

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations



SEPTEMBER 2025



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

www.partnersinhope.ca/meditations

You can also view our daily video blog at:
<http://www.partnersinhope.ca/hope-for-today>

*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
Visit us at <http://www.partnersinhope.ca>

or write to us at:

***Partners in Hope Recovery Society
1906 – 615 Belmont Street, New Westminster, BC
V3M 6A1***

Email: pihrecovery@gmail.com

Phone or text: 604-215-0335

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



LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY Daily Meditations

SEPTEMBER 2025

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Evelyn Leeburn, Elsie Quick

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Scriptures taken from:

Holy Bible, Contemporary English Version (CEV), Copyright © 1995 by American Bible Society
Holy Bible, Easy-to-Read Version (ERV), Copyright © 2006 by Bible League International
Good News Translation (GNT), Copyright © 1992 by American Bible Society
The Living Bible copyright © 1971 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.
New American Standard Bible (NASB), Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation
New King James Version® (NKJV), Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
Holy Bible, New International Version® (NIV),® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.
New International Reader's Version (NIRV), Copyright © 1995, 1996, 1998, 2014 by Biblica, Inc.®. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.
Holy Bible. New Living Translation (NLT) copyright© 1996, 2004, 2007, 2013 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.
New Life Version (NLV), Copyright © 1969, 2003 by Barbour Publishing, Inc.
New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
The Message (MSG), Copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002 by Eugene H. Peterson

PHOTOS

Elsie Quick, Evelyn Leeburn, Linnea Groom, Ruth Kimber © 2025 Partners in Hope Recovery Society

© 2025 Partners in Hope Recovery Society. All rights reserved. Printed in Canada.

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 09

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.

<p style="text-align: center;">SUBSTANCE ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Alcohol Caffeine Injected or smoked substances such as: Crack, Crystal Meth, Heroin Marijuana Prescription Medications Sugar Tobacco</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">BEHAVIOUR ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>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)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">SOFT ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">RELATIONSHIP ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Abusive Relationships: Includes: Intimidation, Isolation, Domination, Blaming, Humiliation, Withholding, Forcing acts against one's will Approval dependency Attention Seeking Codependence/Rescuing Power/Control</p>

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 Spirit in order 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 we I dare ask or imagine. Amen

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.

LABOUR DAY

Today in North America we give thanks for and honour the collective labour-force of people within our nation, our communities, and our families.

The gift of work is first recognized at the beginning of time when God created the earth and its first inhabitants in six days and then rested on the seventh day. There is so much to admire and enjoy because of God's creative nature which is displayed in our environment, in the night sky, in animal life, and in each person.

Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good! On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested from all his work. (Genesis 1:31, 2:2 NLT)

God has given skills and talents to each of us to enable us to work, to provide for ourselves and our families, and to take care of the earth. We are instructed to work hard, to give our work the best effort we can, and to be content with what we have.

Lazy people want much but get little, but those who work hard will prosper. Work brings profit, but mere talk leads to poverty. Don't love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, "I will never fail you. I will never abandon you." (Proverbs 13:4, 14:23, Hebrews 13:5 NLT)

Too many of us have lived between the extremes of either working too much or working too little. God doesn't want us to run after money as the ultimate source of our security. He advises us to work hard and not squander the time and talents He has given us.

Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans. (Colossians 3:23 NLT, Proverbs 16:3 NIV)

As we celebrate Labour Day, let's offer our work – studies, paid employment, volunteer work, recovery work, etc. – to the Lord and ask His blessings on all that we do, so that our labour may honour Him and help build up our community.

Prayer: 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. Amen (Psalm 90:17 NIV)

***We are
instructed
to work
hard, to
give our
work the
best effort
we can,
and to be
contented
with what
we have.***

Mother Teresa got it right when she said, “A joyful heart is the inevitable result of a heart burning with love.” Joy is a gift from God. Joy results when we surrender every part of our lives to God and entrust each detail to His care. Joy will burst forth as we wholeheartedly trust the Lord rather than ourselves or anything else. Joy is a sign that a person is thriving rather than just surviving.

Taste and see that the Lord is good. Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him! (Psalm 34:8 NLT)

It’s up to us to call on God when we are in trouble so that we can move beyond surviving to thriving. Even in times of illness or hardship, God is our refuge and strength. Giving up on God should never be an option. God invites us to depend on Him and rest in the ultimate security that He will provide for all our needs. People are joyful when they follow the principles written in the Scriptures and live a life of integrity.

Joy is a sign that a person is thriving rather than just surviving.

God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. Be still and know that I am God! (Psalm 46:1,10a NLT)

We can fill our hearts and minds with hope for this new way of life even though it may seem impossible for us to achieve. If we resolve to seek Him in all our ways, God will make a way where there seems to be no way.

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NIV)

We often get discouraged when things don’t work out as we have determined they should. At times like these we need to ask ourselves, “How is God teaching me to thrive in this situation?” As we trust God and obey His word, God assures us that He is with us and is working for good in everything that concerns us. God’s desire for us is that we should thrive and not simply survive.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I know that Your desire for me is to thrive and be filled with joy and purpose. Help me to follow Your principles and listen for Your guidance when times are tough. You are my hope for a blessed life in which I thrive and not just survive. Amen

THE ONE WHO KEEPS ME GOING

Trouble shows up in our lives for several reasons. Some problems we bring upon ourselves because of our choices and our self-willed behaviour. Other troubles may come from outside sources. The good news is that regardless of the source of the trouble, there is a solution. We can bring our troubles to God, ask for forgiveness where necessary, request deliverance and help from the trouble, and expect that God will make us new again.

God, make us new again. May you be pleased with us. Then we will be saved. (Psalm 80:3 NIRV)

***I know
that God
helps me.
The Lord
is the one
who
keeps me
going.***

***Psalms 54:4
NIRV***

Several times in Psalm 80, as the writer recounts things that have gone wrong and troubles that people are facing, he reminds God that they are God's chosen people whom He loves. He uses the picture of a person transferring a plant into new ground and building a protective wall around it. But after some time, he sees the wall has been broken down and harm and destruction done to the plant.

