

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations



JUNE 2025



These meditations are available online
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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.*

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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.

FREED FROM ALL MY FEARS

What would it look like if we were to live in freedom from all our fears? For some of us it hardly seems possible. We have hope for something better than we are living today but to believe that we could live free from ALL our fears seems a bit like “pie in the sky.”

I prayed to the Lord, and he answered me. He freed me from all my fears. Those who look to him for help will be radiant with joy; no shadow of shame will darken their faces. (Psalm 34:4-5 NLT)

The verses from the Bible today make this astonishing claim, “He freed me from all my fears.” We are told that when we pray to God, He answers us.

Day-by-day, situation-by-situation, as we encounter fear and bring it to God, it will be removed from us. Does God know and care that we are scared and have been pounded into a fearful place by a difficult situation? Certainly! Is God able to protect us until we feel safe again and normality returns? Once again, the Bible assures us that perfect love casts out all fear.

In my desperation I prayed, and the Lord listened; he saved me from all my troubles. Taste and see that the Lord is good. Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him! (Psalm 34:6, 8 NLT)

Obviously when we call out to God it’s from a place where we know we need help and are asking for it. The above verses from the Bible suggest that those who were looking to God were experiencing despair and shame and trouble in their lives. Sound familiar? No matter how fearful we may feel at this time or in this place where we find ourselves right now, if we invite God to be with us, God will answer, and changes will occur both in us and around us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You know my heart better than I do. You know when I am feeling anxious or fearful. When a frightening situation arises, I will choose to seek Your help and trust Your perfect peace to work in me and around me. Help me to be conscious of Your perfect love which casts out all fear. Amen

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JUNE 2

BEING PERSISTENT IN CALLING OUT FOR HEALING

Our hope for healing is not centered on what we think we may deserve but is founded on the grace of God given to those who believe in Jesus. When we give our will and lives over to the care of God, we become His precious children and are given an inheritance based on His love and favour towards us. There is no unimportant child in the family of God.

Lord my God, I called to you for help, and you healed me. Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.
(Psalm 30:2; Matthew 7:7 NIV)

***I call to you,
Lord, come
quickly to
me; hear me
when I call to
you. May my
prayer be set
before you
like incense.***

*(Psalm 141:1-2a
NIV)*

There is a story in the Bible of a blind man named Bartimaeus who was sitting by the roadside begging when he heard the noise of a great crowd passing by. He must have asked what the noise was all about and was told that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. He started to shout, "Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me!" Many told him to be quiet but that did not stop him for he shouted even more.

When we call out to God for healing, are we persistent?

Jesus ignored the crowd and stopped and said to them, "Call him." At this the crowd said, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." Throwing his cloak aside – maybe the only security he had – Bartimaeus jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. When Jesus asked Bartimaeus what he wanted him to do for him, he replied, "I want to see." Immediately he received his sight. (Mark 10:46-50)

When Bartimaeus received the healing he had requested, it meant leaving behind his former lifestyle, his source of income, and more than likely the friends with whom he begged. Having his sight meant everything in the future would be new to him. Are we calling out to God for healing, and if so, are we ready to live the new life that God will give us?

Prayer: Loving God, I ask You to fill me with the knowledge of the plan You have for my life and also give me the wisdom and understanding I need to accomplish it. Amen

NOTES

CHARACTER DEFECT – INSINCERITY

We all long to be genuine and sincere in our relationship with God and others, and yet we often find ourselves being fake and insincere. Self-centeredness, fear, co-dependency, approval seeking, irritation and control issues are just a few of the things that push us over the slippery slope to that ugly place where we are not truthful about what we are saying but rather are hiding what is going on inside us.

People will love only themselves and money. They will be proud and boast about themselves ... They will have no love for others and will refuse to forgive anyone. They will talk about others to hurt them and will have no self-control.

They will be cruel and hate what is good. People will turn against their friends. They will do foolish things without thinking and will be so proud of themselves. Instead of loving God, they will love pleasure. They will go on pretending to be devoted to God, but they will refuse to let that "devotion" change the way they live. Stay away from these people! (2 Timothy 3:2-6 ERV)

It's time to stop pretending. We need to say what we mean and mean what we say.

It's time to stop pretending. We need to say what we mean and mean what we say. We need to speak the truth with kindness, admit when we are wrong and forgive others when they fail. If we make plans we need to keep them, even if it is inconvenient. When we say we care, we need to really listen and perhaps lend a hand. We need to watch our words and quit any negative talk or gossip. If we have a problem with someone, we need to learn how to talk it out in a healthy way. We don't know everything, and we cannot always attend to someone else's needs. We need to become genuine and humble, admitting our limits. We need to remember what we can do in the light of how far

we have come. Rather than making insincere and foolish promises we know we can't keep, we need to have respect for the circumstances and say "No" or "I can't" to the person asking for help. This honours them more than empty words.

Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. (Romans 12:9, 1 John 3:18 NIRV)

Prayer: Loving God, You are faithful and sincere in all Your ways. Teach me to be truthful and kind in every circumstance. Please forgive me when I falter. Amen

WILLING TO CHANGE

As we become willing to have God remove our defects of character, we commit to being persons who desire God's will to replace our own. We learn to face reality by overcoming false beliefs about: a) what is right or wrong; b) who has all the necessary information about what truly works; and c) who gets to be in charge of the process of change.

On our own we are unable to identify right and wrong for ourselves. We need God's word to reveal that to us. To understand what is broken in us and then become willing to change is only possible when we rely on God's Holy Spirit to reveal to us what needs to be healed and restored. God will meet us where we are at and bring new life to us when we sincerely seek to know Him and follow His ways.

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you and lead me along the path of everlasting life. (Psalm 139:23-24 NLT)

As we seek God, He will gently reveal our defects of character. He speaks clearly. He fills us with courage to see the truth and gives us the will and the power to change our ways.

