

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY DAILY MEDITATIONS



Week 12

Monday

SHARING HEART TO HEART

It is God's desire that we walk securely in the conscious awareness of His great love and care for us. In the past, we didn't know or even care about God. Our self-willed, self-directed way of life in destructive addiction created chaos for us. God's invitation to us is that we come and enter into a deeply satisfying relationship with Him.

How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand! And when I wake up, you are still with me! (Psalm 139:17-18 NLT)

There is no better friend and companion than God. God's heart is always turned towards us. He pays attention to what is going on in our lives and cares about how circumstances impact us. We don't have to wait until our thoughts are 'tidied up' before God will listen to us. We can just pour out what is going on in our hearts and ask Him to help us sort it all out. God always has our best interest at heart. He knows better than us what we need. If we seek God in all our ways, He will help us.

I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. (Jeremiah 31:3, 1 Peter 5:7 NIV)

Today, let's give God thanks for His faithful love for us and enter more deeply into a heart-to-heart relationship with Him.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, My desire is to live in conscious contact with You, to know Your will for my life, and have the power to carry it out. Please direct my steps in all I undertake to do. Amen

Tuesday

PROMPTLY DEALING WITH WHAT IS WRONG

Step 10 of the 12-Step program encourages us to stay on track in our recovery with the following words: *"We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it."* This means we regularly schedule time to monitor our thoughts, actions, and communication with others. Where we recognize old behaviours or thought patterns creeping in, we promptly admit it and seek to put things right.

Therefore, he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. (Hebrews 7:25; 2 Corinthians 9:8 NIV)

When we repent of our sin and give our will and life over to the care of God we are considered "justified". This means that our sins are cleansed by the blood of Jesus and we are "just as if we had never sinned." What comes next is "sanctification", which requires us to let go of our sinful ways and follow God's ways. If we are not vigilant in this, as Step 10 teaches, we may easily slip back into our old sinful habits and relapse.

So be careful. When you think you are standing firm, you might fall. Then I admitted my sin to you. I didn't cover up the wrong I had done. I said, "I will admit my lawless acts to the Lord." And you forgave the guilt of my sin. (1 Corinthians 10:12; Psalm 32:5 NIRV)

When we do wrong, we need to be honest with God, ourselves, and others and try not to rationalize our behaviour. Taking personal inventory and promptly dealing with our wrongs will enable us to keep on the path of recovery. If we ask God for help in any area we are battling, He promises He will help us.

Prayer: Loving God, When I examine my ways and see the wrongs I have done, please help me to humble myself and seek Your forgiveness. My desire is to follow You in all my ways. Please help me! Amen

Wednesday

CARRYING THE MESSAGE BY ACTING WISELY

The book of Proverbs in the Bible, is a collection of wise sayings we do well to learn and put into practice. Chapter 11 in this book has 31 sayings that cover a wide range of topics that contrast, right and wrong, and good and evil. They address characteristics such as honesty, pride, gossip, keeping secrets, being kind, family relationships, and our use of money. Many of these sayings have promises attached to them such as:

If you do the right thing, honesty will be your guide. But if you are crooked, you will be trapped by your own dishonesty. Dishonest people use gossip to destroy their neighbors; good people are protected by their own good sense. Kindness is rewarded—but if you are cruel, you hurt yourself. Try hard to do right, and you will win friends; go looking for trouble, and you will find it. (Proverbs 11:3, 9, 17, 27 CEV)

These are all helpful descriptions of behavioural choices we make and the positive or negative results that come from our actions. Near the end of Proverbs 11 is a sentence that encourages us to live right, and as we do, we will find the life we long for and be a positive influence on others as well.

Live right, and you will eat from the life-giving tree. And if you act wisely, others will follow. (Proverbs 11:30 CEV)

We talk about 'carrying the message' and sharing our 'experience, strength, and hope' with others. While it is important to attend meetings and share our story, the wise sayings in Proverbs suggest that a powerful way to 'carry the message' is to live right and follow God's principles. This is certainly a way to embrace the "attraction rather than promotion" principle.