God who rules over all, return to us! Look down from heaven and see us! Watch over your vine. Guard the root you have planted with your powerful right hand. Take care of the branch you have raised up for yourself. (Psalm 80:14-15 NIRV)

The devil will try to use our troubles to have us turn our backs on God. He will say we do not deserve the problems we face so God must not care about us, or he will tell us we have wrecked things by our own poor choices and God will not fix the mess we've created. Regardless of the source of the trouble, God is the answer to all our problems and His solutions are available to us when we turn to Him, repent and seek His forgiveness, and turn our will and life, including our problems, over to His care.

Give us new life. We will worship you. Lord God who rules over all, make us new again. May you be pleased with us. Then we will be saved. (Psalm 80:18b-19 NIRV)

Prayer: Loving God, I come to You once again with all that is going on in my life and world. I bring all my troubles to You and ask for Your wisdom and guidance to resolve the issues so that I can go forward with You into the joyful life You have planned for me. Amen

IMPATIENCE

For some of us, a lifestyle in addiction grew out of our frustration with negative events in our life. The absence of another's care for our well-being made us feel vulnerable in our social life and in our community. We became impatient and rebellious due to the way we were treated and either stuffed our feelings or became angry and exploded when things were not as we would have them.

Don't say, "I'll get even with you for the wrong you did to me!" Wait for the Lord, and he will make things right for you. (Proverbs 20:22 NIRV)

***A patient
person is
very
smart. A
quick-
tempered
person
makes
stupid
mistakes.***

***Proverbs 14:29
ERV***

When we gave our will and life over to the care of God, we learned that God loved us so much that He gave His son Jesus to pay the debt we owed for our sin. Our relationship with God was restored when we repented of our sin and we were adopted into His family as His beloved children. The Bible tells us that God is love, and that love is patient and kind. As we experience the undeserved love of God for us, we will get rid of more and more of the bitterness and resentment that is fueling our impatience with others.

We get our new life from the Spirit, so we should follow the Spirit. We must not feel proud and boast about ourselves. We must not cause trouble for each other or be jealous of each other. (Galatians 5:25-26 ERV)

Pride also fuels our impatience. We think others should respect us as we deserve and yet we often do not treat others with the respect they deserve. We get impatient with those who are seeking to help us when they don't work to our time schedule. We get impatient when God does not immediately answer our prayers. Then because we are tense and frustrated, we dwell on and begin to obsess with going back to our old ways. We stress and complain because we consider our needs to be much more important than the needs of those around us.

God has a plan for us that is meaningful, purposeful and joyful. Let's get rid of our impatience and trust God's perfect timing to act. When we settle down, we will experience that God will do through us and for us, those things He has planned.

Prayer: Loving God, Forgive my impatience with people and events. Help me to see You at work in my life to fulfill those good and perfect plans You have for me. Amen

TAKING A LOOK AT MY LIFE TODAY

It's useful to practice taking a regular inventory of our lives. It will help us maintain spiritual, emotional, and relational health.

But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it. Exercise daily in God—no spiritual flabbiness, please! Workouts in the gymnasium are useful, but a disciplined life in God is far more so, making you fit both today and forever."
(James 1:22, 25 NLT, 1 Timothy 4:7-8 MSG)

***As we
work out
God's
good plan
for our
lives,
regularly
taking
inventory
will help
keep us on
the right
path.***

SPOT CHECK INVENTORY: In each situation where we begin to experience things not going well, we need to pause and note what's right and what's wrong. What do we feel? What's going on beneath the feeling? What are we expecting? Are we listening for God's direction in what is going on? Are we living the Golden Rule in this moment, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you?"

DAILY INVENTORY: At the end of each day, we talk with God about the events of our day and listen for His encouragement, His correction, and His instruction. Where we need forgiving, we ask for it from God and receive it. Where we notice our good intentions, our caring thoughts and our upright actions, we note them and give thanks.

The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand. (Psalm 37:23-24 NIV)

God has a plan that will bring meaning and joy to our lives. As we plot our course, God will direct our steps, and we will be enriched by goodness and love through each step of the journey. As we work out God's good plan for our lives, regularly taking inventory will help keep us on the right path.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to see myself as You see me. Help me to rejoice in what is going well and promptly admit what needs to be confessed and changed. Thank You for being with me in every circumstance and for teaching me Your principles for living life well. Amen

DOING OUR BEST IN EVERY SEASON

Recovery is hard work, and finding employment to pay the bills is also a challenge. Employment training or retraining stretches us and in today's fragile economy we wonder if there will be jobs for us when we complete our training. God's Word encourages us to give ourselves whole heartedly to the work that is before us today and then we can expect that God will take care of the rest.

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.
(Colossians 3:23-24 NIV)

We are all unique individuals that God has created, and we are all in quite different seasons of life. God wants to give students what they need to study well and learn. He will bless employees to be a blessing to others if they do their best in whatever job they are doing – whether it is day labour or a high-pressure job in a downtown office. Each person's job is to serve God, and we do that by also serving our employer well. Co-operating with other members of a team we might be on, or providing training and support for them, so that together we can succeed in the work assigned, is serving God and our employer well.

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. (1 Peter 4:10 NIV)

Every place of work or study requires flexibility and grace as we work together to benefit the community. God has blessed each of us with skills and talents and we need to respect the safety and dignity of everyone in our work area.

God has served us well every day of our life and we can now respond to that faithful help by committing our work into God's hands and doing everything we can to bless others.

God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. (Hebrews 6:10 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I commit my work to You asking You to bless me and my work and help me and others to make something beautiful of it all in Your time and in Your way. Amen

***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

PRAYING IN THE TIME OF STRUGGLE

One of the great comforts, with challenges at the same time, is the reality that we are powerless to manage our lives on our own. Nothing makes us feel more vulnerable than not being in control. The truth is that whether we know it or not, life is too much for us and only the care and knowledge of God keeps our lives and our world on track.

In this struggle to maintain our faith and trust in God we are invited to pray for one another and not panic, because we are not in control. Whether we've been in recovery for a long time or just getting started, we all know that there are many struggles and challenges to be faced if we are to keep going. The Bible encourages us to pray for one another in the struggle.

Prayer is the number one strategy to employ in order to find the solutions and strength we need.

