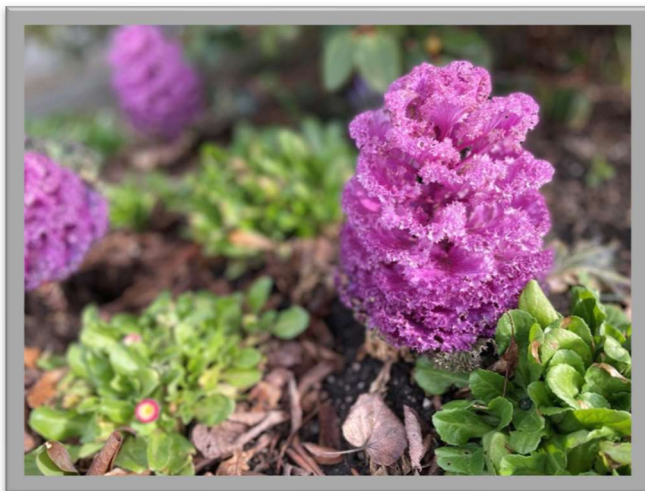


LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

# Daily Meditations



**JULY 2024**



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# LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

## Daily Meditations

**JULY 2024**

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### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## HAPPY CANADA DAY

JULY 1

Canada's coat of arms is an official symbol of the country. Each component has meaning. Royal Authority is represented by the lions. The motto "desiderantes meliorem patriam" (They desire a better country) reminds us that most of us are immigrants who have experienced hospitality here in Canada. Symbols of both France and England link us to our country's heritage. A crest on the royal helmet symbolizes valour and courage. Figures on either side of the shield are known as supporters and are depicted with great strength. Underneath these symbols are the words, "A mari usque ad mare" (From sea to sea) taken from Psalm 72, a prayer for God's authority and rule to be present in the mandate of all that holds this country together.

*Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness. May he judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice. May he defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; may he crush the oppressor. In his days may the righteous flourish and prosperity abound till the moon is no more. May he rule from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth.* (Psalm 72:1-2,4, 7-8 NIV)

Thousands of years ago the above prayer went up from earth to heaven on behalf of a ruling king. The prayer asked God for justice for the people and that the people be blessed, the afflicted defended, and the children protected. The same prayer invited God to have dominion (influence and authority) over the country.

May this be our prayer as we celebrate Canada Day. Who better than we, who have experienced freedom from our addictive and destructive lifestyles, to offer up prayers to our loving God for hope and help for our friends and neighbours? Today, as we see the Coat of Arms and sing our national anthem, may we lift our hearts to God praying, "God keep our land glorious and free, and Lord, let it begin with me."

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank you for this land of Canada. May I seek to live in peace with my neighbours and look to You for direction in all my affairs. I ask that Your favour rest on this great land and may its government and its people from sea to sea be guided by Your wisdom so that this nation may flourish and prosper. Amen*

**As we see the Coat of Arms, and sing our national anthem, may we lift our hearts to God praying, "God keep our land glorious and free."**

JULY 2

## WHAT HOPE DO WE HAVE?

Life is a journey and from its beginning to its end we are all influenced by the environment we live in. When we were old enough to choose our own way, our choices were impacted by what went on in our journey to that point in our life. What hope do we have when what was sown into the early years of our life is what we are reaping today?

***Lord, you know the hopes of the helpless. Surely you will hear their cries and comfort them. You will bring justice to the orphans and the oppressed, so mere people can no longer terrify them. (Psalm 10:17-18 NLT)***

***Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.***

*Hebrews 11:1 NIV*

When we first gave our will and life over to the care of God we knew little about God's ways. Our known ways and actions were like chains that bound and enslaved us to a life that was totally unmanageable. The only hope we have of eliminating our bondage is to unchain our mind from our actions and, with God's help, release ourselves from our former slave master. We need to keep saying no to the old path that dominates our thinking and continue treading the new path back to life. Each time we make that choice the new path will become more firm under our feet and our old ways will more and more be undesired and left behind.

***Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you. (Psalm 25:5 NLT)***

The scriptures tell us to have faith in God even when we are unable to see the way forward. The measure of our faith is the hope we have in the power, faithfulness, and love of God to strengthen us as we tread the pathway of the will of God for our lives. God will make a way for us to persevere through and live the life plan He has prepared in advance for us.

***Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. (Hebrews 11:1 NIV)***

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, My old ways need to be axed. Your Word gives me hope to move forward in my life. I am forever grateful that You love and care for me. Please strengthen me to tread the new path You have marked out for my life. Amen*

JULY 3

## CHARACTER STRENGTH: DISCRETION

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

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

We have not always behaved wisely with what we shared about others. Often, we threw discretion to the wind so we could feed our own pride in being "someone in the know." Sometimes when asked about another person, we set aside sound judgment and instead chose to disclose information which possibly could have been used against them by others.

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

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

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

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

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

JULY 4

## LOVED ALWAYS

Many of us have questioned God about the purpose for our existence and the reason why certain things have happened to us. When God created humans, His intention was for them to have an abundant life. Even though humans rebelled against God and chose not to follow His ways, God did not abandon them, but chose through Jesus to restore His relationship with us.

Jesus said, ***"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."*** (John 3:16-17 NKJV)

***God who knows everything still allows us to choose whether we operate within His loving knowledge and care or navigate each day on our own.***

God, who knows everything, still allows us to choose whether we operate within His loving knowledge and care or navigate each day on our own. God is aware that our limited knowledge of the consequences of our choices will end in disaster when we don't consult Him. However, love needs to be freely chosen and God has given us that choice. Addiction is a consequence of our failure to trust our lives to this all-wise, all-good, all-loving God. We bring pain and disaster into our lives when we attempt to live life on our own terms.

***But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. He leads the humble in doing right, teaching them his way.*** (James 1:22; Psalm 25:9 NLT)

God's way is simple. We choose to believe God is good, and regardless of what we may be feeling, has our best interests at heart. In all our circumstances we determine to choose for God's principles as defined in the Bible. When our thinking and God's principles conflict, with God's help, we need to choose to live surrendered to His will and His ways.

