

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations



JULY 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 me from the dark power of Satan and bringing me into loving relationship with Your Son, Jesus. I ask for wisdom and understanding from Your Holy Spirit to live as a person who honours You. Heal me. Make me new. Make me a strong follower of Christ. Root me deeply in Your love. I place my trust in Your power that can do far more in me than I dare to ask or imagine. Amen.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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VOLUME 10, NUMBER 07

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.

BENEFITS OF CITIZENSHIP

On July 1 citizens of Canada celebrate Canada Day. It is also a special day for many immigrant residents who have chosen to obtain Canadian Citizenship and are now entitled to hold a Canadian passport and all the benefits which are included with that. Many citizens gather with other members of their community to celebrate this annual occasion.

Distribute the land as an allotment for yourselves and for the foreigners who have joined you and are raising their families among you. (Ezekiel 47:22a NLT)

Most of us who are going through or have been through recovery programs have a great deal to celebrate today. We have chosen to give our will and lives over to the care of God and by so doing we have become citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven where God reigns. Jesus tells us that there is a great celebration in Heaven over one person who repents of their wrongdoing and turns to the God who created them. God promises us life forevermore in His Kingdom.

In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven't strayed away. (Luke 15:7 NLT)

Choosing to become a legal citizen of a country entitles that person to the protection and benefits that the government has established for that country's citizens. Becoming a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven also has many benefits and entitles us to the protection of God and the fulfillment of all the promises that God has made to us as recorded in the Bible.

But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives

***Philippians 3:20
NLT***

But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Saviour. For all of God's promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding "Yes!" And through Christ, our "Amen" (which means "Yes") ascends to God for his glory. (Philippians 3:20, 2 Corinthians 1:20 NLT)

Let's celebrate this 1st day of July and think about our eternal security as citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Heavenly Father, Thank You for caring for me and establishing my citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven. I am forever grateful that through Jesus my inheritance with You has been established and is forever secure. Amen

TRUSTING THAT YOU WILL MAKE ALL THINGS RIGHT

Who can we trust? Who's reliable? Who tells the truth? Who has the strength and the ability to carry out the things they promise us? These are the questions we wrestle with in recovery after coming out of addiction where there was no truth or dependability in us, or in those around us.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

(Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV)

***Trusting in
God is
foundational
for building
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relationships
and for
enjoying a
satisfying
life.***

God has a plan for our lives. He wants to give us hope and a future. Our own plans haven't done much for us in the past and we don't have a lot of history with God in early recovery, so we may be unsure how to proceed from here. God promises to show us the way forward. Everything will not instantly be how we would like it to be, but God assures us that we will be enriched by His goodness each step of the journey. Perhaps it's time to surrender to God's will and trust in His promise to give us hope and a future.

Trust in the Lord and do good. Then you will live safely in the land and prosper. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart's desires. (Psalm 37:3-4 NLT)

Trusting in God is foundational for building trust in all our other relationships and for enjoying a satisfying life. We need to find out what God's principles are and then make wise choices accordingly. It's time to practice faithfulness and integrity in all our affairs. As we do, we will find that God makes things happen in ways beyond all we could have hoped for or imagined.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13 NIV)

God tells the truth. God can be trusted to be the Higher Power who will restore us to sanity.

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to trust You each step of the way forward in my life with You in recovery. Thank you for filling me with hope for my future. Amen

TURNING OVER MY WILL AND MY LIFE

The experience of life outside the will and care of God for us is helplessness and frustration. The good news is, when we respond to God's gracious offer of a new life in relationship with Him, we become His beloved children and all of God's resources are made available to us.

This new identity is God's gift to all of us who believe that Jesus' death on the cross paid the debt for all our sins – past, present, and future. As we repent of our self-will and turn our will and life over to God's care, God's Holy Spirit comes to live within us and empowers us to choose to follow God's principles. In a way that may surprise us and others, we will become individuals who truly want to please God and find satisfaction in doing so. How does God bring about this incredible transformation in us?

It is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him. If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. (Hebrews 11:6, 1 John 1:9 NLT)

Turning our will and our life over to the care of God always involves action. If we say that we have entrusted our life to God, but no change is evident, then we are only fooling ourselves. Accepting Jesus' payment for our sins on the cross brings us freedom from the bondage of sin and death plus eternal life with our Heavenly Father. We must pay close attention to the Word of God as written in the Bible and allow God's Holy Spirit to direct us in all our affairs. Effective recovery is built on God's principles for living as we allow them to shape our thinking and behaving. We must also be aware that the powers of evil will battle against our will as they desire to keep us in bondage.

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:21-22 NKJV)

Prayer: Loving God, I don't understand how everything will work together for my good but in faith I put my trust in You and rely on the finished work of Jesus on the cross to make me whole. I repent of my sins and believe they are forgiven. Through the blood of Jesus, I stand cleansed and whole in Your presence. Please help me to walk daily by faith and not by sight. Amen

***Turning
our will
and our
life over
to the
care of
God
always
involves
action.***

WHERE TO LOOK WHEN I AM LOST

Jesus was often challenged by the self-righteous actions of some of the religious leaders who saw themselves as guardians of God's law. He did not approve of their religious pride or their blindness to the needs of ordinary citizens and sinners.

Many tax collectors and sinners came to listen to Jesus. Then the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to complain, "Look, this man welcomes sinners and even eats with them!" (Luke 15:1-2 ERV)

The religious leaders saw themselves as the 99 good people who did not need to change. Some of us are like them.

Jesus told people a story – a parable – to help them understand why God had sent Him into the world. Jesus said that if a man owned a hundred sheep and one of them wandered from the flock, the owner would leave the ninety-nine in the field and go and search for the one sheep that was lost. When the sheep was found the man would rejoice with his friends and neighbours.

Then Jesus made a connection between the sheep and us: ***In the same way, I tell you, heaven is a happy place when one sinner decides to change. There is more joy for that one sinner than for 99 good people who don't need to change.*** (Luke 15:7 ERV)

We are like the lost sheep who wandered away from our Heavenly Father. The religious leaders saw themselves as the 99 good people who did not need to change. Some of us are like them too. We look at and judge what Jesus has done for us but fail to acknowledge that Jesus is our only way back to God. By acceptance of Jesus' death and resurrection we can be free from sin and adopted into God's family. Today if we choose to turn our will and our life over

to God's care, heaven will be a happy place.

