggling with. We ask for and receive strength from God to take steps we never could before. We open our hearts to experience healing where pain used to overwhelm us. Our belief in God grows as we give God a chance to work in our lives.

***Prayer: Loving God, Give me ears to hear and a mind to understand Your word, and through obedience, see the reality of it in my life. Help me to believe who You say You are, and that You have the power to restore me to sanity. Thank You for giving me hope. Amen***

## LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY DAILY MEDITATIONS



Week 4

Monday

### KNOWING FREEDOM AND A NEW HAPPINESS

In the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous there is a section on making amends and sorting things out with our families. In this section we find a paragraph naming twelve promises we will celebrate *"before we are half-way through."* The first of these promises is, *"We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness."* Are these empty words for just a select few or the experience of just some old-timers of AA? Is there a chance it can be a reality for me?

***Christ has set us free to enjoy our freedom. So remain strong in the faith. Don't let the chains of slavery hold you again.*** (Galatians 5:1 NIRV)

Living in sobriety is hard work after living in a self-centered addictive lifestyle. Working the steps, particularly making amends to those we have harmed and being careful to do so in a way that would not injure them or others, takes courage and care which we are just beginning to develop. We will experience the freedom that gives us hope when we believe God's promise to free us from our bondage.

***The Spirit of the Lord God is on me. The Lord has chosen me to tell good news to the poor and to comfort those who are sad. He sent me to tell the captives and prisoners that they have been set free.*** (Isaiah 61:1 ERV)

God is working in all of us today. Our responsibility is to trust God, do our part, and then relax and enjoy the freedom and happiness we have been given.

***Heavenly Father, Thank you for my sobriety and for freedom to live in a new way of peace and blessing towards others. Help me to stay strong, trusting You to work in my life and in the lives of those I have harmed. In Your love and care may we all find freedom and happiness. Amen***

Hitting bottom is the place we reach in our addiction where we finally admit that we have a problem and that we can't solve it on our own. We come to realize that we are powerless and that our lives have become unmanageable.

For too long we thought everyone else had a problem, or even that we had problems, but they weren't as bad as those of others. However, there comes that point where we can no longer hide from the facts. We realize that we are at a low place and can't see any way out. We know we are unable to carry on with the way things are. At that point, God is waiting for us to come to Him, and He is willing to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

***I waited patiently for the Lord to help me, and he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along.*** (Psalms 40:1-2 NLT)

God not only works on our behalf but also strengthens us and teaches us valuable lessons from the things we have experienced. It's in our lowest moments that we have an opportunity to see how kind and good God really is and that He will give us everything we need to get well one day at a time as we choose to trust Him rather than ourselves. If we will give Him the opportunity to rebuild our lives God promises to give us a new foundation, a solid place to stand. Today is another chance to stand on this solid foundation rather than falling through the floor again and hitting a new bottom.

***Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from Him. Truly He is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I will never be shaken.*** (Psalms 62:1-2 NIV)

*Heavenly Father, Thank you that when I hit bottom You were there ready to embrace me and help me build a new life. It is because of Your unfailing love for me that I can stand strong on a firm foundation. You are my rock and my security. I choose to follow Your ways in all my affairs. Please help me! Amen*

Our pride often keeps us from asking to have our needs met. Perhaps we grew up in a family where we were consistently ignored or disappointed and our personal needs were seldom met. Some of us may have reacted by becoming self-sufficient. We determined we would never ask anyone for help again. However, our plan opposed God's plan for successful living, and our drift into an addictive and destructive lifestyle affirms that.

***My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.*** (2 Corinthians 12:9 NLT)

On our own we are powerless to live life well. When we ask God for help He will strengthen and empower us to make good choices and accomplish things we never thought possible. As we continue to meditate on God's word and follow His principles, life will begin to change. God tells us that those who seek Him will find Him for He is not far from any one of us.

***"I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."*** (Luke 11:9-10 NIV)

One of the countless ways we honour God's life-giving plan is to give others an opportunity to bless us. We will honour someone today if we ask for and receive their advice in solving a problem we need help with. Others may also need the gift of our time and assistance.

When we live in healthy relationships we are able to give and receive the gifts of wisdom and kindness. This is the life that God invites us to and is described in the Bible with these words: ***Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ.*** (Galatians 6:2 NLT)

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for always being available when I seek Your help. As I live in Your care today, help me to be considerate and gracious in how I receive and offer help. Amen*

SHARING WITH HUMILITY AND GRACE

Some people who have no relationship with God will pray when they are in trouble or when they really need help in a time of great distress. Does God hear their prayer? Yes, He does. Will He answer their prayer? Yes, He will. How God answers that prayer is up to God for He knows each person's heart and knows what is best for each of us. God alone knows the end from the beginning. However, when we have given our will and life over to the care of God, we are assured that His eyes always watch over us and His ears are open to all our prayers.

***The Lord watches over everyone who obeys him, and he listens to their prayers. But he opposes everyone who does evil. Ask me, and I will tell you things that you don't know and can't find out.*** (1 Peter 3:12; Jeremiah 33:3 CEV)

We who have accepted Jesus as our Saviour are God's beloved children. Like any good parent, God is aware of His children's needs. The closer we get to our Heavenly Father the more He will speak with us. God's desire is that we grow in wisdom by reading and obeying His word. He gives us His Holy Spirit to help us understand the principles of His Word. He also empowers us to love and care for others as He loves and cares for us.

***But I tell you to love your enemies and pray for anyone who mistreats you. Then you will be acting like your Father in heaven. He makes the sun rise on both good and bad people. And he sends rain for the ones who do right and for the ones who do wrong.*** (Matthew 5:44-45 CEV)

God cares about His creation and each of us is benefiting from His goodness in the world today. Can anyone imagine living in a place without God in it?

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for being aware of all my needs and for making help and guidance available to me every moment of every day. Forgive me for the times I have not bothered to consult with You or have failed to surrender my will and my life to Your care. Today, I choose to surrender my will to You. Please help me walk in Your ways and obey You in all my affairs. Amen*

PRAYER