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

As we choose to obey God's principles for life as revealed in the Bible, we will progressively move forward in our life with God in recovery. Our self-destructive patterns will be removed and replaced by His life-giving ways. By the power of God's Holy Spirit, we will be transformed into a new person and come to know God's will and plan for our lives.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for calling me out of darkness into Your glorious light. Help me to quickly abandon my own ideas and ways that get in the road of my recovery. Help me to surrender to Your truth and in so doing be made whole. Amen

As we choose to obey God's principles for life as revealed in the Bible, we will progressively move forward in our life with God in recovery.

THE PATHWAY OF PEACE

Each day in recovery is a new opportunity to respond to God's call to live with humility, desire reconciliation in relationships, walk in forgiveness, and focus on cleaning our side of the street.

Honesty, balance, and realism are essential tools to keep at hand when we are seeking peace in all our relationships. When we have a problem with others we should not lean towards self-righteous justification. In those moments we should remember the Golden Rule, ***"Do to others as you would like them to do to you."*** (Luke 6:31 NLT)

***Honesty,
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God wants to teach us about ourselves as we humbly bring our past, present, and future to Him and have a desire to learn His ways. The list of people we have harmed is evidence that we have failed them by doing things our way. Humility says we have much to learn. Becoming willing to make amends is an expression of our deep desire to do all that is in our power to make peace and open paths for healing and reconciliation.

When we work a Step 8 or Step 9, we ask God to show us where we may have caused harm. We take responsibility for our part in the harm that was caused. This attitude of respect for the dignity of others and sincere sorrow for any actions that hurt them is what we need to demonstrate in both our words and our manner as we make amends and seek their forgiveness.

Because of God's tender mercy, the morning light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace. (Luke 1:78-79 NLT)

As we put our trust in God and ask Him to guide us on this path of peace, we will experience great burdens being lifted from our shoulders and amazing peace filling our hearts.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I have so much to learn. Help me to be considerate towards those individuals I have harmed and not simply want what is best for me. My desire is that any actions I take will have the effect of healing and restoration in my relationships. Amen

GOD DOES WHAT HE PROMISES

How encouraging it is for us to know that God is on our side and God always does what He promises.

This I know: God is on my side! I praise God for what he has promised; yes, I praise the Lord for what he has promised. I trust in God, so why should I be afraid? What can mere mortals do to me? I will fulfill my vows to you, O God, and will offer a sacrifice of thanks for your help. For you have rescued me from death; you have kept my feet from slipping. So now I can walk in your presence, O God, in your life-giving light. (Psalm 56:9b-13 NLT)

We come into recovery because our life is unmanageable, and we are powerless to fix it. Many of us never knew that there was a God who was willing to rescue us and restore us to sanity. A wonderful part of this new way of life is the process of coming to believe in this power greater than ourselves, and also finding that this gracious God who is loving and faithful is for us and not against us.

Part of the spiritual awakening so many give witness to as they work through the 12-step program, is that God was already working on their behalf long before they recognized it. Some of us are alive today because God had a plan and purpose for our lives. When we did not care about our life, God did.

While we may have been unsure about God and what He promised, God proved Himself faithful to do all that He said. He rescued us from the slimy pit of addiction and continues to keep our feet from slipping. Every day we are coming to realize what an awesome God He is, and we are choosing to trust His moral guidance.

God doesn't rescue us from addiction and then leave us on our own to figure things out. Through prayer and meditation, we will improve our conscious contact with God and identify what His plan for our life is. We then will receive from Him the power to carry it out. God will also give ongoing spiritual revelations as we continue to walk in His presence and life-giving light.

Prayer: Gracious God, Thank You that You are faithful to do all that You have promised. Thank You for all that You have done for me, even when I didn't recognize or give thanks for it. Help me to wholeheartedly trust You and follow Your life-giving ways in all I do. Amen

***God is on
our side
and God
always
does what
He
promises.***

MANY REASONS FOR GIVING THANKS

There are many reasons to be thankful to the Lord for all He has done for us. He took us from the pit of our addiction and brought people into our lives who helped us understand His unfailing love for us. When we thought there was no way forward, He made a way. God also made us many promises and one by one we see them coming true, for He is faithful to His Word. God has done many things for us, and we can now say with confidence, “He truly is a miracle worker”.

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. (Psalm 105:1-5 CEV)

God has done many things for us, and we can now say with confidence, “He truly is a miracle worker”.

As we read and obey God’s counsel about living in the power of His Holy Spirit, there is nothing too difficult for us to achieve. When we first came into recovery we wondered if we would be able to stay the course. We knew the nagging effects of our dependency on us and were unsure how strong our desire was to stay clean.

Living one day at a time and seeking God’s help to ignore negative and obsessive thoughts was a start. Then we discovered that we could take these thoughts to God and allow His Power which is greater than ourselves to fight the battle in our minds. All we needed to do was what the Psalm says, “***Trust the Lord and his mighty power.***”

When life presents us with problems and we struggle to cope, we need to remember that God is present with us and ask for His help. In good times and in troublesome times, God will help us do the next right thing, and He will make everything work together for our good.

We thank you, God, we thank you—your Name is our favorite word; your mighty works are all we talk about. (Psalm 75:1 MSG)

Prayer: Gracious God, I praise Your name that I am never alone. In good times and trying times I pour out my heart before You because You are my strong tower in whom I trust. Amen

ONGOING SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Many of us thought we would never sink so low in our destructive lifestyle and yet we ended up there by our own choosing. Sometimes we still wonder if a recovering addict can ever reach the abundant life that Jesus said He came to give us. God tells us that what we choose is a significant factor in how we experience abundance. Every day we must decide if we are satisfied with where we are right now or if we want ongoing spiritual growth?

