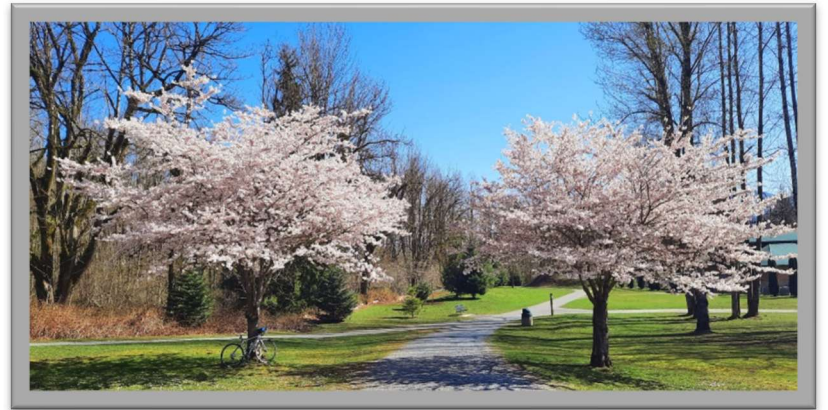


LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations



APRIL 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

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>

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY Daily Meditations

APRIL 2025

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Evelyn Leeburn, Elsie Quick

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Scriptures taken from:

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

PHOTOS

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

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.

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.

GROWING IN MATURITY

Those of us who have come from an unmanageable lifestyle and have chosen a recovery program with scheduled community gatherings may find this change in our lifestyle intimidating. We are unfamiliar with meeting procedures and some of the words we hear sound like they are from another language. Everything is different from what we have known and we feel immature and imperfect as we compare ourselves with these people who want to help us. What are we to do?

Have two goals: wisdom—that is, knowing and doing right—and common sense. Don't let them slip away, for they fill you with living energy and bring you honor and respect.

(Proverbs 3:21-22 TLB)

Those who've been in recovery for a while have had to grow through many phases of unknowns. We also were unfamiliar with the ways of God, but we soon learned that we could grow as we humbled ourselves and asked questions. A flower will grow from a planted seed when it is watered and fed. We will grow mature in the ways of God and recovery practices as we are watered and fed from the Scriptures and by those around us who are willing to answer questions and share their experience, strength, and hope with us.

Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong. (Hebrews 5:14 NLT)

Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong.

Hebrews 5:14 NLT

As we grow in our recovery and become knowledgeable of what is evil and what is morally excellent, we may be shocked to learn that some of the approved ways of our culture are different from the ways of God. Having had a spiritual awakening, we have come to know that God's ways are higher than our ways and will actually lead us along a path of life that is good, pleasing, and perfect.

Give me understanding and I will obey your instructions; I will put them into practice with all my heart. (Psalm 119:34 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me to be willing to ask questions when I feel overwhelmed by all that is new to me in recovery. Give me the will and desire to mature in my understanding of the Scriptures and the wisdom and power to do what You say. Amen

APRIL 2

JOURNEYING WITH GOD

NOTES

When we turn our will and life over to the care of God, we are admitting that we cannot do life on our own and have become willing to let God direct our lives. We are aware of the past wrongs we have done, the evil we have brought on ourselves, and the harm we have caused our loved ones and friends while living in self-will. Now we choose to surrender our whole person, body, mind, and spirit, to God's care. We say to God, "I am Yours. You have paid the price to give me a new life. Now do with me as You will."

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. (Romans 12:1 MSG)

***As we
journey
with Him
God will
care for us
and keep
us safe on
the path
we have
chosen.***

God knows our hearts and when we are sincere about living a new life in the power of the Holy Spirit it delights His heart because He loves and cares about us. God is patient and kind and has compassion on us when we are feeling weak about obeying His word. If we ask Him, He will help us. He will show us things that are pleasing to Him and helpful to us, things that we may never have thought about or even considered.

So let us never stop offering to God our praise through Jesus. Let us talk openly about our faith in him. Then our words will be like an offering to God. Don't forget to do good. Don't forget to share with others. God is pleased with those kinds of offerings. (Hebrews 13:15-16 NIRV)

Our minds may not yet be in tune with God's word, but we have God's mighty Power working in us to help us get to know and do those things that please Him. God is a loving Father who is patient and kind. As we journey with Him God will care for us and keep us safe on the path we have chosen.

Every word of God is perfect. He is like a shield to those who trust in him. He keeps them safe. (Proverbs 30:5 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for caring for me and guiding me in the way I should go. Please help me to be obedient to Your Word in all that I say and do. Amen

JUST FOR TODAY – GOD WORKS FOR GOOD

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.

We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28 ESV)

Those of us who come from an unstable background often feel vulnerable. We attempt to control things around us to avoid more added pain or disappointment.

While it is good to do our part to work towards good solutions, in the end it always comes back to seeking God's will in the moment and trusting God's plan to work for us.

When we are trusting God, we can relax. God “has our back” and God is “on our side.” We live in an unpredictable world and each day seems to bring surprises, some of them good and others not so good. When we are walking with God and are surrendered to His will, He will work in the most challenging circumstances to bring about a better solution than any of us could think of or imagine.

Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act. (Psalm 37:4-5 ESV)

At this stage we need to humbly admit that we really don't know what is best for us. We often react out of fear or worry or both and try to get things arranged in ways that seem to us to be manageable. While it is good to do our part to work towards solutions, in the end it always comes back to seeking God's will in the moment and trusting God's plan to

work for us. Sometimes we may have to wait. Often it seems, “the bad guys are winning.” For a time, we may have to hang on tightly to God's promise that He will act on our behalf. With a gracious manner and a willing heart, let's do what we can and then settle down, relax, and wait for God to work.

Prayer: Loving God, I am grateful that I can release the pressures and burdens of today into Your capable hands. Help me to stay focused on You and know You are at work. You are a good God and You always work for good in my life. Help me to trust You today. Amen

A BRIGHT NEW WAY OF LIFE

We lost our way. That's an obvious fact. We fell into addiction and a destructive lifestyle. We hid in dark and isolated places. Sometimes that was in dark corners and streets, but even if it was under bright lights, we were still lost in dark places in our minds and hearts. We were lost in darkness and powerless to find a way to the light. Who can show us the way out of darkness into the light? Jesus says He is the light and if we follow Him, we won't have to walk in darkness but will have the light that gives life.