Here is what Christ wants us to beg you to do. Come back to God! Christ didn't have any sin. But God made him become sin for us. So we can be made right with God because of what Christ has done for us. (2 Corinthians 5:20-21 NIRV)

Prayer: Loving God, I have wandered from Your ways and know I am lost without You. I accept all that Jesus has done to restore me into Your family. Help me to believe that Your Presence is ever with me and trust You to guide me in all my ways. Amen

STRAIGHTEN UP AND FLY RIGHT

The saying "Straighten Up and Fly Right" has been around since Nat King Cole wrote and recorded a song with this title many years ago. At various times in our life, and certainly when we come into recovery, we need to get serious, get focused on healthy things, and start behaving in new ways. People tell us we need to get our lives in order but if we stubbornly refuse to do so, we are on a fast track to trouble and heartbreak.

Whoever stubbornly refuses to accept criticism will suddenly be destroyed beyond recovery. Proverbs 29:1 NLT

God kindly had people write down everything we need to know to live well, including how to correct our course when we are going wrong. That is why we need to read the Scriptures and apply what we read to our words, attitude, and behaviour.

God has breathed life into all Scripture. It is useful for teaching us what is true. It is useful for correcting our mistakes. It is useful for making our lives whole again. It is useful for training us to do what is right. (2 Timothy 3:16 NIRV)

God's principles are the measure He will use when we stand before Him and He evaluates what we have done with our lives. Now is the time to not just know what the right thing to do is, but to adjust our behaviour accordingly.

Words alone will not discipline a servant; the words may be understood, but they are not heeded. Jesus asked: "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' but you don't do what I say?" (Proverbs 29:19, Luke 6:46 ERV)

The Bible illustrates this point by the teaching of children to do what is right. Parents who truly care for their children, guide, direct and discipline them as needed. The child who grows up in the knowledge of what is right learns from being disciplined.

Some of us may not have been given this teaching or, in our arrogance and rebellion, ignored what we learned and went our own way. Now would be a good time to develop a humble heart, seek correction, and straighten up and fly right.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for my stubborn rebellious ways. Help me to welcome input from Your Word each day and to quickly put Your principles into practice. Amen

Now is the time to not just know what the right thing to do is, but to adjust our behaviour accordingly.

WISDOM – STANDING WITH THOSE IN AUTHORITY

We are all looking for a peaceful life and God's Word has a lot to say about how living well under authority with proper respect for leaders will bring that to us.

People who always want more stir up conflict. But those who trust in the Lord will succeed. Those who trust in themselves are foolish. But those who live wisely are kept safe. I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for all people — for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. (Proverbs 28:25-26 NIRV; 1 Timothy 2:1-2 NIV)

God wants us to bring blessing into our own lives by praying for understanding and wisdom for those who are in authority over us.

In addiction we often broke laws and chose our own way to get what we needed. In our new life with God in recovery, when we don't like or don't agree with the decisions of some of our leaders, it's God's way that we pray for them rather than simply disregard what they are saying or legislating. God wants us to bring blessing into our own lives by praying for understanding and wisdom for those who are in authority over us.

When godly people win, everyone is very happy. But when sinners take charge, everyone hides. (Proverbs 28:12 NIRV)

Some issues in our society are complex and challenging and require the expertise of many to interpret. Part of our new life with God in recovery is to pray that God would raise up leaders who will champion the cause of both the "haves and the have-nots" and keep those who are evil from coming into leadership.

A ruler who is mean to his people takes money from them by force. But one who hates money gained in the wrong way will rule a long time. (Proverbs 28:16 NIRV)

Do we want a peaceful life in recovery? It's time for us to step up and do whatever we can for the common good including praying for and working with those who are in authority.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, It is challenging to live under authority because I am so used to wanting things my own way. Help me to learn how to work with and pray for those in authority so that I and others can have a peaceful life. Amen

SELF-SUPPORTING – PERSONALLY AND IN THE GROUP

One of the amazing transformations we experience when we have spent time in recovery from active addiction is that we learn how to become self-supporting. Instead of always expecting someone to rescue us with a handout, we learn not only how to pay our own way but also to contribute to the needs of others.

May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands. (Psalm 90:17 NIV)

Our recovery is our responsibility, not something that we expect someone else to do for us. As we recover, we learn how to work hard and little by little we see the fruit of our labour. Working hard and providing for ourselves and our families is both the will of God and the provision of God.

Yet we hear that some of you are living in laziness, refusing to work, and wasting your time in gossiping. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ we appeal to such people—we command them—to quiet down, get to work, and earn their own living. (1 Thessalonians 3:11-12 TLB)

We practice being self-supported in our group life as well as in our personal recovery. We learn how to care for each other and how to ***“love our neighbour as ourselves”*** by putting some money in the basket that goes around in a group meeting. We express the value of this principle in what is described in the A.A. Responsibility Statement: ***“When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.”*** (1965 AA Convention Literature)

When we live responsibly, God will abundantly bless us.

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God. Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans. (2 Corinthians 3:5 NKJV; Proverbs 16:3 NIV)

It is God who gives us the skill to do a specific work. We are created by God to be people who use the gifts God has given us. When we live responsibly, God will abundantly bless us.

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for working in me as You transform me to do the work that You have created me to do. Help me to be faithful and trusting as well as responsible and generous in my work environment and wherever I meet with others. Amen

FORGIVING AS WE HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN

Jesus said that the greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind. And the second is like it, to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. When we accepted Jesus as Lord and Saviour, God forgave all our sins. Through prayer and reading the scriptures, we began a loving relationship with our Heavenly Father and our hearts were filled with thanks for all that He has done for us.

Then he (Jesus) took a cup, gave thanks to God, and gave it to them. “Drink it, all of you,” he said; “this is my blood, which seals God’s covenant, my blood poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. (Matthew 26:27-28 GNT)

We know about God’s great love for us and our love for Him, but how do we feel about loving our neighbour, especially a person who has harmed us? Jesus told a story about an unforgiving servant to teach us that we are to forgive others as we have been forgiven. The story is about a servant who was unable to pay the huge debt he owed to the king. The king generously forgave the debt. The forgiven servant went out and met a fellow servant who owed him a small debt in comparison. The forgiven servant was unwilling to forgive the debt of his fellow servant and had him put in prison until he could pay. The king was not happy when he heard this and had the unforgiving servant put in prison where he was turned over to the torturers.