Give me the knowledge to make wise decisions. I trust your commands. Before I suffered, I did many wrong things. But now I carefully obey everything you say. (Psalm 119: 66-67 ERV)

Seeds can germinate, sprout, and grow into a wonderful harvest if they are planted in healthy soil, are fed, watered, and weeded. It is the same with us. We can have ongoing growth both physically and spiritually if we live in a clean environment, feed ourselves with healthy food, and spiritually guard our hearts by reading and obeying the Word of God. If we starve ourselves of nourishment, either physical or spiritual, we will suffer decline and there will be no growth in the life God has planned for us.

Dear friends, we have these promises from God. So, we should make ourselves pure—free from anything that makes our body or our soul unclean. Our respect for God should make us try to be completely holy in the way we live. (2 Corinthians 7:1 ERV)

We have an enemy who wants to destroy us before we can become all that God intends us to be. Let’s not let that happen by being lazy or complacent. Today, let’s give thanks for all that God has done for us and choose to keep on learning and growing spiritually as we once again surrender our will and life to God’s care and choose to follow His guidance in all our affairs.

He makes both us and you remain strong in the faith because we belong to Christ. He anointed us. He put his Spirit in our hearts and marked us as his own. We can now be sure that he will give us everything he promised us. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22 NIRV)

Prayer: Loving God, I am thankful that Jesus came into the world to save me and give me new life. Give me greater understanding of who You are and all that You do, and all that You have planned for me to be and to do. Amen

Are we satisfied with where we are right now, or do we want ongoing spiritual growth?

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 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)

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

Proverbs 14:16 NLT

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 in recovery is that we attach our reckless behaviour only to our substance abuse and fail to include things like being mean and ungrateful which are equally unacceptable. We need a radical change of heart, and we need to change our perspective to become one that is willing to see things as God sees them. We need humility to come to God with a willingness to have Him remove all our character defects.

As dire as conditions in the self-willed life might look, God encourages us with His word as He describes the changes He will make when we follow His ways. We can be people who understand sound judgment and speak clearly as we share with others our exciting stories 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, My life without You is like a train wreck, I have proved that over and over again. Today, I choose to turn away from all expressions of reckless behaviour. Today, I turn my will and my life over to Your care. Please help me change! Amen

GETTING OFF TRACK BY REFUSING TO LISTEN

To be responsible recovering addicts, we need to have regular contact with God and seek His wisdom and His will for our lives. We need to ask God to give us understanding of the Scriptures and pray for His help in applying His principles in all our affairs. It is easy to pick up our old way of doing things and then irresponsibility kicks in and starts us on a downward slope. Our sponsor or a trusted friend may have spoken to us about how we were getting off track, but we refused to listen. Before we knew it, we were behaving in ways that were not in keeping with our new life with God in recovery and found we ourselves moving towards relapse.

As a dog eats its own vomit, so fools recycle silliness. See that man who thinks he's so smart? You can expect far more from a fool than from him. (Proverbs 26:11-12 MSG)

Some of us deceive ourselves by justifying our behaviour and the bad choices we are making. We may have hurt someone with angry words or behaved unacceptably. We may have stayed silent to avoid dealing with a situation where gossip was being spread. We may have then foolishly spread the gossip we heard. We are accountable to God and to those in authority for the unwise choices we make. If we were to judge ourselves, could we say we are loving our neighbour as ourselves?

When you run out of wood, the fire goes out; when the gossip ends, the quarrel dies down. A quarrelsome person in a dispute is like kerosene thrown on a fire. (Proverbs 26:21-22 MSG)

If we humbly ask God to help us change those things we can, God will enable us to do so and will help us live in the wisdom of His word. Choosing to actively live in loving relationship with God and with our neighbours will empower us to live a joyful life which no one can take from us. As God blesses us abundantly, we will in turn be a blessing to others.

Prayer: Loving God, I need Your wisdom and understanding to change my uncaring ways and actions. My desire is to love You with all my heart and to love my neighbour as myself, please help me to do so. Amen

Our sponsor or a trusted friend may have spoken to us about getting off track but we refused to listen...and found ourselves moving towards relapse.

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 to 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 towards 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? Normally their lawyer would have prepared them for the possible penalty for the crime, but their hope is that the judge will have mercy and give a lesser sentence.

Showing mercy and forgiving others is God's way for us to walk in His light. This will bring peace to our souls and settle our hearts.

God, the righteous judge, did not give us a lesser sentence than the one we deserved for our sin. Instead, He pronounced the full and proper sentence but sent Jesus into the world to pay that penalty in full. By His death on the cross, Jesus brought God's love and mercy to us and offered to clear our record.

In the same way we are called to be like God and offer others our 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 choose to call others to account for every unkind thing they said or did, and hope they suffer. Showing mercy and forgiving others is God's way for us to walk in His light. This will bring peace to our souls and settle 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 may be like You and show mercy from a generous heart. Amen

OVERCOMING A VICTIM MENTALITY

People who suffer from a victim mentality often confuse love with pity or rescue. They think good things only happen to others. They feel overly sensitive and anxious. Can God make a way for them to have a satisfying and meaningful life? Yes! Yes! Yes!

Jesus suffered and died on the cross to deal with sin and injustice and to enable us to be free and have life with God forever. Jesus willingly gave His life for us, so we no longer need to live as a victim. Jesus paid in full the price of sins committed by us, and injustices done to us.

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:4-6 NIV)

It is very challenging for those of us who have spent years living with a victim mentality to move into the experience of being an overcomer. Why? We have become familiar with a lifestyle of wanting someone else to do things for us. The thought of taking responsibility and using our own initiative raises anxiety within us. Underneath our conscious fear of rejection is often an unconscious layer of anger, not just against the person who abused us, but also against those who "should have" protected us and did not.

