

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations



AUGUST 2025



These meditations are available online
for computer, tablets, and smart phones
at:

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*Partners in Hope Recovery Society
is a Christian community
outreach organization
offering hope, support, and healing
through Jesus Christ
to victims of
harmful circumstances and dependencies,
as they reclaim the gift of their life.*

For more recovery resources
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JUST FOR TODAY

Just for today I will try to live in conscious contact with God praying only for knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out.

Just for today I will strengthen my mind. I will take a few minutes to read and meditate on God's word, seeking God's perspective for my life today. I will take note of one helpful thing God is saying to me and seek to behave accordingly.

Just for today I will be joyful, optimistic, and grateful. I will take time to notice the gifts in me, in others, and in my surroundings and let the rest go.

Just for today I will adjust myself to what is and not try to adjust everything else to my desires. I will trust that God is working all things for good in my life.

Just for today I will be agreeable. I will not criticize, not find fault, and not try to improve or control anybody except myself. I will pray blessing on one person with whom I struggle to relate.

Just for today I will have a quiet half hour all by myself to relax and enjoy all that God is giving me.

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.

Just for today I will seek to serve others with kindness, doing what is right, and walking humbly with God.

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. Ephesians 2:10 NLT

SOME AREAS OF ADDICTION AND DEPENDENCY

For a variety of reasons, many of us have an underlying structure of disorder that is damaging us and others. We invite God to show us the truth about ourselves so we can personally receive God's forgiveness to set us free and healing to make us strong.

SUBSTANCE ADDICTIONS:	BEHAVIOUR ADDICTIONS:
Alcohol Caffeine Injected or smoked substances such as: Crack, Crystal Meth, Heroin Marijuana Prescription Medications Sugar Tobacco	Anger/Rage/Bullying Cutting Crime Eating Disorders: Bulimia, Anorexia, Binging, Obesity Gambling Hoarding Sex/Pornography Verbal Abuse: Gossip, Lying, Accusing Blaming, Condemning Violence (physical, verbal, cyber)
SOFT ADDICTIONS:	RELATIONSHIP ADDICTIONS:
Digital Use: (Time or Content) TV/Phone/Tablet; video games, Social Networking; Cyber-bullying; Online shopping; Gambling, Pornography Exercise Food (See Eating Disorders) Isolating/Sleep Money: Debt/Fraud Religion Shopping Sports Work/Achievement	Abusive Relationships: Includes: Intimidation, Isolation, Domination, Blaming, Humiliation, Withholding, Forcing acts against one's will Approval dependency Attention Seeking Codependence/Rescuing Power/Control

PRAYER: FOR HEALING AND RESTORATION

Loving God, Thank You for rescuing us from the dark power of Satan and bringing us into loving relationship with Your Son, Jesus. We ask for wisdom and understanding from Your Spirit in order to live as people who honour You. Heal us. Make us new. Make us strong followers of Christ. Root us deeply in Your love. We place our trust in Your power that can do far more in us than we dare ask or imagine. Amen.



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How To Enjoy New Life With God In Recovery

God created us to have a wonderful life. In love, God planned for us and carefully put us together. God has always been calling out to us to enter into a relationship of love with Him. He doesn't force us but He invites us. Many of us have learned what a painful and confusing wreck our lives become when we try to live independently from God. Today is a good day to begin to live the full and rich life God intended for us. Nothing in our past can keep us from this life, if we want it and choose for it.

The 12-Steps remind us that our lives are unmanageable without the loving care of God and that we can get to know and come to believe that He is a power greater than ourselves. As we turn our will and our lives over to God's care, we find a solid foundation upon which to build a new life.

When we confess our sin and brokenness to God, repent and turn towards God, He gives us new life. When we invite God to come into our lives we find that He is ready and waiting for us. A simple prayer like the following, offered sincerely, establishes this new relationship with God that will last forever.

God, my life is unmanageable without you. You created me to live in relationship with you. There really is no good way to live on my own. Forgive me for not including you. I turn from my independent ways and surrender my will and my life to you. Thank you Jesus for dying on the cross for my sins and making a way for me to have new life and be filled up with Your Holy Spirit. Come into my heart and wash me clean. Teach me to do your will. Transform my way of thinking. Strengthen me to obey You in all I do. Amen

If you prayed that prayer sincerely from your heart, God forgives you and receives you. God makes you His son or daughter. God wants to show you how to live well and give you strength to do that every day. We would love to provide you with some information to support you as you move forward in your journey with God. Please contact us. You'll find our contact information on the front cover of this booklet.

WE ARE TRULY BLESSED

As we come before the Lord, either alone or together with others, is our mind focused on praising God for all He has done for us? God sought us when we were in the pit of our destructive lifestyle and brought us to a place where we were willing to receive new life through Jesus. We then began to live out the plan God had for our lives. God knew us before we were born and watched us as we made the mistake of trying to live life on our own terms. What a blessing when we could finally say to God, "Take my will and my life and make them conform to the plans You have for me." Now we have a Heavenly Father who cares for us and an inheritance in heaven that is beyond the reach of change or decay.

Praise the Lord and pray in his name! Tell everyone what he has done. Sing praises to the Lord! Tell about his miracles. Celebrate and worship his holy name with all your heart. Trust the Lord and his mighty power. Remember his miracles and all his wonders and his fair decisions. The Lord is our God, bringing justice everywhere on earth. He will never forget his agreement or his promises, not in thousands of years. (Psalm 105:1-5, 7-8 CEV)

The way we lived previously brought us to a place where we were powerless over our dependencies and our life was totally unmanageable. Now we can celebrate the gift of eternal life because Jesus defeated death when He was resurrected from the dead. God has given those who believe in Jesus' finished work the priceless gift of life with Him forevermore. In this world we have God's mighty power working all things together for our good as He fulfills His promises to each one of us. With God in our lives, we are truly blessed.

God is so good, and by raising Jesus from death, he has given us new life and a hope that lives on. God has something stored up for you in heaven, where it will never decay or be ruined or disappear. (1 Peter 1:3b-4 CEV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for the inheritance I have as Your precious child. I am forever grateful that You gave me a new life and that with You I am truly blessed, both in this world and in the one to come. Thank You for all that You have done and continue to do for me. Amen`

What a blessing when we could finally say to God, "Take my will and my life and make them conform to the plans You have for me."

ADMITTED TO OURSELVES

It is often difficult to admit to ourselves the exact nature of the wrongs we have done. We may believe that our actions were in response to the hurt others inflicted on us or the result of our wanting to be accepted by our peers. Whatever caused us to bring harm to ourselves and others and brought us to this place where our lives are unmanageable, these are the things that God wants us to bring into the light so that we may be forgiven and restored to new life.

Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed. (Hebrews 12:12-13 NKJV)

If we ask God to show us the root cause of our actions, He will expose those things that keep us in bondage to our former ways.

Through Jesus, God has made a way for us to be forgiven for all our sins. God wants us to be healed and set free from all the hurts we have endured and from those things that caused us to harm others. Are we willing to receive from God all He wants to give us?

As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation. (2 Corinthians 6:1-2 NIV)

We are often challenged to understand our own behaviour but if we ask God to show us the root cause of our actions, He will expose those things that keep us in bondage to our former ways.

He does what is right for those who have been hurt. He gives food to the hungry. The Lord frees people locked up in prison. The Lord makes the blind see again. The Lord helps those who are in trouble. The Lord loves those who do right. (Psalm 145:7-8 ERV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that I struggle to admit even to myself the hurt I have caused others. Please help me to see beyond my actions and give me understanding of the underlying root that caused me to rebel against Your ways and in doing so harm others. Amen

OVERCOMING SHAME RESULTING FROM THE WRONGS OF OTHERS

We are not defective and dirty because someone else sinned against us while under the power of the evil one. Satan, however, endeavours to keep us in bondage to the abusive act we experienced, and the feelings of hopelessness associated with it. God's plan for our restoration is based on the truth of who He says we are.

God says we are precious in His sight. Through Jesus, God has provided a way for us to live a blessed and joy filled life. The power of another's abuse is not stronger than the power of God's love.

Let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. God has said: ***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!*** (Hebrews 10:22, 2 Corinthians 12:9 NLT)

God calls us to overcome shame by living in community with Him and with others. When we want to run away because we feel threatened, our best choice is to stay. Shame may block us from talking with a trustworthy individual about the things in our past but the only way to find real freedom is to get it all out. Wise counsellors will help us understand who is responsible for what took place in our past and give us advice on how to speak the truth to ourselves.

Believing and speaking the truth helps us live in freedom. It is not easy to let go of powerful lies that have hindered our well-being in the past, but God will help us and give us the power to do so.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I give thanks that You created me for a life of loving relationship with You and with others. When I feel like running or isolating because of the shame I feel, please strengthen me to remain in community with You and with other healthy people with whom I can be honest about my abusive past. Amen

God calls us to overcome shame by living in community with Him and with others.

TREATING GOD'S POWER WITH RESPECT

In some translations of the Bible, we are told we are blessed if we *fear* the Lord and that the *fear* of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The following version of Psalm 128 explains that blessings will be on all who reverence, trust, and obey the Lord. That is exactly what *fear* of the Lord means. It means to reverence God by trusting and obeying His Word in all our affairs and allowing Him to bless us as He has promised to do.

Blessings on all who reverence and trust the Lord—on all who obey him! Their reward shall be prosperity and happiness. That is God's reward to those who reverence and trust him. May the Lord continually bless you with heaven's blessings as well as with human joys. (Psalm 128:1-2; 5 TLB)

**God's
Power is
awesome
to save us
from sin
but, if we
fail to
reverence
and follow
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God blesses and gives peace to those who know they are His and that He is working all things together for their good. This does not mean that we will experience a problem-free life. The apostle Paul, whose goal was to share the message of Jesus Christ crucified for the sins of the whole world, suffered greatly at the hands of those who opposed him for telling others of this good news. Paul's concern was for the blessing of people around him who were hurting, and not for himself.

Who makes a mistake and I do not feel his sadness? Who falls without my longing to help him? Who is spiritually hurt without my fury rising against the one who hurt him? (2 Corinthians 11:29 TLB)

Electricity is a wonderful power which blesses us with light and heat etc. However, it needs to be treated with respect and fear. An electrician learns to handle the power of electricity by following strict rules. If strict rules were not obeyed by the electrician, it would put his or her life in danger.

God's Power is awesome to save us from sin but, if we fail to reverence and follow God's laws, our lives will be in danger. If we choose to trust and obey God's principles in all we do, God will bless us beyond all we could hope for or imagine. We will truly be blessed so we can be a blessing.

Prayer: Gracious God, My desire is to reverence You in all my ways. Please help me to obey Your principles in all my affairs so I may be blessed to be a blessing to others. Amen

REJOICING IN OUR MAKER

In many Psalms from the Bible, we are invited to "Praise the Lord." Because of our background, praising the Lord may be something we are not familiar with. However, today's Psalm is inviting us to do just that and to sing a new song.

Praise the Lord. Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of his faithful people. Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the people of Zion be glad in their King. Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with timbrel and harp. For the Lord takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with victory. Let his faithful people rejoice in this honor and sing for joy on their beds. (Psalm 149:1-5 NIV)

This Psalm is inviting us to rejoice in our maker. For various reasons we may not have been happy with the God who made us or were even aware that He existed. In our addiction we never recognized any good in ourselves or in others. In our confused mind we never would have considered that someone truly loved or cared about us.

Perhaps something we may have done aroused anger in another person who responded by telling us that we were worthless human beings. We believed that lie and projected that God and others saw us the same way. This is not what God says about us, or how He sees us. In the above Psalm we read that, ***"the Lord takes delight in his people."*** When we put our hope and trust in the unfailing love of God, we become His precious children, and our Heavenly Father rejoices over us.

God planned the time and place of each person's birth, and He created us for a purpose. God's plan for us has never changed and being in a recovery program is a great time to find out what that plan is. As we choose to daily turn our will and life over to God's care, we will experience His goodness and mercy filling each day. Our sanity will be restored, and we will sing songs of joy on our beds at night rejoicing in all that God has done for us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please give me the gift of Joy that I may praise You from the depths of my being, even with music and dancing. I want to know You more and experience Your delight in me and in the praise that I bring You. Amen

***When we put
our hope and
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over us.***

DISCRETION

When someone shares their life story with us, we are not always the best judge of what needs to be held in confidence or what can be disclosed. Things that are shared in confidence need to be kept close to our hearts and only shared with our Heavenly Father as we pray for the person who shared with us. Some things are required to be disclosed to the appropriate authorities, particularly if a person's life is in danger. When a friend shares their character defects with us, though they may not have specifically stated that they are sharing in confidence, we should use our discretion and keep that information to ourselves, leaving it up to our friend to disclose their shortcomings with whom they choose to.

Discretion is a life-giving fountain to those who possess it, but discipline is wasted on fools. From a wise mind comes wise speech; the words of the wise are persuasive. (Proverbs 16:22-23 ERV)

***To be kind
to our
neighbour,
we need to
be discreet
in the way
we speak
about
others.***

We have not always behaved wisely with what we shared about others. Often, we threw discretion to the wind so we could feed our own pride as "someone in the know." Sometimes when asked about a person, we are ready to set aside sound judgment and make known things which we would probably not disclose if that person was present.