“I am the way, the truth, and the life!” Jesus answered. “Without me, no one can go to the Father. I am the light for the world! Follow me, and you won't be walking in the dark. You will have the light that gives life.” (John 14:6, John 8:12b CEV)

Darkness is not a thing in itself. Darkness is the absence of light. In pioneer days people lit a candle, put a glass orb around it, and the light spread out across the room. When we invite God to come and live in us, He is the light within that reflects brightness to those around us. As others see us living in the light of God's love, they will be drawn to that light. Darkness in our hearts and in our circumstances must give way to the light of Christ as surely as darkness leaves a room when we flip a switch and turn on a light.

In recovery, we can be taught to live in a new way by reading the Bible and learning about Jesus and how He lived. We can then follow His example. God's Holy Spirit will give us the power to live this way. Jesus gives light and life for our journey, and He will get us to our destination. Jesus not only knows the way, He is the way.

The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. (Romans 8:11 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank you for seeing me when I was lost in darkness and also for sending Jesus to be the light to show me the way to life with You. I surrender myself to You and choose to follow Your plan for my life. I ask for Your Holy Spirit to empower me to do Your will and be a light that shines brightly to those around me. Amen

Simon Peter answered, “Lord, there is no one else that we can go to! Your words give eternal life.”

John 6:68 CEV

JEALOUSY

Jealousy is a strong emotion created when a relationship seems to be threatened. For example, in a marriage relationship one person may feel jealous when their spouse is spending time in an intimate way with another person. Jealousy may also arise when an activity takes time away from a relationship.

You must worship no other gods, for the Lord, whose very name is Jealous, is a God who is jealous about his relationship with you. (Exodus 34:14 NLT)

Have we ever considered that God is jealous for our attention?

Have we ever considered that God is jealous for our attention? God is a jealous God? How could this be? In our life in addiction, who or what did we worship and seek after? In our recovery, who or what do we hold in high esteem? Do we ignore God when we need help and choose to seek that help from another person? Perhaps we seek for information on our future through horoscopes, fortune tellers, mediums or such. God is a God who knows all things from the beginning to the end, why do we ignore Him in favour of false prophets?

You can't drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too. You can't have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons. Are we trying to make the Lord jealous? Are we stronger than he is? (1 Corinthians 10:21-22 NIRV)

God created the earth and everything in it yet many of us do not even acknowledge who He is or what He has done. Let's honour God today by spending time with Him, and in His written word, the Bible. If we do, our relationship with Him will thrive.

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. (Romans 1:20-21 NKJV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for the times I have ignored You and looked to other people or things for relationship, direction or comfort. From this day forward I will seek You in all my affairs and ask that You direct me in the way I should go. Amen

LIMITED AUTONOMY

An autonomous person is capable of making an informed decision about something on their own without having the input of another. Tradition 4 of Alcoholics Anonymous states: *Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.* This is a principle to be put into practice at the group level but has lessons for our individual recovery as well. We are encouraged to express our individual uniqueness "except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole." (Twelve By Twelve page 146)

In this tradition AA is recognizing something that flows from God's own heart – that humans would have the gift of free will – freedom to live fully as the persons they were created to be but doing so according to the principles that their creator knew would work. From the very beginning, choices were provided so we could honour God's wisdom as superior to our limited human knowledge.

There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death. This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him, for the Lord is your life. (Proverbs 14:12, Deuteronomy 30:19-20a NIV)

The founders of AA were willing to trust each group to rely on their own conscience as a guide for action. It was a courageous choice and offered huge freedom to groups – even the freedom to get things wrong.

God made us in His image, unique from every other created being, with the ability to think and choose how to act based on truth and moral principles. God encourages us to make use of the abilities and creativity with which He has gifted us. At the same time, God pleads with us to recognize the reality that we are limited and stand in need of His wisdom every moment of every day. In moments where what we think is right goes against the wider wisdom of the group, we would do well to heed the "except in matters affecting ..." principle.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to humbly surrender all that I think and do to Your guidance. I want my life to be shaped by Your wisdom, so my choices do not negatively impact others. Amen

Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.

ESSENTIALS FOR LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Water is a very simple substance. It is colorless, odorless, and has no taste, yet no living thing can survive without it. Plants, animals, and human beings consist mostly of water. The human body is 2/3 water. Despite its simplicity, water is amazing, and its properties point us to the God who created water, gathered water, and disperses it over the earth.

God said, "Let there be a space between the waters, to separate the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth." And that is what happened. God made this space to separate the waters of the earth from the waters of the heavens ... Then God said, "Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place, so dry ground may appear." And that is what happened. God called the dry ground "land" and the waters "seas." (Genesis 1:6-7, 9-10)

Just as water is essential for natural life, so being filled up with God's Spirit is essential for spiritual life.

Water is a solvent. This property means that the various chemicals, minerals and nutrients in the food we eat are diluted and dispensed throughout our bodies by the water we drink. Water freezes from the top down and floats so fish can survive underneath the ice, and yet water in the root of plants flows against gravity giving water and nutrients to the top of even the tallest trees.

Even though 97% of the earth's water is in the oceans and is salt water, yet in the plan of God, evaporation takes the ocean waters, leaves the salt behind, and forms clouds which are easily moved by the wind to disperse the water

over land for the usage of vegetation, animals, and people. This planned system purifies, recycles, and reuses water in a way that sustains life across the planet.

Just as water has many attributes and is essential for natural life, so being filled up with God's Spirit is essential for spiritual life. As we welcome God and His ways into our recovery, it may mean doing things differently. As salt gets left behind in the evaporation from ocean waters, so we need to allow God to help us leave behind those memories, people, and habits that are not helpful as we move into the future God has planned for us. Let's make an informed decision today to again turn our will and our life over to this amazing God who cares for us.

Prayer: Loving God, You are awesome in all of Your ways. Help me to see You as You are and not as I have made You. I praise You that Your will for me is good, pleasing and perfect. Amen

STOPPING GOSSIP

Almost everyone says they hate gossip and yet many of us are easily drawn into conversations that are unkind. How can we be a person who stops gossip rather than one who contributes to its spread?

