

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations



FEBRUARY 2025



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

www.pihtoday.blogspot.com

View our daily video blog at:

www.pihprayer.blogspot.com

*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 your personal print copy send your request to:

Visit us at 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



LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations

FEBRUARY 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 © 2024 Partners in Hope Recovery Society

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

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 02

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.

<p>SUBSTANCE ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Alcohol Caffeine Injected or smoked substances such as: Crack, Crystal Meth, Heroin Marijuana Prescription Medications Sugar Tobacco</p>	<p>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>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>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 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.

FREEDOM TO BE FREE

When we came into recovery we admitted that our lives were unmanageable and we needed a power greater than ourselves to restore us to sanity. We may have been unsure about God and what to expect from Him, but we were open to receive all the help we could get. We no longer wanted to be a slave to our addictive practices and longed to be free to choose what was right and good.

He gives justice to the oppressed and food to the hungry. The Lord frees the prisoners. The Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are weighed down. The Lord loves the godly. The Lord protects the foreigners among us. He cares for the orphans and widows, but he frustrates the plans of the wicked. The Lord will reign forever. He will be your God, O Jerusalem, throughout the generations. Praise the Lord! (Psalm 146:7-10 NLT)

We may not have thought of our lifestyle as being oppressive and ourselves as prisoners but that is exactly where things were at due to the control of our addiction. The destructive powers that manipulated us also controlled how we moved about each day. We often felt compelled to lie, cheat, or steal in our desperation to obtain our drug of choice. We had no time for anything else in our lives. We were entirely occupied with doing what was required to supply our dependency.

Now in recovery, God has opened our blind eyes to reveal the mess we were in and through the redeeming work of Jesus we have been unshackled from those things that limited our freedom. As we continuously turn our will and life over to the care of God, we will be blessed and have favor with Him. He will grant us the desire and the power to do those things that please Him. Through God’s love and forgiveness, we have been freed from the power of sin and it no longer has authority over us. By His death on the cross Jesus paid the price for our freedom from sin so that we could be reconciled with our Heavenly Father, so let’s praise Jesus and give Him thanks for all that He has done for us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for sending Jesus into the world to pay with His life the price of my freedom from bondage to sin. Please help me to remain free and never again allow the dark forces of oppression to enslave me. Amen

**Through
 God’s love
 and
 forgiveness
 we have
 been freed
 from the
 power of
 sin, and it
 no longer
 has
 authority
 over us.**

THE BENEFIT OF DOING THINGS GOD'S WAY OVER THE LONG HAUL

How many times have we spoken before we thought, and as the old truism says, "put our foot in our mouth?" For too long we have held narrow views of life and our place in it. God created us for community and caring relationships. In the scriptures He has given us all the knowledge we need to live life well every day.

If you listen closely to my wisdom and good sense, you will have sound judgment, and you will always know the right thing to say. (Proverbs 5:1-2 CEV)

The more often we make the choice to do things God's way, the more often we will be aware that it was exactly the right thing to do at that time.

In Step 11 of the 12-Step program, we are encouraged to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out. As we encounter God's wisdom in the Bible and put His ways into practice we will have the satisfaction and joy of knowing how practical God's word really is. In the beginning it may be a challenge for us to put God's principles into practice as God teaches us to be generous to others which is opposite to our self-centered practices in addiction. Generally, in our society, God's ways are not upheld as the best way forward.

The Lord watches your ways. He studies all your paths. Sinners are trapped by their own evil acts. They are held tight by the ropes of their sins. They will die because they refused to be corrected. Their sins will capture them because they were very foolish. (Proverbs 5:21-23 NIRV)

To walk according to God's principals requires that we discipline ourselves in certain ways and at certain times. The more often we make the choice to do things God's way, the more often we will be aware that it was exactly

the right thing to do at that time. People will benefit from our right actions and our sense of what is good for us and others will become clearer. This will form part of the message we are to carry to others as we practice God's principles in all our affairs.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to not only meditate and pray for the knowledge of Your will but to have the courage to put it into practice in all my affairs. Help me to trust Your way even when it seems inconvenient or quite different from what I have known in the past. I choose once again to turn my will and my life over to Your care. Please direct me in all my ways. 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.

BECOMING EMOTIONALLY AVAILABLE AGAIN

Living in addiction is living emotionally unavailable to God, to others, and to ourselves. One of the essential areas we give our attention to in recovery is learning how to identify, experience, and deal with emotions. Grief, shame, unforgiveness, and fear of rejection are just some of the root causes of our emotional separation from life experiences. God created us to be individuals who experience a wide variety of emotions, and He wants to help us recover the satisfying life that He prepared in advance for us.

We know that God loves us. We depend on it. God is love. Anyone who leads a life of love is joined to God and God is joined to them. Love is kind and patient. Love rejoices in the truth, but not in evil. Love is always supportive, loyal, hopeful, and trusting. Love never fails! (1 John 4:16 NIRV, 1 Corinthians 13:4a, 6-8 CEV)

The only way to healing and becoming emotionally available again is to repent of our former ways and open our hearts to God's unfailing love for us. Jesus died on the cross to make this life available to us. God gave us freedom of choice to invite Him to come and make our dead hearts alive and to give us comfort and healing. We don't have to earn this new life. We need not fear that it will be taken away from us if we do something wrong. In the safety of God's love, forgiveness, and healing, we can face the truth of every emotionally threatening memory or circumstance.

I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. (Ezekiel 36:26 NLT)

Our journey in this area will likely be taken in very small steps. As we persevere and open our hearts more and more each day, God will accompany us and support us through the healing process. If we are emotional and sense that we may be vulnerable to shutting down or running and hiding once again, we can call out to God for His help to improve our conscious contact with His love.

