

Friday

## HAPPY NEW YEAR--REALLY???

Happy New Year! Really? Some of us may have woken up this morning to the fact that our lives are unmanageable and that we are powerless over our addictive behaviour. We may have been seeking happiness in a dysfunctional lifestyle and have caused ourselves and others a lot of pain by our behaviour. We also could be facing the consequences of overspending, overeating, or unfortunate words or actions said and done at gatherings during the holiday season. As we begin this second day of this new year, the future doesn't look all that happy and hopeful.

Despite all that, God continues to offer us the opportunity to turn over a new page and begin again. As we give our will and our life over to His care, one day at a time, one moment at a time, God promises to heal us and give us a life that is truly satisfying.

***The Lord says, "I will rescue those who love me. I will protect those who trust in my name. When they call on me, I will answer; I will be with them in trouble. I will rescue and honor them. I will reward them with a long life and give them my salvation."*** (Psalm 91:14-16 NLT)

Are we making room for God in our hearts today? We don't know what this year will bring, but God does. God knows the difficult moments we will encounter and the temptations we will face. He promises to guide us safely through every circumstance.

***Prayer: Dear God, I admit that without You my life is unmanageable. Please give me the wisdom and strength to leave my destructive, addictive behaviour behind and bless me with a new life. I believe that Your strength will help me overcome my weaknesses. Amen***

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Weekend

## BUILDING UP OUR SELF-ESTEEM

Low self-esteem is a negative sense of one's worth or ability to cope or do well in life. There's plenty of literature that links substance abuse with low self-esteem. The truth is substance abuse doesn't solve this problem but only adds to it in a very major way. What does God, the one who made us and who planned a meaningful and satisfying life for us, have to say about our self-worth?

***God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. You are precious to me. You are honored, and I love you. "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.*** (Genesis 1:27, Isaiah 43:4b, Jeremiah 29:11, Philippians 4:13 NLT)

The devil loves to tell us lies when we don't feel good about ourselves, our circumstances, or our future. He tells us we're defective and we need something to make us fit in, be accepted, or help us feel better. God's view is different and His perspective of us is the ONLY correct one. We all have strengths and weaknesses. We don't need to fear our weaknesses or try to hide them just because they are different from someone else's. God's promise is that when we feel weak, His power will strengthen us.

God says: ***My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me.*** (2 Corinthians 12:9 NLT)

We are who God says we are. We have a wonderful future because God says we do. We can get through whatever difficulty we may face because God promises to help us and make a way where there seems to be no way.

***Prayer: Loving God, help me to live today in the joy of being the person You created me to be, trusting that You are with me and providing everything I need to live in the comfort of Your love and the honour of being Your precious child. Amen***

## LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY DAILY MEDITATIONS



Week I

Monday

### STANDING FIRM

As we come to the end of another year and watch news reports which review the events of the past year, we realize how quickly some things change and yet how slowly other things seem to leave. What do we do with all that has gone on in recent times and how do we safely make the move into the new year?

This is a time to remember that God is in control and will fulfill His purposes. When we seek God's help in our personal challenges, we are assured that He will help us and bring about those things He has promised. Even when people think they have failed to live up to the potential God has for them, God remains unwavering in His plans, and He will work out His purpose for those who commit their will and life into His care.

***For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. The Lord foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.*** (Psalm 33:9-11 NIV)

We must continue to have faith in God's ultimate control if we are to find peace in this fragile and sometimes frightening world. The invitation to us in this week between Christmas and the New Year is to reaffirm our trust in God's promises and His ability to bring about His purposes no matter how chaotic things may appear.

***Prayer: Lord Jesus, You truly are the Prince of Peace. During this "in between time", come and live in me and strengthen me to follow Your Principles in all my ways. Amen***

KNOWING GOD'S WILL FOR OUR LIVES

In Step-11 we commit through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God. We pray for knowledge of His will for our lives and the power to carry it out. Christmas is a time when we think of the plan that God had for Jesus when He came into this world as a human baby. About eight hundred years before Jesus was born the prophet Isaiah spoke of a sign regarding His birth.

Jesus came at God's appointed time and angels announced His arrival to shepherds in the fields. We read in the Bible of many amazing things that God did to protect Jesus from those who wanted to cause Him harm. When we believe in Jesus, whom God sent into the world, God will protect us from any evil that might be planned against us. Jesus spoke often of His Father's love and care for those who accept Him and obey the Scriptures.

*Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them.* (John 14:21 NLT)

For more than two thousand years people have celebrated God's plan of salvation that was fulfilled through Jesus. Through prayer and meditation on God's Word we can know God's plan for our lives. God does not ask us to fulfill His plan on our own, He gives us the Holy Spirit to help us. Jesus said if we want to be His disciples, we must deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow Him.

*Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it."* (Matthew 16:24-25 NLT)

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for Jesus who came to earth to fulfill Your plan of redemption for mankind. Please show me Your will for my life and strengthen me by the Power of Your Holy Spirit to carry it out. Amen*

THE END AND THE BEGINNING

In just a few hours the new calendar year will begin. After a challenging year, on what basis do we hope to have a better year? Often, we feel overwhelmed at the start of a new year because we have so much stuff to wade through, so many unanswered questions in our minds, and so many painful things in our hearts. If we have come and gone from recovery in the past year, we might be concerned about our future ability to maintain sobriety for any length of time.

God's answer is very positive, very simple and very direct. It comes in the form of an invitation: *Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed and get a new heart and a new spirit.* (Ezekiel 18:30b-31 NIV)

As we wait for the countdown to this new year, it's worth remembering that God has promised us a new heart and a new spirit if we turn our will and our life over to His care. If we choose to do so we will come into this new year as a new person.

*Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion* (2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT, Philippians 1:6b NIV)

This coming year is a fresh opportunity to go deeper in our experience of coming to believe that a Power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity. We can't fix ourselves, but God can. This is our New Year's hope.

*Prayer: Loving God, As I enter this New Year, I choose to commit myself to You. I repent of my past sins and lay down my fears and resentments. I receive Your forgiveness, Your comfort, and Your healing. I trust and have confidence in Your assurance that You will complete the good work You have begun in me. Amen*

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Happy New Year! The start of a new year is when many people have a desire to change their lifestyle. Some of us make New Years Resolutions to achieve our goal of a better life. We make commitments to personal ideals and projects and to abandon unhealthy habits. The only problem with attempting change through New Years resolutions is that success is based on self-will. Statistics tell us that after just 9 days there is a 75% failure rate in keeping New Years resolutions.

If we think the statistics on New Years resolutions are bad news, what about the statistic that tells us that 100% of people fail to live life according to God's righteous laws? As we look at statistics like these, what hope can we have for a new year that is different from the past?

*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord. He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies. He fills my life with good things.* (Romans 6:23, Psalm 103:3-5a NLT)

This is the first day of a new year and we are longing for a new beginning. If we choose to wholeheartedly surrender our will and our life into God's care, the Holy Spirit will come to live in our hearts and we can be confident that what God has begun He will complete and this will be our best year yet.

*Prayer: Loving God, on this New Year's Day I choose to surrender my will and my life to Your care. Forgive me for the wrongs I have done. Heal me from all that is broken and painful in my heart. Help me to live one day at a time in Your peace and blessing. Amen*