God wants to release us from the bondage of a victim mentality and help us grieve painful losses. Rather than continuing to blame others, God invites us to receive healing for our wounds and forgiveness for the resentment towards others that we have held. As we bring our troubled situations to God for His help and healing, He will take hold of our hand and say, ***"Do not fear; I will help you"***. (Isaiah 41:13 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to turn away from protecting myself at all costs and learn how to live life with realistic expectations and safe boundaries. Teach me Your ways and help me to live my life without fear. Thank You for loving and caring for me. Amen

Jesus willingly gave His life for us, so we no longer need to live as a victim.

MONEY – A BALANCED PERSPECTIVE

We all need a certain amount of money to buy food and clothes, pay the rent, and get around from one place to the next. We are also advised to save some of what we earn for an emergency and for retirement. In all our decision making, when is it wise to focus on money and when does our focus become a problem?

Anyone who loves money never has enough. Anyone who loves wealth is never satisfied with what they get. Money gained in the wrong way disappears. But money gathered little by little grows. The love of money is a root of all kinds of

In all our decision making, when is it wise to focus on money and when does our focus become a problem?

evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. (Ecclesiastes 5:10a, Proverbs 13:11 NIRV, 1 Timothy 6:10 NIV)

Money is a problem when we refuse to work to supply our needs. Money is a problem when we spend more than we earn and run up debts that we are unable to pay. Money is a problem when we are willing to engage in dishonest behaviour to obtain it. Money is a problem when we gamble and are unable to buy necessities. Money is a problem when we refuse to give a money offering of thanks to God or to help someone in need. Money is a problem when we think money is the solution to all our problems.

Some of you are living idle lives, refusing to work and meddling in other people's business. We command such people and urge them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and work to earn their own living. It is better to live right and be poor than to be sinful and rich. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. (2 Thessalonians 3:11-12 NLT, Psalm 37:16 CEV, Matthew 6:33 NLT)

God encourages us to work to earn a living and not simply live off the generosity of others. God promises that we will have all we need when we seek Him first and live according to His will and His ways. Today is an opportunity to look at both our practice of using money and our attitude towards it.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me to have a healthy attitude towards money. Forgive me for the ways I have tried to obtain and use money to solve my problems only to end up with increased problems. Help me to live simply and honestly, trusting that as I focus on You, You will provide for all my needs. Amen

SUSPICIOUS

To be suspicious can be good or bad depending on the circumstances. We are often told to watch out for suspicious behaviour and report, as appropriate, when someone is acting deviously. Most of us would be suspicious of people who are lurking in our neighbourhood and appear to have no motive for being there. However, being suspicious becomes a shortcoming when we distrust a person or program because of our calculated thinking of how we want things to be.

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 faith God has distributed to each of you. (Romans 12:3 NIV)

In addition it was easy to accuse others of things we suspected they did, whether we had proof or not. Accusing a person without proof causes anger and resentment and perhaps even violence. In an intimate relationship, one person may be suspicious of their partner if they appear to pay attention to another person and, in a volatile relationship, this may even cause the suspicious person to become violent.

So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages." (Luke 3:14b NKJV)

There are times when our self-protection and character defects incline us to suspect evil intention in another person and react to what we think, rather than what is true. Someone may have decided to clear up junk that has been lying around only to have another person accuse them of stealing their belongings. We need to look for good in what is happening rather than being suspicious of what we are not familiar with. Suspicion could be settled by a willingness to speak with the person involved and hear what they have to say.

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. (Philippians 4:8 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me to be more considerate of others and less inclined to self-protection. I ask for the gift of thinking good thoughts about others rather than finding fault. Amen

We need to look for good in a person rather than being suspicious of evil intention.

WHO'S ON CALL WHEN I NEED HELP?

Often when we are in trouble we call out to God. We are desperate for His immediate attention. As God is not limited by time, He is always available to those whose hearts are turned towards Him.

Hear me, Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. Have mercy on me, Lord, for I call to you all day long. (Psalm 86:1,3 NIV)

When our circumstances cause us to think we are poor and needy, we can be assured that if we call out to Him, God will hear us. He will provide good solutions and set events in motion to help us. When we admit we have done wrong, mercy is available. When we confess the wrong we have done, God will forgive us and restore our joy.

As God is not limited by time, He is always available to those whose hearts are turned towards Him.

Bring joy to your servant, Lord, for I put my trust in you. You, Lord, are forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to you. Hear my prayer, Lord; listen to my cry for mercy. When I am in distress, I call to you, because you answer me. (Psalm 86:4-7 NIV)

The writer of this Psalm recognizes that God is good, forgiving, and full of love for all who put their trust in Him. When we bring our requests to God, it pleases Him. God is faithful to His promises. If we are lacking faith in God's ability to answer our prayers, we can even admit our unbelief to Him and He will hear our cry for compassion and encourage us to persevere and just trust Him.

Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know. (Jeremiah 33:3 NKJV)

Jesus responded with grace to the father who asked Him to heal his son when the father cried out, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

As we begin to seek God and put our trust in Him, God's word promises us that He will reward us. There truly is no other God like the Lord, and no other answers to our prayers that can compare with His.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me when I doubt Your willingness to answer my prayers. You truly are a good, good Father and perfect in all Your ways. Amen

THE PURPOSE OF PRAYER AND MEDITATION

When we turn our will and our life over to the care of God, He immediately begins to work to help us change. The disciplines of prayer and meditation help us hear from God and correctly handle the ongoing events of our lives. As we put God's Word into practice, we will learn to recognize His voice as He guides and directs our ways.

Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know. 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. (Jeremiah 33:3, James 1:5 NIV)

God has a wonderful plan for each of our lives. No day is wasted. In every situation there is a lesson for us to learn as God rebuilds us according to His original plan. Even our past mistakes can be used by God as we assist others and tell them that God loves them. As we continue to obey God and do what He says, His will for our lives will become clearer. God promises that we will have a life that is better than we could ever have imagined.