Prayer: Loving God, While I find it quite difficult to open up to my emotions, I know you created me to experience a healthy and satisfying emotional life. I turn away from fear and invite You to give me a new life today. Help me to trust in the safety of your unfailing love and support. In Your care, help me to learn to live and love others as You love me. Amen

The only way to healing and becoming emotionally available again is to repent of our former ways and open our hearts to God's unfailing love for us.

FEBRUARY 4

COMING CLEAN ABOUT IT ALL

NOTES

God created us to live in loving relationship with Him. All addictive and destructive behaviour is rooted in the breakdown of that relationship. Instead of turning to God for help in our time of need, we try to fix problems ourselves and end up in a worse condition than before. Our rebellion against God and His ways is at the root of all our wrongs.

In relationships that we struggle with, all of us wrestle with our conscience. We use lots of different strategies to rationalize our poor behaviour towards others. We may lie to ourselves and pretend that what we have done is not so bad in comparison to what others have done. We minimize how our conduct negatively impacted others. We hope that working hard at being good will offset the wrongs we have done.

When we expose the exact nature of our wrongs, we think that God will be surprised by our admission of what we have done.

To be at peace with ourselves we must stop rationalizing our past behaviour, acknowledge the error of our ways, realize the hurt we have caused, and turn away from our destructive lifestyle.

Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.
(Proverbs 28:13 NIV)

When we expose the exact nature of our wrongs, we think that God will be surprised by our admission of what we have done. We forget that He already knows every detail of our history and the true nature of our issues.

For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight—That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge. (Psalm 51:3-4 NKJV)

When we repent of our sin and bring our issues before God, He will hear us and rescue us from all our troubles. He has forgiveness for all our wrong-doing, healing for our brokenness, and guidance to help us build healthy relationships.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess the foundation of all my wrong-doing is my unwillingness to trust You and surrender to Your ways. You alone know what is best for me. Today I choose to trust Your plan for my life and I sincerely thank You for giving me hope and a future. Amen

WHEN TO SPEAK AND WHEN TO BE SILENT

When we were powerless over our addiction how many times did people try to help us see the truth about our problem? However, we just ignored them each time and continued on in our rebellious ways? As we share the message of life with God in recovery with others, we need to pray for wisdom to know when to speak and when to simply pray and leave people until they are ready.

Never correct conceited people; they will hate you for it. But if you correct the wise, they will respect you. Anything you say to the wise will make them wiser. Whatever you tell the righteous will add to their knowledge. (Proverbs 9:8-9 GNT)

We are to be those with stories of hope and comfort.

It is a good idea to share in a measured way and watch for the reaction of those to whom we are speaking. This is particularly true for those who are not yet willing to admit to their own struggles and their need for freedom from the bondage of addiction. We may not agree with what a person says but we don't always need to confront it. Silence has its place. Every conversation with others can be prayed about and God will prompt us when to speak, and what to say.

The right word at the right time is like precious gold set in silver. It makes a lot of sense to be a person of few words and to stay calm. (Proverbs 25:11, 17:27 CEV)

On the flip side, when we are with people and especially with those who are longing to hear about the hope we can share, we need to honour God by telling the story of His work that gave us life and recovery. We need to truthfully share both the impact of responding to God's Word and the rejecting of it had in our lives. We are a witness not a judge. We are to be those with stories of hope and comfort. God's Holy Spirit will do the rest.

To be wise you must first have reverence for the Lord. If you know the Holy One, you have understanding. Wisdom will add years to your life. You are the one who will profit if you have wisdom, and if you reject it, you are the one who will suffer. (Proverbs 9:10-12 GNT)

Prayer: Loving God, You made so many wonderful changes in my life that I am eager to share my experience, strength, and hope with others. Help me to be wise and know when to speak, and when to listen with respectful silence. Please open opportunities for me to share Your Good News and, as I speak, fill my mouth with Your words of hope. Amen

CONTENTMENT

Some of us in recovery circles know what it is like to live in plenty and others of us have experienced what it is like to live in poverty. Contentment in life does not come from having all that we need, but from a deep satisfaction within. Knowing that we are loved and cared for, and that God has our back, will give us a sense of peace and security in situations that we may be dealing with.

Fear of the Lord leads to life, bringing security and protection from harm. (Proverbs 19:23 NLT)

Without Jesus as our Saviour and Lord, we will never experience contentment. Some of us have sought satisfaction in money, in our substance of choice, or in human relationships. We have made false gods of these things by focusing our minds and all our efforts on having them. They may have satisfied us for a time but eventually they failed to fulfill the deep longing within our heart. There is only one thing that will fill the emptiness in each one of us and that is, God in us.

But those who still reject me are like the restless sea, which is never still but continually churns up mud and dirt. There is no peace for the wicked," says my God. (Isaiah 57:20-21 NLT)

God has prepared a way for us to enjoy life and be content. Jesus paid the debt for our sins so we could be forgiven and freed from the penalty of sin by accepting God's gift for us. All things are possible for those who believe in God. When we walk in His ways, we will know peace in the deepest place in our soul. The contentment that God gives is priceless and cannot be bought with silver or gold.

Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth. After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it. (1 Timothy 6:6-7 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess I have wandered far from You. Today, I humbly ask You to come into my heart and help me follow You in all my ways. My desire is to experience Your peace that passes all understanding. Amen

The contentment that God gives is priceless and cannot be bought with silver or gold.

OBSESSION WITH PAST FAILURES

Sometimes people in recovery circles are obsessed with past failures. In their minds they replay scenes of negative events over and over again allowing the sustained hurt to cause them even more pain.

Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. (Luke 6:37 NIV)

We need to give up being judge of our own and someone else's failures. Failures are not fatal, while bitterness can be.

Some of us struggle with memories of how our care givers failed to provide the necessities of life for us. We may judge and condemn them, and subsequently ourselves for our failure to provide for those who depended on us. Failures of others, or our own failures, too easily become the dominant focus in our thinking and in our conversations with others. Resentment and bitterness grow like weeds in this type of environment and our obsession with past offences eventually becomes our identity. Can God help in these circumstances?