***Prayer: Loving God, Thank You that Your love never fails, never gives up, and never runs out on me. Forgive me for the many times I have complained that no one loves or cares for me. Help me to lay down my stubborn self-will and choose to live in response to Your unfailing love. Amen***

JULY 5

## HOSPITALITY AND RECOVERY

Some of us in recovery lack the quality of being hospitable. We do not care to be around others. We give our attention to our own needs and have forgotten, or perhaps never learned, the social skill of thoughtfulness towards others. Our loving God created us to be in relationship with Him and with one another and we are out of sync with our humanness when we behave in other ways.

***Starting from scratch, he made the entire human race and made the earth hospitable, with plenty of time and space for living so we could seek after God, and not just grope around in the dark but actually find him. He doesn't play hide-and-seek with us. He's not remote; he's near.*** (Acts 17:26-27 MSG)

Although we may not vocalize it, some of us tend to think this way, "Why should God and others care about me when I really don't care about them?" However, we are made to care for one another and to be hospitable. Jesus gave us a commandment to love one another. This is not a suggestion. God knows what is best for us and He made us to live in community with one another.

***This is my command: Love one another the way I loved you. This is the very best way to love. Put your life on the line for your friends.*** (John 15:12-13 MSG)

Going to a recovery meeting for the first time can be intimidating but, as we are warmly greeted by others, we will be encouraged to stay. When attendees share their experience, strength, and hope with us, they are choosing to be hospitable and their desire is to help us with what they share.

***Love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.*** (1 Peter 4:8-9 NIV)

Hospitality is the human way of caring for one another. It begins with one person helping another to find their way out of the maze of self-centeredness.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Sometimes I want to hide from others because of the guilt I feel about my past life. Help me to accept Your forgiveness and live in the dignity of being Your child. Help me to put Your Word and Your ways into practice. Help me to be hospitable as I share the experience, strength, and hope I experience in belonging to You. Amen***

***God knows  
what is  
best for us  
and He  
made us to  
live in  
community  
with one  
another.***

JULY 6

## MY LIFE IS UNMANAGEABLE

Why do we continue to do things our own way when it obviously isn't working? Someone has defined insanity as repeatedly doing the same action while expecting a different result. Someone else has coined a slogan that says, "If nothing changes, nothing changes." Doing life on our own without God has led us to empty, lonely, and shame-filled places.

To help us understand just how unmanageable our life is without God and how powerless we are to fix ourselves the Bible uses a clear picture that contrasts a fountain of fresh flowing water with an old container – a cistern – that is dirty and cracked and doesn't even hold the rain water that has flowed into it.

***Whether  
we are  
early in  
recovery or  
have been  
clean and  
sober for a  
time, we  
need what  
God is  
offering to  
us each  
day.***

God explains, ***"My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and dug out cisterns for themselves, cracked cisterns that can hold no water."*** (Jeremiah 2:13 NIV)

We've responded to our felt needs with defective short-term solutions and ended up with a more frustrating level of need. If we continue to fill our lives with chaos and thrash around in our own panic and distractions, we'll never know real life. God desires to provide power and guidance through His Holy Spirit so we can have a peaceful and meaningful life that is fruitful and satisfying.

***Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them."*** (John 7:37-38 NIV)

Whether we are early in recovery or have been clean and sober for a time, we need what God is offering to us each day. We need to be filled up with God's life-giving truth and the refreshing power of the Holy Spirit.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I don't want my life to remain stale or chaotic and ask that You work in me each day so I can live in the reality of what life brings. Please give me the courage and strength to follow Your direction in all my affairs. Amen***

JULY 7

## BEFORE YOU SAY I CAN'T, SAY I'LL TRY

When we are being taught something new we often feel overwhelmed by the process we must follow. We may shy away from learning about something by telling ourselves or others, "I can't" or, "This or that is impossible for me." Our approach to learning to live a sober life after years in addiction often raises a similar response. We need to remind ourselves that with time and determined effort we can succeed, as many before us have. Of course, sobriety may seem impossible to us if we are relying solely on self-will, but when we put our hand into the hand of God and follow His ways, we will find success.

***You can hear the victory celebration in the homes of those who live right. The Lord has shown his great power again!***  
(Psalm 118:15 ERV)

God has made many promises to those who give their will and life over to His care. Success is achieved by following God's ways rather than our limited human ways. God tells us to bring our old thought patterns to Him for renewal. Inviting God to help us, and then choosing to listen and act upon what He says, will bring success that will boost our self-confidence. Choosing to quote God's word over our faulty thinking is one way to bring about change that lasts.

***The weapons we use are not human ones. Our weapons have power from God and can destroy the enemy's strong places. We destroy people's arguments, and we tear down every proud idea that raises itself against the knowledge of God. We also capture every thought and make it give up and obey Christ.*** (2 Corinthians 10:4-5 ERV)

At times we may be tempted to turn back to our old ways but if we call out to God, He will give us the strength we need to keep moving forward. Today, before we say, "I can't" let's say, "With God's help, I'll try."

***Don't worry—I am with you. Don't be afraid—I am your God. I will make you strong and help you. I will support you with my right hand that brings victory.***  
(Isaiah 41:10 ERV)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am weak, but You are strong. Help me choose to walk in Your will and Your ways in all my affairs and to fully rely on Your strength for victory over all my dependencies. Amen***

***Today,  
before  
we say,  
"I can't"  
let's say,  
"With  
God's  
help, I'll  
try."***

JULY 8

## POWER IN RELATIONSHIPS

Whether it is a group of bullies on a school playground or an abusive partner behind closed doors, it is never right for one person to force their agenda or desires on another. Some of us who have come out of addiction have lived on the side of being domineering and demanding and of being submissive and trampled on. We have been bullied by others and have also manipulated others to give us what we want. We have lied and hidden our true needs and desires so that things might remain peaceful in a relationship, and we have also used anger and abusive words to gain control over others to get what we wanted.

God has a better plan for us as we live in relationship with others. God invites us to let go of the fear and co-dependency behind these behaviours and learn to submit to each other in love.

***We  
choose to  
live each  
day for  
God's  
agenda  
rather  
than for  
our own  
or  
someone  
else's.***

***In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.*** (Matthew 7:12, Philippians 2:3, Romans 12:10 NIV)

We need to bring our hearts and actions before God each day and seek His help in determining whether we are being self-centered or forceful in our relationships. We also need to move away from the lie that we are inferior to others. Mutual respect is God's heart for us in our relationships.