But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. Without wood a fire goes out; without a gossip a quarrel dies down. (Colossians 3:8 NLT, Proverbs 26:20 NIV)

We need to decide that we won't participate in a conversation about another person when the words that are being said would be painful for that person to hear if they were present. We can end gossip by simply not passing on any of the words and rumors we have heard. If the conversation around us moves towards gossip, we can change the subject and talk about something else -- anything else that is positive.

We can make a point to counter negative things said about a person by expressing positive things about them. We can encourage a gossip to speak to the person they are gossiping about if it would help the situation. Sometimes if we simply suggest, "I don't feel comfortable talking about this person this way" it may help the gossip to consider what they are saying.

Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers. Drive out the mocker, and out goes strife; quarrels and insults are ended. (Psalm 1:1, Proverbs 22:10 NIV)

We need to ask ourselves: "When do I find myself engaging in gossip? How many of my words would pass the 3-question test for wise speech? 1) Is it true? 2) Is it kind? 3) Is it necessary? It may be helpful to remember that those who gossip to us will gossip about us. Let's make every effort to stop gossiping today.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I ask Your forgiveness for the times I have found fault with others and gossiped about them. I am grateful for the compassion and mercy You showed to me when my own character defects were revealed. Help me to encourage others rather than judge and gossip about them. Amen

How can we be a person who stops gossip rather than one who contributes to its spread?

WHO WILL STAND UP FOR ME?

Often when we are going through hard times we fail to call out to God for help. We are so focused on our problem that we think and talk about it continually instead of going to a quiet place to pray and seek God for His help. If God promises to help us in our time of need, why are we so reluctant to seek Him?

The Lord says, “The poor are being robbed. Those who are in need groan. So I will stand up to help them. I will keep them safe from those who tell lies about them.” The words of the Lord are perfect. They are like silver made pure in a clay furnace. They are like gold made pure seven times over. Lord, you will keep needy people safe. You will always keep sinners from hurting us. Proud and sinful people walk around openly when the evil they do is praised by the human race. (Psalm 12:5-8 NIRV)

The Lord will stand up to help us and He will keep us safe from harm.

One reason we don't come to God when we are in trouble is that we are unsure if He will help us. Some of us would prefer to go to someone we can see rather than to God who we are unable to see but whose presence is always with us. God has infinite power to help. The above scripture says that the Lord will stand up to help us and He will keep us safe from harm. Do we believe what God says in His Word, or do we doubt that He is able to fulfill what He says?

The above Psalm tells us that God's words are perfect. They are like silver or gold which has been made pure in a furnace. This means that we can be sure God's word is true and free of all error or falsehood. God's promises and His faithfulness in fulfilling what He has said is dependable.

Jesus said that those who are weary and heavy laden should come to Him for rest.

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28 NIV)

Are we willing to come to Jesus who knows all about our troubles and desires to help or would we rather go to someone else? The choice is ours!

Prayer: Loving God, I want to sincerely believe that You will do what You have promised. When I am afraid, encourage me to first come to You for help, and trust You to keep me safe from all harm. Fill my heart with peace as I come to believe that You are always with me and will help me in my times of need. Amen

TAKE ACTION NOW

I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that I am responsible. (Alcoholics Anonymous)

This “Responsibility Statement.” written for the A.A. international convention in Toronto in 1965 put words together that were of significance to A.A. Many of the principles of A.A. are rooted in truths from the Bible that were practiced by the founders. This willingness to respond to someone in need is one of those.

Do everything you possibly can for those who need help. If your neighbor needs something you have, don't say, “Come back tomorrow.” Give it to him immediately. (Proverbs 3:27-28 ERV)

Proverbs is a book of wise sayings and in it we are reminded to act for the good of others, to do it now, and not wait for a more convenient moment or another day. When Jesus spoke of those who showed by their actions that they were right with God, He revealed that the help they had given others was as if it had been done FOR Him.

“Then those that are right with God will say, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You? When did we see You thirsty and give You a drink? When did we see You a stranger and give You a room? When did we see You had no clothes and we gave You clothes? And when did we see You sick or in prison and we came to You?’ Then the King will say, ‘For sure, I tell you, because you did it to one of the least of My brothers, you have done it to Me.’ (Matthew 25:37-40 NLV)

It's not our job to “fix anyone” but it is our God given responsibility to look with eyes of compassion on those around us and when necessary to lend a hand. We have been forgiven by God and supported on our journey by others. Now it is our turn – whether we are one day into recovery or many decades – to lend a hand to another. The amazing thing is, as we make life a bit easier for someone else who is suffering, even though it may be inconvenient for us in that moment, we will find that joy and contentment fills our own hearts and minds.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me change my self-centered focus. Today, I ask that You give me eyes to see and a heart of compassion to respond to someone who is in need. Amen

It's not our job to “fix anyone” but it is our God given responsibility to look with eyes of compassion and offer to lend a hand to those around us.

GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO WAIT

Many of us have heard the saying, “Good things come to those who wait.” This proverb reminds us that if we are patient and keep on doing the next right thing, we will eventually achieve our goal. God’s word has more to say about this.

Good things come to those who do what is right. Joy comes to those whose hearts are honest. You who are godly, be glad because of what the Lord has done. Praise him, because his name is holy. (Psalm 97:11-12 NIRV)

***But put
God’s
kingdom
first. Do
what he
wants you
to do.
Then all
those
things will
also be
given to
you.***

***Matthew 6:33
NIRV***

Going forward we do not have all the solutions for our future and perhaps feel insecure about some of the unknowns. God’s promise to us is, if we will live with integrity and follow Him in doing what is right, our lives will be filled with good things and our hearts will overflow with joy. As well as that, God says that in this life He has planned better things for us than we could ever think of or imagine. God also promises that when this life on earth is over we will spend life forevermore with Him in His Kingdom.

Some people live for God’s glory, for honor, and for life that cannot be destroyed. They live for those things by always continuing to do good. God will give eternal life to them. (Romans 2:7 ERV)

The best news of all is, God knows we are unable to continually live according to His principles, so He gives us the gift of His Holy Spirit who fills us with His power and wisdom to help overcome our weaknesses and the temptations that we will face along the way.