Is anyone crying for help? God is listening, ready to rescue you. If your heart is broken, you'll find God right there; if you're kicked in the gut, he'll help you catch your breath. (Psalm 34:17-18 MSG)

Continuing to obsess on past failures is a hindrance to our present and future well-being. We need to ask God for forgiveness for the sins of bitterness, resentment, or meanness that occupy our minds and hearts. We need to see those who harmed us as sinners in need of forgiveness. We need to give up being judge of our own and someone else's failures. Failures are not fatal, while bitterness can be.

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 12:15 MSG)

Let's ask God today to help us deal with our obsession with past failures.

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to let go of the bitter discontent I harbour because of past hurts. I accept Your forgiveness and healing and choose to live together with others in Your peace and blessing. Amen

SETTING THINGS RIGHT THROUGH PRAYER

God won't stop us from making bad choices. His desire is for us to choose and experience life and love but, that is our choice to make. God will never remove choice from us for that would make us powerless robots who mindlessly obey His commands. When we make a mess of our lives God does not abandon us to die in our addiction and sin. It is God's desire that every person will find their way to life with Him and experience the joy of His unfailing love.

The Lord isn't slow about keeping his promises, as some people think he is. In fact, God is patient, because he wants everyone to turn from sin and no one to be lost. (2 Peter 3:9 CEV)

How do we make the move out of our mess into the care of God? We pray! We admit that we have not done what is right and that God has continued to spare our lives. We turn away from our sin and we turn to God for forgiveness and healing. The amazing and joyful truth is that when we pray God will answer. God will set things right. We will be set free. We will truly find what we have been searching for.

When they pray, God will answer; they will worship God with joy; God will set things right for them again. Each one will say in public, "I have sinned. I have not done right, but God spared me. He kept me from going to the world of the dead, and I am still alive." (Job 33:26-28 GNT)

How is God able to do this? He sent Jesus into the world to die on a cross to pay the penalty for our sin. As we trust what Jesus has done for us, repent of our sin and ask for forgiveness, God will forgive us and give us new life. That's always been His plan – not to condemn and judge us but, through the redeeming work of Jesus, to give us a new life that lasts forever.

God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life. God did not send his Son into the world to judge the world. He sent his Son to save the world through him. (John 3:16-17 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am so grateful that You desired to save me rather than condemn me. Forgive me for my sins and failures. Set things right for me again so I can live in Your presence now and forevermore. Amen

How do we make the move out of our mess into the care of God? We pray!

TWO KINDS OF SADNESS

Sadness is one of the most common human emotions and can be difficult to deal with. The feeling itself brings a burden and often the memory of the event that caused the sadness keeps pressing down on our hearts. It's interesting that the Bible talks about both a bad and a good sadness. How are we to know the difference and how are we to deal with each of them?

For the sadness that is used by God brings a change of heart that leads to salvation—and there is no regret in that! But sadness that is merely human causes death. (2 Corinthians 7:10 GNT)

We may experience sadness due to grief, loss, worries, disappointments, shame or regret, just to name a few factors. Thankfully, God does not leave us on our

own to face all this. He comforts and strengthens us in our time of need.

Our God has sent me to comfort all those who are sad. He wants me to help those ... who are filled with sorrow.
(Isaiah 61:2b-3a
NIRV)

Why am I so sad? Why am I so troubled? I will put my hope in God, and once again I will praise him, my savior and my God. (Psalm 42:5 GNT)

As we look at the wreckage of our past our own pain and the pain we caused others will likely cause sadness in our hearts. Recovery groups and programs that are based on God's word will help us face those events and sort out what amends we are responsible to make and what we can let go. When we became willing to repent of our sin and experience the pain associated with dealing with the past many of us have stories to tell of how God changed our sadness to joy. Jesus compared

that sadness and joy with the extreme suffering of a woman birthing a child and the joy experienced when holding the baby in her arms.

When a woman is about to give birth, she is sad because her hour of suffering has come; but when the baby is born, she forgets her suffering, because she is happy that a baby has been born into the world. (John 16:21 GNT)

God will strengthen us as we overcome the sadness of brokenness. Our joy will be complete when we come alongside others to give them comfort and hope.

Heavenly Father, Thank You for consoling me in my sadness and for Your forgiveness and healing. I praise You for the joy of sharing Your love with others who are suffering. Amen

STEP THREE – WAKING UP TO LIFE IN GOD'S CARE

Some of us wonder where life will take us if we give our will and life over to the care of God. We have anxiety about our past, and the effort required to change our ways seems intimidating. We are standing at a crossroad and are not sure which way we should take. If we go back to our old lifestyle we know things will get worse because addiction and sin never get any better, they always lead us further into darkness. If we choose to give our lives over to the care of God, we fear having to live without our controlling dependency. What a predicament?

I can anticipate the response that is coming: "I know that all God's commands are spiritual, but I'm not. Isn't this also your experience?" Yes. I'm full of myself—after all, I've spent a long time in sin's prison. What I don't understand about myself is that I decide one way, but then I act another, doing things I absolutely despise. (Romans 7:14-15 MSG)

There is a way forward which seems obvious even though it is new and unknown – obey God's commands and leave the outcome with Him. We have admitted that we are powerless over our dependency, so it would be unwise for us to make decisions about what is best for us. Recognizing what we have done to ourselves, to our loved ones, and to our friends surely is a wake-up call to trust someone other than ourselves. God has already proved Himself worthy of our trust. Through Jesus He has liberated us from sin and is offering us forgiveness and new life.

He reached down from heaven. He took hold of me. He lifted me out of deep waters. He saved me from my powerful enemies. He set me free from those who were too strong for me. (Psalm 18:16-17 NIRV)

God has continuously proved Himself to be faithful in all His ways. To effectively change our ways, we need to wholeheartedly give our will and life over to the care of God and trust Him to lead and guide us in the path of righteousness.