We need to see ourselves and others as God sees us and choose to live each day for God's agenda rather than for our own or someone else's. As we approach God and build our faith in His goodness, we will learn to be generous with others. God will show us when we should step back, or agree or disagree respectfully with others, or how to value and lift up others without throwing away our own dignity.

Only God can teach us how to be safe, loving, and kind in the challenges of each of our relationships.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please take the blinders off my eyes and help me see how I relate to others. Help me to honour You and others and to practice Your principles in everything I say and do. Amen***

JULY 9

## GROWING MATURE IN OUR LIFE WITH GOD

When we come into recovery we are usually immature in our knowledge of God and his ways and don't really know how to live a meaningful life. Mature people in recovery groups welcome us and accompany us patiently and faithfully in order to support our growth in the knowledge of God and in learning how to put His way of life into practice.

***We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up.*** (Romans 15:1-2 NIV)

In the past we had little consideration for others and our daily agenda focussed only on fulfilling our own needs in whatever way it took. Our immature ways and self-focus reveal that our desire was simply to please ourselves. Centering on our own pleasure reveals that we devoted our lives to the gods of everything that made us feel good. Perhaps we did not know, or refused to abide by, the ways of the God of the Bible.

***If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.*** (Matthew 15:10, 12 NIV)

Improving our conscious contact with God, gaining knowledge of the Scriptures, and practicing the principles we learn, will help us grow and mature in our life with God in recovery. When Jesus died on the cross, He fully demonstrated the Scripture above. He loved his Father by fulfilling His Father's will for Him and He loved us by doing so. Is our desire to remain in the love of Jesus as we choose to love each other?

***If someone says, "I love God," but hates a fellow believer, that person is a liar; for if we don't love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see?*** (1 John 4:20 NLT)

***Heavenly Father, Please help me to be mature in my knowledge of the Scriptures. My desire is to seek Your will for my life and have the power to carry it out. Help me to spread the good news of the love of Jesus for every person. Amen***

***Improving our conscious contact with God, and gaining knowledge of the Scriptures, and practicing the principles we learn, will help us grow and mature in our life with God in recovery.***

JULY 10

## ACCEPTING HARDSHIP AS THE PATHWAY TO PEACE

Everyone faces unwanted hardships and trouble. Some hardship comes because we act in ways that are unwise and end up in circumstances we did not anticipate. Other hardships come because we live in a broken world with people who are struggling and making mistakes just as we are. During those times it's important to face the questions: Does God know what is going on? Does God care? Is God making a way for me through these problems or do I just have to sort things out on my own?

***God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. The Lord hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles.*** (Psalm 46:1; 34:17 NLT)

***It's not easy, but "accepting hardship as the pathway to peace" can be life changing.***

As those who are seeking to live with God in recovery, we have an enormous advantage over many others. We can turn to God in our moments of frustration and uncertainty and find His help in our time of need. Instead of being frustrated and overwhelmed by a problem, we can focus our attention on our caring God who promises stability, peace, and a way forward.

***You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you! Trust in the Lord always, for the Lord God is the eternal Rock.*** (Isaiah 26:3-4 NLT)

Panic blocks many helpful thoughts and solutions to problems. When we face hardship with peace it's amazing how much clearer the guidance of God's Holy Spirit is heard. It's why, in every circumstance, it's good to turn our will and our life over to the care of God.

Obstacles and problems, even failures, can be opportunities for learning and growth as we experience God's faithfulness. It's not easy, but "accepting hardship as the pathway to peace" can be life changing as our faith and trust grow in our knowledge of God as our eternal Rock.

***Prayer: God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference, living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time, accepting hardship as the pathway to peace .... trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your will. Amen***

JULY 11

## FACING TEMPTATION

As God draws us into a deeper relationship with Himself, the devil and his forces of darkness try to make us doubt Him and the truth of His Word as recorded in the Bible. We need to be on guard. A wise phrase is “know your enemy.”

***Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*** (1 Peter 5:8 NKJV)

One of the most appealing things people desire is education, believing knowledge will give them control over their lives. While education is good, it has no power to comfort or sustain a distressed soul. Only the power of God can strengthen us to endure the hardships of life.

***But God loves us deeply. He is full of mercy. So he gave us new life because of what Christ has done. He gave us life even when we were dead in sin. God’s grace has saved you.*** (Ephesians 2:4-5 NIRV)

The devil sees a child of God as an enemy. He attempts to lure us away from God with accusations and suggestions that make us doubt. Only the word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit will give us victory over our enemy. While undergoing temptation Jesus quoted scripture. When we experience temptation we too should pray for strength and speak the truth of God’s Word to our feelings and our situation.

***He [Jesus] himself suffered when he was tempted. Now he is able to help others who are being tempted. Great blessings belong to those who are tempted and remain faithful! After they have proved their faith, God will give them the reward of eternal life.*** (Hebrews 2:18 NIRV; James 1:12 ERV)

***Prayer: Lord Jesus, I am glad You have experienced what I am going through and that You ever live to intercede for me. Help me to stand firm and proclaim Your Word over each enticement I may face and to persevere through to victory. Amen***

***Only the power of God can strengthen us to endure the hardships of life.***

JULY 12

## EVASIVENESS (HIDING)

At many points in our recovery journey the character defect of evasiveness may begin to surface. We try to keep troubling past events buried in some deep place in our soul. We are evasive when asked to share with others or make a moral inventory. However, the God who created us knows all about us and wants us to be free from the bondage of our past. He tells us that knowing the truth will set us free. Through Jesus, God has made provision for removal of all sin and shame from us.

***In the past you offered the parts of your body to be slaves to your immoral and sinful thoughts. The result was that you lived only for sin. In the same way, you must now offer yourselves to be slaves to what is right. Then you will live only for God.*** (Romans 6:19b ERV)

***Through Jesus, God has made provision for removal of all sin and shame from us.***

Both physical and spiritual restoration are painful. The body and spirit have both been damaged by our addictive substances and habits and both require help. Just as medical help is sought for the body, so spiritual help is needed for the soul. Jesus offers us forgiveness for our sin and shame. When we receive all that Jesus has for us, a positive and visible change in our attitude and behaviour will occur.

***Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.*** (Lamentations 3:22-23; 1 John 5:14-15 NKJV)

Life with God in recovery is a journey of facing our fears rather than avoiding them and of uncovering our hurts rather than burying them. When we begin our journey to freedom it may feel painful but new life and new dignity will come to those who are willing to persevere.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for being evasive about my past life for fear of what others may think. Your Word says that perfect love casts out all fear. Please help me experience Your perfect love, so that I may be unafraid of revealing those hidden things that hold me in bondage to my past. Amen***



JULY 13

## FINDING ENTHUSIASM AGAIN

Recovery is hard work. Sometimes we feel joy in the journey and other times we don't seem to feel anything at all. We spend a lot of time analyzing our feelings as we remember the many difficulties and challenges we had in the past. Our self-esteem begins to suffer, and we feel uncomfortable, maybe even distressed. If we are honest, sometimes we just get tired of dealing with it all. How can we find the strength and the joy and enthusiasm we need for growth in this journey?

***Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as though you were working for the Lord and not for people. Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth.*** (Colossians 3:23 GNT, 2 Timothy 2:15 NLT)

Particularly when our emotions are a challenge it is helpful to know we can lean back on God's promise to be with us and get us through what we are facing. If we ask God for help and do what we can with as much enthusiasm as we can, we can expect God to strengthen and support us through any disturbing days. We may not be at the finish line, but we can have the satisfaction of living well one day at a time.

***The Lord your God will fight alongside you and help you win the battle.***" (Deuteronomy 20:4 CEV)

Part of finding enthusiasm again comes from recognizing the progress made on a long and sometimes difficult journey. We need to set goals for one hour or one day or one activity at a time and give thanks as we accomplish what we set out to do. Some of our discouragement may come from only having long-term goals which take time to reach. That is why the principle "progress not perfection" is so powerful. Some other effective tools include practicing gratitude, taking time to find beauty in nature, listening to praise music, or trying something new, and then intentionally speaking with sincerity and genuineness about what we liked about it. If we do these things, joy and enthusiasm will catch up to us again.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to find peace and joy as I go through this tough part of my journey. Help me to lean on You and remember that You are always with me. Thank You for supporting me through one more successful day in recovery. Amen***

***Work hard  
and do not  
be lazy.  
Serve the  
Lord with  
a heart full  
of  
devotion.***

Romans 12:11  
GNT

JULY 14

## GOD'S VIEW OF LAZINESS

In the Bible Jesus told a story of three servants who were given various amounts of money to use or invest on behalf of their master. Two of the servants doubled the amount they were given and the third did nothing. We don't know if he was jealous that the others were given more, if he held resentment against the master because of his high expectations, or a bit of both. The bottom line is, he didn't do anything with what he had been given. When the master came back, his condemnation of the servant was not that he hadn't earned as much as the others but that he was lazy and had not done anything with what he had been given. (Matthew 25)

***What  
are we  
going to  
do with  
the gift  
of today  
that God  
has  
given  
us?***

We may envy those who had a better life than we did as we were growing up. Perhaps they or others had a better education or better prospects than we ever had. In comparing our circumstances with theirs, we feel sorry for ourselves and angry at the world that seems to have deprived us of a good life. God has given each of us opportunities and gifts we can use to serve one another and thereby experience a fulfilled life. What have we chosen to do with what we have been given?

***God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly but understand what the Lord wants you to do.*** (1 Peter 4:10 NIRV, Ephesians 5:16-17 NLT)

Some people compare themselves with others and because they easily manage to do more than what they see others do, they choose to do less than they could. God knows what each of us is capable of. We are choosing to be lazy when we do less than we can. As we use the gifts and opportunities we have been given, we will benefit from knowing we have done all we can. Each person is accountable to God for what we have been given.

***Much will be required of everyone who has been given much. Even more will be asked of the person who is supposed to take care of much.*** (Luke 12:48 NIRV)

Every day is a gift from God and an opportunity to do good. What are we going to do with the gift of today that God has given us?

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for the gift of my life and the opportunities I have been given. Help me to do all I can to faithfully serve You and others each day. Amen***

JULY 15

## GRACE – NECESSARY INGREDIENT FOR CHANGE

Over the long haul, how do we prevent relapse into addictive behaviour and maintain our choice to live in the love and grace of God? Strangely, we must stop focusing on “not picking up” and focus instead on God’s goodness to us, God’s strength in us, God’s blessings around us, and God’s principles for our daily living. It’s time to stop recalling what happened 5 minutes or 5 years ago and instead focus on the good news that our past sins have been forgiven and that comfort and healing for every hurt is available today.

God pursued us with His love even while we were running away. He did so, not to accuse or condemn us, but to heal and restore us. To live in grace rather than in addiction is to rely on the truth that God’s power is sufficient to help us stand firm in Christ.

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

Our behaviour usually reflects what we believe about God. God is love and God created us in love. Do we believe that? To live abundantly in recovery, we must believe that in each moment of each day and in every set of circumstances, our lives are supported and shaped by the love and amazing grace of God. The principle is simple, if we want to love others, we need to know that we ourselves are truly loved.

***Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*** (1 John 4:7-8 NLT)

God invites us to a satisfying, meaningful, joyful and purposeful life. Are we willing to leave our addiction behind, come close to God, and accept His invitation to live in His wonderful grace?

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for helping me see that You created me for the joy of having a loving relationship with You. Today, I choose You. I choose grace. Help me to fully live in Your amazing grace so I may know Your ways and grow strong in Your love and care. Amen***

***Are we  
willing to  
leave our  
addiction  
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come close  
to God,  
and accept  
His  
invitation  
to live in  
His  
wonderful  
grace?***

JULY 16

## I AM A WALKING MIRACLE

“I am a walking miracle” is a slogan we often hear said in recovery meetings. It’s repeated because we are amazed at the change God has made in our lives. Each of us knows that it is nothing short of a miracle to be who we are today, compared to who we once were.

Many of us will testify that when we came into recovery we were powerless over our problems and dependencies. Daily life was totally unmanageable. The thing that brought us to recovery was that we began to believe we could find a power greater than ourselves who could restore us to sanity.