***But if you
refuse to
forgive
others, your
Father will
not forgive
your sins.***

Matthew 6:15 NLT

And Jesus concluded, “That is how my Father in heaven will treat every one of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.” (Matthew 18:35 GNT)

God’s generous love for us is the reason Jesus came into the world to pay our sin debt and restore our relationship with God. Jesus taught us to pray and ask God to forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors. If we are unwilling to forgive our debtors, how can we pray this prayer and expect God to forgive us?

And when you stand and pray, forgive anything you may have against anyone, so that your Father in heaven will forgive the wrongs you have done. (Mark 11:25 GNT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that I struggle to forgive those who have harmed me. Please fill me with Your love and grace so I can forgive as I have been forgiven by You. Amen

BEING CONFIDENT IN WHO GOD SAYS WE ARE

God has given gifts to everyone; no one has been left out. The gifts He gives are not solely for our benefit but are also for the good of others. We are created to serve God and bring joy and blessing to others. God promises to help us do that. Are you and I willing to step forward, confident in who God says we are? Are we willing to follow His ways and the perfect plan He has for our lives?

Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ’s body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. (Romans 12:4-6a NLT)

The first step in developing self-confidence is acknowledging that God is our creator and that each one of us is individually made with special qualities. As members of the human family, we are extraordinarily gifted because we are made in the image of an awesome God, uniquely equipped with the potential to fulfill the amazing plan He has for us.

Lord ... You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother’s womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. (Psalm 139:13-14 NLT)

Often, to improve our confidence, we must demonstrate to ourselves that we can achieve what we set out to do. How do we do that? We take a risk and do something we have not done before. We leave the safety and security of our comfort zone to determine if we really can achieve something new.

Am I willing to affirm what God says about me and seek His strength to live confidently in the truth that with God in charge, I can successfully complete the work I have been given to do?

Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:6 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to faithfully walk with You as I learn from both my successes and my mistakes. Please increase my faith in Your ability to make a success of my life as I use the gifts You have given me for good in all I say and do. Amen

***My heart
is
confident
in you, O
God; my
heart is
confident.
No wonder
I can sing
your
praises!***

Psalms 57:7 NLT

STEP ONE – I CAN'T DO IT ALONE

We come into recovery because we recognize we are powerless over addictive substances, people, or things that we have become dependent on to sustain life as we know it. We have acknowledged that where we are at is not life-giving and if we continue on this path, it will have the effect of a further downward spiral. Regardless of what we have gained or lost, what we have achieved, or where we have fallen short, we have reached the point where we no longer can cope with life on our own.

We admit our defeat and turn to God for mercy and grace. God assures us that if we choose to trust Him, He will rescue us and help us do what we cannot do for ourselves.

In fact, Jesus said He came to seek and save people exactly like us, in circumstances just like ours.

We have reached the point where we no longer can cope with life on our own.

The Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost. I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners.” (Luke 19:10; Matthew 9:13 NLT)

We are not suffering solely because we have misused certain substances or developed destructive habits or co-dependent relationships. We are not suffering because we think we were treated as second-class human beings or because we grew up in a less than perfect environment. We are suffering because we believed the lie that we could meet our own needs and solve our own problems in our own way. We are suffering because we thought that masking the unbearable pain inside us with a substance, a habit, or a relationship would give us lasting pleasure and make life worth living. We are suffering because we believed we could live life on our own terms and denied the requirement of having an ongoing relationship with the God who created us.

Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22 NIV)

God offers us a new way of life that begins by admitting, we cannot do life on our own.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I admit defeat. I am powerless to live life on my own. Without Your guidance, my life is unmanageable. I give up trying to meet my own needs. I give up trying to cover my pain and confusion with substances, destructive habits, and unhealthy relationships. I ask You to show me the way forward so that I may have peace in my heart. Please strengthen me to follow Your principles in all my affairs. Amen

SELECTIVE SURRENDER

It is important to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God in ALL our affairs. Selective surrender will take us back into trouble. Through prayer and meditation on God's Word we will begin to know the God we are now trusting to help us turn our life around. God's principles for living a meaningful and purposeful life are tried and tested throughout generations. We can trust what God says will work. Our lives will change as we consistently follow God's ways and not our own.

Who but God goes up to heaven and comes back down? Who holds the wind in his fists? Who wraps up the oceans in his cloak? Who has created the whole wide world? What is his name—and his son's name? Tell me if you know! Every word of God proves true. He is a shield to all who come to him for protection. Do not add to his words, or he may rebuke you and expose you as a liar. (Proverbs 30:4-6 NLT)

Our thought patterns need to be informed and changed by God's word. We can ask God to change the way we think so that our thoughts are in line with His directions. God is pleased with us when we do this. He will bless us with peace in our hearts and calm our emotions. However, if we try to live our life with selective surrender to God's will, our chosen disobedience will cause us to stumble and fall.

O Israel, stay away from idols! I am the one who answers your prayers and cares for you. I am like a tree that is always green; all your fruit comes from me. Let those who are wise understand these things. Let those with discernment listen carefully. The paths of the Lord are true and right, and righteous people live by walking in them. But in those paths sinners stumble and fall. (Hosea 14:8-9 NLT)

Turning our will and our life over to the care of God requires that we fully surrender our will to His will and faithfully follow His ways.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for the half-hearted way I am choosing to live. Help me to fully surrender my will and my life to You and to wholeheartedly follow Your ways in all my affairs. Amen

If we try to live our life with selective surrender to God's will, our chosen disobedience will cause us to stumble and fall.

MISSING THE POINT ABOUT MISTAKES

Trying to be perfect is a mean task master yet many of us live in fear of making mistakes and often hide in shame and addictive behaviour when we stumble.

Pride leads to disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom. (Proverbs 11:2 NLT)

Mistakes are a part of life. Thomas Edison failed 100 times before he finally got the light bulb right. Henry Ford went bankrupt 5 times before he had success in manufacturing and selling cars. Michael Jordan missed more than 9000 shots during his famous basketball career, including the 26 times he was given the ball at the last second of the game and missed. Life is full of mistakes, but the winners are those who learn from them and try again.