Prayer: Loving God, I choose to give my will and life over to Your care. I am fully relying on You to support my desire to change my ways. Please strengthen me in my resolve to obey Your principles in all my affairs. Amen

Where will life take us if we give our will and life over to the care of God?

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

When we pray for God's will and the power to carry it out, God just doesn't point to something unfocused in the distance. God brings the truth up close and tells us what we need to know and act on. In the book of Proverbs in the Bible, there is much wisdom in the many clear and simple sayings that are truths we can put into practice while we are learning about our life in recovery. 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.

God calls us to love others, and to lift them up, and to encourage them in any way we can.

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 or for angrily confronting and accusing someone of their wrongdoing. It is so easy to be devious in the way we approach a person in authority or someone from whom we are asking a favour. Instead of acting in these ways, God calls us to love others, and to lift them up, and to encourage them in any way we can. God is love and He tells us to love one another, promising us that love will never fail.

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 4:4-7 NIRV)

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 blaming others and being negative. Help me to be humble, truthful, quick to do what is right, and to make peace rather than stir up anger and conflict. Help me to establish new patterns of thinking and behaving. Help me to persevere and hold to the truth in every circumstance that arises. You have been my friend, and I ask You to stick close to me. Your love truly is unfailing. Help me to live my life in ways that honour You. Amen

WILLINGNESS IS THE KEY

To become willing to follow God's ways is an everyday challenge for those of us who are used to running our own lives. If we desire a successful life in recovery the practice of a willing heart and mind to follow God's principles is necessary.

We need to be willing to admit we cannot do life on our own. We need to become willing to believe that a power greater than ourselves exists and has our best interests at heart. We need to become willing to admit our shortcomings and to have God remove them. We need to be willing to review the events of our day in an ongoing inventory with God and determine to make any changes that may be necessary.

For change to take place and serenity with God in recovery to become our lived reality, we must wholeheartedly turn our will and life over to God's direction and care. God is the one who gets to decide what is best for us, what is best in our relationships, what is best for our well-being today, and for the long haul. What God says needs changing gets worked on until it changes. What God says needs removing gets removed. When God says to bear with something patiently, we hang in and tolerantly bear with it.

God has chosen you and made you his holy people. He loves you. So, your new life should be like this: Show mercy to others. Be kind, humble, gentle, and patient. Don't be angry with each other but forgive each other. If you feel someone has wronged you, forgive them. Forgive others because the Lord forgave you. Together with these things, the most important part of your new life is to love each other. Love is what holds everything together in perfect unity. (Colossians 3:12-14 ERV)

We must be willing to allow God, through His Word in the Bible, to guide us and give us discernment as we negotiate new pathways in our minds and hearts. We must be willing to ask God, "what do I need to change so Your kingdom will come, and Your will be done in my life here on earth as it is in heaven?"

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me grow in my relationship with You and be willing to submit to You and to Your principles in all my affairs. Amen

If we desire a successful life in recovery the practice of a willing heart and mind to follow God's principles is necessary.

EMOTIONAL HEALING IS ASSURED

Healing is a process of restoring to health something that has been injured. The injury can either be physical or emotional, but in both cases, healing takes time. A small cut to a finger may take a few days to heal while a deep gash can take weeks. Emotional damage is often unseen and the longer it remains untreated the more damage is done. Emotional damage is inflicted by one person on another and often the injured person will, through unforgiveness of the offender, cause further damage to themselves plus inflict harm on others.

If you are tired from carrying heavy burdens, come to me and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:28 CEV

At that point Peter got up the nerve to ask, "Master, how many times do I forgive a brother or sister who hurts me? Seven?" Jesus replied, "Seven! Hardly. Try seventy times seven. (Matthew 18:21-22 MSG)

If we have been injured, we need to do what is necessary to get well. Even a small cut can cause significant damage if it becomes infected with bacteria. If we have been emotionally injured, we need to seek help and not just allow the event to fester in our minds and cause us further harm. Without God in our lives, our attitude towards those who have harmed us is to judge, condemn, and be angry, rather than to show mercy and promote healing. Often drugs and alcohol are the medicine of choice to stop the emotional pain we are feeling. However, they are not the prescription for healing.

Don't judge others, and God won't judge you. Don't be hard on others, and God won't be hard on you. Forgive others, and God will forgive you. (Luke 6:37 CEV)

When we refuse to forgive someone who has harmed us, we create more harm for ourselves. The original wound is aggravated and we become tense, angry, and disagreeable with others. Why would we refuse to forgive and live with continued darkness and pain when healing through Jesus is available?

If you are tired from carrying heavy burdens, come to me and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28 CEV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am weary of carrying the heavy load of unforgiveness, please give me the will and desire to forgive so I can be healed and restored to life. Amen

MARKING MILESTONES

Recognizing and marking milestones (clean time in recovery) is a way to celebrate our sobriety and give hope to others who attend recovery meetings with us. Milestone celebrations help us to remember how our lives were when we first turned away from our destructive lifestyle and sought God. They also help us celebrate our new life with God in recovery and the peace it brings.

The Lord is my strength and shield. I trusted him with all my heart. He helped me, so I am happy. I sing songs of praise to him. (Psalm 28:7 ERV)

We celebrate belly-button birthdays because we are thankful for another year of shared life with our family and friends. We celebrate sobriety milestones to give thanks for God's lavish love and grace poured out on us when we turned our will and life over to His care. God enabled us to see life with meaning and purpose. How else could we remain sober for even one day, let alone months or years?

He remembered us when we were defeated. His faithful love will last forever. He saved us from our enemies. His faithful love will last forever. (Psalm 136:23-24 ERV)

Every day of sobriety is worth celebrating with others. This is why we celebrate many time periods from one day to multiple years giving chips, key fobs, medallions, and cakes to mark the applicable occasion.