***God has sent his special servant Jesus. He sent him to you first. He sent him to bless you by causing each of you to turn away from your evil ways.*** (Acts 3:26 ERV)

***It is  
nothing  
short of a  
miracle to  
be who  
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today,  
compared  
to who we  
once  
were.***

When we were stumbling around in the darkness, we were unaware of the provision God had made for us. We did not know, or chose not to believe, that God desired to have a relationship with us. When we wholeheartedly gave our will and life over to God’s care, we came to experience that we had someone to watch over us, someone who really knew us and cared for us. We also became aware that we were filled with God’s Holy Spirit who guarantees our inheritance as a child of God.

***Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.*** (2 Corinthians 1:21-22 NKJV)

What a privilege to be in the care of God. When a child of God considers where they have come from and who they are right now, no wonder they proclaim, “I am a walking miracle”.

***To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*** (Revelation 1:5b-6 NKJV)

***Prayer: Gracious Father, I don’t know why You love me, but You do. Thank You for raising me up to new heights in You and declaring me to be Your precious child. Amen***

JULY 17

## SPEAKING WITH TACT AND SENSITIVITY

In recovery meetings we've heard some people tell "war stories" that made us cringe and which may have triggered something negative in those who were listening. Thankfully, most of those who share their experience, strength, and hope do so in a tactful and thoughtful way. It's important to be considerate of others as we speak. We don't need to brag. We simply need to share what God has done for us and how He continues to accompany us on the journey.

***You're blessed when you stay on course, walking steadily on the road revealed by God. You're blessed when you follow his directions, doing your best to find him. That's right—you don't go off on your own; you walk straight along the road he set.*** (Psalm 119:1-3 MSG)

It is important to be sensitive in any response we make when someone is openly sharing about difficulties they are experiencing. The person may want to identify with another who knows and understands their situation. Even if we think they are co-dependently looking for rescue or still dealing with denial, we need to be tactful and compassionate when we respond to what they are sharing.

***Be gracious in your speech. The goal is to bring out the best in others in a conversation, not put them down, not cut them out.*** (Colossians 4:6 MSG)

Even when a person is clearly doing wrong, we need to be gentle as we point them in the right direction. This should always be done with prayer and great sensitivity. Our purpose should always be to encourage.

***Tell everyone God's message. Be ready at all times to do whatever is needed. Tell people what they need to do, tell them when they are doing wrong, and encourage them. Do this with great patience and careful teaching.*** (2 Timothy 4:2 ERV)

By our speech, do we create in others a desire to know God? That is truly speaking with tact and sensitivity.

***Prayer: Gracious God, Thank You for the mighty work You have done in me. Please give me great tact and sensitivity as I speak with others of Your grace poured out on me. Help me to encourage them in a way that will bring others closer to You. Amen***

***By our  
speech, do  
we create in  
others a  
desire to  
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That is truly  
speaking  
with tact  
and  
sensitivity.***

JULY 18

## DEALING WITH HEALTH ISSUES

Many of us struggle with health issues both in our bodies and in our minds. The Bible tells us that whatever we allow our minds to dwell on has a major impact on our physical well-being. God's desire is that we prosper as we obey the principles in His word. God wants us to be in good health and have a cheerful heart which He says brings healing to our body and soul. God also informs us that a crushed heart will struggle with sickness and depression.

***Beloved friend, I pray that you are prospering in every way and that you continually enjoy good health, just as your soul is prospering. A joyful, cheerful heart brings healing to both body and soul. But the one whose heart is crushed struggles with sickness and depression.*** (3 John 1:2: Proverbs 17:22 TPT)

***God wants  
us to be in  
good  
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heart  
which He  
says brings  
healing to  
our body  
and soul.***

When we were in addiction, we thought that drugs, alcohol, or unhealthy relationships, or all of them together would help us have a good life. However, we were wrong in that assessment because dependencies never bring relief or healing to troubled souls. They increase the need for more of the same numbing medication. If we continue medicating ourselves and doing what is right in our own eyes, Satan will work to enslave us to whatever we substitute for God's goodness.

***Even though I've seen their ways, I will heal them. I will guide them forward and repay them with comfort, giving mourners the language of praise.*** (Isaiah 57:18 TPT)

When we commit to following the ways of the Lord, He promises healing and freedom from whatever has caused us harm. Our part is to improve our conscious contact with God through prayer and meditation on the Scriptures applying these principles in all our affairs. God invites us to share in his wonderful goodness and He will give us the will and the power to do what pleases Him.

***Everything in the Scriptures is God's Word. All of it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and showing them how to live.*** (2 Timothy 3:16 CEV)

***Prayer: Gracious God, I am truly blessed that You want me to share in Your goodness. Please give me the will and desire to learn and then do what pleases You. Amen***

JULY 19

## JUST FOR TODAY – LEAN NOT ON MY OWN UNDERSTANDING

*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.*

As we learn to live one day at a time, it's essential that we come to God with a willingness and intention to continuously surrender our will and our life into His care. What does that mean? What does a life surrendered to God look like? What steps can we take to implement this in our daily lives?

***Trust in the Lord and do good, then you will live safely in the land and prosper. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart's desires. Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you.*** (Psalm 37:3-5 NLT)

To trust God is to live with confidence in what He says can be relied on. That being true, the first thing we want to do is find out what God says. That is what daily prayer and meditating on God's Word is all about. We get to know the path God sets before us. We learn about what God says works and become aware of the harmful thoughts and behaviours that cause us to stumble.

The knowing part is usually the easiest. The difficulty for most of us is trusting God's way when it is different from what we have known or what we think will work. Trusting God rather than our own understanding is a challenge when we are facing people or circumstances that we can't control or know we need help to deal with. Will we go ahead and do something in fear or panic, or will we trust God, give up the unknowns that cause us fear or worry, and wait for Him to show us a tried and true path?

***Those who trust in themselves are fools, but those who walk in wisdom are kept safe. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*** (Proverbs 28:26; 3:5-6 NIV)

*Prayer: Loving God, Help me to walk in the path You have chosen for me and humbly submit all my unknowns, my frustrations, my worries and my fears, as well as my hopes and dreams into Your care. Thank You for leading me forward in the strength that You provide. Amen*

***To trust God is to live with confidence in what He says can be relied on.***

JULY 20

## THINKING LIKE A PEACEMAKER

God invites us to joy and peace, to forgiveness and a loving relationship. Have we allowed ourselves to be loved and encouraged by the living God today? If we have failed to spend time with God, we could be setting ourselves up for failure by not allowing Him to fill us up with His peace and the strength necessary to properly face any trials that may arise.

***Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord.*** (Hebrews 12:14 NLT)

Learning how to let go of our self-centered ways and coming into a lifestyle of making peace with God and others is hard work, particularly in early recovery. There are so many things to learn and unlearn. We have our default ways of acting and reacting and it's difficult for us to adjust to new ways of behaving. As with any new activity, it can be tiring at first as the "muscles of our soul" often feel painful from the strenuous workout. However, this pain signals growth rather than trouble to avoid.

***No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.*** (Hebrews 12:11 NLT)

***God provides everything we need to relate to and be at peace with people who are less than perfect.***

God provides everything we need to relate to and be at peace with people who are less than perfect. Instead of engaging in harmful addictive behaviour God wants to honour us and have us honour others. He wants to remove the poison of evil from us and fill us with His goodness which brings great joy in our relationship with

Him. In the strength of God's love, we can then do the hard work of interacting peacefully with others who, like us, are flawed.

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, I choose to rely on Your promise that I can live in peace today as I pursue a life that honours You and others. Help me to submit to Your proven ways of interacting with others so that my behaviour gives glory to You and blesses those with whom I have a relationship. Amen*

JULY 21

## WHEN TO BE THANKFUL

It is a wonderful practice to take time daily to be thankful for all that we have, and all that God has promised us. This principle is evident as we read the Bible.

***They were also to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord. They were to do the same in the evening.*** (1 Chronicles 23:30 NIV)

Whether we feel great when we get out of bed or wish we could just turn over snuggle down and sleep for a few more hours, one of the spiritual practices that needs to be first in our day is looking around and recognizing with gratitude all that we have been given. At the end of the day many of us let tiredness get the better of us and we fail to take just a few moments to reflect on the good things that God did for us throughout the day and the ways He helped us in everything we faced. Even if we do not write these things in a journal, just taking time to bring them to mind builds joy and confidence within us that God is near.

Jesus modelled giving thanks when life was overwhelming and everyone around Him was struggling. When a huge crowd was with Him and the resources available for feeding everyone were insufficient, Jesus gave thanks. The result was an amazing miracle. What might God do if, when faced with overwhelming challenges, we take the time to name before God what we have and give Him thanks for His goodness?

***Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied.*** (Mark 6:41-42 NIV)

Most of us would not question the fact that it is good to be grateful on a regular basis but the question for each of us today is, have I taken the opportunity to bring myself to a moment of reflection which allows gratitude to rise in my heart for all that God has done and continues to do for me? This is how we find strength. This is how our faith in God's goodness grows in our hearts.

***Prayer: Thank you God for being attentive to my needs in the situations I face throughout each day. Help me to practice gratitude so I can be filled with faith and live in conscious awareness of Your generous heart and Your loving presence ever with me. Amen***

***Have I  
taken the  
opportunity  
to bring  
myself to a  
moment of  
reflection  
which  
allows  
gratitude to  
rise in my  
heart?***

JULY 22

## FAITHFUL AND DEPENDABLE

In addition we were often unfaithful to our promises. Many in our family suffered heartache because we were unreliable and did not follow through on our commitments. In our own way we grieved our lack of integrity and buried our feelings of guilt and poor self-image in the recesses of our soul. God wants to heal us and take away the shame we feel so that we may become honourable people who are trustworthy in all our ways.

***People with integrity walk safely, but those who follow crooked paths will slip and fall.*** (Proverbs 10:9 NLT)

God is faithful, completely dependable, and always true to His word. God never changes. What is recorded in the Bible as a promise, God will fulfill to us.

***God is  
faithful,  
completely  
dependable,  
and always  
true to His  
word. God  
never  
changes.***

***Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; You established the earth, and it abides.*** (Psalm 119:89-90 NKJV)

When we make promises to God, our spouse, our children, other loved ones, or our friends and acquaintances, we usually mean to keep them. However, unforeseen circumstances may arise, and the promises we made may conflict with what is currently happening. What do we do when this occurs? Will we continue to honour the promises we have made?

If we fail to keep our promises because of selfishness or inconvenience, then we are not acting with integrity. If we acknowledge our faithlessness and ask God to help us change, He will forgive us and empower us to live in a new way that reflects His character in our behaviour. We will then bless our family and community and will become known as one who is faithful and whose word is dependable.

***Lord, who is a God like you? You forgive sin. You forgive your people when they do what is wrong. You don't stay angry forever. Instead, you take delight in showing your faithful love to them.*** (Micah 7:18 NIRV)

***Prayer: Loving God, I praise Your name for Your unfailing love and faithfulness and for the fact that Your promises are backed by all the honor of Your name. Amen*** (Psalm 138:2 NLT)

JULY 23

## HITTING BOTTOM

Hitting bottom is the place we reach in our addiction where we finally admit that we have a problem, and we cannot resolve it on our own. We have come to realize that we are powerless and that our lives have become unmanageable.

For too long we thought others had a problem and their problem was much worse than the one some people thought we had. However, there comes a point in our lives where none of us can hide from the facts. We admit that there is nothing good in our lives and we cannot see a way forward out of the chaos. We also know we cannot continue with things the way they are. Fortunately, at this point, God who has been waiting for us to come to Him, is ready and willing to do for us that which we cannot do for ourselves.

*I waited patiently for the Lord to help me, and he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along.* (Psalm 40:1-2 NLT)

God not only works on our behalf but also strengthens us and even teaches us valuable lessons from our past experiences. It is in our lowest moments that we have an opportunity to see how kind and good God really is and, as we choose to trust Him rather than ourselves, He will provide everything we need to get well one day at a time.

God promises to give us a new foundation, a solid place on which to stand, if we will give Him the opportunity to rebuild our lives. We can choose to stand on this foundation today and rebuild our lives, or we can fall through the floor once again and hit a new rock bottom from which we may never recover.

*Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him. Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.* (Psalm 62:1-2 NIV)

*Heavenly Father, Thank You that You were there when I hit bottom and You were ready to embrace me and help me rebuild my life. Help me to remember that it is because of Your unfailing love for me that I can stand strong on a firm foundation. You are my rock and my security. I choose to follow Your ways in all my affairs. Please help me. Amen*

**God not only works on our behalf but also strengthens us and teaches us valuable lessons from our past experiences.**

JULY 24

## IMMORAL THINKING

Many people who come into recovery seeking victory over drugs and alcohol find themselves relapsing into addictive lifestyles when they refuse to obey God's teaching on sexual purity. When it comes to murder, everyone recognizes that it is wrong and something to be avoided and punished. Jesus puts sexual sin in the same category as murder. Jesus speaks about sexual purity in a way that includes not just our actions but also our thoughts and feelings.

***For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander. These are what defile you.*** (Matthew 15:19-20, NLT)

We are challenged to inventory the way we talk, the way we think, the jokes we tell, the offhanded comments we make. These fit in the category of impurity of mind and God clearly warns us against such activity. Looking at pornographic images on the television, in movies, on the internet and in magazines is activity outside of God's plan for us. It leads us to immoral thinking and lustful desires.

***Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God's people. Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes—these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God.*** (Ephesians 5:3-4 NLT)

God wants us to be whole and filled with peace and this only comes when we are following His ways in every area of life. Impossible standards? On our own, YES! But God is faithful to do in us that which we cannot do for ourselves.

***Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again. God will make this happen, for he who calls you is faithful.*** (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 NLT)

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have called me to be holy because You are holy. Give me the strength to live in sexual purity so that I may honour You with my body. Help me to surrender all immoral thoughts to You for cleansing and keep my eyes from viewing anything that would raise lustful passion within me. Amen*

**Jesus speaks about sexual purity in a way that includes not just our actions but also our thoughts and feelings.**

JULY 25

## HALFWAY IS BETTER THAN HALF MEASURES

Although we know that "*half measures avail us nothing*," it is wonderful to have the promise that, "*If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through.*" (Big Book, pages 83-84)

We are not required to live a perfect life – thankfully Jesus did that for us – but we are required to make a sincere effort. We will experience the promised outcome when we make a sincere effort. While the promises given are fulfilled among us, sometimes quickly and sometimes slowly, it is the experience, strength, and hope of those who share with us that gives us hope when the going gets tough.

***This is the reason we do not give up. Our human body is wearing out. But our spirits are getting stronger every day. The little troubles we suffer now for a short time are making us ready for the great things God is going to give us forever. We do not look at the things that can be seen. We look at the things that cannot be seen. The things that can be seen will come to an end. But the things that cannot be seen will last forever.*** (2 Corinthians 4:16-18 NLV)

Noteworthy changes gradually take place deep within our soul where we are unable to see them. Our daily commitment is to consciously give ourselves over to the care of God and follow the principles that have worked for many who have walked this path before us. It is only as time passes that we notice that we are changing in ways that amaze us. We find peace and stability we never knew before. Solutions to problems present themselves. We become more and more conscious of God being with us, supporting us each step of the way.

***Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.*** (Deuteronomy 31:6 NIV)

Thankfully we don't have to wait until we have completed Step 12 to experience transformation. When we have committed to doing the next right thing, we will notice that change is already taking place.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am so grateful that You are with me each day, working changes in the deep places of my soul as with all my heart I follow Your ways. Please help me to live with hope and always do the next right thing in each situation I encounter. Amen***

***We will be amazed before we are halfway through.***

JULY 26

## LEARNING FROM SOUND ADVICE

Wise people are willing to listen to sound advice and learn. When we begin our journey with God in recovery, we need to welcome help from people whose desire is for us to succeed in being restored to sanity. We can learn from their experience, strength, and hope, because they have gained wisdom through conscious contact with God and by listening to others and following the principles recorded in the Bible which all lead to a successful life.

***Wisdom is found on the lips of those who understand what is right. But those who have no sense are punished.*** (Proverbs 10:13 NIRV)

Those who have walked the spiritual journey to recovery before us tell us of prayers that God faithfully answered when they felt like giving up. They persisted in doing the next right thing and God made a way for them to be overcomers, even when they doubted there was a way forward. If we choose to disregard the truth that in tough times God will give us the power we need to hold on, then in our foolishness, we will end up back in the same place we came from.

***Wisdom is found on the lips of those who understand what is right.***

***Proverbs 10:13a  
NIRV***

***Knowledge begins with fear and respect for the Lord, but stubborn fools hate wisdom and refuse to learn. But now you know the true God. Really, though, it is God who knows you. So why do you turn back to the same kind of weak and useless rules you followed before? Do you want to be slaves to those things again?*** (Proverbs 1:7; Galatians 4:9 ERV)

God wants to take us through to victory, but if we are unwilling to pay attention to His sound principles, we will forever be on the same old roundabout. God's Word, as recorded in the Bible, assures us that He will honour all the promises He has made. Why not trust and obey what God says? Why not be a person who gains wisdom?

***Prayer: Loving God, Help me to listen and learn from others who have walked this journey of recovery before me. Please give me the will and desire to trust and obey Your Word so that I may gain wisdom and walk in Your ways. Amen***

JULY 27

## WHAT'S IN AN INVENTORY?

God created man and woman in His own image and together they lived in loving relationship with Him and with each other. This was the foundation that God established for a solid and satisfying life here on earth.

Jesus said: ***Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.*** (Mark 12:30-31 NIV)

The way we take an inventory of our life starts with identifying those attitudes and actions that either help or hinder us from loving God, others, and ourselves. This applies to reflection on our daily living as well as a formal inventory when working the steps.

***Put on your new nature and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him. No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.*** (1 Corinthians 2:9; Colossians 3:10 NLT)

To live in God's new way of life for us rather than in our own self-willed way we need to: 1) Be convinced that God knows everything good and evil in us but still loves us. 2) Let go of our faulty understanding of how life works and become willing to learn from God of a new way. 3) Retrain our minds in the principles found in God's Word and ask the Holy Spirit to instruct us in how to apply them in each situation that arises. 4) Ask God to show us how to love with a pure heart and to help us be obedient to Him in all our thoughts and actions.

As our relationship with God is restored, we will be renewed and strengthened to build healthy human relationships.