***The quicker
we admit we
got it wrong,
the quicker
we can build
on the lesson
learned.***

The Lord takes good care of all those who fall. He lifts up all those who feel helpless. (Psalm 145:14 NIRV)

Learning from our mistakes means we look at what went wrong and think about how we might improve in our future efforts. When we don't know about something we need to be humble enough to admit it and ask questions or seek professional help. We need to give our attention to what we are doing and avoid distractions. We need to learn from those who have been successful in their recovery and ask what helped them stay the course. We need to take time to reflect on a task we have done or on what happened in our day and determine if anything went

wrong, and if something did, promptly admit it and take any necessary action.

Even if good people fall seven times, they will get back up. (Proverbs 24:16a CEV)

If we make a mistake, the worst thing we can do is pretend it never happened. It does no good to bluster our way around or try to hide it. The quicker we admit we got it wrong, the quicker we can build on the lesson learned. Let's get active and try, and then try again, until we get things right.

If you don't confess your sins, you will be a failure. But God will be merciful if you confess your sins and give them up. (Proverbs 28:13 CEV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to see my mistakes from Your perspective. When I stumble help me to learn from it, say sorry, get up, live in today, and move on with You. Amen

LIVING IN UNITY

God says it is pleasant for people to live together in unity, that is, in harmony or agreement with one another. How many of us make the effort to live in unity with family, friends, people in meetings, and others?

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down on the collar of his robe. It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore. (Psalm 133:1-3 NIV)

The Bible uses the picture of a physical body to represent this unity. When we surrender our will and our lives to the care of God, He brings us together with others to become one body, the body of Christ. This body is meant to work in harmony just like a physical body. Each part of a physical body is different, but every part is carefully placed by God to function for the good of the whole body.

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. (1 Corinthians 12:27 NIV)

If, for whatever reason, a part of our physical body should not perform the function it was created for, or performs more than its purpose, the whole body suffers. A physical body is healthy when each part is doing what it was created to do. In the body of Christ, God's children are meant to live in harmony, and the blessings of God flow when each person is doing what God planned for that person to do.

Today, let's consider our part in living in unity with other parts of the body of Christ. Let's avoid problems caused by not doing the things we ought to do, or by doing things that others are meant to do. Let's try to understand God's purpose for us, even when He places us together with those with whom we seem to have nothing in common. Let's do everything we can to live in unity with others as we function in a way that is kind and considerate and will enhance the purpose of God in each of our lives.

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to live together in unity with others so that the many parts of the body of Christ function in a way that enables everyone to receive Your blessings. Amen

***How
good and
pleasant
it is when
God's
people
live
together
in unity!***
Psalm 133:1

LIFE IMPROVES AS WE PRACTICE SELF-CONTROL

We live in a time where the freedom to do what we want, when we want, with whomever we want, is the popular understanding of freedom and the source of a wonderful life. Why then would God call us to exercise self-control and motivate us to deny ourselves the right to express our feelings in certain ways at certain times? God's desire is that everyone may experience the abundant life He has planned for them.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. (Jeremiah 29:11, 2 Timothy 1:7 NLT)

God calls us to have self-control, so we can experience deeper joy and satisfaction in our relationship with Him and with others.

God knows what works and what doesn't. God calls us to have self-control, so we can experience deep and lasting joy and satisfaction in our relationship with Him and with others. Following are some areas for us to consider as we conduct an inventory of our lives in the area of self-control.

TEMPER: *People with good sense restrain their anger; they earn esteem by overlooking wrongs.* (Proverbs 19:11 NLT)

WORDS: *Those who control their tongue will have a long life; a quick retort can ruin everything.* (Proverbs 13:3 NLT)

USE OF TIME: *Make the most of every opportunity for doing good in these evil days.* (Ephesians 5:16 NLT)

MAKING MONEY: *Don't wear yourself out trying to get rich. Be wise enough to know when to quit.* (Proverbs 23:4 NLT)

PARTYING: *Don't participate in the darkness of wild parties and drunkenness, or in sexual promiscuity and*

immoral living, or in quarreling and jealousy. (Proverbs 13:13 NLT)

HARD WORK: *Lazy people want much but get little, but those who work hard will prosper.* (Proverbs 13:4 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to learn Your ways and to practice self-control in every area of my life. I need Your power working in me to help me step away from my self-centered attitude and desires. Please change me from the inside out. Amen

OUR STORY OF A FAITHFUL GOD AS WE RECOVER FROM ADDICTION

When we have experienced healing and transformation through daily living in the grace and love of God, we need to tell our story to others and share our experience, strength, and hope with them.

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:22-23 NIV)

Regardless of how destructive the darkness and brokenness of our addiction has been, when we surrender our lives to God He tenderly helps us out of the pit we have dug for ourselves. Each day in recovery is a testament to God's unfailing love and faithfulness to us. God never tires of accompanying us and guiding us. We are never left to face our problems alone. We have times when we feel conscious of God's presence and times when we do not. However, God is always with us, and He is working for our good in every situation.

God has said, "I will never fail you. I will never abandon you." He will send help from heaven to rescue me, disgracing those who hound me. My God will send forth his unfailing love and faithfulness. (Hebrews 13:5, Psalm 57:3 NLT)

God says He will never fail us, and God does not lie. Even when we are unfaithful, God remains faithful. God provides all we need to live as the people He created us to be. Recovery is more about the story of God's faithfulness to us than it is about our strength to endure.

God reminds us that His strength is constantly working in us, and He has a plan and a purpose for our lives. If we mess up, God's forgiveness is still available the instant we repent and confess our failure. We would likely get lost again in the despair of brokenness if we did not believe that God loves us and holds us close to His heart. We will recover as we seek help and guidance from our faithful God in every challenge we encounter.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am grateful for Your unfailing love for me. Help me to be conscious of Your presence ever with me as I am transformed into the likeness of Jesus. Thank You that I can depend on You to be with me in whatever I have to face each day. Amen

Recovery is more about the story of God's faithfulness to us than it is about our strength to endure.

IDENTIFYING AND FACING DYSFUNCTION

For a variety of reasons, many of us have an underlying structure of disorders that is damaging to us and to others. When a person is ill, the first step in getting well is to acknowledge that something is wrong and go to a doctor who can diagnose the cause and offer a treatment plan.