Who may worship in your sanctuary, Lord? Who may enter your presence on your holy hill? Those who lead blameless lives and do what is right, speaking the truth from sincere hearts. Those who refuse to gossip or harm their neighbors or speak evil of their friends. (Psalms 15:1-3 NLT)

We need to ask ourselves what our motivation is when we share things that we ought not to. We need to think about the consequences of our actions and the harm we may cause. To be kind to our neighbour, we need to be discreet in the way we speak about others.

Lord, guard my mouth. Keep watch over the door of my lips. (Psalm 141:3 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I ask You to help me have discretion in sharing what I know about others. Forgive me for the harm I may have caused through my thoughtlessness. Help me to be more like Jesus whose words give life. Amen

OUR LIFE IS SHAPED BY OUR THOUGHTS

We all know that our thoughts and emotions affect our health. Negative thinking leads to stress, which is the root cause of many of our physical illnesses. There is so much research available on this topic that we just cannot deny it. Long before science proved it, God's word pointed us to this truth.

Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts. (Proverbs 3:23 GNT)

One of the smartest ways to let God change the way we think is to obey His principles in all that we are doing. We also need to ask Him to remove from us those thoughts that are negative so that we can focus on those things that give us Life.

Never say anything that isn't true. Have nothing to do with lies and misleading words. Fill your minds with those things that are good and that deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and honorable. (Proverbs 4:24, Philippians 4:8 GNT)

A rule of life that God's Word proclaims will help us have a pure mind is to filter the messages we receive from news reports, social media, and by word of mouth. We need God to transform our thinking, so we recognize what is good and pleasing and perfect. We need to let go of hurtful, angry things that other people say and focus on what God says.

Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God—what is good and is pleasing to him and is perfect. (Romans 12:2 GNT)

An inventory of our thinking is as important as a daily inventory of our behaviours. Only God knows what is best for us and we will do well if we continue to seek His wisdom and rely on what He says to guide our thinking.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to fill my thoughts with the truth of Your Word. Help me to sort my thoughts according to Your principles and enjoy the benefits of Your wisdom. Give me the grace to let go of any negative thinking that seeks to invade my mind and to intentionally fill my mind with Your positive and encouraging truth. Amen

***Trust in
the Lord
with all
your
heart.
Never rely
on what
you think
you know.***

***Proverbs 3:5
GNT***

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH, SO HELP ME GOD

When thoughts of relapsing enter our thinking, telling ourselves the truth about who we are in Christ will have a significant impact on the way we choose to go. If we let memories and accusations about the past inform us about who we are today, then we are vulnerable to relapse. God says we are new people. The old has gone and the new has come. What will we tell ourselves?

Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! (2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT)

If we see ourselves as having to accomplish some perfect standard of the 12-step program or of some other religious measure to maintain our sobriety, then we are living a lie. We are believing that our success in life and recovery depends on ourselves and our own efforts rather than on God's gift of grace. This kind of self-reliance is not based on truth and makes us vulnerable to relapse.

We have become beloved sons and daughters of God. This is the truth that frees us from our past life.

The Bible states, ***My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not treat the grace of God as meaningless. For if keeping the law could make us right with God, then there was no need for Christ to die.*** (Galatians 2:20-21 NLT)

We have become beloved sons and daughters of God. This is the truth that frees us from our past life. We are new creations who have been forgiven for all past offences that would hinder our new life with Christ. When we accept Jesus as our Saviour, He fills us with His Holy Spirit, who is the power that helps us deal with temptation. The Holy Spirit will strengthen us in times of trial. God says He will complete in us that which He has started, and we can trust His Word because He is faithful.

Prayer: Gracious God, I trust in the power of Your Holy Spirit to strengthen me when I am weak and to sustain me in trying times. Only You can comfort and heal me and be my help in time of need. Please help me maintain my focus on the truth of Your Word so I can grow in my new life with You in recovery. Amen

A REALISTIC VIEW OF OURSELVES

A humble life is grounded in a realistic view of ourselves. A humble person is not someone who feels inferior but someone who is thankful for the undeserved goodness of God. We believe that God cares, therefore we no longer need to hide behind either too much self-confidence or the burden of self-doubt. Our security rests in the safety of God's acceptance and unconditional love for us.

Investigate my life, O God, find out everything about me; Cross-examine and test me, get a clear picture of what I'm about; See for yourself whether I've done anything wrong — then guide me on the road to eternal life. (Psalm 139:23-24 MSG)

An attitude of humility allows us to accept our dependence on God and follow His direction. In humility, we listen to God's warning signals and turn away from any path, even a familiar one, that is harmful. We need humility to put our hand in the hand of God and allow Him to lead us along an unfamiliar path. Humility helps us to lay down every known thing that hinders our way forward. We unreservedly choose to embrace God's ways as recorded in the Bible. These actions ultimately lead us to fullness of life.

My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body. Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life. (Proverbs 4:20-23 NLT)

God, who created us in love, invites us to come to Him for rest. Peace in our hearts will come quietly when we trust in God's goodness, respond to His invitation, and humbly put ourselves into His care. With confidence we can come into God's presence and, as He gently removes our defects of character, we can begin to live as reliable people who have integrity.

Heavenly Father, Thank you for being with me when I grieve over incidences of my past. I am thankful that I never have to face the trauma alone. Today, I humbly ask you to remove all my shortcomings and help me become a person with integrity. Amen

A humble life is grounded in a realistic view of ourselves.

AUGUST 6

HAS GOD FORGOTTEN TO BE MERCIFUL?

Often, we wonder if God is listening to our prayers when traumatic situations arise, and we are trying to navigate our way through them. We have brought the situation to God in prayer and have been waiting for Him to act out of His great mercy and give us the answer we require. When we begin to think God is not listening to us, we wonder if He is angry about something we have done and perhaps is withholding the solution to our situation.

Has God forgotten to be merciful? Has he in anger withheld his compassion?" Then I thought, "To this I will appeal: the years when the Most High stretched out his right hand. I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will consider all your works and meditate on all your mighty deeds." Your ways, God, are holy. What god is as great as our God? (Psalm 77: 9-13 NIV)

**Faith in
God
requires
that we
trust what
He says
and wait
for Him to
act.**

Giving our will and life over to the care of God means that we allow God to determine what is good for us, believing that He works all things according to His will for us. If something we prayed for happened as soon as we prayed, we might get puffed up by believing we are the ones directing God when and how to provide for our need. God is a wise Father and He has a good plan for our lives and is working everything according to His plan.

If we read the Bible and get acquainted with how God works, we will learn that God honours and acts on behalf of those who have faith in what He says. God always operates in His perfect way at just the right time.