This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be happy today! (Psalm 118:24 ERV)

Registering our clean date and preparing to mark the milestones as they come is one helpful tool in keeping us sober. Remembering our journey of one day at a time with God and then celebrating how one day became one week, one month, one year, etc., is a helpful deterrent when we struggle to stay clean.

Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible." (Matthew 19:26 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, I thank You for this day of sobriety and each day linked to it. You've been with me through thick and thin and You will never leave me nor forsake me. I truly face each day with confidence because of Your unfailing love and care for me. Amen

Recognizing and marking milestones (clean time in recovery) is a way to celebrate our sobriety and give hope to others.

ACCEPTANCE THAT BRINGS SERENITY

Life has its ups and downs and does not always treat us fairly. Some problem situations seem to work out and others do not. In difficult times, when we are powerless to change a situation, what we really need is the serenity that comes from recognizing what cannot be changed. How do we deal with that? We reach out to God and steady ourselves in the truth that God is with us, God cares for us, and God will make a way where there seems to be no way forward.

Give your burdens to the LORD, and he will take care of you. The Lord gives his people strength. The Lord blesses them with peace. (Psalm 55:22, 29:11 NLT)

Acceptance sees reality for what it is, focuses on what can be done, and leaves the rest in God's hands.

The acceptance that fills us with peace is found when we stop living in denial. It comes when we no longer hide from pain by trying to live under buried anger or behind the sadness of "that's just how it is." Acceptance sees reality for what it is, focuses on what can be done, and leaves the rest in God's hands.

Acceptance keeps this day and this moment in focus and leaves tomorrow's uncertainties with God. Acceptance causes us to pray and speak with God about what is going on, particularly speaking to Him of those things we do not understand and wish we could change. Acceptance seeks God's direction and strength to cope, trusting that God has a plan. If we don't know the next right thing to do, we can ask a trusted companion in recovery and then act appropriately on the advice given. In this way we position ourselves for blessing and support.

For even if the mountains walk away and the hills fall to pieces, My love won't walk away from you, my covenant commitment of peace won't fall apart." The God who has compassion on you says so. (Isaiah 54:10 MSG)

God has more strength to give than what our current situation requires. God will compassionately comfort us while the going is tough. Circumstances may come and go but we can be sure that God will continue to show us the way forward if we acknowledge Him in all our ways and allow Him to direct our path.

Prayer: Loving God, when I face challenging circumstances, help me to reach out to You for comfort and strength. Help me to do the next right thing and trust You to make all things right as I surrender to Your will. Amen

GIVING THANKS IN IMPOSSIBLE SITUATIONS

One day Jesus and His friends faced a huge problem. Thousands of people were before them, and these people were tired and hungry. The only food available was five small loaves (probably bun sized pita bread) and a couple of small fish. Jesus' friends did not see a way to provide for the crowd and thought the way to deal with the problem was to send them away so they could meet their own needs. What was Jesus' response to this impossible situation?

Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them. Then he gave them to the disciples to distribute to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over." (Luke 9:16-17 NIV)

Why should we give thanks when facing needs that seem impossible to fill? God knows who we are and the resources that are available to us and the true nature of whatever the need before us is. If we have committed our will and life to His care, God has promised to generously supply all our needs so we can share the overflow with others.

And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19 NIV)

Giving thanks is one way to acknowledge the truth about God's presence with us and His promise to provide for us. Remembering how God has taken care of us in the past is an important way to build our trust in His care for us today, and in the future. As we focus on our loving God and how He works on our behalf, we will experience more joy and satisfaction in life than we ever thought possible. Giving thanks opens the generous hand of God.

Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:18 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for Your promise to provide for all my needs. Help me to continue to trust You even when the reality of life seems to block my vision of what You can do. Help me to continue to see You as the Awesome God that You are and remember that You can move mountains. Amen

Giving thanks is one way to acknowledge the truth about God's presence with us and His promise to provide for us.

DISCERNMENT

People with discernment normally do the right thing in any situation that arises. Based on their knowledge of God and His ways, spiritually discerning people have the capacity to separate and sift what is best from what is generally understood to be good.

When humans were created, we were meant to live in relationship with God forever. God gave humans free will to choose to love and obey Him. Even though humans chose to disobey God and their relationship with Him was cut off, eternity remains in our hearts where it was planted when we were created.

**Without
God's
wisdom,
none of us
know how to
live
purposefully
in this life, or
what will
happen to us
in the next.**

God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end. (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NLT)

Many humans continue to function in this world as though they will live forever. They don't consult God with regards to what is best for them. They think they intuitively know what that is but end up suffering painful consequences for the many unhealthy choices they make. The truth is that without God's wisdom, none of us know how to live purposefully in this life, or what will happen to us in the next. What are we to do?

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16 NIV)

When we surrender our lives to Jesus, God's Holy Spirit comes to live in our hearts, and He will teach us the truth about life that we could never come to understand on our own. It is this truth that results in us "having discernment". It is more than our conscience speaking to us, or "trusting our gut." This is God revealing truth to us, so we can live well. As we spend time in God's word each day, He gives us a discerning heart to know His ways and put them into practice.

Deal with your servant according to your love and teach me your decrees. I am your servant; give me discernment that I may understand your statutes. (Psalm 119:124-125 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that You are the only wise God. Teach me Your ways so that, together with You, I can discern and choose what is the best path for my life. Amen

SEEING OUR TRUE VALUE

Self-worth is the value we see in ourselves and our role in life. Some of us overrate ourselves and some of us undervalue ourselves according to our position in life. What is the right approach to assessing our self-worth? When selling a house, the asking price is not the true value of that house, its value is the price the buyer is willing to pay. God was willing to pay a high price to buy us back from the brokenness and isolated condition we found ourselves in due to our rebellion and sin against Him and His ways.