We sometimes tend to think we know all we need to know to answer these kinds of questions—but sometimes our humble hearts can help us more than our proud minds. We never really know enough until we recognize that God alone knows it all. (1 Corinthians 8:2-3 MSG)

We thought the pain and dysfunction experienced in our addiction was the only problem but now realize there are other contributing factors.

As formerly self-directed addicts we need to acknowledge to God that we are hurting and are unable to diagnose and heal ourselves. We admit that we are not certain of the source of our problems, but we trust that God knows and cares. We believed that the pain and dysfunction experienced in our addiction was the only problem but now realize there were other contributing factors. We need to listen to the diagnosis and treatment plan that has been offered to us and agree to act on it. This will eliminate the need to mask the pain with our own destructive choice of medication.

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. My youth is renewed like the eagle's! (Psalm 103:3-5 NLT)

Thank God for His clear diagnosis and treatment plan for our sinful self-centered ways of living separate from Him. Thank God for a wonderful Saviour in Jesus who paid the price to set us free from our sins and diseases. Thank God for the principles of a healthy lifestyle which are clearly defined in the Bible. Thank God for the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within us, enabling us to put into practice, and experience the functional, purposeful life God created us to live.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I need Your help to recognize and overcome my lingering dysfunctional thinking and behaviour. Thank You for being at work within me and for giving me the desire, and the power, to do what pleases You. Please help me to do what is right, to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with You, my God. Amen

LISTEN TO ME AND BE SECURE

In times of trouble, or when facing an uncertain future, it's easy to feel insecure and fearful. God has promised that as we listen to Him, we will be safe and secure.

But if you listen to me, you will be safe and secure without fear of disaster. (Proverbs 1:33 CEV)

It would be very easy to miss the word “but” in the sentence that contains this promise because it is the first word. This word indicates that there are prior things we need to avoid so that we can experience the life of security and blessing that God is promising us. If we read the preceding verses in Proverbs 1 we will be reminded of the trouble that comes when we are enticed into harmful practices such as: when we mock others who live a simple life; when we stay so busy and distracted that we don't hear God's warnings or bother to obey His principles when it is inconvenient to do so; when we slide along not being alert to potential trouble and thinking, “I've got this in the bag.”

The word “listen” has two parts, to hear what God is saying and to obey what we have heard. Doing this will lead to the successful living that God is promising us. God knows what is best for us. We need to seek Him and find out what His plans are for us. God will strengthen us and help guide us around things that would otherwise cause us to stumble, because He knows how weak we are, and how powerful the triggers that cause us to stumble can be. As we give our full attention to God and obey what he says, we will experience the life of security God promises us. We will then be free from the fear of disaster that is so harmful to our well-being.

Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track. Submit yourselves to God. Resist the Devil, and he will run away from you. (Proverbs 3:6 MSG; James 4:7 GNT)

Prayer: Loving God, It is so easy to become confused by fearful thoughts and then act out of panic. Please help me to follow Your ways in every situation I encounter so that I may experience the safety and security that You have promised. When I fail to listen or follow the way You have shown me, help me to admit the error of my ways and quickly get back on track with You. In all I say or do, please help me to listen well to Your Words and then do as You say. Amen

How happy are those who hear the word of God and obey it!

Luke 11:28 GNT

DEALING WITH SELFISHNESS

We begin the process of changing our selfish way of living by turning our will and life over to the care of God. Both the Bible and the Big Book of AA clearly tell us that self-effort alone will not work. With God's help, what are some of the actions we can take that will help us enter a new and satisfying way of unselfish living?

Be Humble: Battling the sin of selfishness requires genuine humility. This means thinking about others and the impact that life situations have had on them rather than always thinking about ourselves first and how life situations have impacted us. ***Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.*** (Romans 12:3 NIV).

Help me to look beyond myself and become a person of humility and sober judgment.

Pray and Study God's Word: Prayer and meditation on God's word are necessary to our well-being in recovery. The Bible teaches us: ***Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.*** (Psalm 119:36; Philippians 2:3 NIV).

Intentionally Honor Others: As we live with God in recovery our attitude towards others becomes one of genuine care and concern rather than personal approval seeking. ***Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection and take delight in honoring each other.*** (Romans 12:9-10 NLT)

Give Generously: An unselfish person knows that money and possessions are for sharing not hoarding. A sure cure for selfishness is the practice of giving. ***You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."*** (Acts 20:35 NLT).

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to learn from Your Word as recorded in the Bible and from those who have travelled this path before me. I want to let go of my selfish ways and allow Your love to flow through me to others. Help me to look beyond myself and become a person of humility and sober judgment. Help me to love others as You love me. Amen

PROTECTION IN TIMES OF VULNERABILITY

Life has many vulnerable moments, especially in our early days in recovery. The memories of our wrecked relationships and unresolved problems play over and over in our minds. Our lives were truly unmanageable and we were powerless to sort things out. We felt broken down and vulnerable. It seemed the whole world was after us. The clarity of time spent in recovery painfully underlines these facts. Thankfully Step One's admission is linked to Step Two's affirmation of hope that there is a higher power who can restore us to sanity.

I wait quietly before God, for my victory comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress where I will never be shaken. So many enemies against one man—all of them trying to kill me. To them I'm just a broken-down wall or a tottering fence.
(Psalm 62:1-3 NLT)

God has whatever we need to sort out everything that needs sorting, and He will protect our tender hearts in the process. Our lives with God in recovery give us many opportunities to witness God's work of restoration in us. We have not previously known strength like God's strength which includes kindness and understanding.

My victory and honor come from God alone. He is my refuge, a rock where no enemy can reach me. O my people, trust in him at all times. Pour out your heart to him, for God is our refuge. (Psalm 62:7-8 NLT)

What is our part in our relationship with God? We choose to trust Him and pour out our hearts to Him as honestly and openly as we can. In the beginning we may experience a mixture of fear and trust but, as we walk with God, we will become more confident that He truly is a place of refuge from the storms of life.

Prayer: Gracious God, Help me to live in Your care today and experience the safety, stability, and satisfaction of knowing You. I put my trust in You for You are the God who promises to heal my wounds and restore me to health and sanity. Amen

As we walk with God, we will become more confident that He truly is a place of refuge from the storms of life.