When Abraham had no children, God told Him that His descendants would be as the stars in the heavens, too many to count. Abraham believed God would do what He said, but Abraham was almost 100 years old and his wife past childbearing age before Isaac the child of promise was conceived.

Faith in God requires that we trust what God says and wait for Him to act.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You alone are the God who will honour Your Word. Give me the wisdom not to rely on my own understanding but fully trust You and practice Your principles in all my affairs. Amen

AUGUST 27

MATURITY

A person who is said to be "mature" is usually productive and effective in their community. With the knowledge they have gained from life's situations and their obedience to God's Word, they grow closer with God and their overall stability in life improves. In the past many of us were called immature because the knowledge we gained did not lead to our participation in things that improved our lives or helped us make a positive contribution to the lives of others. If we are to reach maturity, we need to faithfully follow God's principles in all our affairs.

I am the vine. You are the branches. If you remain joined to me, and I to you, you will bear a lot of fruit. You can't do anything without me. If you don't remain joined to me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and dries up. (John 15:5-6a NIRV)

A gardener will prune the branches of a grapevine so that the vine will not develop more grape clusters than it can feed. Effective pruning also forces the clusters to grow in a way that is helpful for harvesting. When we ask God to remove our defects of character, we are pruning those things that hinder our effectiveness for God's Kingdom and our growth. As we put God's principles into effect, we will grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus.

You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain joined to me, just as I also remain joined to you. No branch can bear fruit by itself. It must remain joined to the vine. In the same way, you can't bear fruit unless you remain joined to me. (John 15:3-4 NIRV)

Those of us who have had a spiritual awakening know that we must grow in our knowledge of God's Word and continue to obey what God says. To help us do that, we have conscious contact with God through prayer and meditation on the Scriptures. We also seek to know God's will for our lives and have the power to carry it out. This is the way to maturity and God's blessing in our lives.

All these things should describe you more and more. They will make you useful and fruitful as you know our Lord Jesus Christ better. (2 Peter 1:8 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to let go of anything that would hinder my conscious contact with You or my goal to gain understanding of the Scriptures. My desire is to know Your will for my life and have the Power to carry it out. I want to be useful and fruitful for Your Kingdom. Amen

**If we are to
reach
maturity,
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faithfully
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all our
affairs.**

THE GOD WHO KNOWS BOTH SIDES

Jesus came to earth to die in our place. Jesus knows the way we can please our Heavenly Father and He knows the way humans displease Him. What a great privilege to have someone in Heaven who is praying for us and who knows of the life God has called us to. Jesus tells us to live to please our Heavenly Father and He will take care of meeting all our needs.

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. (Matthew 6:33 NLT)

Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts are higher than your thoughts.

Isaiah 55:9 ERV

God's ways are different from our ways. While Jesus was walking with His disciples on a Sabbath day, they saw a man who was blind from birth. They thought the man was born blind because His parents had sinned, but Jesus explained that the reason for His blindness was so the works of God might be displayed. Jesus spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes and told him to wash it off in a nearby pool. When the man washed it off, he could see. This caused a commotion with the religious leaders. They didn't care about the miracle performed. They were upset the man was healed on the Sabbath day.

If you had known who I am, then you would have known who my Father is. From now on you know him — and have seen him! Then Jesus told him, I have come into the world to give sight to those who are spiritually blind and to show those who think they see that they are blind. (John 14:7; 9:39 TLB)

So many things in the above story reflect the way humans who don't know God think. That is why it is important to get acquainted with what Jesus says. We may want to change certain things in our lives if we could, but who knows, maybe those very things are meant to be used by God to display His amazing power. Others get to see that power at work when we share our experience, strength, and hope of how God has changed and healed us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me, through prayer and meditation on Your Word, get to know Jesus more and thereby know You more. Help me look at life from the view that You have good plans for me and for those I meet along the way. Amen

CONTINUING SURRENDER

Living in recovery and following the Twelve Steps is a spiritual journey. It requires a conscious commitment to a spiritual way of living. In Step-3 we are invited to turn our will and our life over to the care of God as we know and understand Him today.

“You will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,” declares the Lord. (Jeremiah 29:12-14a NIV)

When we first came into recovery, most of us admitted that our way of doing things resulted in pain, frustration, sickness, and despair. We came to God because we knew we needed help, or because someone shared with us that God is the Higher Power who restored them to sanity.

Surrendering to God is an everyday ongoing moment-by-moment process of turning away from self-will and choosing for the will of God in every situation. This will always involve action on our part. If we say that we have entrusted our life to God but do not make changes in how we think and act, then we are only fooling ourselves.

We may not understand how everything will work together for our good but today we can take one step of faith and choose to do whatever God says works.

To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen. (Jude 1:24-25 NIV)

Prayer: Loving God, I don't understand how life works and what tomorrow may bring but today I choose to turn my will and my life over to Your care. I want to know more about You and Your ways and to find out what Your will is for my life. Help me to know You more as I read Your Word each day. In the Power that You have promised to give me, please strengthen and help me practice Your principles in all my affairs. Amen

Surrendering to God is an everyday ongoing moment-by-moment process of turning away from self-will and choosing for the will of God in every situation.

THE GIFT OF PEACE AND SERENITY

Peace and serenity are gifts to be received. They are treasures to be chosen. To make room for them in our hearts involves surrender on our part. We do not have to be right; we do not have to look good; we do not have to be understood; and everything around us doesn't have to be pleasant. When we live for God and our hearts and minds are surrendered to Him, we will have peace no matter what our circumstances are.

Being at peace is one of the ways we know whether we have truly given our will and life over to God's care and are allowing His Holy Spirit to guide and direct us.

(Philippians 4:6-7 NLT)

Peace and contentment are the fruit of making good choices every day.

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for the gift of peace I will receive as I surrender my will and life into Your care. When I am not at peace, help me to seek You and determine where I have wandered from Your ways. Please give me the strength to do the next right thing and get back to Your path of peace. Amen

It is God's desire that we live in peace. In fact, being at peace is one of the ways we will know whether we have truly given our will and life over to God's care and are allowing His Holy Spirit to guide and direct us.

The Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23 NLT)

God is working around and in us every day. Not all circumstances change in a moment. God knows that life will feel rich sometimes and empty at other times. When we seek to follow a new and healthy way of life, we will face challenges that seem too much for us to handle. While some effort from us will be required, we can rely on God's help and encouragement throughout the process. When we choose to make right choices and do the next right thing, we can safely leave the outcome with God.

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.

THE GOLDEN RULE

In the middle of Jesus teaching about how to treat our enemies he inserts one of the most famous principles of human interaction called "The Golden Rule".