***Prayer: Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.*** (Psalm 139:23-24 NIV) *Amen*

***The way we take an inventory of our life starts with identifying those attitudes and actions that either help or hinder us from loving God, others, and ourselves.***

JULY 28

## SECURITY OR CHANCE

Often in recovery we are not sure where the future is going to take us, and it makes us fearful. In the past we used our addiction to help boost our confidence or blot out reality so we could survive. In sobriety, blurred images of ourselves come to life and we suffer the shame of the path we chose to follow. Thoughts of defeat tell us we will never be able to live securely in the new life God is offering us. The alternative, however, is going back to a life guided by our own self-will and living in insecurity and chance. We are at a crossroad in our lives, which path will we choose?

***So if you find life difficult because you're doing what God said, take it in stride. Trust him. He knows what he's doing, and he'll keep on doing it.*** (1 Peter 4:19 MSG)

***God will make the unknown way safer than any other way that may seem more familiar to us.***

If we choose the path that God has planned for us, we are assured that God knows the way and He will guide us. If we choose the path of chance, we will struggle to find our way, and we will be alone as we walk in it. The unknown path that God has chosen for us is not unknown to God and He will make our way safer than any other way that is more familiar to us.

***Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*** (Psalm 119:105 NKJV)

If we are looking to people, money, or any other thing for our security, we need to change our focus and look to the Lord of heaven and earth. God will be our security. God is faithful and has the power to do everything He has promised us.

***God guards you from every evil, he guards your very life. He guards you when you leave and when you return, he guards you now, he guards you always.*** (Psalm 121:7-8 MSG)

***Prayer: Loving God, I confess that my own way does not work, and I am fearful of what the future holds for me. Please strengthen me to believe and trust in Your Word and follow You in all my ways. Amen***



JULY 29

## GROWING AND CHANGING

There are seasons in each of our lives which are fruitful and others which are not. Some plants and trees are evergreen and always have the appearance of life in them. Other trees and shrubs look rather drab and dead in the winter months. Then, as the season changes, they come to life as leaves begin to bud and grow, change colour, and produce fruit. When we feel drab and spiritually dead, we may be envious of those who always appear evergreen and have life in them. At these times we need to trust God and acknowledge that He has unique plans for each season of our lives.

***God, you are the one who saves us. We will trust in you. Then we won't be afraid. Lord, you are the one who gives us strength. You are the one who keeps us safe. Lord, you have saved us.*** (Isaiah 12:2 NIRV)

God wants our lives to be filled with fruitfulness. He has created us with life giving abilities and talents. When our lives are in the care of God, His Holy Spirit works in us to produce good and abundant fruit at the right time.

***Jesus said, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that does not produce fruit. He also trims every branch that produces fruit to prepare it to produce even more.*** (John 15:1-2 ERV)

The purpose of our lives may have been lost under the brush and weeds of addiction, but God will remove or heal everything that takes away life and growth. It takes the seasoned eye of a gardener to know what's still alive and healthy and what needs to be pruned. It takes God's wisdom to identify the character defects and shortcomings that restrict our growth. Are we willing to allow God to prune us in order that we might have life and fruitfulness in His Kingdom?

***But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Glory be to him, now and forever! Amen.*** (2 Peter 3:18 ERV)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, I give You permission to prune me so that I may grow in grace and the knowledge of my Lord and Saviour and be fruitful for Your Kingdom. Amen***

***It takes God's wisdom to identify the character defects and shortcomings that restrict our growth.***

JULY 30

## CONFRONTING DENIAL

A healthy foundation for life with God in recovery includes seeking truth in all our affairs. Our goal is to know what is good and recognize what is harmful. We can then correctly identify what has the power to negatively impact us. God's word is a trustworthy source of truth in directing us to new ways of life. We need to confront any denial of God's truth and invite Him to show us where our thinking and perceiving have become confused. God's wisdom and power will help us make any changes that are necessary.

***We need to confront any denial of God's truth and invite Him to show us where our thinking and perceiving have become confused.***

***Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.*** (Psalm 139:23-24 NIV; Matthew 11:28 NLT)

In recovery we are taught to accept responsibility for our actions. We come to know that our actions bring consequences. In the past, some of us tried to deceive ourselves into thinking we could escape the consequences of the things we had done. Now, with some time and learning in recovery, we know the truth that God made accountability a necessary part of human existence.

***Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.*** (Galatians 6:7-8 NIV)

The good news is that God will help us be accountable and make amends to those we have harmed. God wants us to live with self-worth before Him and others. We may fear humiliation and the pain of acknowledging the truth about what we have done. However, even though it means facing our past, admitting the truth will bring us peace, Truth leads to freedom. Deceit and denial lead to bondage and death.

***Prayer: Gracious God, Help me to fearlessly commit to the way of truth in all my affairs. I want to live in the freedom that comes from living my life according to Your Word. Amen.***

JULY 31

## AN AMAZING MUSTARD SEED

# NOTES

A mustard seed is very small, but in only three months it can grow and produce a mature harvest. Amazing growth in a short space of time. We may feel quite small and vulnerable, wondering if we can sustain recovery. We can take hope from what Jesus is saying about the mustard seed.

***If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, it is enough. You can say to this mountain, "Move from here to there." And it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.*** (Matthew 17:20-21 NIRV)

If we take the little bit of faith we have, enter the process of "coming to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity," and turn our will and our lives over to God's care, then in even the short space of 90 days amazing changes can be ours. Our faith is not in our own ability but in God's unfailing love and power to strengthen and support us in our life in recovery.

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

Mustard on hamburgers, hot dogs, or ham sandwiches makes them taste even better. Mustard leaves add wonderful flavour to salad greens and are good for our digestive system. Mustard oil has healing benefits as a health-boosting agent. Who knew a little seed could make such a difference?

God created us with amazing potential which is still waiting to be discovered. Our addiction had the power to temporarily block what God created us to be. Now in recovery, we can believe and receive all that God is giving us each day to help build us up. We can grow strong and courageous in His unfailing love and become the unique person that God created us to be.

***No one has ever seen, no one has ever heard, no one has ever imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.*** (1 Corinthians 2:9 ERV)

*Prayer: Lord Jesus, I want to have faith, even faith as small as a mustard seed, to trust You to make something beautiful of my life. I commit to following You in all my ways in the recovery process. Please give me the will and the power to do so. Amen*

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recovery.***

## SOME AREAS OF ADDICTION AND DEPENDENCY

### *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.*

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

# 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***