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 what our reaction to them was, then we come closer to changing our thought patterns and responses to troubling situations. Jesus came into this sinful world not to judge it for what it was and still is, but to put it right again.

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.

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 and have all their earthly needs met through unrighteous acts. 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 the things we can, and simply be at peace with the rest.

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. Please give me the courage and wisdom to accept the things I cannot change and, with Your help, change the things I can. Amen

GIVING UP STREET SMART BEHAVIOUR

We often bring our "street smart" thinking into recovery with us. Evidence of this shows when we compare ourselves to others and decide we are not as bad as we thought because others are doing worse things than we are. We gossip and feel important when we know something that others do not know. When someone challenges us and we counter-attack with a smart remark, we feel pretty good about ourselves. We use degrading words to embarrass or victimize a person or an ethnic group. Any of these practices are evidence that we're not living wisely in recovery but are settling for "street smart" behaviour.

The Bible tells us: ***An honest witness tells the truth; a false witness tells lies. Some people make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise bring healing. Truthful words stand the test of time, but lies are soon exposed.*** (Proverbs 12:17-19 NLT)

It doesn't take long in recovery before "street smart" thinking returns to our minds. We begin to reflect on life in addiction and tell ourselves it really "wasn't so bad." Things are not changing quickly enough for us in recovery so we tell ourselves that there are too many challenges and not enough people to help, and we need to find another way that will work for us. These familiar but twisted ideas roll around in our heads challenging the truth that is still unfamiliar to us. If we obsess in this way of thinking, we will become discontented and find ourselves well on our way to relapse.

The naive believe anything, but the prudent give thought to their steps. The wise are careful and avoid evil, but fools become excited and overconfident. Short-tempered people make stupid mistakes, and schemers are hated. (Proverbs 14:15-17 CEB)

God's desire is that we allow ourselves to be guided by His wisdom and replace our "street smart thinking" with His principles for living life to the full.

Respect and obey the Lord! This is the first step to wisdom and good sense. (Psalm 111:10 CEV)

Prayer: Gracious God, Lead me in Your truth and teach me Your ways for I have put my hope in You. Amen

God's desire is that we allow ourselves to be guided by His wisdom and replace our "street smart thinking" with His principles for living life to the full.

WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT

When troubles show up in our lives, we are advised to quickly call out to God and trust that He will hear us and help us. The problem is, we often wait until the challenges are way too much for us to handle and then we come to God in a panic. We expect God's help in an instant. When that doesn't happen, we complain that God doesn't care about us.

I pray to you, Lord. So when the time is right, answer me and help me with your wonderful love. Don't let me sink in the mud, but save me from my enemies and from the deep water. Don't let me be swept away by a flood or drowned in the ocean or swallowed by death. Answer me, Lord! You are kind and good. Pay attention to me! You are truly merciful. Don't turn away from me. I am your servant, and I am in trouble. Please hurry and help! Come and save me from my enemies. (Psalm 69:13-18 CEV)

The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake.

2 Peter 3:9a NLT

We are encouraged by the Bible reading above to remember that God is merciful, kind, and good, and His love has no limit. God pays attention to us when we are in trouble, and He promises to rescue us. The great faith that we need to develop is to trust that *"when the time is right"* God's help will be there for us.

While God truly is kind and quickly responds to many of our requests, only God knows all that needs to be in place before the perfect solution is applied. We often assume that God's help will come in the way we think we need it and at the time we want to have it. It does not always work like that. God may help us in different ways and at different times than we might desire, but His help is effective in every situation and always on time.

The Lord is good to those who put their hope in him. He is good to those who look to him. It is good when people wait quietly for the Lord to save them. (Lamentation 3:25-26 NIRV)

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for hearing and answering my prayers and for loving me. Help me to have faith and to continue to put my hope in You as I wait for some answers to come. To know You is to believe that You are never slow as some people might think but are patient to fulfill Your plan for my life by bringing the perfect solution at just the right time. Amen

SETTLING MY HEART BY SHOWING MERCY

Mercy is the act of being compassionate or kind toward someone who does not deserve it. God showed mercy towards us by sending Jesus into the world, not to condemn us for our sin, but to save us from it. How then should we respond when dealing with others?

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Matthew 5:7, Ephesians 4:32 NIV)

When a person stands before a judge for a crime they have committed, what are they hoping for? Their lawyer will likely have prepared them for the expected penalty for the crime but they still have hope that the judge will show mercy and give a lesser sentence.

God, the righteous judge, did not give us a lesser sentence than the one we deserved for our sin. Instead, He sent Jesus into the world to be our substitute. Jesus paid the penalty for our sin in full and cleared our record. God's love and mercy towards us is freely given. We should then be like God and freely offer to others forgiveness, love, and mercy. Forgiveness and mercy come from a heart that has been changed by the extravagant love of God for us.

But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all. (Isaiah 53:5-6 NLT)

We are not acting with compassion and mercy if we are choosing to call others to account for every unkind thing they say or do or if our desire is that they suffer for mean things they have done to us in the past.

Showing mercy and forgiveness is proof that we are walking in the light of God's love, and it has brought peace to our souls and settled our hearts.

Heavenly Father, I confess that I have been reluctant to forgive those who have harmed me. Fill me with Your love and compassion so that I can be like You and show kindness and mercy from a generous heart. Amen

Showing mercy and forgiveness is proof that we are walking in the light of God's love, and it has brought peace to our souls and settled our hearts.

KINDNESS and COMPASSION

God is kind and compassionate. Knowing and believing that God tenderly watches over us with compassion in circumstances we are in will allow our hearts to be filled with peace as we navigate our vulnerable days in recovery. Comfort and healing for our pain will flow from the knowledge that God really does care for us.

I myself taught Israel how to walk, leading him along by the hand. But he doesn't know or even care that it was I who took care of him. I led Israel along with my ropes of kindness and love. I lifted the yoke from his neck, and I myself stooped to feed him. (Hosea 11:3-4 NLT)

God treasures us as His beloved children and desires that we respond to Him as we would to a loving, caring, earthly Father. When we gave our will and life over to the care of God we may not have been aware of God's kindness towards us. An important part of our new life with God in recovery is getting to know this generous grace offered to us through Jesus Christ. When Jesus looked at suffering people, His heart was filled with compassion for them.