Do for others what you want them to do for you. (Luke 6:31 ERV)

This principle was written centuries before and was contained in the Jewish scriptures which Jesus and others heard from week to week in their worship services. Jesus is quoting it because it is important for us to know and practice.

As we share and support friends and loved ones we often do for them what we would like them to do for us. Jesus says in that context there is no real challenge because it is easy to love and care for those who in return love and care for us.

"If you love only those who love you, should you get any special praise for doing that? No, even sinners love those who love them! If you do good only to those who do good to you, should you get any special praise for doing that? No, even sinners do that!" (Luke 6:32-33 ERV)

What makes the following saying of Jesus challenging for us is that we are to behave this way with people who don't love us or treat us well.

Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Ask God to bless the people who ask for bad things to happen to you. Pray for the people who are mean to you. (Luke 6:27b-28 ERV)

In our past, we have all been hurt and disappointed. We have also hurt and disappointed others. Jesus wants all of us to move forward, find healing, and live well. He knows that holding grudges and failing to make amends is a recipe for bitterness and disaster in the heart. What is God's way for us to be successful in recovery? When someone irritates us or we reflect on a person we are avoiding, God's says: ***"Love...do good...ask God to bless...and pray."***

To whom on my "challenging persons list" can I apply the Golden Rule today?

Prayer: Gracious Father, Help me! It's so hard to bless and do good for people who have harmed me. Please work in my heart and give me the courage and strength to bless others and live the Golden Rule from a heart of thanksgiving for all You have done for me. Amen

Do for others what you want them to do for you.

Luke 6:31 ERV

READY FOR GOD TO REMOVE

The purpose of Step 6 of the 12-Step program is to help us address those personal defects of character that result from our discontentment with life. Through our personal inventory, we have become aware of our flawed belief system and our dysfunctional behaviour patterns and now seek the willingness to be changed. We are becoming ready to have God remove all our coping mechanisms and this is the key to experiencing the change we seek in the ways we think and act.

Keep me from cheating and telling lies. Be kind to me and teach me your law. I have chosen to be faithful to you. I put my trust in your laws. (Psalm 119:29-30 NIRV)

Our ways are changing, and new life is developing in us every time we ask God to remove a character defect.

Character defects are often developed through many years of struggling to survive. We feel at home with what is familiar to us, even while desiring a better life. God is willing to give us the desire and the power to complete the task of changing if we wholeheartedly turn our will and our life over to His care. God will not only help us defeat our fear of change but will enable us to become willing to have Him remove all our defects of character so we can progress more than we ever thought possible.

I taught Ephraim to walk. I took them up in my arms. But they did not realize I was the one who took care of them. I led them with kindness and love. I was to them like a person who lifts a little child to their cheek. I bent down and fed them. (Hosea 11:3-4 NIRV)

Character defects often slip away one at a time as we surrender ourselves to the ways of God. When we notice one of our defects in operation, we can invite God to help us change our thinking and enable us to choose His way of communicating. Our ways are changing, and new life is developing in us every time we ask God to remove a character defect rather than acting on it.

Teach me your ways, O Lord, that I may live according to your truth! Grant me purity of heart, so that I may honor you. (Psalm 86:11 NLT)

Prayer: Gracious God, I am entirely ready to have You remove all my character defects. Teach me Your ways and help me practice them so that I may live according to Your truth. Amen

RESOLVING STORED ANGER

Because of its damaging effects, stored anger is a problem and needs to be addressed. Following are some principles which may help in lessening the angry outbursts and lead us to healing of the root cause.

1) Rather than trying to get others to understand the reason we get angry, we need to assess what ignites the fuse and arouses the anger within us.

God's word directs us, **"For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you."** (Romans 12:3 NIV)

2) Positive changes will occur when we practice the "PUT OFF" and "PUT ON" principle:

"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." (Ephesians 4:22-24 NIV)

3) Rather than getting discouraged when things are not as you would have them, we need to stop what we are doing and seek God's help and encouragement. God can make us stand firm in Christ as we go forward in life.

"And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns." (Philippians 1:6 NLT)

With God's help and our resolve to live in the power of God's unfailing love, the oppression of stored anger and resentment can be removed from us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, My desire is to get rid of the stored anger and resentment that has been buried in the dark places of my soul. Show me my heart as You see it. I ask for Your comfort and healing as I deal with each issue You reveal. Amen

With God's help and our resolve to live in the power of God's unfailing love, the oppression of stored anger and resentment can be removed from us.

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

The end of Tradition 12 in the Big Book of AA sums up an important principle in our recovery: We need to regularly count our blessings.

We are actually to practice a genuine humility. This to the end that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him who presides over us all. (Big Book of AA)

***We are
blessed
today with
a clear
conscience
as we
confess our
wrongs to
God and
allow Him
to remove
our sin.***

The Bible gives us many wonderful words on which to focus our thoughts as we put this principle into effect.

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV)

God speaks blessings of protection, peace, and tenderness over us. Will we believe His words and fill our minds daily with these delightful thoughts?

God offers us the blessing of forgiveness for all our wrongdoing. Jesus died on the cross and took the punishment for every sin we have ever committed and for those we are not yet aware of. We are blessed today with a clear conscience as we confess our wrongs to God and allow Him to remove our sin.

Blessed is the person whose lawless acts are forgiven. Their sins have been taken away. Blessed is the person whose sin the Lord never counts against them. (Psalm 3:1-2a NIRV)

On the recommendation of the founders of AA, let's make it a habit to count our blessings each day. As we do, we'll become more aware of all that God has given us and our hearts will be filled with joy because of His love and care for us.

Prayer: Loving God, I acknowledge that on my own my life is an unmanageable mess. I am grateful for the gifts You bring to my life each day. Give me the courage to receive all you are offering me and the humility to remember that all I am and have comes from You. Amen

WHEN GOD IS SILENT

The future King David wrote the following Psalm while travelling in the desert of Judea where he was sleeping and hiding in caves from King Saul who was trying to kill him. The land was very dry, and David and his men had to search to find water to drink. They were also weary of being hunted like animals by their adversary. David had an intimate relationship with God but in these circumstances, he wrote that he was searching hard to find Him.

God, you are my God. I am searching so hard to find you. Body and soul, I thirst for you in this dry and weary land without water. Yes, I have seen you in your Temple. I have seen your strength and glory. Your faithful love is better than life, so my lips praise your name, I lift my hands in prayer. When I sit down to satisfy my hunger, my joyful lips hunger to praise you! I remember you while lying on my bed. I think about you in the middle of the night. That is because you are the one who helps me. It makes me happy to be under your protection! (Psalm 63:1-7 ERV)

When we first came into recovery and experienced God's goodness, life seemed peaceful, and we had great expectations of a trouble-free future. Now we are finding the going is tough, and God seems far away from us. When God is silent, He is not deaf or dumb. He still hears and answers our prayers. However, God's overall plan may be to strengthen us by the Power of His Spirit so that we learn to persevere through future trials that may come our way.