Even though you are evil, you know how to give good gifts to your children. How much more will your Father who is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” (Luke 11:13 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that I am weak when it comes to temptation. Please fill me with Your Holy Spirit so I have the power to do what is right regardless of the circumstances I encounter. Also, please give me the wisdom to wait patiently for things in my life to change. I want to live for Your honour and one day at a time seek to do what is right and good. Amen

SELF-HATRED

A lot of us express self-hatred in the way we look at ourselves and our life experiences. Perhaps we were brought up in an abusive home and the bare necessities of life were not available to us so we lived in anxiety about our future well-being. We tend to compare our lot with that of others and grumble about how disadvantaged we were. We blame God and others for our missed opportunities and the way we are today.

I am sick of life! And from my deep despair, I complain to you, my God. Do you look at things the way we humans do? Is your life as short as ours? Is that why you are so quick to find fault with me? You know I am innocent, but who can defend me against you? (Job 10:1, 4-7 CEV)

Many of the people we read about in the Bible lived lonely fruitless lives until God called them out of their darkness and walked with them on the path He had planned for their lives. Moses was a murderer and unsure of his ability to speak when God called him. Gideon was a coward and hiding from his nation’s oppressors when God called him. However imperfect or ineffective we see ourselves, God is calling us and empowering us to fulfill the plan He has for our lives.

Through faith in the name of Jesus, this man was healed—and you know how crippled he was before. Faith in Jesus’ name has healed him before your very eyes. (Acts 3:16 NLT)

When we give our will and life over to the care of God, it is faith in Jesus’ name that restores us in body, mind and spirit. The sacrifice Jesus made for our sins on the cross and His subsequent resurrection proclaims to demonic oppressors that they are powerless to stand against Jesus. As we repent of our sins and allow Jesus to come into our lives and make us new, we will find that self-hatred no longer has power over us.

So let’s do it—full of belief, confident that we’re presentable inside and out. Let’s keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. He always keeps his word. (Hebrews 10:22-23 MSG)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, You are mighty to save, please deliver me from the demonic oppression of self-hatred. I have come to believe that through You, all my sins have been forgiven and I am made perfect both inside and out. Amen

***However
imperfect or
ineffective
we see
ourselves
God is
calling us to
the plan He
has for our
lives.***

JOY – MY HAPPY PLACE

Where's your "happy place"? When we Google "happy place," the pictures that come up are young hands holding older wrinkled hands; a wedding celebration; friends jumping for joy in the outdoors; a young child looking peacefully at a baby; someone resting in a hammock; a rainbow in the sky; a beautiful beach with waves of blue sea; a cup of coffee.

What if we didn't have to "go to a place" or "experience a happening" to find joy, but could be full of joy wherever we are? Today's good news is that God tells us how to do just that.

Following is a list of some of the ways the Bible says we can have joy wherever we are.

It is God's desire that we live joyfully today. Let's follow His instructions and let the joy flow.

Psalm 32:1 Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight!

Psalm 32:2 Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!

Psalm 34:5 Those who look to him for help will be radiant with joy; no shadow of shame will darken their faces.

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

Psalm 41:1 Oh, the joys of those who are kind to the poor! The Lord rescues them when they are in trouble.

Psalm 70:4 But may all who search for you be filled with joy and gladness in you. May those who love

your salvation repeatedly shout, "God is great!"

It is God's desire that we live joyfully today. Let's follow His instructions and let the joy flow.

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

Prayer – Heavenly Father, Thank You for making known to me the path that leads to a joyful life. I want to live forever in Your presence where there is fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore. Amen

SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL INVENTORY

When making an inventory of our lives before God, some basic questions to ask are: "God what does my life look like to You? How have I strayed from Your directives? What needs to go? What needs to be sought after with everything I have in me so I can really live?"

In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone. (2 Peter 1:5-7 NLT)

Our addictive behaviour is almost certainly rooted in the problems we experienced in relationships we have had in the past. Wrong beliefs and actions formed from the pain and brokenness we suffered. When doing an inventory that is searching, fearless, and moral, we must examine the way we think and ask ourselves, "What is the root cause of the way I think and behave?" We must look not only at what we did, but the reason we did it.

No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. (Philippians 3:13-14 NLT)

Like a skillful surgeon God will help us identify and then remove from us those things that have hindered us from living a good and pleasing life. We will come to appreciate what a purposeful life looks like when we inventory our behaviour in the light of God's Word as recorded in the Bible.

Prayer: Loving God, The act of uncovering what I have tried to cover up and run from in the past is extremely challenging for me. However, in the safety of Your love and care and guidance, I am determined to make a searching, fearless, and moral inventory of myself. Please help me! Amen

When making an inventory of our lives before God, the basic question to ask is, "God what does my life look like to You?"

RE-BUILDING INTEGRITY

What does integrity look like in our lives, in our time, and in our city? People of integrity set a good example for the children and youth of our society. We may think our children don't know when we cheat, take advantage of a customer or employer, lie to the boss, or abuse paid benefits. However, they see more than we realize. Our misdeeds, whenever they are exposed, cause our children to lose respect for us or worse, to pattern their own actions and lives after ours. People of integrity live honestly in all situations, noticed or unnoticed.

Even in darkness light dawns for the upright, for the gracious and compassionate and righteous man. Good will come to him who is generous and lends freely, who conducts his affairs with justice. A righteous man who walks in his integrity—how blessed are his sons after him.” (Psalm 112:4-5 NIV & Proverbs 20:7 NASB)

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

People of integrity gain the respect of others. Men and women of integrity can be depended upon. People look to them with trust and respect. Neighbours speak highly of them, and they are helpful in their community or place of work. Few things are more valued than a good reputation.

A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold. (Proverbs 22:1 NIV)

Integrity is built over time as we diligently apply God's teachings to the choices we make. If we remain faithful to God's principles, we can leave the consequences of others' actions with Him. Living with an undivided heart and being a vibrant witness for Jesus to those around us is worth any effort that may be required.

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

As we do an inventory, it might be helpful to ask ourselves: “What personal challenges do I face in living as a person of integrity? Is there any area of my conscience that is flawed and in need of correction?”