I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. (Romans 15:30 NIV)

The struggle may consist of our own personal challenges with temptations and obsessions. It could be the challenge to keep having hope for a loved one who has relapsed once again after seeming to do well for a time. Whatever the challenge, we know that prayer is the number one strategy to employ to find the solutions and the strength we need. The deepest level of our lives is the spiritual, and solutions for our wayward thoughts, emotions, and behaviours are rooted in the spiritual work that is being done in the core of our being.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. (Ephesians 6:12 NIV)

The evil one is stronger than us but is no match for the Power of God. That's why we need a Higher Power who can restore us to sanity and to whom we can pray and regularly choose to give our will and life over to His care.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I'm glad I don't have to pretend that it is not a struggle to continue to do what is right. Help me to stand firm in Your love and continually pray for Your support for both myself and my friends as together we offer our powerlessness to You and invite You to continue Your work of restoration in our lives. Amen

OUT WITH THE OLD – IN WITH THE NEW

When we repent of our sin and give our lives over to the care of God, our old way of life goes, and we are born again as a new creation in Christ Jesus. To be in Christ means we have a new nature that is like that of our Saviour. Our old way of life, which was corrupted by selfish desire, is gone and we are made new in our attitudes and our thinking to live a life of right living and holiness. We won't need to manage this on our own for God has graciously given us His Holy Spirit to empower us to do those things that please Him.

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

In the early days of walking in God's ways we may not feel like a new creation. Old ways of thinking keep coming back and we have to battle with ourselves to do the next right thing. The way to have victory over our thought patterns is to submit them to God and speak His Words into the situation. The words of God changed this world from being chaotic and void into being the beautiful creation we enjoy. If we speak God's Words into our situation, they will have the power to change our thinking and make it line up with the new creation we are.

The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:4-5 NLT)

(2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT)

We have started a new course in our life and the way forward is unfamiliar. We need knowledge of the Scriptures so that we can hold fast to God's Words and principles. If we listen to the Holy Spirit, He will be our guide into all truth.

Your commandments give me understanding; no wonder I hate every false way of life. Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:104-105 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Your Word says that through Jesus I am a new person. Please guide me into all truth so I can follow Your principles in my new life that has begun. Amen

IS IT WORTH DOING THINGS GOD'S WAY?

Now that we are seeking to act with honesty in all our affairs, it's discouraging to face obstacles in our path while we see others lying and manipulating and getting what they want without the hassle we are experiencing. Is it worth doing things God's way? We are not the first ones to experience inconvenience and suffering as we wait for God to bring about His good plan for our life. Thousands of years ago the writer of these words from the Bible had a similar experience.

But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold. For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure and have washed my hands in innocence. All day long I have been afflicted and every morning brings new punishments. (Psalm 73:2-3, 13-14 NIV)

***My flesh
and my
heart may
fail, but
God is the
strength of
my heart
and my
portion
forever.***

(Psalm 73:26 NIV)

We don't need to pretend that we don't have raw thoughts and emotions, but we do need to learn how to deal with them. Along with the writer of these words we need to bring our observations and feelings before God and ask Him to show us what's going on in us and how we are meant to respond.

When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny. (Psalm 73:16-17 NIV)

Only God can help us see things in perspective and give us wisdom in what we ought to do. As we faithfully put our trust in Him, God has promised to give us a future with hope. Whatever we do, or see others do, is only an event in time. However, God knows the future impact of the choices we make. We do not!

God, in His wisdom, will quiet our hearts and show us how to find rest and security. We often won't see the result of our obedience in the moment but if we open our heart to God and reaffirm our trust in His goodness in our lives, God will be delighted to give us the strength we need for today and provide what we need for tomorrow – in ways we might expect – or in some other surprising and better way.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You are good and You are wise. Help me to trust both Your care for me and Your promise to give me a future with hope, regardless of what I might experience in my life or see happening in the lives of those around me. Amen

COMPLETELY NEW

When we turned our will and life over to the care of God, we gave God permission to take our unmanageable life and make us new. We were unsure that God could and would change us, but the darkness was so great around us that we knew we needed help to see light. In seeking God to do for us what we are powerless to do for ourselves, do we just sit back and wait for things to happen? Where is our focus meant to be to bring about the change we desire?

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:1-3 NIV)

By the sacrificial death of Jesus, we were deemed perfect when we gave our will and life into God's care. Our old ways and habitual sins were removed and the new life that we desired came into being. Now it is time to set our minds on things above and not on circumstances – past, present, or future. We need to search the Scriptures and put into practice, the principles God has established, so that we are enabled to live the new life God has given us.

You were taught not to live the way you used to. You must get rid of your old way of life. That's because it has been made impure by the desire for things that lead you astray. (Ephesians 4:22 NIRV)

Our former way of life distanced us from God and sank us into the lowest hell. If we determine to fix our eyes on God's principles and, like an athlete in training set aside everything that would hinder us from running the race before us, we will find that God's divine favour will rest upon us and make us whole in body, mind, and spirit.

Let the one who is wise heed these things and ponder the loving deeds of the Lord. (Psalm 107:43 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for the great love You have for me and for teaching me Your way of living life to the full. Please help me to put Your principles into practice in all my affairs. Amen

***For you
died, and
your life is
now
hidden
with Christ
in God.***

Colossians 3:3

MAKING A MATCH

Step 12 encourages us to share the message of our spiritual awakening with others and to practice the principles we have learned in all our affairs. This means we need to keep on doing those things that have helped us retain our sobriety and share with others about the Power that enables us to keep going.

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)

We have a message to share with others, but we need to be careful that our lives match what we have learned. We need to be sensitive to those who are still in the bondage of addiction or perhaps have just entered the recovery process. We need to remember how we felt when the program was new and intimidating to us. In our enthusiasm to share we might scare someone away by being thoughtless in our approach. Remember how vulnerable we felt while dealing with our guilt and shame?