But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. (Jude 20-21 NIV)

Reading and meditating on scripture reveals to us the nature of God and His desire to affirm the unfailing love He has for us. In our daily devotions we are not simply seeking to learn facts about God but are consciously seeking to get to know Him more intimately.

As we become familiar with God's character and choose to live by His principles, we will be empowered by God's Holy Spirit to live fully surrendered to His ways.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I welcome the work of Your Holy Spirit to reveal Your will and Your ways to me. Help me to live humbly before You and honour You by practicing Your principles in all my affairs. Amen

The discipline of prayer and meditation helps us hear from God and correctly handle the ongoing events of our lives.

ANGER AND PRIDE – BAD BUDDIES

How many of us have lashed out in anger against a person who has harmed us? Often when we see that person our anger is stirred up within us and we just want to get back at them. We see them as an enemy to be destroyed in any way possible. How can we get past the bitterness that is inside us and learn to love our enemies?

If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head, and the Lord will reward you. (Proverbs 25:21-22 NIV)

***If we
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past.***

As we consider being kind to our enemies, our feelings may not agree with us. When we think of a person who has continually put us down and trampled all over our feelings we may ask, “Why should I be kind to that person?” The main obstacle is simply that our pride would take a beating. Rather than seeing our actions as God’s way to freedom, we see them as giving in to this person. We must battle against willful pride if we are to obey what God says. Our pride may suffer but God will reward us.

A person without self-control is like a city with broken-down walls. (Proverbs 25:28 NLT)

If our choice is to remain filled up with bitterness, we bind ourselves to our past. Our focus remains on past events and what other people may think rather than on what God says. Without self-control and the power and love of God in our hearts, our brokenness will negatively influence us as we consider obeying God’s word. Jesus, who humbled Himself and died on a cross for our sins, prayed for forgiveness for those who crucified Him. Are we so prideful and concerned about how other people will view us that we will not obey God and live a life of goodness towards others, even our enemies?

The right word at the right time is like precious gold set in silver. Listening to good advice is worth much more than jewelry made of gold. (Proverbs 25:11-12 CEV)

Prayer: Loving God, Please give me wisdom to obey Your Word and follow Your ways in all my affairs. Help me to change my heart and to love and be kind to everyone, especially those I have considered to be my enemies. Amen

OUR SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

When we say in Step 12 that we have had “a spiritual wakening,” we are describing the effect we experienced as we completed the first eleven steps. The person we are today is vastly different from the broken person with an unmanageable life who came into recovery. We have discovered that there is more to life than we thought and we are excited that there is still more to come.

The Lord’s teachings are perfect. They give strength to his people. The Lord’s rules can be trusted. They help even the foolish become wise. The Lord’s laws are right. They make people happy. The Lord’s commands are good. They show people the right way to live. (Psalm 19:7-8 ERV)

We have discovered that a power greater than ourselves is alive within us and He has helped us admit to, and repent of, our past wrongdoing. We could never have faced those things that were buried deep in our soul without knowing that our will and life was in the care of the God who had prepared a way for our forgiveness. As we humbly asked God to remove all our shortcomings, we experienced peace in our mind and heart that went beyond anything we ever could have expected or imagined.

***With God,
we truly
have had a
spiritual
awakening.***

As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. (Psalm 103:12; Romans 8:6 NIKV)

With our minds freed from the terror of our destructive past, we were able to look at our former relationships and consider those whom we had harmed. Our loving God strengthened us to have the desire to make amends to those we had harmed and to seek their forgiveness. We will continue to experience God at work within us as we make a daily personal inventory, and through prayer and meditation seek the knowledge of God’s will for our lives, and ask Him for the power to carry it out. As we stay close to God, He will encourage us to tell others of the experience, strength and hope we have found in Him – the God who effects change in the lives of all who will call on His name. With God, we truly have had a spiritual awakening.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you! (Isaiah 26:3) Amen

A LIFE PLAN – THE BEST PLAN

In every area of our lives, it is God's desire that we plan a good course. God has given us the ability to think and organize. As we make plans for our future, we would be wise to seek God's input

We can make our plans, but the LORD determines our steps. No human wisdom or understanding or plan can stand against the LORD. (Proverbs 16:9, 21:30 NLT)

We are just heading into summer and vacation days are ahead for some of us. Thoughts of school or work fade as times of relaxing and taking it easy come into focus. We make travel plans and plan get-togethers with friends and family as

we enjoy the long summer evenings. Good planning is helpful in all seasons of life. This includes planning in areas like money, career, food, business, housing, retirement etc. The truth is, we often experience anxiety as we make our plans. We wonder if things will fall into place and if we will be able to carry through with the plans we make.

***As we plan,
God invites us
to first seek
His kingdom
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all things will
work together
for our good
and His glory.***

Thankfully, God is aware that we are limited in what we know. For our plans to work well we need to bring in the expert. God is the expert! If we ask Him, He will give direction to our planning so that each day our lives will be filled with purposeful activities. God is the planner and builder of time and eternity. God made us. He knows our past, present, and future and the happenings that will impact our lives. As we plan, God invites us to first seek His kingdom ways so that all

things will work together for our good and His glory.

Put God's kingdom first. Do what he wants you to do. Then all of those things will also be given to you. (Matthew 6:33 NIRV)

God wants to work our plans in a way that is even better than we could ask for or imagine. Let's determine to shape our lives according to the best plan, His plan.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am often fearful of making plans. Help me to seek You first in all my ways so that as I plan, You will direct my steps. Amen

ATTENTIVE

Whether we admit it or not we all long for someone to care for us and listen to us. Sometimes, when we are speaking, we feel the person we are addressing is not listening to us and assume they do not care. How many times have we offended God and others by not paying attention to what they have said? Genuine relationships are built on listening to God and to others.