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me consider the impact of my actions and behaviour on those around me. Give me the courage to behave in ways that are right and just, regardless of who is watching. Amen

WORDS – THE POWER TO ENCOURAGE OR CRUSH

We've all experienced the power of words in our own lives and observed the effect of their power in some things that others have shared with us. Some of us carry the effects of harsh words for a lifetime and find it difficult to get past the hurtful impact. When we take time to reflect we may also be able to remember some kind things people have said, and allow those words to bring hope to our heart and a smile to our face.

A gentle answer makes anger disappear, but a rough answer makes it grow. Good people think before they answer, but the wicked do not, and what they say causes trouble. Kind words are like a life-giving tree, but lying words will crush your spirit. (Proverbs 15:1, 28, 4 ERV)

It may be time for each of us to consider what impact our words have on others. Do we speak quietly or thoughtlessly use harsh words in reaction to something we don't like? Will we give a compliment and a word of appreciation, or will we condemn someone for not doing things exactly the way we wanted? As much as we are a work in progress and want to be recognized as such, will we allow the same growing space for others as we speak to them or when we speak about them?

It may be time for each of us to consider what impact our words have on others.

Listening to wise people increases your knowledge, but only nonsense comes from the mouths of fools. People are happy when they give a good answer. And there is nothing better than the right word at the right time. (Proverbs 15:2, 23 ERV)

In our society, with its emphasis on social media, the thoughtless use of words is often reflected through our texts and posts rather than our mouths. In what seems like less than a personal encounter, we somehow feel freer to express our thoughts without first filtering them. Much harm may be caused to a person by what we post. With things hanging in cyberspace long after we delete them from our own page, we need to be aware that we have less control over the harm we cause through our social media posts than in face-to-face encounters. It's always wise to think before we speak or post.

Prayer: Loving God, help me to consider what I say and its impact on others. Give me the patience and self-control necessary to filter my thoughts before I respond to others, so that my words may build up rather than crush. Amen

PLANNING WELL AND WORKING THE PLAN

Each day God has a plan for our lives that is meaningful, purposeful, and joyful. There is a work for us to do today that will bless others and give us deep satisfaction. God is not only interested in what we do, but why we do it. Our circumstances may not change immediately but when we have sought God's help and direction in what we have planned, we can leave the outcome with Him.

People think that whatever they do is right, but the Lord judges their reason for doing it. Turn to the Lord for help in everything you do, and you will be successful. People can plan what they want to do, but it is the Lord who guides their steps. (Proverbs 16:2-3, 9 ERV)

We may not do things perfectly, but we are to learn from our experiences and trust that God will bless us when we pick ourselves up and move on from any failure or disappointment.

We can pray at any time during the day, but there's something about beginning the day with God in prayer, bringing our plans before Him, and intentionally seeking His guidance. Everything will flow better when we do that, even though we may encounter some challenges along the way. When we are conscious of God being with us and are seeking His help, positive solutions will come more easily.

Good people try to avoid evil. They watch what they do and protect themselves. Good things happen to those who learn from their experiences, and the Lord blesses those who trust him. (Proverbs 16:17, 20 ERV)

As we move forward, we are encouraged to do those things that we can do so that our plans will succeed. We are blessed with a sense of knowing what is right or wrong, above-board or shady.

We need to pay attention to and seek protection from those who are operating in dishonest ways. In the beginning we may not do things perfectly, but we are to learn from our experiences and trust that God will bless us when we pick ourselves up and move on from any disappointment or failure.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to trust You with my plans and follow Your guidance in all I do. Give me discernment to recognize when things are going wrong and to learn from my disappointments and failures rather than just quit. Amen

HEALING PROMISED

Anyone who has struggled with addiction knows that their body and mind both need healing for there is no peace to be found in either. We used our dependency to give us courage to cope with fearful circumstances or to blot them out. God desires that we give our will and life over to His care so that we can be dependent on Him to cope with the events that life brings our way.

Lord my God, I called out to you for help. And you healed me. Lord, you brought me up from the place of the dead. You kept me from going down into the pit. (Psalm 30:2-3 NIRV)

In His Word, God tells us repeatedly not to fear and that should be an indication of what He knows about our situation. God cares for us and wants to heal us so we can live as He intended. How can we go about living as God intended?

My son, pay attention to what I say. Listen closely to my words. Don't let them out of your sight. Keep them in your heart. They are life to those who find them. They are health to a person's whole body. (Proverbs 4:20-22 NIRV)

Satan is our enemy and will use whatever harms us to gain control over our destiny. Each person is visible in God's sight, and He knows our name and our ways. God governs the world with wisdom and those who do the will and work of God are favoured in His sight. Do we watch others get healed and restored to new life and wonder why it does not happen to us? Who or what are we looking to for help that will enable us to live the life we desire?

Wealth and honor come from you. You are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power. You can give honor and strength to everyone. (1 Chronicles 29:12 NIRV)

God promises to heal us and give us the power and strength we need to live the meaningful life we desire. Why not seek a miracle from Him today?

Prayer: Gracious God, I have been looking in all the wrong places for the meaningful life I desire. Today I choose to commit my life to You for healing and restoration. Amen

God promises to heal us and give us the power and strength we need to live the meaningful life we desire.

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS OVER TIME

When we are trapped in a destructive lifestyle of addiction, we are unable to sustain healthy friendships with others. One of the gifts of our new life with God in recovery is learning how to share ourselves with others and develop meaningful relationships. Jesus was a good friend to twelve men who became His disciples, and He served and taught them well about the things of God. Jesus also received friendship from these men in return.

This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me. (John 15:12-15 NLT)

The bottom line of all healthy relationships is that we help each other know and serve God well.

What are some characteristics of being in a healthy relationship? Friends trust and rely on each other. They may not always agree but they respect one another's differences. Friends are kind and understanding towards one another. They stand together in times of trouble even when others can't or won't stand with them. Friends celebrate the good times and encourage each other during the bad times. They tell each other the truth -- the truth they like to hear as well as the truth they don't want to hear but need to.