***We need
to be
careful
that our
lives
match
what we
have
learned.***

Keep a close watch on all you do and think. Stay true to what is right and God will bless you and use you to help others. (1 Timothy 4:16 TLB)

Every person we encounter is special in the eyes of our Heavenly Father and we need to show the love of God in us by being understanding, patient, and kind in all we say and do. We need to allow a person to be where they are at and encourage them to take one small step at a time. We should ask ourselves "Who were we drawn to when we first came into recovery? What was it about that person that encouraged us?" Now we can try to be that kind of person for someone else. The message of hope for recovery needs to be shared with the grace that God alone can give us. As we greet others today, let's have good deeds and words to encourage them.

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word. (2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to carry the good news of living life with You in recovery and help me do it in the Power of Your gentle Spirit. Amen

A CALM AND QUIET HEART FOR TODAY

As we begin this day, is our heart quiet or is it upset and anxious? The greatest gift we receive when we turn our will and life over to the care of God is peace of mind and heart. If anything is causing us to feel irritated or uneasy, God promises that if we ask Him, He will help us sort through the cause of our agitation.

Lord, I don't feel proud. I don't see myself as better than others. I am not thinking about doing great things or reaching impossible goals. No, right now I am calm and quiet, like a child after nursing, content in its mother's arms. Israel, trust in the Lord. Trust in him now and forever!
(Psalm 131:1-3 ERV)

When we are living in pride, we get restless and dissatisfied. We think we need to excel and be better than the next person just to feel okay. We think we need the approval and attention of others to have worth. The pleasure of living life with God in recovery is, we can simply be the person God created us to be and have our own personality as we use the gifts we have been given. The result of living this way will be contentment, joy, and peace of mind and heart.

What a wonderful picture the Bible uses to describe this. A baby doesn't have to do anything to be loved and enjoyed by its mother. The baby doesn't know how to find food for itself or how to change its own diaper. It isn't worried about what it's going to do to earn a living and provide for its needs. All it knows is that its mother provides food, care, cuddling, clean clothes, maybe a lullaby, and love that goes deeper than words could ever tell.

God created us to be the person we are with the talents, gifts, and even the limitations we have. God knows all about what's going on in our inner world and in our circumstances. God loves us beyond what words could ever tell and promises He will provide for all our needs. We can simply come to God and trust Him to be our Abba Father and our provider. It's not complicated!

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to come close to You and choose to lean on Your strength and wisdom. Help me to trust that together with You all challenges can be faced and I can experience peace and contentment knowing that You love and care for me, and will provide for all my needs. Amen

***The greatest
gift we
receive when
we turn our
will and life
over to the
care of God
is--peace of
mind and
heart.***

DEALING WITH INSULTS AND LIES

Jesus always spoke the truth. He encouraged people to follow Him because He is the way, the truth, and the life. He said some things that are very difficult to do and do not seem to fit the categories of comfort or encouragement.

Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. (1 Peter 3:9 NIV)

Does Jesus really mean this? We see examples of situations like road rage and know that quick-flash anger lives in most of us and can be triggered very easily. Isn't it enough that we don't act violently in response to what others say and do or spread vicious rumors about them to others? The Bible teaches us not to return evil for evil and challenges us even further when we are taught to bless the one who may speak badly about us.

We are taught to find a way to bless the one who is speaking badly about us.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. (Matthew 5:11 NIV)

As Jesus hung on the cross, He asked His Father to forgive those who put Him there, even as some continued to mock and make fun of Him. Jesus knew it was better to focus His actions on fulfilling what God wanted Him to do rather than being distracted by the sinful words or behaviour of those around Him.

While it may be a challenge, it is true that God will help us when we choose to stop the cycle of insults and unkindness.

This does not mean that we smile while our fists are clenched. It does mean that we give up the desire for revenge. We let God speak truth to our hearts and give us peace within, so that the insults and evil lies of others wash off us like oil on a non-stick pan surface. When we do this, we can then ask others to tell us what their problem is and listen long as they offer an explanation or, as is sometimes needed, simply walk away and pray for the wounded angry person.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, When someone insults me, I can't imagine not paying them back but I'm willing to do things Your way. With Your help I will do my best to bless a person who, either in the past or even today, speaks evil to me or about me. Remove all lies from my mind and heal my wounded heart and help me to see myself and others as You see us. Amen.

WISDOM FOR OUR RECOVERY – WHAT GOD HATES and WHAT GOD LOVES

When we pray for God's will for us and the power to carry it out, God doesn't point to something which is unfocused or distant. God brings truth up front and close and tells us in simple ways what we need to know and how we need to act. In the book of Proverbs in the Bible, we can find great wisdom in the many sayings written there that teach us how life works. Today we find a list of practices that are clearly NOT God's will. The more we avoid these things and do what God says the more we will grow and find continued success in this new life we have been given.

There are six things the Lord hates. In fact, he hates seven things. The Lord hates proud eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that kill those who aren't guilty. He also hates hearts that make evil plans and feet that are quick to do evil. He hates any witness who pours out lies and anyone who stirs up conflict in the community. (Proverbs 6:16-19 NIRV)

We have all sorts of excuses for lying and for angrily confronting or accusing someone of wrongdoing. It is easy for us to be shifty and underhanded in how we approach a person in authority or someone from whom we want some favour. Instead of acting in these ways, God calls us to be those who love and lift others up, and with all that we can, encourage them. God is love and He tells us to love one another, promising us that love will never fail.

God calls us to be those who love and lift others up, and with all that we can, encourage them.

Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIRV)

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for rescuing me from sin and darkness. I admit that I have done things that Your Word says You hate. Forgive me and wash me clean. Help me to move away from being scheming and negative and always blaming others. Help me to be humble, truthful, quick to do what is right and to make peace rather than say things that stir up anger and conflict. Help me to establish new patterns of thinking and behaving regardless of what others may think. Uphold and help me endure every circumstance. Your love is unfailing, and You have been my friend who sticks close to me. My desire is to honour You with my life. Amen

A GENTLE LIFESTYLE

If someone was to evaluate our daily interaction with others, would they describe us as gentle or harsh?

Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. (Ephesians 4:2 NLT)

It is not easy to change from being a self-centered, impatient, and often unkind person to being one who lives respectfully and gently with others, regardless of the circumstances. There is a natural unwillingness in each of us to admit that we are not living and behaving well in the community. We are also reluctant to acknowledge that we are powerless to make any change on our own and need God to work in us to help us do so.