God knows us and listens to us, and His attention to our thoughts and prayers brings us comfort and stability in our daily lives.

The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are attentive to their cry. (Psalm 34:15 NIV)

God wants to care for others through us. God's Holy Spirit will help us listen attentively to what another is saying, so we can comfort and help that person discover the healing they may need. Listening well is something we can all develop. It begins with a willingness to stop being preoccupied with what we think and thus forcing the conversation to focus on what we have to say. To be attentive we must stop speaking and listen carefully to what others have to say. We must also quiet the voices in our head that have a response prepared before a person has finished saying what they are trying to convey to us.

Be humble. Value others more than yourselves. None of you should look out just for your own good. Each of you should also look out for the good of others. (Philippians 2:3-4 NIRV)

It takes undivided attention and effort to become interested in what someone is saying and really listen to what they are trying to share. However, it is a wonderful way to let go of our attention seeking and express our love and care for the needs of someone else.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You listen to me every time I come to You and I know You care about what is going on in my life. Help me to love as You love and give me the gift of a listening ear and an attentive heart to hear and concentrate on what another person wants to communicate. My desire is to truly support those who share with me by being attentive and listening to them as they speak. Amen

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NOT AS I WOULD HAVE IT

The full version of the Serenity Prayer said at most recovery gatherings contains the words, *“Taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it”*. Jesus left heaven, where He was known and praised, and came to earth to take on human flesh so that He might pay the price of human sin which is death. The environment here was certainly not as He would have had it. Jesus was despised and rejected by those who ought to have known who He was. To protect their way of living and their status, these people bore false witness against Jesus and handed Him over to be mocked, tortured, and killed by oppressive rulers.

“Taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it.”

People looked down on him. They didn’t accept him. He knew all about pain and suffering. He was like someone people turn their faces away from. We looked down on him. We didn’t have any respect for him. (Isaiah 53:3 NIRV)

Even though Jesus suffered many things, He chose not to judge the people who treated Him harshly. He knows that every person, not just those suffering from addiction, are in bondage to sin. He came to set all of us free. How do we respond to those who are rude to us and do not treat us kindly? Do we see them, as Jesus does, as people God loves who have not yet been set free? This world may not be as we would like it, but because of what Jesus has done for us, we can carry this message to others – “normies” as well as fellow addicts – and tell them of Jesus’ love for them, of His power to set them free from their bondage, and of His willingness give them new life.

I’m sending you off to open the eyes of the outsiders so they can see the difference between dark and light, and choose light, see the difference between Satan and God, and choose God. I’m sending you off to present my offer of sins forgiven, and a place in the family, inviting them into the company of those who begin real living by believing in me. (Acts 26:17-18 MSG)

Next time we pray the Serenity Prayer, let’s truly desire to be more like Jesus in the way we respond to others.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I want to be like You and take this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it. Help me to accept the things I cannot change and give me the courage to change the things I can. Amen

FICKLE PEOPLE AND A FAITHFUL GOD

Why does God bother with rebellious humankind? As we read stories in the Bible, we notice that the people of God are repeatedly fickle in their obedience to God’s ways. For a time they follow God’s ways, then they rebel against Him and do what they think is right in their own eyes. Their own ways lead them to painful complicated situations and so they call out to God for help against their enemies. When they call out to God for help, in His mercy and compassion towards them, He rescues them from their enemies and helps them get back on course.

We are very much like them. We come into recovery knowing that we need to turn our will and life over to the care of God. Later we think that we know best and end up stumbling and falling into another messy situation and again we call out to God to rescue us. Amazingly, when we call for help, God responds to us with kindness and help.

O Lord, what are human beings that you should notice them, mere mortals that you should think about them? For they are like a breath of air; their days are like a passing shadow. Open the heavens, Lord, and come down. Touch the mountains so they billow smoke. Hurl your lightning bolts and scatter your enemies! Shoot your arrows and confuse them! Reach down from heaven and rescue me; rescue me from deep waters, from the power of my enemies. (Psalm 144:3-7 NLT)

God made us in His image so He could have a loving relationship with us. However, we are like the prodigal son that Jesus told a story about. The son wanted a different life than his father had provided for him and so he asked for his inheritance and went off and squandered it. Like the prodigal son, some of us are not content with the inheritance God has provided for us and want to live according to our own desires.

When the prodigal son eventually came to His senses, he went home to his father who received him with open arms. The father had mercy and compassion for the returning son and restored him to the family. That’s how God receives us when we come home to Him. He rescues us from the brokenness that has resulted from trauma in our lives and the self-centeredness of our own addictive lifestyles and welcomes us into His family.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for rescuing me from the deep waters I was in and for bringing me into my inheritance through the finished work of Jesus. I am glad that Your image is stamped on me and that Your love for me is unfailing. Amen

O Lord, what are human beings that you should notice them?

Psalm 144:3 NLT

DEALING WITH STRESS – SEEING GOD’S PERSPECTIVE

There are many reactions to everyday stress. Some people try to flee the problem in the hope that the irritation will go away. Others internalize the pressure, seeking to suppress it. However, stress usually spills over into some other area of our being. Sometimes we crumble emotionally and give way to depression and despair and addictive behaviour. God’s word in the Bible reminds us of several promises that can bring us through tough times and build up our spiritual and emotional well-being.

But now, God’s Message, the God who made you in the first place, Jacob, the One who got you started, Israel: “Don’t be afraid, I’ve redeemed you. I’ve called your name. You’re mine. When you’re in over your head, I’ll be there with

God knows everything about us, including our names, and deeply cares about each one of us.

you. When you’re in rough waters, you will not go down. When you’re between a rock and a hard place, it won’t be a dead end—Because I am God, your personal God, The Holy of Israel, your Savior. (Isaiah 43:1-3 MSG)

God knows everything about us, including our names, and deeply cares about each one of us. He encourages us to realistically view the events that are causing us concern. Sometimes we worry about things that haven’t even happened, and our internal pressure increases even though nothing has occurred. God knows what is ahead of us and, if we trust Him, He will provide whatever is needed when we need it.