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity. My intercessor is my friend as my eyes pour out tears to God; on behalf of a man he pleads with God as one pleads for a friend. (Proverbs 17:17, Job 16:20-21 NIV)

The bottom line of all healthy relationships is that we help each other know and serve God well. Those who fail to examine themselves in the light of God's Word and heed the advice of good friends may end up being enslaved by their destructive habits and dependencies.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You created me to live in loving relationship with You and with others. Help me to tear down the walls I have built to keep You and others out. Give me the will and desire to live in the light of Your love and share in respectful relationships where each person cares for the other. Amen

LOVE IS NOT BOASTFUL OR PROUD

When we come into recovery we are usually worn out and broken and we feel wretched. However, we often remain prideful in the way we talk. We brag about things we have done and make ourselves out to be clever in our dealings with others. God does not want us to be boastful or proud. He wants to transform the way we think so that we learn to behave in ways that are good and pleasing to Him. God's desire is that we humbly admit the exact nature of our wrongs.

Dear friends, God is good. So I beg you to offer your bodies to him as a living sacrifice, pure and pleasing. That's the most sensible way to serve God. Don't be like the people of this world, but let God change the way you think. Then you will know how to do everything that is good and pleasing to him. (Romans 12:1-2 CEV)

Satan was boastful and proud when He tempted Eve. He reworded God's instructions to make them seem more appealing to her human nature and he told her, "You will be like God." Satan's own downfall was pride. Satan entices us to his way of thinking and doing because his desire is to have control of us. We need to be on guard against his deception. He will attempt to twist the truth and have us look back at what we have left behind and make us think we now could handle our dysfunctional lifestyle.

Love is not boastful or proud. Love is humble and selfless.

You said to yourself, "I'll climb to heaven. I'll set my throne over the stars of God....I'll climb to the top of the clouds. I'll take over as King of the Universe!" But you didn't make it, did you? Instead of climbing up, you came down—Down with the underground dead, down to the abyss of the Pit. (Isaiah 14:13-15 MSG)

God is love. Love is not boastful or proud. Love is humble and selfless. Love is sacrificial in its actions towards another. As we read the following verses of scripture, how many of the characteristics listed would we say we exhibit? It may be something to think about!

Love is kind and patient, never jealous, boastful, proud, or rude. Love isn't selfish or quick tempered. It doesn't keep a record of wrongs that others do. Love rejoices in the truth, but not in evil. (1 Corinthians 13:4-6 CEV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I am so grateful for Jesus who through His love and sacrifice covers all my sins. Teach me how to love as You love and to live according to Your truth. Amen

SOBRIETY AND MIRACLES

We talk about experiencing miracles in recovery. What is a miracle? It's a joyful and pretty surprising event that can't be explained by natural laws and is therefore considered to be a work of God. How many of those have we experienced: physical and emotional healing; restored relationships; the opportunity to be a positive role model and give support to another struggler; a string of days sober that leads to a milestone celebration. Today we give thanks to God for the miracles we have already witnessed in our lives and the many more we will experience from the God who lavishes His love on us.

Today we give thanks to God for the miracles we have already witnessed in our lives and the many more we will experience.

Faith in Jesus' name put this man, whose condition you know so well, on his feet—yes, faith and nothing but faith put this man healed and whole right before your eyes. (Acts 3:16 MSG)

We come into recovery with little more than desperation and a bit of hope that, because we have seen others get sober, maybe someone can help us get sober too. If we ask Him, God will work in our life way beyond our expectations. He will give us new life so that we can become the person He created us to be. He will fill us with His mighty Power and make us whole.

I ask the Father with his great glory to give you the power to be strong in your spirits. He will give you that strength through his Spirit. I pray that Christ will live in your hearts because of your faith. I pray that your life will be strong in love and be built on love. Then you can be filled with everything God has for you. (Ephesians 3:16-17, 19b ERV)

New life in recovery is a work that takes place from the inside out. When we invite Him in, God's Spirit comes to live in us. Where we were formerly dead in our sins, God brings life. There's no greater miracle than sins forgiven and new life. This gets expressed in so many beautiful ways every day as we put God's ways into practice in all our affairs.

Prayer: Thank You God for the miracle of You living in me and helping me be the person You created me to be. This is life beyond all my expectations. I want to keep on reaching out to You so I can experience the many good things You have in store for me. Amen

THE EASTER QUESTION

Most of Jesus' friends abandoned Him before He died on the cross. After His death they huddled together in a locked room wondering what to do next. In their grief and sorrow, they were sure that the troubles that awaited them outside the room were more than they could endure. They didn't know how to go forward because Jesus was dead and they had no hope -- or so they thought. While they sat in that room, an incredible thing happened. Jesus appeared to them.

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. (John 20:19-20)

Jesus gave them convincing proof that He was truly alive. He wasn't just a ghost or a delusion, but a person they could feel and touch. He was alive! Wonder, joy and peace filled their hearts. However, one of Jesus' disciples named Thomas wasn't with the others when Jesus first made an appearance to them. When Thomas was told that they had seen Jesus, he doubted that it was true.

Like Thomas, some of us have known the discouragement of hopes dashed and opportunities lost. In our broken fearful lives, we doubt the presence of God with us to help.

A week later Jesus came again when they were all together, including Thomas. Jesus did not judge Thomas for having doubts but invited Him to, "***Stop doubting and believe.***" Jesus also told Thomas, "***Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.***" (John 20:29 NIV)

Will we, like Thomas, come to realize that something incredible takes place when we ask Jesus to show us who He truly is?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Forgive me for doubting who You are and what You have done for me. Help me to be like Thomas who stopped doubting and believed. Amen

Will we, like Thomas, come to realize that something incredible takes place when we ask Jesus to show us who He truly is?

EASTER SUNDAY – THE HIGHEST POWER

All of humankind's sin – from the beginning to the end of time – was laid on Jesus and not even the weight of that could hold him down. Jesus rose from the dead. Jesus' resurrection demonstrates that no darkness, no evil, no pain or brokenness, can overcome the power of God in the lives of those who believe in Jesus.

I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. (Ephesians 1:19-20 NLT)

What seems impossible for us to believe becomes possible when God is involved.

No matter how fearsome or broken our lives seem to us, not even the weight of that can keep us down when we are submitted to Jesus. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is in us who surrender our will and our lives to God.