If someone was to evaluate our daily interaction with others, would they describe us as gentle or harsh?

What does a gentle lifestyle look like?

Forgiveness that expresses kindness to those who may have previously harmed us: ***Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.*** (Ephesians 4:32, 4:2 NLT)

Always speaking about another person with kindness and respect: ***They must not slander anyone and must avoid quarreling. Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone. A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare.*** (Titus 3:2, Proverbs 15:1 NLT)

Addressing everyone with sincerity and generosity: ***But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere.*** (James 3:17 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, I want to be a strong but gentle person. However, I know I often fall short. I am willing to have You work in me to remove my character defects and help me exhibit gentleness to others in my thoughts, my words, and my behaviour. Amen

GETTING TO KNOW HOW GOOD LIFE CAN BE

As we pay attention to God's Word as recorded in the Bible, and do what He says, He will begin to reveal His will for our lives. God has good plans for us and He's more than willing to make those plans known to us. He promises us a life that is even better than we could ask for or imagine. This is the purpose of prayer and meditation--to get to know the good things God has planned for us--and then shape our lives around His life-giving principles. As we act on what God teaches us, we become more and more conscious of how well His ways work in all our relationships.

Jesus said: ***But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! Ask me and I will tell you remarkable secrets you do not know about things to come. If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you.*** (John 15:7, Jeremiah 33:3, James 1:5-6a NLT)

Meditation and reading scripture reveal to us the nature of God and the promises He has made. Underneath the "spiritual exercises" is God's desire to affirm His unfailing love for us. As we pray and meditate on God's Word, we are not seeking to simply learn facts about God, but to consciously get to know Him and His Ways.

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. The humble will see their God at work and be glad. Let all who seek God's help be encouraged. (John 16:13, Psalm 69:32 NLT)

As we become familiar with God's character and ways and make this the foundation for our daily living we will become more and more aware of the loving and uplifting presence of God that is always with us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I welcome the work of Your Holy Spirit to guide me as You reveal Your will for my life. I am grateful that you give me the desire and power to carry out what You have prepared in advance for me to do. Help me to humbly honour You in all my ways as I chose to serve You in Your plan for my life. Amen

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out.

SELF-EXAMINATION

To examine ourselves is to do just that – examine ourselves! It's so easy to compare what we do with what others do, and then we begin comparing ourselves with them. However, God wants to free us to live in the truth of who we truly are and where we need to exercise His truth and grace to live a better life. The focus of any self-examination must be squarely focused on ourselves.

Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else. (Galatians 6:4 NLT)

The focus of any self-examination must be squarely focused on ourselves.

When we examine ourselves, it is important to make a judgment both on what is good and what is harmful. Judgment is not about condemning and accusing. A healthy self-examination is best described as taking an inventory -- whether it is the Alcoholics Anonymous Step 4 version or a daily Step 10 review. Harmful things we uncover should be abandoned immediately. Other things we need to keep, no matter how challenged they make us feel. There are some things in our lives that we need to bring before God and perhaps discuss with knowledgeable friends who will help us observe, perhaps over time, whether these things are harmful or helpful for us.

Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us. Test everything that is said. Hold on to what is good. (Romans 12:3b, 1 Thessalonians 5:21 NLT)

One of the great benefits of living in conscious contact with God is that He can reveal what is buried deep in our hearts. He knows us best and loves us most. He alone knows the manner and time those things are best dealt with--particularly things deep within that we have covered up, but which cause us to fail repeatedly.

How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart? Cleanse me from these hidden faults. Keep your servant from deliberate sins! Don't let them control me. Then I will be free of guilt and innocent of great sin. (Psalm 19:12-13 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to see myself as You see me. Give me a willing heart to admit where my shortcomings lie and the grace to acknowledge the gifts that you have given me. Grant me the humility I need to learn from You and from others who are mature in their walk with You. Please expose anything in me that needs to be brought to light and changed. Amen

SPIRITUAL FRIENDS

God has given us spiritual friends to accompany us on our journey to recovery. These friends teach us how to draw close to God and to seek Him in all we do so that we may experience God's joy and peace for ourselves.

A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need. (Proverbs 17:17 NLT)

Jonathan and David are an example from the Bible of a selfless caring friendship. Jonathan was the son of King Saul. King Saul was jealous of David's military achievements, hated David, and tried to kill him. God chose David to succeed Saul as King of Israel and protected Him from Saul's death threats.

Jonathan, as King Saul's son, would have inherited the throne of Israel. One would expect Jonathan to be bitter and resentful at being disinherited by David. However, Jonathan honoured the plan of God for David's life and helped David escape from his father's attacks. When Jonathan and Saul were both killed in battle, David became king. Instead of killing all the family of the previous king, as was the custom, David honoured his friendship with Jonathan by taking Jonathan's crippled son into his palace and allowing him to eat at his table.

As we attend meetings and church fellowships, we will get to know those who, like us, are seeking to walk with God. We need to keep our eyes open for spiritual people whom God may have prepared for us to build caring friendships with. We can then support and look out for each other just as David and Jonathan did. Some of the people we meet might seem the least likely to be such friends because they come from different backgrounds than ours, but God's plan for us will be perfect and may surprise us. Let's ask God today to help us recognize and form friendships that He determines are best for us.

The seeds of good deeds become a tree of life; a wise person wins friends. See that no one pays back evil for evil, but always try to do good to each other and to everyone else. (Proverbs 11:30, 1 Thessalonians 5:15 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for my family and friends and especially for those You have given me to guide me on my recovery journey. Help me to recognize those individuals to whom I can offer support and perhaps become a friend who will help them on their recovery journey with You. Amen

God has given us spiritual friends to accompany us on our journey to recovery.

LIFE IMPROVES AS I PRACTICE SELF-CONTROL

The Bible tells us that when God's Spirit lives within us our lives will demonstrate that by showing qualities such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. God works in us so we can choose and act in ways that please God and satisfy our souls. One of the ways we please God is to say "yes" or "no" to self-gratification at the appropriate time.

As we follow God's guidance and allow God's Spirit to mature the fruit of self-control in us, we will both be blessed and be a blessing to those around us.