***When
God is
silent,
He is
not deaf
or
dumb.***

David declares God's faithful love is better than life and He continues to praise Him. However, David's immediate situation does not appear to be getting any better. Eventually it did get better, but David had to persevere through many trials which helped develop both his character and his rock-solid faith in the God who helped him. We are ever under God's protection and, as we strengthen ourselves in the Lord, we will have victory over the trials that come our way because God is the One who helps us.

But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God. (1 Samuel 30:6b NKJV)

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to persevere through the trials of life knowing that You are always with me and will never leave me even in those times when I feel like I am living in a dry and weary land where I see no future. Thank You for Your protection over me and for strengthening me to face anything that may come my way. Amen

RECOVERING A LIFE OF RELATIONSHIP

God invites us to relationship with Him so we can know and set healthy boundaries in our relationships with others. God wants us to utilize the gifts and talents we have been given to help others. It's only as we reach out and serve others that we will get to know ourselves and the unique gifts and talents we have been given. This is life – the recovered life.

What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. (1 Corinthians 2:12 NLT)

We need the continued care and guidance of God as we learn to come alongside others and work co-operatively with them towards our common goals.

God never intended for humans to live in isolation. His plan for us has always been to live in relationship with Him and with others. Isolation may be familiar to us but with God's help, we can learn to live safely and well in our relationships with others. God wants us to be our true self and help us excel in aiding others.

For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love. (Galatians 5:13 NLT)

We need the continued care and guidance of God as we learn to come alongside others and work co-operatively with them towards our common goals. Trying to figure things out on our own is seldom the most productive way of obtaining our objective. We need to let go of the fear of making mistakes or looking stupid and instead ask for another's help with the project that we are working on together. Rather than running away in hurt and anger when problems occur, God wants us to learn to communicate our feelings so that others can better

understand where we are at, and offer their support as necessary.

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. (James 1:5 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to move from isolation and hiding behind walls to living in healthy supportive relationships. Please strengthen my resolve to work through any barriers that surface so that my relationship with others may grow and mature. Amen

LIFE IMPROVES AS I PRACTICE SELF-CONTROL

Everyone wants a happy life. In the past some of us tried to achieve a good life by taking what are known to be shortcuts. Unfortunately, the shortcuts proved less than desirable, and we found ourselves in chaotic places we would rather have avoided.

In the Bible we find the story of Esau who traded his blessing as a firstborn son for a bowl of stew to fill his empty stomach. At the time, his primary concern was to satisfy his immediate physical need without any thought at all about his future. Esau had not learned how to practice self-control.

Jesus faced a similar challenge. The plan of God was that Jesus would come to earth as a man, live a sinless life, pay the penalty of death for the sin of all humans, rise victorious over death, and then return to heaven to prepare a place for those who would believe in His saving work. It was a great plan for all humans but a tough journey for Jesus to attain it for us. Satan offered Jesus the shortcut of becoming king over all the earth. If Jesus had yielded to this temptation, He would have obeyed Satan rather than God and we would all be captive in our sins, eternally separated from God. Thankfully, Jesus practiced self-control and followed God's plan.

Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. "I will give it all to you," he said, "if you will kneel down and worship me." "Get out of here, Satan," Jesus told him. "For the Scriptures say, "You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him." (Matthew 4:8-10 NLT)

We need to practice self-control and avoid all shortcuts that take us even one step outside of God's will. We are warned, ***"So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."*** (James 4:7 NLT). Jesus is truly the only way forward. If we give our will and life to Jesus, He will fill us with His Spirit who will help us to make wise choices. As we stay on the path, one step at a time we will find that practicing self-control really does bring the good things that God has planned for us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to walk humbly with You from this day forward and choose to follow Your will for my life. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit so that I may have the gift of self-control over all issues that I encounter. Amen

As we stay on the path, one step at a time we will find that practicing self-control really does bring the good things that God has planned for us.

FACING TROUBLE WITH GOD

In recovery, and in life in general, situations arise which cause us to believe that we are alone and have no one to turn to for help. Fear often wells up within us causing that old feeling of wanting to run and hide and medicate in our addiction. What can we do when this happens? The writer of the following Psalm poured out his heart to God knowing that God alone had the answer to all his problems.

I cry out to the Lord; I plead for the Lord's mercy. I pour out my complaints before him and tell him all my troubles. When I am overwhelmed, you alone know the way I should turn. Wherever I go, my enemies have set traps for me. (Psalm 142:1-3 NLT)

***When we cry
out to God
and bring the
“bully”
before Him,
the
tormentor
loses his
power.***

When the pull of addiction tempts us, it is like a bully who will not cease until we are wounded and defeated. When we give in to the obsession, we will find ourselves back in the prison of insanity knowing we are powerless. However, when we cry out to God and bring the “bully” before Him, the tormentor loses his power.

As children of God, we do not stand alone while defending ourselves against temptation. The battle is the Lord's! When we come close to God, He will come close to us. Just like a strong person coming to our aid and standing up to a bully on our behalf, so we will find God to be a place of safety and protection for us. Even though the battle may rage in our minds for a time it will eventually quiet down. The enemy who is responsible for the promotion of our obsessive thinking must surrender to God's overwhelming power.

It's important to know both the strengths and limits of our enemy. The enemy will claim to have unstoppable power over us but as we put our trust and faith in the finished work of Jesus, we will experience God's saving power that is greater than any other power.

Heavenly Father, Thank You for being my shelter and my help in time of need. When I experience the enemy trying to have power over me, help me to stop and call out to You for help to overcome, for You alone have the Power that will give me victory over the enemy of my soul. Amen

SWEET FRUIT OF PATIENCE

Aristotle, a famous philosopher, once said, “Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet.” After many years of looking for instant results, it's challenging to do the hard work of confronting our issues while establishing a relationship with the God who has known us before we were even born. Is the result worth the effort?

Don't you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin? (Romans 2:4 NLT)

In God's eyes, we are worthy to be pursued and rescued from our sin and brokenness. God wants to help us begin a wonderful new life with Him in recovery. God was patient with us until we chose to call out to Him in our helpless state. When we were not even conscious of God He was watching to see when our hearts would turn toward Him. We need to be patient with each other until we come to unity in our faith in this amazing God who has been extremely patient with all of us.

But God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life. (1 Timothy 1:16 NLT)

As we practice the principle of patience in all our ways, others may find hope as they see us change. Perhaps our experience, strength, and hope will nourish the hope of others, and give them the encouragement they need as they build their relationship with the God who loves and cares for them.