But you, dear friends, carefully build yourselves up in this most holy faith by praying in the Holy Spirit, staying right at the center of God's love, keeping your arms open and outstretched, ready for the mercy of our Master, Jesus Christ. This is the unending life, the real life! (Jude 20-21 MSG)

What seems impossible for us to believe becomes possible when God is involved. When we invite God into a situation, things happen that are beyond all we could hope for. God's power is stronger than anything we have ever encountered. God's kindness is more tender than anything we may have experienced. When Jesus comes into our lives, He brings power and solutions and hope for a new way of life. He fills us with His Holy Spirit. Believing that the Holy Spirit is within us –

with unlimited power to meet every need and solve every problem – will enable all doubt about our recovery and our ability to deal with problems to be overcome.

He saved us because of his mercy, and not because of any good things that we have done. God washed us by the power of the Holy Spirit. He gave us new birth and a fresh beginning. (Titus 3:5 CEV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You are God and You have the power to bring about change and healing in each life given over to You, including mine. Thank You for filling me with the mighty power of Your Holy Spirit so I can walk confidently in this new life You have given me. Amen

PALM SUNDAY

The day we call Palm Sunday was foretold in the Jewish scriptures hundreds of years before it happened. The religious scholars in Jerusalem on that day should have known of the prophecy yet they failed to relate it to what was happening. As Jesus had directed them, His followers found a donkey which the owners allowed to be taken to Jesus because they were told, "The Lord has need of him." The disciples threw their clothes on the colt and set Jesus on him. Others spread their clothes on the road as Jesus rode along and, at the Mount of Olives, the people began to praise God for all the mighty works they had seen Jesus do.

Rejoice, rejoice, people of Zion! Shout for joy, you people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you! He comes triumphant and victorious, but humble and riding on a donkey – on a colt, the foal of a donkey. (Zechariah 9:9 GNT)

Jesus fulfilled many prophecies about His life and death. How could the writers of the Scriptures have known things about Jesus hundreds of years before He was born? Why would the owner of the donkey allow the disciples to take it? Why would a donkey on whom no one has ever sat be calm enough to let Jesus sit on its back? The crowds were full of praise for the things Jesus had done among them. The Jewish religious leaders, who were offended by this display of worship, asked Jesus to stop the people praising God.

He (Jesus) came closer to the city, and when he saw it, he wept over it, saying, "If you only knew today what is needed for peace! But now you cannot see it!" (Luke 19:41-42 GNT)

Jesus knew what was needed for peace. His death and resurrection were required for peace for us and even for the Jewish leaders, though they did not recognize their need. Jesus knew the appointed time of His death was near and right to the end He remained willing to be the sacrifice for sin on behalf of the whole world.

As we increase our conscious contact with God, do we praise God for those things that have taken place, and are we able to see and believe for those things God has promised that are yet to come?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Thank You for restoring me in body, mind and spirit and for giving me Your peace which passes all understanding. You are worthy of my praise and adoration. As You have promised I say even so, come Lord Jesus, come. Amen

Do we praise God for those things that have taken place, and are we able to see and believe for those things God has promised that are yet to come?

WHO HAS AUTHORITY IN MY LIFE?

God's purpose in creating humans in His likeness was that they would be in relationship with Him and reflect His image on the beautiful earth He created for them to live on. God's desire was that humans would fellowship with Him and enjoy everything He created. However, through lies and scheming, Satan managed to make the first humans believe that God was withholding something good from them.

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:26-27 NIV)

Perhaps it is time to reflect on who we really want to have authority over our lives.

Satan, a created angel, once held a place of great importance before the throne of God. However, he became prideful and wanted to be worshipped like the Most High God and, because of his pride, Satan was cast out of heaven. Now he roams the earth seeking to destroy humans who are made in the image of God.

How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, "I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God. I will make myself like the Most High." But you are brought down to the realm of the dead, to the depths of the pit. (Isaiah 14:12-15 NIV)

When we follow the desires of our own heart, whether in an addictive lifestyle or in just ignoring the God who created us, we are being disloyal to God and therefore giving Satan authority over us. We, by our actions, are saying that we have found something more pleasing to us than God and what He has so generously provided for us. Perhaps it is time for us to reflect on whom we really want to have authority over our lives.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for my rebellion against You and Your ways. Thank You for pursuing me with Your love. Thank You for sending Jesus into the world to free me from sin and the power of Satan. Today, I choose to give You full authority in my life. Amen

DON'T WORRY ABOUT TOMORROW

Some of the most welcome words in life and in recovery circles are: "One day at a time" or "Just for today." These are principles that help take the weight of the past and the future off our shoulders and help us deal with life in a way that is more realistic. These sayings are ways to express Jesus' teaching.

So don't worry about tomorrow. Each day has enough trouble of its own. Tomorrow will have its own worries. (Matthew 6:34 ERV)

The above words can be found in the most famous record of Jesus' teaching called, "The Sermon on the Mount." Jesus had been speaking about some of the things we worry about – money, clothes, food – and encouraged His followers to believe that God cared for them and would provide for their need. Jesus uses examples of birds and flowers to remind us of the attention to detail we can expect from God.

Instead of worrying, Jesus' advice is to seek God and His plans for us each day and then do what God says. If we do, we can trust God to take care of everything else.

What you should want most is God's kingdom and doing what he wants you to do. Then he will give you all these other things you need. (Matthew 6:33 ERV)

We are not encouraged to live in denial and bury our heads in the sand. There are things we will need to deal with today and not all of them will be easy, but God will meet our need. At the end of the day, we will have further experiences to share of God's faithful care and guidance throughout the day.

As we learn to live one day at a time, it is essential that we come to God with a willingness and intention to surrender our will and our life to His care. He might stretch us more than we think in a certain situation because He knows best how to mature our faith, but He will never give us more than we can handle.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Your Word tells me not to worry about my life or the things of tomorrow. Forgive me for my lack of confidence in Your ability to work everything together for my good. Please help me to deal with the things I can, and where necessary to make changes. Help me to leave those things I am unable to change in Your care. Amen

Some of the most welcome words in life and in recovery circles are: "One day at a time" and "Just for today."

WHAT DOES JESUS' DEATH HAVE TO DO WITH ADDICTION?