We live in a time and culture that could easily be labeled as self-indulgent rather than self-controlled. One principle that appears to operate in the lives of people in this 21st century is, "If it feels good, do it." God desires for each person to have a rewarding and fulfilling life. Surprisingly, God tells us that to have that, we will sometimes need to deny ourselves immediate pleasures.

So, let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. (Galatians 6:9 NLT).

Just like the farmer who plants good seeds must deal with weeds all through the growing season, we will need to do what is right while fighting against the temptation for immediate gratification. Sometimes we will have to wait longer than we expected and trust God's promise to provide us with everything we need. While times of waiting are difficult, there are rich rewards to be reaped when we sow the seeds of self-control.

As we follow God's guidance and allow God's Spirit to mature the fruit of self-control in us, we will both be blessed and be a blessing to others around us.

But we belong to the day. So let us control ourselves. Let us put the armor of faith and love on our chest. Let us put on the hope of salvation like a helmet. (1 Thessalonians 5:8 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Though I normally "want what I want when I want it," I repent of this selfishness and pray that Your Holy Spirit will mature the fruit of self-control within me. Help me to walk in Your ways, so I may receive Your blessing and be a blessing to others. Amen

FORGIVENESS

Forgiving others is something we must take very seriously if we want to protect our sobriety. We can never make up for the wrongs we have done, but we can let those whom we have harmed know how much we regret having hurt them. Through the finished work of Jesus, God forgives us and no longer counts our wrongdoing against us. Operating out of this secure foundation of forgiveness will give us the grace and strength we need to support our efforts in seeking reconciliation with others.

It would be impossible for us to forgive someone who has harmed us if God had not first demonstrated the way. We harmed ourselves and others when we failed to keep God's commandments and yet God was willing to send His Son into the world to pay the debt we owed. If we admit our wrong-doing and repent and turn away from it, and trust in Jesus' sacrifice for our sin, God will give us a new life.

In Christ, God did not hold people guilty for their sins. And he gave us this message of peace to tell people. (2 Corinthians 5:19 ERV)

God did not wait for us to come to Him. He prepared in advance to liberate us from the penalty of our wrongdoing. God reached out to us with His wonderful gift when we didn't dare approach Him. We can reflect on God's way of reconciliation as we begin the work of restoring our own troubled relationships.

Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. (Colossians 3:13 NLT)

Hanging on to a bitter grudge and seeking revenge only sickens our soul and damages those who are close to us. Bitterness is like a cancer that feeds on our insides and shows itself in outbursts of irritability, anger, and resentment. Who do I still need to forgive? Am I ready to invite God into the pain and the injustice and ask Him to show me a way to peace through forgiveness?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have forgiven me for the many wrongs I have done and even though it is difficult, I choose to forgive those who have harmed me. Please heal me and give me the strength and courage to move forward into a life of peace with others. Amen

Forgiving others is something we must take very seriously if we want to protect our sobriety.

STRONG AND HEALTHY

When we are feeling sick, we go to the doctor so that we may find out what is wrong with us. We list the symptoms we are experiencing and the doctor who has been trained to recognize symptoms associated with certain diseases will make a diagnosis. If the doctor is uncertain about the correct diagnosis, further tests may be needed. When we come to recognize we are powerless over our dependencies and our life is unmanageable where do we go for help? Do we look to those who are trained in addiction recovery and to God who is the expert in every disease of mankind?

Respect the Lord and stay away from evil. This will make you healthy, and you will feel strong.

Proverbs 3:7-8 CEV

I am God Most High! The only sacrifice I want is for you to be thankful and to keep your word. Pray to me in time of trouble. I will rescue you, and you will honor me. (Psalm 50:14-15 CEV)

We may have called out to God in the past for help and made promises that we would stop using, but our hearts were not ready to commit to keeping the words we spoke. We often think we know all there is to know about addiction and how we can control it. If that were true, why are we powerless over it and why is our life unmanageable? We need to seek help from those who have been trained in addiction recovery and from God Most High who, when we are ready, will be faithful to His Word and will help us.

Don't ever think that you are wise enough but respect the Lord and stay away from evil. This will make you healthy, and you will feel strong. (Proverbs 3:7-8 CEV)

When we give our will and life over to God's care, He is already aware of everything that brought us to this point of despair. The wonderful thing about God is that when we call out to Him, He will answer us and will help us get well. Why?

Because we are made in His image and precious in His sight.

No one wants you as a friend or cares what happens to you. But I will heal your injuries, and you will get well. (Jeremiah 30:17 CEV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess I am sick at heart and ask You to heal me and make me well. Thank You for caring for me. Amen

FORGETTING WHAT IS BEHIND

When we first come into recovery, we tend to focus on our past behaviour and the things we have done wrong. For years we tried to cover our pain with addictive substances or destructive behaviours because, at that time, it seemed to work. We felt anger, guilt, and shame, often to an overwhelming degree. We suffered injustice and felt we deserved comfort and went after comfort in whatever ways we were able to find it. We didn't question the impact our choices might have had on others. We did what we felt we "had to do" to survive and have a little happiness. Sadly, despite some momentary pleasure, we fell deeper and deeper into sin and our heartache increased. God now invites us to shift our focus from what was self-motivated destructive behaviour to a life focused on the healing power of Jesus.

Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:13-14 NIV)

God wants us to have a satisfying life. We all want that; who wouldn't? Or do we? We know we have problems – we've had them for most of our lives. Problems create an excuse for us to think about using whatever we have chosen in the past to cover the pain within us. Are we ready to stop allowing our problems to steal the new life God is giving us? If we are, we need to be willing to give up our obsessive thinking about how to cover our pain and instead welcome solutions from God, including His healing power, to restore us to new life.

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:2 NIV)

God's call to us today is to take our focus off our problems and let Him show us solutions. Are we willing to make the shift?

Prayer: Loving God, You are reaching out to me today, encouraging me to receive the healing you are offering, and that which I desperately need. Help me to surrender myself to You and choose to faithfully walk in Your ways. Amen

God's call to us today is to take our focus off our problems and let Him show us solutions.

PAYING IT FORWARD

Living a life of goodness, peace and joy reflects the Kingdom of God within us. As God continues to pour His blessings on us, we need to let those blessings overflow to others. For example, when we encounter someone who is troubled and in need of compassion or encouragement, we are to show the same kindness to them that we ourselves have received. God promises that as we give to others He will pour even more back into our lives.