***The Lord is
compassionate
and merciful,
slow to get
angry and
filled with
unfailing love.***

Psalms 103:8 NLT

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. (Matthew 9:36 NIV)

To the extent that we experience God's love, our obsessive thoughts and destructive behaviour will diminish. We can tell God about what we are feeling because He loves and cares for us and knows exactly what we need. In the safety of God's protection, we will see our behaviour improving. Instead of the heavy burden of forcing ourselves to hold our poor behaviour in check, we will find ourselves relaxing and communicating with others in a friendly manner. Experiencing kindness helps us to express kindness.

For you are my hiding place; you protect me from trouble. You surround me with songs of victory. The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you." (Psalm 32:7-8 NLT)

Prayer: Gracious God, I ask You to teach me Your ways so that my behaviour may reflect You in me. My desire is to honour You in all I say and do. Thank You for Your love and kindness towards me, I am forever thankful that You love and care for me. Amen

THERE TRULY IS A GOD and IT'S NOT ANY ONE OF US

Tony Bennet sang a song, "If I Ruled the World". The words of the song speak of what would be put into effect if the singer ruled the world. However, when one observes the expanse of the universe and has some knowledge of the precision required to keep the planets, sun, moon and stars in place, we should be thankful that this is not a task that has been left in the care of a limited human being.

The Lord is high above all nations, His glory above the heavens. Who is like the Lord our God, who dwells on high, who humbles Himself to behold the things that are in the heavens and in the earth? (Psalm 113:4-6 NKJV)

Our lives are complex and require God's knowledgeable precision to operate well. When we choose to make our own decisions, we become our own god and our own care giver and supplier. With our limited knowledge of life, it doesn't take long before important things are dangerously "out of sync." Each of us knows deep down inside us that there must be a God for we are unable to cope with life on our own.

Love God, all you saints; God takes care of all who stay close to him, but he pays back in full those arrogant enough to go it alone. (Psalm 31:23 MSG)

Jesus came to earth so that through His death and resurrection we could be restored to God and live forever. Jesus told us He was going home to prepare a place for us in heaven. Life is so much more than the few years we have on this earth and only God can do all that is necessary to prepare us for this amazing forever life. When we take time to reflect on these things, we become more aware that there truly is a God and it's not any one of us.

God's home is with people. He will live with them. They will be his people. God himself will be with them and will be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death, sadness, crying, or pain. All the old ways are gone. (Revelation 21:3-4 ERV)

Prayer: God of Heaven and Earth, You have prepared a place for me to be with You forever. Help me take this sinful world as it is, trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your will. Amen

***Each of us
knows deep
down inside
us that
there must
be a God
for we are
unable to
cope with
life on our
own.***

MAKING AMENDS

In our life in addiction, we offended many people – family members, friends, and even strangers. We lived to meet the needs of our addiction and were concerned only for ourselves. We neglected others' needs. We lied, cheated, and even stole from those around us. We made enemies by our actions. We avoided people because of our behaviour.

When we put our hand into the hand of God, He will strengthen and support us as we become willing to make amends to those we have harmed.

When we are ready, we will make a list of all the people we have harmed and then begin to consider how and when we might make amends to them. Because of the impact our addictive behaviour had on them, we may be fearful of making amends to some of those on our list. We fear they will not be as willing as God to forgive us for what we have done.

O God have mercy on me, for people are hounding me. My foes attack me all day long. I am constantly hounded by those who slander me, and many are boldly attacking me. But when I am afraid, I will put my trust in you. I praise God for what he has promised. I trust in God, so why should I be afraid? What can mere mortals do to me? (Psalm 56:1-4 NLT)

In these challenging moments, like the writer of the above Psalm, we will put our trust in God and say: ***"I praise God for what He has promised. I trust in God, so why should I be afraid? What can mere mortals do to me?"***

When we put our hand into the hand of God, He will strengthen and support us as we become willing to make amends to those we have harmed. God is always with us, we need never face our problems alone.

See, God has come to save me. I will trust in him and not be afraid. The Lord God is my strength and my song; he has given me victory. (Isaiah 12:2 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for Your mercy and unfailing love for me. When I am afraid to complete any of the assigned tasks in the steps of my recovery program, I will trust You to help me do what is required. Amen

IDENTIFYING OUR STINKING THINKING

One of the greatest spiritual dangers in recovery is "stinking thinking". What we think often leads to what we do because our actions are based on our stinking thinking. One example of this is that when we make an incorrect assumption that, "God cannot or will not help me" we tend to allow ourselves to be dominated by fear – fear of the past, fear of the guilt we feel, fear of relapse, fear of embarrassment, fear of loneliness, fear of being hurt in relationship.

Jesus said, "And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand. (Matthew 28:20, Isaiah 41:10 NLT)

When we think that God cannot or will not help us, we leave ourselves open to harmful actions. We are too fearful to do what is right and good, so we end up experiencing emptiness and often choose addictive habits to deal with the pain of not being who we truly are. In our mind we think and then tell ourselves, "We do not have any other option but to take care of ourselves".

We allow negative feelings and frustration with life to build up within us and vent our fears in angry outbursts of words or actions towards whoever is closest in that moment. After an eruption of anger, we again experience discouragement, shame, loneliness, and increased pain because of the conflict. We blame God or others for where we are in life but fail to acknowledge that our best thinking is defective, and we need help.

The Lord says, I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. Unfailing love surrounds those who trust the Lord. (Psalm 32:8,10 NLT)

The Lord's unfailing love surrounds those who trust in Him and, if we ask Him, He will teach us His way to life and peace in all our affairs. It's time to open our minds and hearts to God and watch Him act on our behalf.

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to trust that You are good, that You are with me, and that You care about me and what happens in my life. Amen

It's time to open our minds and hearts to God and watch Him act on our behalf.

WISDOM FOR REBUILDING

Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control.
(Proverbs 25:28 NIV)

What a helpful picture this proverb provides for us who have come out of a chaotic lifestyle in addiction. While in addiction, our walls were broken down and anyone could enter and cause havoc. There was no order, no protection and no peace for the people. However, when we called out to God in our confused state, He brought us to a place where we could start rebuilding a safe and secure life in recovery.

When we follow the ways of God, He will watch over and protect us as we rebuild our lives.