When people sin, they earn what sin pays—death. But God gives his people a free gift—eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23 ERV)

We are of great value to God because Jesus came into the world to pay the price for our sin so that we could be free from its penalty. How do we value what Jesus has done for us? If we refuse to accept what Jesus has done, then we are assessing no worth to the plan of God for our deliverance from the penalty of sin. Our self-worth is then self-determined, or assessed by the value others place on us.

For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:21 NIRV)

Jesus came into the world not to judge the world but to save it. Our unwillingness to receive this precious gift of new life through Jesus is what will be our judge. Our true value is determined by who we become when we accept the finished work of Christ on our behalf. In Christ we become children of our Heavenly Father. Our worth to God is more than we could ever determine but God says we are His masterpieces created in Christ Jesus to do good works.

God rescued us from dead-end alleys and dark dungeons. He's set us up in the kingdom of the Son he loves so much, the Son who got us out of the pit we were in, got rid of the sins we were doomed to keep repeating. (Colossians 1:13-14 MSG)

Prayer: Gracious God, Help me to base my self-worth on the truth of who You are and all that I am because I have accepted all that Jesus has done for me. I am grateful that You have become my Heavenly Father and that I am Your precious child. Amen

***Our worth
to God is
more than
we could
ever
imagine.***

TELLING THE TRUTH

Telling the truth presents many challenges for individuals seeking new life in recovery. We have a history of lies and manipulative ways. Every resource we had was used to get what we wanted when we wanted it. Those habits of conveniently hiding the truth when it is to our advantage can be a challenge to overcome.

May your unfailing love come to me, Lord, your salvation, according to your promise; then I can answer anyone who taunts me, for I trust in your word. Never take your word of truth from my mouth, for I have put my hope in your laws. I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts.

(Psalm 119:41-43, 45 NIV)

God's invitation to us as we walk with Him in recovery is to know freedom by living in the truth.

Now we can see the wreckage we created because of our bad choices, and it causes us anxiety when we think about what we did. We are afraid of the opinions of others and of the consequences we may face. We know we need to talk about our past behaviour but are unsure how to go about it without arguments and harsh words arising.

God's invitation to us as we walk with Him in recovery is to know freedom by living in the truth. God promises that when we walk in the truth we won't need to be afraid or ashamed. The past is what it is. God's mercy and forgiveness is based on our acceptance of the finished work of Jesus who gave His life to pay the debt for our sin. The way of truth-telling may be unknown and uncertain to us, but God says we will experience freedom when we submit to His ways and follow Him. When we get to telling the truth, everyone may not agree with us. Our perception of events may differ from that of others.

Initially people may not be supportive of us when we get honest, however, we need to show humility and be willing to accept this.

In the face of all these challenges our only hope is to rely on God's promise to us that truth telling is the right way forward and, when we are truthful, we will have no shame as we are upheld by God's unfailing love. Today is a new opportunity to trust in God's word and walk in honesty before Him and others.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I have lied and hidden the truth repeatedly in my life. Please forgive me. Teach me Your way of always speaking the truth and give me the wisdom and courage to respectfully be a truth teller in all my dealings with others. Amen

GOD IN MY PAIN

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:3 NIV)

How many of us are poor in spirit? If being poor in spirit means being financially poor as in not having enough money to meet all our needs, how can Jesus encourage us to become that way and promise us that "the kingdom of heaven is ours?" If Jesus says we are blessed because we are "poor in spirit," it has to be something good that we should desire.

To be "poor in spirit" means that we come to an honest understanding of who we truly are without God in our life. We recognize that we are powerless to do life on our own. We no longer deny what we have done in the past, but humbly admit the exact nature of our wrongs to God and ask for His forgiveness. We choose to turn our will and life over to the care of God and wholeheartedly follow Him, trusting that He will provide the strength we need to seek Him in all our ways.

Don't love the world's ways. Don't love the world's goods. Love of the world squeezes out love for the Father. Practically everything that goes on in the world—wanting your own way, wanting everything for yourself, wanting to appear important—has nothing to do with the Father. It just isolates you from him. The world and all its wanting, wanting, wanting is on the way out—but whoever does what God wants is set for eternity. (1 John 2:15-17 MSG)

When we are "poor in spirit" we will humbly live in the grace and favour of God. We will be thankful for all that God has done for us. When we fail, we will not be fearful, but will come to Him, knowing that God is slow to anger and rich in love. If we are truly sorry for the wrongs we have done and confess our sin, we will receive forgiveness not condemnation. We are truly "poor in spirit" when we admit that if any weakness existed in God it would still be stronger than our greatest human strength. We are "poor in spirit" when we remember that every breath comes from our awesome God and live gratefully in each moment. We know we are "poor in spirit" when every moment of every day we rely on the goodness of God.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I acknowledge that without You I can do nothing. I desire to be poor in spirit so that I can be rich in Your unfailing love for me. May my life here on earth reflect my birthright as a child of the Kingdom of Heaven. Amen

When we are "poor in spirit" we will humbly live in the grace and favour of God

LIVING WITH JOY TODAY

We live in a beautiful world created by God. Because God desired a people for Himself, He made humans in His own image. By doing so, God could communicate with us, and we could have a relationship with Him. Whether we take time to notice it or not, God is pouring out blessings for us every day. God's plan is that we live close to Him in the joy of His presence ever with us.

God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking. It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy. All this comes through the Holy Spirit. (Romans 14:17 NIRV)

True joy will be our experience when we live in the purpose God planned for us when He made us.

Often we do not recognize the goodness of God to us and especially His love for us in giving Jesus to be our Saviour. We blame God when things do not go right but fail to thank Him when good things happen. Joy in our lives will be increased by receiving God's forgiveness for our sin and by walking in gratitude for His help and protection over us in troubling times in this imperfect world.