Give away your life; you'll find life given back, but not merely given back—given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity. (Luke 6:38 MSG)

***God promises
that as we
give to others
He will pour
even more
back into our
lives.***

Both blessings and curses cannot come from a heart that is submitted to God. When we pray, we often ask God to forgive us our sins as we forgive the sins of others. When we choose not to forgive others, it will have a major impact on our lives. Holding on to grudges or deep-rooted anger is the soil that allows bitterness to grow in our hearts. When we choose to let go of bitterness and resolve to keep ourselves free from this aggressive weed, we will be surprised by joy. A joyful person who has a generous forgiving heart will naturally overflow with generosity and forgiveness to others.

Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. (Ephesians 4:31-32 NLT)

As we accept God's amazing grace for ourselves and then grace others, we will experience the joy and security of the generous life God has planned for us.

Make sure no one gets left out of God's generosity. Keep a sharp eye out for weeds of bitter discontent. A thistle or two gone to seed can ruin a whole garden in no time. (Hebrews 12:14 MSG)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You are a God of unfailing love and faithfulness. Help me to follow Your principles in all my affairs and to bless and forgive others as I have been blessed and forgiven by You. Amen

CO-DEPENDENCY

Co-dependence is an addictive relationship. People who are co-dependent form relationships that are normally one-sided, emotionally destructive, and often abusive. A co-dependent person bases their personal value on who they identify themselves to be within the relationship. They often interact with the other person in a way that is harmful to their own well-being.

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)

Contentment in life does not come from controlling or trying to please someone, or from hoping they will meet our needs so that we may feel secure. Another person cannot love us enough or touch us deeply enough to satisfy the longing in our hearts. Only God can satisfy those longings. In a relationship one person has only a limited responsibility for the other person's happiness. We have our desires and dreams, and we need to allow others to have theirs. We make our mistakes and others make theirs. We need to forgive ourselves and others for past mistakes and determine to learn from them.

Fullness of life and real freedom from co-dependency can only be found when we are first rooted in a relationship with our Heavenly Father. God made us in His image, and we have great value in His sight. When we base our worth and identity around this truth, rather than on the opinions of others, we begin to experience peace, freedom, and security.

Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. (Ephesians 1:4-5 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I ask You to show me how to live in a way that honours You and honours others. Help me to love You with all my heart, soul, mind and strength and to love others as myself. Fill me with Your love and give me the knowledge and wisdom to follow Your way in all my relationships. Amen

***Fullness of
life and real
freedom
from co-
dependency
can only be
found when
we are first
rooted in a
relationship
with our
Heavenly
Father.***

CONTROL WHAT YOU SAY

What are we saying and why are we saying it? After years of either saying nothing out of fear, or bursting out with anger and complaints, one of the things we need to learn in recovery is what to say and when to say it. We need to learn to control what we say and speak in ways that encourage others. We need to speak the truth to others in a loving way and we need to give attention to what is actually important and needs to be said.

Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones. A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Those who guard their lips preserve their lives, but those who speak rashly will come to ruin. (Proverbs 16:24, 15:1, 13:3 NIV)

A good rule to follow is to speak to others as we would wish to be spoken to.

Gossip and blaming don't help in any situation. Using our words to lie and manipulate and get what we want is more destructive than helpful. It's time to give up these ways of interacting with others.

With their mouths the godless destroy their neighbors, but through knowledge the righteous escape. A lying tongue hates those it hurts, and a flattering mouth works ruin. (Proverbs 11:9, 26:28 NIV)

It's not just words that come out of our mouths we need to watch. In this age of social media, it's easy to let our words run wild when we think of sending tweets or texts. We would do well to think about the impact our words might have on the receiver of our communication and what our words might reveal about us.

Fools give full vent to their rage, but the wise bring calm in the end. Do you see someone who speaks in haste? There is more hope for a fool than for them. (Proverbs 29:11, 20 NIV)

So, what should we be talking about and how might we be saying it? A good rule to follow is to speak to others as we wish to be spoken to. There is always a place for kindness and courtesy. God's Word promises that when we take time to consider what we say and speak kindly to others, it will bring health to our own bodies.

Prayer: May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to You, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. Amen (Psalm 19:14 NLT)

STAYING AWAY FROM ALL SEXUAL SIN

The book of Proverbs, which is in the Bible, is a book of great wisdom. Several chapters of the book give warnings about sexual immorality and the trouble we are lured into when we allow ourselves to be drawn into sexual activity outside of the lifetime commitment of marriage.

Come, let's drink our fill of love until morning. Let's enjoy each other's caresses, for my husband is not home. He's away on a long trip ... Don't let your hearts stray away toward her. Don't wander down her wayward path. For she has been the ruin of many; many men have been her victims. Her house is the road to the grave. Her bedroom is the den of death. (Proverbs 7:18-19, 25-27 NLT)

Jesus was clear on the issue of sexual immorality when He taught that long before we climb into bed with someone, we have allowed our minds and hearts to lust after that person and therefore committed sin in our hearts.

But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matthew 5:28 NLT)

We live in a culture that holds a vastly different standard from the principles God has established. As we go forward in our life with God in recovery, we have a choice to make. Even though it may seem like a huge sacrifice to pay, we are required to exhibit self-control in all sexual contact until after marriage. God knows what He is talking about and what is best for each person. The God who loves to bless His children and fill their lives with good things says to wait until after marriage for the intimate giving of one's self to another. Whose voice will we obey, the voice of lust that leads to ruin or the voice of God that leads to honour?

God's will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin. Then each of you will control his own body and live in holiness and honor— not in lustful passion like the pagans who do not know God and his ways. (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, You have the words of truth and life that will give us freedom as we follow Your will and Your ways. Help me to honour You with my body and make any necessary adjustments, so that I may live in sexual purity before You. Amen

Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body.

(1 Corinthians 6:18 NIV)

DEVELOPING INTEGRITY

Integrity is one of the most valued character qualities a person can have. A person of integrity has strong moral and ethical principles. They are known to be honest regardless of their circumstances, the company they are keeping, or even when they are alone with no one watching. What you see on the outside is the same person that is on the inside.