Past hurtful events feed stress. We need to let go of the hurt and shame caused by those actions and simply learn the valuable lessons those happenings have taught us. With the practical knowledge we have gained we can move forward to a purpose filled life and thank God for His grace and peace as He continues to sustain us.

Therefore,.... let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. (Hebrews 12:1-2a NIV)

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to let go of stress by putting my past, present, and future into Your loving Hands. You are a compassionate God with unfailing love and care for me. Help me to fix my eyes on You and throw off everything that hinders me from moving forward. Amen

TRUSTING GOD TO MAKE THE RIGHT CALL

When we see those who have evil plans prosper, we often wonder why God would allow them to do so. We hear stories about slum landlords who fail to keep their buildings safe and clean and do not seem to care about the well-being of their tenants. God is not pleased when people behave like this. People think that God does not see, but He does, and He will be the righteous judge of the motives and actions of each person.

Do not fret because of evildoers or be envious of the wicked, for the evildoer has no future hope, and the lamp of the wicked will be snuffed out. (Proverbs 24:19-20 NIV)

Evil actions are the result of lack of care for others. Sometimes we look the other way when someone needs help. The wisdom that Jesus gave us is, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and love your neighbour as yourself. Instead of this, we pray and scheme to get what is best for our own use. The Bible teaches us to use all the gifts God gives us to do good and share with others. The Bible also teaches that we will reap what we sow. Do we want to reap a harvest of wickedness or a harvest of good?

Don’t say, “I didn’t know it!” God can read your mind. He watches each of us and knows our thoughts. And God will pay us back for what we do. (Proverbs 24:12 CEV)

Many of us still suffer from unforgiveness towards those who have harmed us and our vengeful thoughts keep alive the desire to get even with them. This causes us to be tied to painful events like an elephant is tied to a stake, and we remain restricted by the pain we could easily be freed from. A wise person lets go of their unforgiveness and turns their offenders over to God who is a wise judge who will administer justice in every situation.

Don’t rejoice when your enemies fall; don’t be happy when they stumble. For the Lord will be displeased with you and will turn his anger away from them. (Proverbs 24:17-18 NLT)

Prayer: Gracious God, Please fill my heart with Your love and give me the desire to forgive those who have harmed me. Set me free from all that hinders my new life with You. Amen

The wisdom that Jesus gave us is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and to love our neighbour as ourselves.

PEACE THAT MELTS HARSHNESS

Too many of us carry a harsh picture of God and believe He looks for ways to be displeased with us. Sometimes we review our actions, condemn ourselves, and then think that God also condemns us. We seldom see the kindness and tenderness of God as He comes alongside us.

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls."
(Matthew 11:28-29 NLT)

Today is a good day to ask God to help us let go of harshness and embrace the gentleness of spirit that allows our hearts and minds to be at peace.

God views our life situations with a caring heart. He welcomes us to come to Him and find peace when we are hurting, confused, or feeling threatened. He encourages us to bring painful memories out of the darkness of our souls and into the light of His healing presence so we can be free from their power over us.

Sometimes our peace is challenged by the displeasure of others. We react with frustration and often, almost without thinking, we strike out violently at the source of our frustration. This is not God's way. God's way is to come alongside us with grace and patience, acceptance and forgiveness, and this is how He instructs us to maintain peace with others.

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.
(Colossians 3:12-14 NLT)

Today is a good day to ask God to help us let go of our harshness and embrace the gentleness of spirit that allows our hearts and minds to be at peace.

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to receive Your love and healing so I can let go of harshness and embrace gentleness. I want to live in perfect harmony in my relationship with You and with others. Amen

FREED FROM ACCUSATION AND JUDGMENT

Why do we look at another's sin and want them punished for what they have done and then look at our own sin and want compassion and forgiveness? We particularly want to see punishment inflicted on those people who have harmed us. The problem is, we compare ourselves with others and think we measure up better than them, but the real standard we are to use is against what God's word says. The Bible tells us that we all have fallen short of God's standard.

For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. (Romans 3:23-24 NLT)

On a day when Jesus was teaching in the temple courtyard, the teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman that was caught in the act of adultery. They made her stand before the group. They told Jesus that the law of Moses commanded them to stone such a woman and asked Jesus what He thought.

Jesus did not oppose the law of Moses as they supposed He might but told the woman's accusers that whoever was without sin should cast the first stone. From the oldest to the youngest they all left. Like us, not one of them could cast the first stone. Jesus alone could have cast the first stone, but instead He told the woman to go and leave her life of sin.

Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?" "No, Lord," she said. And Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more." He himself is the sacrifice that atones for our sins—and not only our sins but the sins of all the world.
(John 8:10-11; 1 John 2:2 NLT)

What a relief for that woman as she went from being condemned for her sin to being set free! That is exactly what Jesus does for each of us when we accept His sacrifice that atones for all our sins.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Thank You for coming into the world to save me from the penalty of my sin. Help me to stand firm on the truth that when You set me free, I am free indeed! Amen

The Bible tells us that we all have fallen short of God's standard.

HONOURING OTHERS ABOVE OURSELVES

God created us to live as honourable people – honouring God, honouring others, and experiencing the joy of living as a person of dignity and honour.

Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. (Romans 12:10 NIV)

God knows the best way for us to live. He has given us life principles in the Bible to teach us how to act in honourable ways towards others. When we invite God to come and live in us, He fills us with the love and strength we need to put His ways of honouring and respecting others into practice in our daily lives.

God created us to live as honourable people – honouring God, honouring others, and experiencing the joy of living as a person of dignity and honour.