There are no instant solutions to developing patience. Patience is the fruit of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives bringing us contentment and joy as we follow the ways of God. We will experience God's delight in us as we wholeheartedly follow Him regardless of the circumstances that may arise. For those of us who have never known anyone to appreciate and affirm us, this is truly an amazing experience.

For God is pleased when, conscious of his will, you patiently endure unjust treatment. (1 Peter 2:19 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to be patient in all my ways and in all circumstances. Thank You for being patient with me as I struggled to believe that You would help me. Amen

***We need to
be patient
with each
other until
we come to
unity in our
faith in this
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God who
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with all of
us.***

DELIBERATE SINS

When we first give our will and life over to the care of God, we often have a blind spot to our wrongdoing. We have lived and relied on our own understanding for so long that it has now become a way of life that we find no fault with. Our lifestyle may even be acceptable to society in general. However, when our behaviour goes against the teachings of the Bible, we need to become willing to change our ways.

Because Jesus' sacrifice on the cross paid the price for all sin, even deliberate sin, we are promised complete forgiveness when we repent.

How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart? Cleanse me from these hidden faults. Keep your servant from deliberate sins! Don't let them control me. Then I will be free of guilt and innocent of great sin. May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. (Psalm 19:12-14 NLT)

We may find all kinds of excuses to continue our ungodly behaviour, but the Holy Spirit will consistently make us conscious of any behaviour that is not pleasing to God. Then a choice needs to be made. If we continue in deliberate sin, we will forfeit our claim to the blessings of God. If we choose to surrender to God's way, His Holy Spirit will work in us to keep us from doing wrong. Because Jesus' sacrifice on the cross paid the price for all sin, even deliberate sin, we are promised complete forgiveness when we repent.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Brothers and sisters let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case. (Matthew 5:8; Galatians 3:15 NIV)

As we turn from our stubborn ways and choose to follow God's ways, we will experience the numerous blessings God has promised us.

Dear friends,.....Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. (Philippians 2:12-13 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, Keep me from deliberate sin. I surrender my stubborn will and choose to live according to Your will. Please give me the desire and power to honour You in all my ways. Amen

SINCERITY

A sincere person is one who is honest, who doesn't create false impressions, and who doesn't operate with selfish motives. What you see is what you get. They do the right thing for the right reasons. They don't have a hidden agenda.

My words come from an upright heart; my lips sincerely speak what I know. (Job 33:3 NIV)

The meaning of the word sincere comes from the ancient practice of pottery making. If potters did not sift rocks out of the clay, their pots would have small holes which the deceitful potters would then fill with wax. Later, when the buyer heated the pot the wax would melt, and the pot would leak. Good potters, whose clay was sifted, would write on their pots "sine cera" – without wax. Are we as genuine on the inside as we try to portray on the outside? God wants us to know who we are in relationship with Him and then live that out with truth and grace in all our human relationships.

The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. (1 Timothy 1:5 NIV)

We need to say what we mean and mean what we say without lies or exaggerations or evasiveness. We need to be honest about what we think or feel – expressing ourselves with respect and politeness for sure – but not thinking one thing and intentionally saying something else. To be sincere is to "walk the walk not just talk the talk."

For us to live before God and others with sincerity of heart, we need to practice being honest in all our affairs and not merely seek to gain advantage for ourselves. When we are impressed with something that has been done right, we should give a compliment with sincerity. When we have done something wrong, we should take responsibility and apologize with sincere regret and a willingness to make things right. With God's help we can live as a person of sincerity today.

Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, with integrity and godly sincerity. We have done so, relying not on worldly wisdom but on God's grace. (2 Corinthians 1:12 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please work in me so that any character defects that would keep me from being sincere are brought to light and removed. Amen

Are we as genuine on the inside as we try to portray on the outside?

COPING WITH ANXIETY OR DEPRESSION

When we first come into recovery, we may have feelings of anxiety or depression. For some time, we have been medicating ourselves with a substance or perhaps have been involved in an unhealthy relationship which temporarily seemed to give relief from the unease we felt inside. Now in recovery, we have given our will and our life over to the care of God and are coming to believe that there might be hope for a better life. However, the physical change we were anticipating may not be keeping up with our expectations. We may feel oppressed by something that we cannot explain but know it causes our minds to be darkened by its presence. If we share with those who have gone through the

recovery process, we will find that we are not alone in having experienced this darkness of soul. We need to seek God's comfort in this situation and stand strong in the truth that Jesus has all power over heaven and earth and has rescued us from the dominion of darkness.

Even though our feelings may go up and down, there is nothing that can hide us from God's presence.

"Be still and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world." The Lord of Heaven's Armies is here among us; the God of Israel is our fortress. (Psalm 46:10-11 NLT)

Because we are struggling, we may conclude that God is no longer with us or that He does not exist, and we are facing this overpowering darkness alone. This is what the evil one would have us believe. The Bible tells us that as children of God we cannot be outside of His presence. He is in the highest heavens and in the lowest hell. Even though our feelings may go up and down, there is nothing that can hide us from God's presence. He is ever with us!

Now all glory to God, who is able to keep you from falling away and will bring you with great joy into his glorious presence without a single fault. (Jude 24 NLT)

God's Spirit is with us through the darkest valleys of anxiety and depression and when we get to the other side, we will give thanks that He was with us guiding and directing us all the way.

Prayer: Gracious God, Thank You for being with me when tension and unease cause me anxiety. I am forever grateful that You are always with me and will give me the strength to stand on the truth of Your Word and be an overcomer. Amen

REASONS FOR OPTIMISM

When we come to know God, the Higher Power who will restore us to sanity, our whole being is turned from darkness to light. In the past we were wandering through life in an out-of-control state and now we are hoping for a better future. We are eager to get rid of our old thought patterns and habits and are ready to be renewed in our minds. What we once thought we could never live without, we are determined, with God's help, to leave behind because we have found something better. Can we dare to be optimistic that we will succeed?

But all these things that I once thought very worthwhile — now I've thrown them all away so that I can put my trust and hope in Christ alone. (Philippians 3:7 TLB)

Because of all that Jesus did for us on the cross, we have been restored to the likeness of God, our Heavenly Father. We are like newborn children ready to discover a whole new world. We need to remain close to our Heavenly Father and allow Him to teach us how to walk in our new-found freedom. As we choose to obey the principles of His Word as recorded in the Bible, we can dare to be optimistic about our new life because, through the Power of His Holy Spirit, God will guide and direct us in the way we are to go.