May integrity and honesty protect me, for I put my hope in you. (Psalm 25:21 NLT)

Integrity is a character quality developed in a person who has been living according to the Word of God. A person with integrity can stand with confidence before God.

***Integrity
is built
over time
as we
diligently
apply
God's
teachings
to the
choices
we make.***

I know that you are pleased with me, for my enemy does not triumph over me. Because of my integrity you uphold me and set me in your presence forever. (Psalm 41:11-12 NIV)

People of integrity have the peace of a clear conscience. When we live according to the Word of God we experience a deep inner peace knowing that we have not violated our conscience by any wrongdoing. We are confident that when someone examines us, we will be proven innocent. In contrast, when our lives lack moral wholeness, we live in constant fear of being “found out” as frauds. People of integrity are not perfect. We occasionally make mistakes and sin, but we do not cover up our offences. We confess them and deal with any consequences that arise.

Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out. (Proverbs 10:9 NIV)

Men and women of integrity can be depended upon. Others trust and respect them. Neighbours speak highly of them. They are known to be helpful in their community and in their workplace. Integrity in us can be built over time as we diligently apply God's teachings to the choices we make.

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to consider the impact of my actions and behaviour on those around me. My desire is to love and care for others as You faithfully love and care for me. Help me to follow Your principles in all my affairs and to become a person of integrity. Amen

LIKE NIGHT AND DAY

Sin whispers to the wicked, deep within their hearts. They have no fear of God at all. In their blind conceit, they cannot see how wicked they really are. Everything they say is crooked and deceitful. They refuse to act wisely or do good. They lie awake at night, hatching sinful plots. Their actions are never good. They make no attempt to turn from evil. (Psalm 36:1-4 NLT)

We read these words in the Bible, and they perfectly describe the time when we were running on self-will in our destructive lifestyle. We were co-operating with the evil one every day and often weren't even aware of it. We didn't care what people thought of us and what we were doing. We told ourselves that we weren't afraid of anyone – certainly not God. Deceitful and crooked are hardly strong enough to describe the choices we made and the things we did.

We are grateful that God, in His great love for us, never gave up on us but kept inviting us to come to Him and leave all that behind. In hindsight we can hardly imagine why we chose to live in such dark and ugly places. The contrast of God's love poured into our lives each day now amazes us as we come into closer conscious contact with Him. Through prayer and meditation on the Scriptures, we have learned God's principles and are now seeking to live them out in all our ways.

Your unfailing love, O Lord, is as vast as the heavens; your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the ocean depths. You care for people and animals alike, O Lord. How precious is your unfailing love, O God! All humanity finds shelter in the shadow of your wings. You feed them from the abundance of your own house, letting them drink from your river of delights. For you are the fountain of life, the light by which we see. (Psalm 36:5-9 NLT)

It's not enough to know about God's love. Let's seize the opportunity today to embrace a loving relationship with God, rest in His shadow, and let Him fill us to overflowing with His goodness.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for Your unfailing love for me. You are the fountain of life and in Your Light I am refreshed and strengthened as I choose to give my will and life over to Your care. Help me to wholeheartedly follow You in all my ways. Amen

***For you
are the
fountain
of life, the
light by
which we
see.***

***(Psalm 36:9
NLT)***

UPDATING OUR OUTLOOK

Life is not perfect and has its challenges. It is easy to let the obstacles and struggles get us down, but there is another way to live that is so much better. While we can't control people, places, or things, what we can control is how we respond to them, and this is where developing a positive outlook is helpful. We can certainly do that better when we are sober than when we are drunk or high. The ninth promise we are given if we live in sobriety for a while is *"Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change."* (Promises of AA)

A happy heart makes a face look cheerful. But a sad heart produces a broken spirit. (Proverbs 15:13 NIRV)

We pull down every proud obstacle that is raised against the knowledge of God; we take every thought captive and make it obey Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:5 GNT

There's plenty of literature on the effect of a positive outlook on life. Stress is reduced. All sorts of physical problems diminish or disappear altogether. Relationship issues tend to be resolved quicker and more satisfactorily when we are looking for what is good rather than blaming, complaining, and seeing the worst possible outcome.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; I will fear no one. The Lord protects me from all danger; I will never be afraid. (Psalm 27:1 GNT)

God will guide us with His light and love. We do not have to be afraid of facing the past, present or the future. God will surround us and protect us from all danger. Because God is always with us, we can confidently let go of the fear within us that keeps us looking at life in a negative way.

When I was burdened with worries, you comforted me and made me feel secure. (Psalm 94:19 CEV)

Going forward, God will not only show us what we need to know and do but when life is challenging, He will comfort us and help us feel secure. We can dare to hope that God has solutions, including healing power, and will stay with us when we are struggling. It is time to update our outlook on life and experience the unending love and care of God who will never leave us nor forsake us.

Prayer: Loving God, I am willing to trade in my pessimistic outlook on life because You have promised me a future with hope. I trust Your love for me and Your ability to work out Your plans for my life. Thank You that You care for me. Amen

GRATITUDE FOR HARD TIMES

As some of us consider the history of our lives – whether before, during, or after active addiction – gratitude might not be the first response in our hearts. Each season of our lives has pain, often shame, and a real desire within us to avoid and just “not go there ever again.”

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. (James 1:2-4 NIV)

Fortunately, we do not always live under the pressure of trials and temptations. God has called us to peace and God wants to fill our minds and hearts with peace today.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:15-17 NIV)

God will speak directly to us through His Word, through His Holy Spirit, and through the encouragement of others. Are we listening? Are we open to seeing what we have to be grateful for? Are we setting our hearts on God's faithfulness to us during the hard times and embracing the lessons we have learned?

How have we learned to persevere through the past experiences we have had? What experience, strength, and hope do we have to share with someone who is new to recovery? How has God filled our lives with good things, even after the destruction we brought on ourselves and others through our words and actions?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I thank You for Your faithful love that has brought me through many trials and temptations to this moment. My desire is to be mature and complete, lacking nothing. Help me to keep my eyes fixed on You and Your goodness, and with a grateful heart enjoy this day You have given me. Amen

Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:17 NIV