Prayer: Loving God, help me to carry the message well today by practicing Your principles in all my affairs. Help me to live with honesty, kindness, and transparency before You and others, praying only for knowledge of Your will for my life and the power to carry it out. Amen

Thursday

THOUGHTS THAT PARALYZE

How are we to live without paralyzing fear in an unsafe world? God teaches us to distinguish between damaging fear and sober precaution. Fear paralyzes our actions. Precaution helps us take safe steps to avoid mistakes. A cautious person thinks clearly but may take reasonable risks. When real danger exists, they will choose a different path. God knows that we will face troubles in life and invites us to call on Him so we can experience His help in our time of need.

Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty. 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 91:1, 14-16 NLT)

When we believe that God's power is greater than any evil that could come our way, we can live with confidence, hope, and optimism. We can face disappointment, failure, and even disaster with soul-settling faith. As we open ourselves to God's truth, we are assured that regardless of our circumstances, God is working everything together for our good. Our faith will grow stronger as we observe the positive results of our obedience to God's guidance.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take. (Proverbs 3:5-6 NLT)

The test of faith always comes when life stops making sense. Our trust must be in God even when we don't understand everything we are experiencing. God tells us He is our refuge and strength in times of trouble, and we are not to fear for He is always with us.

Prayer: Gracious God, When trouble comes my way and paralyzes my ability to think clearly, help me to first seek You for comfort and help. I am so grateful that when I ask, You will show me Your will in all that I encounter. You truly are an amazing God in whom I can put my trust. Amen

Friday

THANKS TO GOD FOR MY LIFE AND MY RECOVERY

Each day in recovery is an opportunity to learn something new. Today we are invited to celebrate and give thanks for those things God has done for us.

Let me tell you what God did for me. I called out to him with my mouth. If I had been cozy with evil, the Lord would never have listened. But he most surely did listen, he came on the double when he heard my prayer. (Psalm 66:16b,17a, 19 MSG)

Sometimes winter months seem long and hard and there are times in recovery when our journey seems long and hard as well. At moments like these it is good to pause and reflect on how different things are now compared to when we were struggling in the pit of our addiction.

At the core of our recovery journey is the God who was there for us when we recognized our powerlessness and admitted that our life was unmanageable. He listened to us and, as the Bible quote above says, "***came on the double when he heard my prayer.***" God didn't just help us take that first step, He stayed with us on the road and kept us out of the ditch when it was extremely hard for us to hang on and keep going.

Bless our God, O peoples! Give him a thunderous welcome! Didn't he set us on the road to life? Didn't he keep us out of the ditch? (Psalm 66:8-9 MSG)

Wherever we share, at a meeting or perhaps just in a conversation on our phone, let's share with gratitude about this Living God who set us on the road to life.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for being there for me when I couldn't even be there for myself. Thank You for making a way for me to find forgiveness and healing and life when I prayed to You for it. Today, I reaffirm my trust in Jesus, who has done for me on the cross what I could not do for myself. Today I thank You for my life and my recovery. Amen

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Weekend

WHITE KNUCKLING

We usually say an individual is "white knuckling" when they are just using willpower to stay sober. They have stopped drinking or using but have not dealt with the underlying issues related to their addiction. They are hanging on desperately and very much at risk of relapsing because they experience life away from their substance of choice as something to be endured. They are not staying sober to benefit themselves. They feel imprisoned rather than having a life and are filled with anger and resentment. This is not the life in recovery that God wants for us.

I am the Lord All-Powerful. So don't depend on your own power or strength, but on my Spirit. (Zechariah 4:6)

When we begin to feel worried and anxious about our sobriety it's time to look again to God who knows us better than we know ourselves. As we read the Bible, God will teach us those things we need to know and will help us practice His principles in all our affairs. We need to listen to others share their experience, strength, and hope, and perhaps learn from them. If we seek God, He will help us identify the source of our pain and, through Jesus, we can receive healing and forgiveness for any issues that are exposed.

You are my strength; I wait for you to rescue me, for you, O God, are my fortress. In his unfailing love, my God will stand with me. He will let me look down in triumph on all my enemies. (Psalm 59:9-10 NLT)

We can't "fight our demons" on our own but when we ask our all-powerful God to help us, He will give us the needed power to do so.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, When I am feeling frustration and pain, I pray for the willingness to reach out to You for strength, and healing. Help me to surrender every area where I stubbornly "white knuckle" through problem situations. Please guide me to a place of peace and stability. I put my trust in You. Help me to trust You more. Amen