If you do not serve the Lord your God with joy and enthusiasm for the abundant benefits you have received ... you will be left hungry, thirsty, naked, and lacking in everything. (Deuteronomy 28:47-48 NLT)

True joy will be our experience when we live in the purpose God planned for us when He made us. Today may be a great day to learn more about that.

Wisdom will lead you to a life of joy and peace. Even though I have troubles and hard times, your commands give me joy. (Proverbs 3:17, Psalm 119:143 ERV)

Even at this point in our recovery, when some of the consequences of our unwise choices of the past are causing us concern, God wants to bless us. As we learn to obey His principles and choose to follow God's ways, we will experience joy and peace beyond all we could ask for or imagine.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You that I can live joyfully in Your presence and enjoy the peace of a good life, even in circumstances that are less than perfect. Help me to always seek Your wisdom and do what is right, so that I may experience peace and the joy of blessings You pour out on me. Amen

DESIRING CHANGE

We will experience freedom and fulfillment in life only when God's desires become our desires, God's way becomes our way, and God's Word becomes our action plan.

Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart's desires. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. (Psalm 37:4, Matthew 16:25, Matthew 6:33 NLT)

Each of us has long established patterns of behaviour that need to change. We hang on to our harmful tendencies because they seem to meet a need or may help to avoid the pain we are anticipating. Those who have a positive recovery experience are those who have surrendered their faulty beliefs and behaviours to God with the desire that God remove from them the underlying patterns of sin and woundedness that has driven their actions.

God says: ***"My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness."*** So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. (2 Corinthians 12:9 NLT)

We have all observed disastrous outcomes in the lives of individuals who chose to live self-centered lives. Jesus taught and demonstrated that the key to a life that is truly happy, joyous, and free is the choosing of God's will over our own. When our goal is to be happy, we will fall into destructive, self-centered patterns of life. When our goal is to love God, and have a relationship with Him, joy will be a natural outflowing of that relationship. A willingness to let God's priorities re-shape our thinking and behaving provides a healthy foundation for a joyful purposeful life.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I need You. Every day, every hour I need you. My request and desire is that You help me recognize my brokenness and come to You for healing. I want to be free from the bondage that holds me captive to my past. I want to live for You and honour You in all my ways. Please help me! Amen

We will experience freedom and fulfillment in life only when God's desires become our desires, God's way becomes our way, and God's Word becomes our action plan.

GOD'S FAITHFUL LOVE AND MY RECOVERY

There's a song that's been sung in churches for a few years now called "He Is Faithful." The words offer great hope to those of us who are recovering our lives and coming to believe in a power greater than ourselves who can restore us to sanity.

Some of the lyrics are: *"I have heard a sound coming on the winds, changing hearts and minds, healing brokenness. I feel a generation breaking through despair. I hear a generation full of faith declare, ...: He is faithful, He is glorious, He is Jesus, all my hope is in Him. He is freedom, He is healing right now. He is hope and joy, love and peace and life. ... He has paid the highest price. He has proven His great love for us. We will praise Him with our lives and proclaim our love for Him."*

We come out of our darkness into light only because God is faithful.

The truth and theme of the song is, we come out of our darkness into light only because God is faithful. We find healing for our brokenness only because God fills us with hope and joy and love and peace and life.

Jesus Christ has proved God's unfailing love for us by coming to earth in human form and dying on the cross to pay the debt of sin for the whole world. He overcame death on our behalf and His resurrection life is our solid hope for eternal life. The Spirit of Jesus living in us is the power by which we overcome any difficulty, past, present, or future. The life we are recovering in this power-filled relationship with God is made available to us through the finished work of Jesus here on earth.

To all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God. So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son. (John 1:12-14 NLT)

When we turn our will and our life over to the care of God, He promises to fill us with new life. God always keeps His promises.

Prayer: Into my heart, into my heart, come into my heart Lord Jesus. Come in today. Come in to stay. Come into my heart, Lord Jesus. Amen

PEACEFUL RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH HUMILITY

If we want to experience healthy and joyful relationships with God and with others each day of our lives, we will have to be willing to change our former ways. We know we cannot fix ourselves. Our confidence in the ability to change is based on the truth that when we humbly come to God and ask Him to remove our character defects He will do so.

God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor. (James 4:6-8, 10 NLT)

A problem many of us experience is – we are willing to have God remove some of our defects of character but are not willing to admit that we have others we want to hold on to. We assume we are finished with our restoration, but as long as we have difficulty in any relationship, there remains a work that God wants to do in us, if we will permit Him to do so.

Be joyful. Grow to maturity. Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you. (2 Corinthians 13:11 NLT)

A life of joy and peace is more evident in those who are humble because they are willing to have blind spots revealed to them. They seek God's help and the help of sponsors or others to work through the tougher issues of their hearts. Humble people are peaceful, thankful people because they recognize the journey is progress not perfection. They leave their stubborn pride behind and come close to God, who alone can save and restore them. They are willing to have God reveal to them what the root of each problem is that arises, and deal with it in God's way.

God forgives. God heals. God encourages. God makes a way of peace and harmony available to those who are willing to have Him reveal and remove character defects that are visible.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Create in me a clean heart and renew a right Spirit within me. Amen

When we humbly come to God and ask Him to remove our character defects, He will do so.

SEEING IT THROUGH TO COMPLETION

How many of us begin a job and see it through to completion? Many of us who have attempted recovery in the past and failed have a fear of never being able to change our old ways. In the Bible we read of Hezekiah who became King of Judah. He forsook the old ways of the nation under his father and worked to turn the nation back to God. He also made plans to restore the temple of the Lord and scheduled a time to celebrate completion.

Everything he took up, whether it had to do with worship in God's Temple or the carrying out of God's Law and Commandments, he did well in a spirit of prayerful worship. He was a great success. (2 Chronicles 31:21 MSG)

Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace.