O Lord, I have come to you for protection; don't let me be disgraced. Save me, for you do what is right. Turn your ear to listen to me; rescue me quickly. Be my rock of protection, a fortress where I will be safe. (Psalm 31:1-2 NLT)

In the Bible we read how Nehemiah and the residents rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem which had been broken down. Nehemiah and the people had to have courage and self-control to do the work and finish the job. They faced cynics who criticized their work and sneered at them each day saying that the wall they were building would never be strong enough and all the gaps would never be filled. Through it all Nehemiah and the people of Jerusalem persevered, and the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt in an amazingly short period of time.

So on October 2 the wall was finished—just fifty-two days after we had begun. When our enemies and the surrounding nations heard about it, they were frightened and humiliated. They realized this work had been done with the help of our God. (Nehemiah 6:15-16 NLT)

When we follow the ways of God, He will watch over and protect us as we rebuild our lives. There will be some who think that we can never achieve sobriety and self-control. However, if we persevere and follow God's ways, we will succeed in the face of adversity, just as Nehemiah and the people of Jerusalem did.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I need courage and self-control to face the task of rebuilding my life. Help me to obey Your teaching and persevere in following Your ways. Amen

MONEY IS NEVER ENOUGH

There is a saying that "money makes the world go around." What does this mean? We could interpret it to mean that without money everything comes to a standstill. If having money is important to make things happen what if the supply dries up? Does life come to a halt? Jesus told us not to worry about money and yet, when we do not have enough money, we worry.

So I tell you, don't worry about the things you need to live—what you will eat, drink, or wear. Life is more important than food, and the body is more important than what you put on it. Look at the birds. They don't plant, harvest, or save food in barns, but your Heavenly Father feeds them. Don't you know you are worth much more than they are? (Matthew 6:25-26 ERV)

Only humans worry about money and their future well-being. The birds and the animals don't worry about money. They don't have sleepless nights thinking about how they will provide for the future. How much does our worrying contribute to what we need?

Those who work hard all day come home and sleep in peace. It is not important if they have little or much to eat. But the rich worry about their wealth and are not able to sleep. (Ecclesiastes 5:15 ERV)

When we lived without the help of God, we managed either legally or illegally to fulfill the demands of our dependencies. Now that we have given our will and life over to the care of God, who is the great provider, will we continue to worry about what we need? God has promised to do for us that which we cannot do for ourselves. What we can do for ourselves, He will help us do. Money is not what makes things happen in this world, God is! Let's choose today to trust God and stop worrying about money.

People come into the world with nothing. And when they die, they leave with nothing. They might work hard to get things, but they cannot take anything with them when they die. (Ecclesiastes 5:15 ERV)

Prayer: Loving God, You alone are the great provider. Help me not to worry about money and instead choose to trust You to meet all my needs. Amen

Jesus told us not to worry about money and yet, when we do not have enough money, we worry.

HIDING IN THE SHADOWS

All of us are vulnerable to relapses when we are feeling lonely, frustrated or dissatisfied with life. When our minds are obsessed with shadows from our past, we need to seek help from our gracious God, our sponsor, or someone we can trust. We need to be honest about what we are experiencing. The devil's desire is to steal, kill, and destroy us. He had power over us until we gave our will and life over to the care of God. Now, even though he is no longer our master, he lurks in the shadows seeking an opportunity to restore his power over us.

All of us are vulnerable to relapses when we are feeling lonely, frustrated or dissatisfied with life.

When sin had power over your life, you were not right with God. What good did you get from the things you are ashamed of now? Those things bring death. But now you are free from the power of sin. You have become a servant for God. Your life is set apart for God-like living. The end is life that lasts forever. (Romans 6:20-22 NLV)

Feeling empty and vulnerable and clinging to thoughts or practices that present us with an opportunity to relapse are signs that the devil is working hard to enslave us again. We must tell ourselves the truth, that giving in to our addiction will bring ruin to our lives. Our substance or dependency will not give us the life we are longing for. If it had, we wouldn't be in recovery today. Instead of thinking about relapse, we need to seek help from God and trusted friends who will assist us to persevere through the temptations that occur.

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isaiah 41:10 NIV)

God will give us the will and strength to persevere through and have victory over our trials. God desire for us is to have fullness of life. The devil wants to kill and destroy us. Whom will we choose to trust and obey?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me to persevere through the times of trial in my life. Help me to daily affirm the truth that, "I am no longer a slave to fear, I am a child of God". My desire is to follow You in all my ways and have fullness of life. Please help me! Amen

RECKLESS BEHAVIOUR or SOUND JUDGMENT

When God wants to paint a picture, He does so very effectively. An out-of-control life of self-will that ignores God is clearly described in detail in the Bible.

You can be certain that in the last days there will be some very hard times. People will love only themselves and money. They will be proud, stuck-up, rude, and disobedient to their parents. They will also be ungrateful, godless, heartless, and hateful. Their words will be cruel, and they will have no self-control or pity. These people will hate everything that is good. They will be sneaky, reckless, and puffed up with pride. Instead of loving God, they will love pleasure. Even though they will make a show of being religious, their religion won't be real. Don't have anything to do with such people.

(2 Timothy 3:1-5 CEV)

We read these words and quickly get uncomfortable because we find ourselves on the list numerous times due to our own reckless behaviour. If ever we were reminded of why we need recovery and why we need to admit our lives are unmanageable, this list pretty much sums it up.

The problem for many of us is that we attach our reckless behaviour only to our substance abuse and do not include things like being sneaky or ungrateful which are equally unacceptable behaviours. We need a radical change of heart. We need to change our perspective and become willing to see things as God sees them. We need the humility to come to God with a willingness to have Him remove all our defects of character.

As grim as conditions in the self-willed life might look, God encourages us by describing the changes He will make if we determine to follow His ways. We will be considered people of sound judgment when we speak clearly and honestly about ourselves as we share with others our life story of healing, freedom, and transformation.

The hearts of reckless people will understand sound judgment, and the tongues of those who stammer will be ready to speak clearly. (Isaiah 32:4 ISV)

Prayer: Loving God, On my own my life is like a train wreck. I turn away from all expressions of reckless behaviour and ask You to help me change. Today, I turn my will and life over to Your care. Amen

The wise are cautious and avoid danger; fools plunge ahead with reckless confidence.

Proverbs 14:16
NLT