When someone asked Jesus which of God's laws was most important, Jesus replied: ***Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence.' This is the most important, the first on any list. But there is a second to set alongside it: 'Love others as well as you love yourself.'*** (Matthew 22:37-39 MSG)

Governments make laws in the belief that they will inform the community how to act in honourable ways towards one another. However, society seems to be on a collision course with the rule of law and appears to be more interested in individual rights rather than in living in a way that honours the common good. Many of us have found ourselves in trouble because life without honouring God and our neighbour does not lead to loving our neighbour as ourselves.

The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good. All have turned away, all have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one. (Psalm 14:1, 3 NIV)

God's invites us to choose to honour Him, honour others, and in doing so, find the dignity and respect we long to experience.

Prayer: Gracious God, My desire is to live in a way that honours You and others. I ask You to give me the will and desire to follow Your principles in all that I say and do so that I may experience Your good, pleasing and perfect will for my life. Amen

THE POWER OF GRATITUDE

We will come to experience a secure and happy life in recovery as we learn to be grateful and appreciate the smallest blessing in each day. Being grateful and taking time to give thanks to God and others nurtures healthy growth. A successful life in recovery will not be sustained when irritation and focusing on our problems is our normal mode of operating. Strength comes as we learn to give thanks to God, who is good, and whose love is available to us 24/7.

Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful. Give thanks no matter what happens. God wants you to thank him because you believe in Christ Jesus. Give thanks to the only one who can do great miracles. His faithful love continues forever. (Colossians 4:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Psalm 136:4 NIRV)

The miracle of being sober today is a gift from God. Have we given God thanks for our sobriety? Jesus died for our sins and offers us forgiveness for all the wrongs we have done. Have we accepted His offer and given thanks for the clean slate we have today?

Since the practice of gratitude is so powerful, how can we make it an intentional part of our daily living? At the top of our "To Do" list each day, why not put "Take time to be grateful." We will experience a burst of energy and joy as we take time to express our thanks to someone we appreciate. Perhaps we could make a gratitude list in our daily journal of those people who have helped us. As we make a phone call or send a text to thank them, we might just lift them out of a dull or difficult moment they may be experiencing. Many individuals and families gather around a table for a meal and before they begin to eat they take time to give thanks for the food. Maybe it's time we paused and added a prayer of gratitude at our mealtimes.

At the end of each day it's important to look for something for which we can give thanks. There is great power in the ongoing practice of expressing gratitude.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have given me so many gifts in my life. I take this moment to remember and give You thanks. Thank You for loving and caring for me. Amen

Strength comes as we learn to give thanks to God, who is good, and whose love is available to us 24/7.

REBUILDING SELF-ESTEEM

When we question our self-worth, we need to remember who God our Creator says we are. A one-hundred-dollar bill, whether it is in prime condition or is crumpled and dirty, is still worth what the creator of the bill has determined. God, our creator, has clearly demonstrated the value he puts on each person by giving His beloved son to die for all of us. In our relationship with God, do we see Him as a loving Heavenly Father and ourselves as His precious children?

Self-esteem can be rebuilt. How?

We need to stop covering up inferiority feelings and instead focus on what God says.

1) *We need to find out the facts* – those things that God says about us such as: “When you believe in Jesus, the One I have sent, you are forgiven. Nothing can separate you from My love. You have a wonderful future for you were created to do good works.”

2) *We need to inform our hearts and minds of these truths* until our negative thought patterns are reshaped and painful trauma is healed and settled in God’s comfort.

3) *We need to stop covering up inferiority feelings and instead focus on what God says.* As we put His principles into practice in all our affairs we begin to experience a life that is good, satisfying and meaningful.

Don’t shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. Look up and be alert to what is going on around Christ—that’s where the action is. See things from his perspective. Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your real life—even though invisible to spectators—is with Christ in God. He is your

life. When Christ (your real life, remember) shows up again on this earth, you’ll show up, too—the real you, the glorious you. (Colossians 3:2-4a MSG)

God has given us gifts and talents to encourage and help others. In the same way that hands and feet and eyes co-operate in the body, God planned for us to work and support one another in community. God has prepared a lifetime of adventure with Him as we build up and bring hope and healing to one another.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to stand on the truth that when I am in Christ, nothing can separate me from Your love. I reject all self-defeating lies and choose for the life You have prepared for me. Amen

HALF-HEARTED

“Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked His protection and care with complete abandon.” (Big Book page 59)

When we give our will and life over to the care of God, we invite Him to develop those qualities in us that will help us love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and love our neighbour as ourselves. For that to take place, we need to surrender to God’s ways as recorded in the Bible. There is no such thing as half-hearted surrender. We are either surrendered to God’s ways or we are not.

Be careful to obey every command I have told you to follow: Love the Lord your God, follow all his ways, and be faithful to him. (Deuteronomy 11:22 ERV)

As we study God’s word, we will learn what is right or wrong, harmful or good, and we can adjust our thoughts and behaviour accordingly. It will take time to make the changes we need to make but, as we determine to follow God’s ways, with God’s help we will succeed. We need to be prepared to battle against our old self-will and former ways of saying and doing things, so that the new self triumphs over the old. Perseverance may not have been a quality we exhibited in our past, but as we determine to be faithful to God’s ways, He will give us the strength we need to be wholehearted.

We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ, we were set free from the power of sin. (Romans 6:6-7 NIV)

As we obey God’s will, our hearts are being renewed and God’s Holy Spirit in enabling us to change from being half-hearted in what we do to being fully surrendered to God. This gracious gift is available to all who believe in the finished work of Jesus.

But the Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin, so we receive God’s promise of freedom only by believing in Jesus Christ. (Galatians 3:22 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for not surrendering all that I am to You. Help me to persevere in times of trial and be determined to faithfully follow You in all my affairs. Amen

God’s Holy Spirit enables us to change from being half-hearted in what we do to being fully surrendered to God.