If we determine to follow God's principles, as Hezekiah did, we will find great success in all we do. We set ourselves up for failure when we neglect to seek God's guidance through prayerful worship and petition, and only half-heartedly do those things required of us in our recovery program. When we decisively give our will and life over to the care of God, He gives us a new life and the power to do those things that please Him. We know that life on our own does not lead to a purposeful life, so why not seek to follow God's principles in all our affairs and allow Him to begin a new work in us.

2 Corinthians 13:11 b

God is the one who began this good work in you, and I am certain that he won't stop before it is complete on the day that Christ Jesus returns. (Philippians 1:6 CEV)

God has promised to be with us on the path ahead and, if we desire to be complete in Him, we need to seek His direction in all that we do. We need to admit that we have defects of character and become willing to allow God to remove them and bring healing and restoration to those places in us that have been wounded.

Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. (2 Corinthians 13:11 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, My desire is to live the purposeful life You have prepared for me. Please strengthen me by the power of Your Holy Spirit to stay the course so I can be complete in You and live my life to the full. Amen

PREJUDICE AND PEACE

Stories of intolerance and prejudice air regularly on the news networks. Sadly, this kind of thinking and acting has been commonplace throughout the centuries. History shows that many wars have been started because of prejudice and hatred between different races and religious and political groups. The rich judge the poor, and the poor judge the rich. The list is endless.

If we want others to treat us with respect when we come into recovery, then we need to respond with respect towards them. This is the first step towards seeing others as God sees them and living at peace within our communities.

I see very clearly that God shows no favoritism. In every nation he accepts those who fear him and do what is right. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Acts 10:34-35 NLT, Galatians 3:28 NIV)

We may not approve of another's beliefs, choices, and actions. However, the Bible tells us we are to "***show proper respect to everyone***" (1 Peter 2:17 NIV). To embrace God's way of living in recovery we must do all we can to see walls broken down and individuals come together to honestly and respectfully interact with one another for the good of all.

Prejudice won't go away simply because we try to ignore it. Responding to hate and discrimination with anger is often more harmful than helpful. We must learn to separate people from words or actions and learn how to deal with individuals in whose presence we might feel uncomfortable. Where troubles and tensions exist, we need to step back and sort out what is truly going on. Whatever unease arises in our hearts is what needs to be addressed so that everyone can be lifted-up, protected, and live in peace with one another.

In a nutshell, to move from prejudice to peace we must listen long, talk to God, and continue to speak respectfully to one another.

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to identify any prejudice I may hold in my own heart. Forgive me if I have built walls rather than bridges. Help me to let go of all prejudice. Strengthen me to walk with wisdom and respect before You and others. Amen

To move from prejudice to peace we must listen long, talk to God, and continue to speak respectfully to one another.

THE POWER TO OVERCOME TEMPTATION

Anyone who has tried to break free from the harmful use of a substance or an addictive habit does not need a dictionary to help them understand temptation. Too many times we have felt the overwhelming obsession to "pick up", even though we know that giving in to that urge in a moment of weakness will result in damaging consequences for us. At times we tell ourselves lies to convince ourselves that some thing, or some one, we have been obsessing over will make us happy. We believe our problems will all go away if we can just have this one thing or this one person in our life.

God promises to help us and to give us victory over temptation as we choose to turn our will and lives over to His care.

How quickly the pleasure that we sought fades, the painful consequences return, and the self-condemnation arises in our thoughts for giving into temptation. We find ourselves dejectedly asking once again, "How can I win over temptation and turn my life around?" God has a way forward for us. God promises to help us and to give us victory over temptation as we choose to turn our will and our lives over to His care.

Because he himself [Jesus] suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (Hebrews 2:18, Romans 8:37 NIV)

Even though Jesus faced many difficult moments and challenges He never gave in to temptation because He never doubted God's care or power to work in the plan He had for His life. Jesus has compassion for us in our weaknesses. Jesus came to earth, took on human flesh, and entered our world of suffering and temptation so He could identify with us. When we invite Jesus to be Lord of

our lives, we are filled with His Holy Spirit who will give us the power to conquer temptation.

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. (Hebrews 4:15 NIV)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Thank You for making a way for me to have victory over temptation and sin. Where I am weak, I ask You to strengthen me. My desire is to live a victorious life in the power of Your Holy Spirit. Please help me to do so. Amen

CELEBRATING FAMILY

In some places today it is a public holiday given to celebrating families. Some of us are happy to celebrate family but for others, thoughts of family causes fear and pain. Family is very important to God. God knows the challenges that face families impacted by addiction. God will make something beautiful available to us today whether we are reconciled to our families or feel very much alone.

See how much the Father has loved us! His love is so great that we are called God's children—and so, in fact, we are. (1 John 3:1 GNT)

When we surrender our lives to God and trust in the forgiveness Jesus purchased for us on the cross, we become part of a family where God is our Father and others become our brothers and sisters.

You are no longer outsiders and strangers. You are citizens together with God's people. You are also members of God's family. (Ephesians 2:19 NIRV)

As we walk with God and change our ways to reflect His plan for our lives, all sorts of benefits result. Many of us have seen changes in how we interact with our family and in many of our relationships.

Reverence for the Lord gives confidence and security to a man and his family. (Proverbs 14:26 GNT)

God will comfort those for whom reconciliation with their biological family is not possible at this time, or maybe never. He will also help us develop loving and supportive relationships with healthy people with whom we can experience the joy of sharing and interacting with each other.

God places the lonely in families; he sets the prisoners free and gives them joy. (Psalm 68:6a NLT)

Wherever we are in our journey with God or our family, let's celebrate God's good plan for us. Let's give Him thanks for where we are in our life today and ask Him for strength to follow Him in all our ways.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You that through Jesus, You have made me a part of Your family. Thank You for all those brothers and sisters who share in my life today. Help me to continue the work of restoration in my relationships with both family and friends. Amen

A slave has no lasting place in the family. But a son belongs to the family forever.

John 8:35 NIRV