

LIFE WITH GOD
IN RECOVERY
DAILY MEDITATIONS

Week 9

Monday

CHARACTER STRENGTH:
BEING GENEROUS



Little by little as we walk with God and work the steps, we gain new information about ourselves and how we relate to other people. As we prayerfully review our lives with God, He will reveal where we have caused harm, and when we need to make amends with someone. He will also teach us new ways to live in relationship with Him and others.

I, the Lord, search all hearts and examine secret motives. I give all people their due rewards, according to what their actions deserve. (Jeremiah 17:10 NLT)

It is God who knows our hearts and what we can expect from each person when we are making amends. If we consult Him and listen to what He says, God is willing to share His wisdom and good plans with us

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)

God invites us to live in honesty, courage, accountability, and forgiveness as we admit our mistakes, forgive those who have harmed us, and compassionately work out a plan for making necessary amends.

It is always the right time to be willing to see what God sees and agree with Him about making things right. However, it takes much prayer and the wisdom of God to know when to involve a person who has been injured.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to be willing to face how I have harmed others and be available to make things right with them in the way and time that You know is best for all of us. Help me to learn from my mistakes and be more considerate of others. Amen

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We lost our way. That's an obvious fact. We fell into an addictive and destructive lifestyle. We hid in dark and isolated places. Sometimes that was in dark corners and streets, but even if it was under bright lights, we were still lost in the dark places in our minds and hearts. We were lost in this darkness and powerless to find a way to the light. Who can show us the way out of darkness into the light? Jesus says He is the Light and if we follow Him, we won't have to walk in darkness but will have the Light that gives life.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life!" Jesus answered. "Without me, no one can go to the Father. I am the light for the world! Follow me, and you won't be walking in the dark. You will have the light that gives life." (John 14:6, John 8:12b CEV)

Darkness is not a thing of itself. Darkness is the absence of light. In pioneer days people lit a candle, put a glass orb around it, and the light spread out across the room. When we invite God to come and live in us, He is the light in us that reflects brightness to everyone around us. As others see us living in the light of God's love, they will be drawn to that light. Darkness in our hearts and in our circumstances must give way to the light of Christ.

in recovery we can find a new way to live by reading the Bible and seeing how Jesus lived and then follow His example. God's Holy Spirit will give us the power we need to live in this way. Jesus gives light and life on our journey, and He will get us to our destination.

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)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for seeing me when I was lost in darkness and for sending Jesus who is the light that shows me the way to You. I surrender myself to You and choose to follow You plan for my life. I ask for the empowering of Your Holy Spirit to do Your will so I may bring light into the darkness of those around me. Amen

God wants us to be responsible and generous with all He has given us – time, abilities, money, possessions. God wants us to ask for wisdom and seek His will in how we use the resources we have been given. He promises to guide and bless us as we do.

Remember this: The one who plants few seeds will have a small harvest. But the one who plants a lot will have a big harvest. Each one of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give. You should not give if it makes you unhappy or if you feel forced to give. God loves those who are happy to give. And God can give you more blessings than you need, and you will always have plenty of everything. You will have enough to give to every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:6-8 ERV)

Farmers know they need to provide for their families from the crops they grow. They also need to retain enough seed to plant for a new harvest. God wants us to be responsibly generous and promises to give us all we need so we can share with others.

God also expects us to do some planning around what we have and not just do whatever we feel like doing in the moment. When we become aware of a need, we should ask God what our part might be in meeting that need, and then obey what God says. As we give to God and to others, God promises that we will receive back what we have given, abundantly multiplied.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for providing what I need for this day and for Your promise to continually meet my needs. I prayfully ask You to direct me to where I can share those things You have given me with others. Amen

People with discernment usually do the right thing in each situation that arises. Spiritually discerning people, based on their knowledge of God and His ways, have the capacity to separate and sift what is good from what is best.

When humans were created, we were meant to live forever in relationship with God. God graciously gave humans free will to choose to love and obey Him. Even though humans made a choice to disobey God and their relationship with Him was cut off, eternity remains in the human heart where it was planted when we were created.

God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end. (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NLT)

Many humans continue to function in this world as though they will live forever. They don't consult God with regards to what is best for them and end up suffering painful consequences for the unhealthy choices they make. The truth is, without God's wisdom, none of us know how to live purposefully in this life or what will happen to us in the next. What are we to do?

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16 NIV)

When we surrender our lives to Jesus Christ, God's Holy Spirit comes to live in us, and He teaches us the truth about life that we could never know on our own. It is this truth that results in us "having discernment." It is more than our conscience speaking to us, or "trusting our gut." This is God revealing truth to us, so we can live well.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that You are the only wise God. Teach me Your ways so I may discern and choose what is the best path for my life. Amen

DISCERNMENT

God wants us to live in victory over temptation. He promises that in every situation this is possible. For those of us who have struggled with addiction and relapsed numerous times, that's incredibly good news.

One of the best ways to overcome temptation is to stay as far away from what tempts us as we possibly can. How do we do that? Here are some practical guides:

- Realize that temptation will be an ongoing issue in life, not a one-time issue. **God's name is a place of protection. -- Good people can run there and be safe.** (Proverbs 18:10 MSG)
- Read the Bible and faithfully apply the truths we learn. **I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.** (Psalm 119:11 NLT)
- Pray and ask God to keep us conscious of what is helpful or what is harmful. **Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing but the body is weak** (Matthew 26:41 NLT)
- Avoid places, people, and actions that invoke tempting thoughts. **Stay away from every kind of evil. Avoid worthless, foolish talk that only leads to more godless behavior.** (1 Thessalonians 5:22, 2 Timothy 2:16 NLT)
- Be practical in everyday living. We need to make reasonable plans and live in the discipline of each plan. Empty and unstructured time can easily make us vulnerable to temptation. **So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do.** (Ephesians 5:15-17 NLT)

Prayer: Gracious God, I admit that I am weak and ask You to strengthen me by the power of Your Holy Spirit to overcome temptation. Give me the will and the desire to do what pleases You. Amen

AVOIDING TEMPTATION

As we hear Tradition 2 read in each AA meeting, we are reminded that, "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority -- a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern." This principle invites all of us to share and do our part in the group.

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but they all come from the same Spirit. There are different ways to serve the same Lord, and we can each do different things. Yet the same God works in all of us and helps us in everything we do. (1 Corinthians 12:4-6 CEV)

God's plan has always been for us to live in relationship with Him, loving Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and then loving our neighbour as ourselves. This love recognizes the gifts that God gives each person, and our need for one another, so we can be complete. Nothing seems less perfect than a jigsaw puzzle of a beautiful scene missing a few pieces when it is put together. We need to enjoy one another and do our part in what we have planned together.

A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. That's how it is with us. There are many of us, but we each are part of the body of Christ, as well as part of one another. (Romans 12:4-5 CEV)

Thank God we can let go of the pressure of having all the answers, being right all the time, or always being in control. Without fear, we can confidently bring our perspective and our service, because God knows how to fit all the pieces together to accomplish His good plan.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have called us to serve You and one another in love. Thank You for the many different gifts each of us has been given. Help me to humbly offer my service to others with the gifts You have given me and welcome the gifts and service others bring. Together may we give full expression of all You have planned for us to do. Amen

TRUSTED SERVANTS and
ULTIMATE AUTHORITY