Follow God's example in everything you do just as a much loved child imitates his father. Be full of love for others, following the example of Christ who loved you and gave himself to God as a sacrifice to take away your sins. (Ephesians 5:1-2a TLB)

When troubles come our way let's choose not to be fearful, but instead remind ourselves that our Heavenly Father is watching over us, ready to help us persevere through each situation that arises. He knows the end from the beginning and is present to help us. As we grow stronger in our faith, we will be eager to share with others about the God who makes our lives complete.

I always remember that the Lord is with me. He is here, close by my side, so nothing can defeat me. So my heart and soul will be very happy. Even my body will live in safety. (Psalm 16:8-9 ERV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for always being there to watch over and strengthen me and for holding me steady so that I can be optimistic about my future. Amen

He [the Lord] is here, close by my side, so nothing can defeat me

Psalm 16:8 ERV

TAKING, AS JESUS DID, THIS SINFUL WORLD AS IT IS

The process of recovery is a time to find peace while also accepting life as it is. Life isn't always fair. It isn't always predictable or controllable. When we become willing to face the hurts we have experienced and consider our reaction to them, then we come closer to changing our thought patterns and response to troubling situations. Jesus came into this sinful world, not to judge it for what it was, but to put it right.

We can't change the fact that our world is imperfect, but we can choose our attitude.

God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again. (John 3:17 MSG)

We can't change the fact that our world is imperfect, but we can choose our attitude. There are many injustices in life. Good people suffer sickness and all sorts of problems. Wicked people prosper from unrighteous acts and appear to have met their own earthly needs. Jesus took this sinful world as it was and suffered and died to give new life to its inhabitants. God graciously says that whoever believes in Jesus will not perish but have everlasting life, and that includes those who are currently His enemies.

But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. (Matthew 5:44-45 NIV)

All of us have made bad choices and walked paths that have caused pain. Life with God in recovery teaches us to think and act in new ways. Are we willing to accept this world as it is and do what God has called us to do to make it a better place for us and for our community? Today, let's focus on ways to change those things we can.

When anyone is in Christ, it is a whole new world. The old things are gone; suddenly, everything is new! (2 Corinthians 5:17 ERV)

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to take this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it. Give me the courage and wisdom to accept the things I cannot change and, with Your help, change the things I can. Amen

THE GOOD LIFE

Addiction for many of us focused on trying to find happiness in all the wrong places and things. Some of us thought that escaping pain would bring happiness. Others, who didn't have a lot of pain, sought pleasure. However, God shows us the way to true happiness. He lays out a good path for us to follow. He also reveals traps and obstacles along the way that we are to avoid.

Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do. But not the wicked! They are like worthless chaff, scattered by the wind. They will be condemned at the time of judgment. Sinners will have no place among the godly. For the Lord watches over the path of the godly, but the path of the wicked leads to destruction. (Psalm 1:1-6 NLT)

We are programmed every day by the media and in conversation with others to believe that the good life comes from doing what we want, when we want. God says the good life comes from spending time with Him, allowing His Words to fill our hearts and His Spirit to guide us in the way we should go. It's easy to just drift along with the crowd without giving much thought to what we say or do. When we behave in this way, God says we are just like dust that gets blown around on a windy day.

God invites us to recover the life He created us to live, a life that is strengthened by His Word and fruitful as a healthy tree planted by a riverbank. God wants our lives to bless others. When difficult times come, God wants to refresh us and help us prosper. God invites us to freedom and purity of heart as we follow His ways and live under the protection of His watchful eye.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me to listen to You and follow Your ways so I may joyfully live under the protection of Your watchful eye and experience the fullness of life You desire me to have. Amen

God says the good life comes from spending time with Him, allowing His Words to fill our hearts and His Spirit to guide us in the way we should go.

MAKING GOOD ON OUR PROMISES

In his distress, the person who wrote the following Psalm is making many promises to God. Most of the promises he made are good, but he is human like any one of us, and subject to failure. Even so, he appears to see himself as having the will and strength to do whatever he says. He appears to be seeking to please God and to control others so that God will show him favour and come to him.

**Unless we
have the
Power
greater
than
ourselves
living in us,
God knows
we would
never be
able to
fulfill our
promises.**

I will sing about love and justice. Lord, I will sing to you. I will be careful to live a pure life. I will live in my house with complete honesty. When will you come to me? I will not even look at anything shameful. I hate all wrongdoing. I want no part of it! I will not be involved in anything dishonest. I will have nothing to do with evil. I will stop anyone who secretly says bad things about a neighbor. I will not allow people to be proud and think they are better than others. I will look throughout the land for those who can be trusted. Only such people can live with me. Only those who live pure lives can be my servants. (Psalm 101:1-6 ERV)

How many of us, both in addiction and in recovery, have prayed to God like that? We have been in trouble and prayed to God for help. We have made promises to live good lives in return for God's favour. The problem is, unless we have the Power greater than ourselves living in us, God knows we would never be able to fulfill our promises. When a crisis dies down, we often forget about God and just carry on in our self-serving existence.

God tells us to call on Him in our time of trouble. The Scriptures say that His eyes roam throughout the whole earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him. God knows when our hearts are fully committed to Him and, when they are, we have His favour, and He will hear and answer our prayers.

Prayer: Loving God, Forgive me for the promises I have made and not kept. My desire is to be fully committed to You and to practice Your principles in all my affairs. Please help me! Amen

LOW SELF-ESTEEM

Many of us suffer from low self-esteem. This disorder comes directly from the enemy of our souls. The enemy wants to discourage us so he keeps our focus on things that cause us anxiety. Our motivation becomes depressed, and we forget to seek God in all our ways. We take off the robes of righteousness we have been given and put on the rags of worry and fear. If we call out to God as He tells us to, He will surely answer us and show us a way out of the gridlock we have created for ourselves.

Be good to me while I am alive. Do this so that I may obey your word. Open my eyes so that I can see the wonderful truths in your law. (Psalm 119:17-18 NIRV)

When we feel that no one cares about us we often talk ourselves into harmful situations. We see our future without seeing God in it. We look for love in all the wrong places instead of trusting God to guide us in the way we should go. We allow our minds to conjure up scenarios that are not real, and we tend to see our family and friends as the cause of our problems. God alone is the answer to our dilemma. People are not.

Lord my God, I prayed to you, and you healed me. (Psalm 30:2 ERV)

When our thoughts are self-focused, we drift into low self-esteem, obsessed by our own limitations and the limitations of others. This is a time to turn to God, our Higher Power, who has limitless power to help us in our time of need.

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! (1 John 3:1 NIV)

Living in the truth of God's love and care for us and acknowledging that we are His precious children is the sure cure for low self-esteem.

Prayer: Compassionate and loving Father, Forgive me for not looking to You to provide for my needs. You have promised that I will not lack any good thing. Help me to keep my eyes fixed on You so I can know and experience the wonderful truth of Your Word. Amen

***Living in the
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