What does Jesus' death have to do with us? Well, maybe nothing and maybe everything – the choice is ours. Jesus is the only solution to our unmanageable problems of sin and the resultant brokenness we suffer.

For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 3:23; 6:23 NLT)

We can ignore the fact that Jesus died for us and perish with our sins, or we can choose to accept that Jesus died to pay the debt for our sins and to give us the gift of an eternal relationship with the Living God.

We can ignore the fact that Jesus died for us and perish with our sins, or we can choose to accept that Jesus died to pay the debt for our sins and to give us the gift of an eternal relationship with the Living God. How do we do the latter?

We make a choice. We admit to God that our self-centered way of living does not work. We have cared only about ourselves and ignored the suffering of those around us. Now we choose to turn away from such behaviour. We admit our sins before God and ask Him to forgive us for living our lives for personal gratification. We receive God's forgiveness and the new life that He offers us through Jesus Christ. This is the act of turning our will and our life over to the care of God.

For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God. (Romans 5:10-11 NLT)

When we commit our lives to the care of God, God calls us His friends and fills us with His Holy Spirit. Today, let's bring ourselves – our will and our lives -- to the care of God. Let's embrace the life and healing that God is offering us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for giving me new life through the death and resurrection of Your beloved Son Jesus. Help me to die to self-will and my old ways of thinking and behaving. I ask You to reveal and remove from me all my defects of character. Help me to live each day obedient to Your Word, Your way, and Your timing, trusting that you will make all things right as I surrender to Your will. Amen

THE HIDDEN KINDNESS OF GOD

God is aware of every difficult moment we have experienced and the pain we have endured through every wrong done to us, or by us. He didn't look away. He hasn't been busy elsewhere. He has watched over and cared for us and has been willing to act on our behalf. Today is a good day to give thanks for the love and kindness of our gracious God.

I celebrate and shout because you are kind. You saw all my suffering, and you cared for me. You kept me from the hands of my enemies, and you set me free. Protect me from hidden traps and keep me safe. My life is in your hands. Save me from enemies who hunt me down. Smile on me, your servant. Have pity and rescue me. (Psalm 31:7-8, 4, 15-16 CEV)

There are so many things we don't see, so many traps that are set to trip us up. God is on the watch for those and ready to offer protection. God will act on our behalf when we welcome His intervention. All we need to do is request His help.

The more we progress in recovery and follow the ways of God, the more the enemy of our soul will try to harm us. Each day of our recovery requires that we put our life in God's hands and rely on Him to save us from the hidden dangers that we may encounter.

You are wonderful, and while everyone watches, you store up blessings for all who honor and trust you. I will praise you, Lord, for showing great kindness when I was like a city under attack. I was terrified and thought, "They've chased me far away from you!" But you answered my prayer when I shouted for help. (Psalm 31:19, 21-22 CEV)

God does not passively watch us as we wander through our day. Others may watch and say nothing, but God pours out blessing and help as we open our hearts to Him. We seldom live with a complete picture of what is happening in our life. Only God knows that. God promises to work on our behalf whether we can see what He is doing or not. God is always with us even though we may not be aware of His presence.

Prayer: Loving God, Whether I can see what You are doing in my life or not help me to trust that, as I surrender my will and life into Your care, You will help, protect, and comfort me in my time of need. Amen

God will act on our behalf when we welcome His intervention.

INSECURITY

Our life in recovery is often like treading an unknown pathway. The surroundings are unfamiliar, and we do not feel confident about the direction in which we are travelling. Sometimes we long for the security of what was familiar when we were in addiction. We seek relationships, the neighborhood, or just the known way of doing things. Recovery has brought change to our lives, and we wonder if we can rely on God to faithfully provide for us and keep us safe.

Growth in recovery and security come as we begin to believe that God will hold us steady while life shifts and turns around us.

Open your mouth and taste, open your eyes and see how good God is. Blessed are you who run to him. (Psalm 34:8 MSG)

Growth in recovery and security come as we begin to believe that God will hold us steady while life shifts and turns around us. As we fix our attention on God and allow His word to change the way we think and act, we will come to a place of peace in our hearts. Following the ways of God requires that we surrender our own familiar but ineffective ways and replace them with God's trustworthy but unfamiliar ways.

My child, listen carefully to everything I say. Don't forget a single word but think about it all. Knowing these teachings will mean true life and good health for you. (Proverbs 4:20-22 CEV)

When we seek God's help, God works on our behalf. In the Bible we read about the miracles God did when people trusted Him. The Bible also promises us that God will do much more than we could ask for or even imagine.

God is able to do far more than we could ever ask for or imagine. He does everything by his power that is working in us. (Ephesians 3:20 NIRV)

Today, let's choose to believe God and see what happens when we trust Him to do what He says.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that the unknown ways of recovery often make me feel insecure. Please help me to trust You and Your ways as I move forward. When I feel insecure, help me to believe what I read in the Bible and trust that You will do as You say. Amen

CARRYING THE MESSAGE BY ACTING WISELY

The book of Proverbs in the Bible is a collection of wise sayings for us to learn and put into practice. Proverbs chapter 11 has 31 sayings covering a wide range of topics that contrast right and wrong and good and evil. The sayings address honesty, pride, gossip, keeping secrets, being kind, family relationships, and use of our money. Many of these sayings have promises attached to them such as:

If you do the right thing, honesty will be your guide. But if you are crooked, you will be trapped by your own dishonesty. Dishonest people use gossip to destroy their neighbors; good people are protected by their own good sense. Kindness is rewarded—but if you are cruel, you hurt yourself. Try hard to do right, and you will win friends; go looking for trouble, and you will find it. (Proverbs 11:3, 9, 17, 27 CEV)

These are helpful descriptions of the behavioural choices we make and the positive or negative results that come from our actions.

Close to the end of the chapter is a sentence that encourages us to live right by reminding us that if we choose to do the right thing, we not only find the life we long to have but will have a positive influence on others as well.

Live right, and you will eat from the life-giving tree. And if you act wisely, others will follow. (Proverbs 11:30 CEV)

In recovery groups, we talk about carrying the message to others and sharing our experience, strength, and hope with them. Too often we think this is all about the words we speak. While it is important and helpful to attend meetings and share our story with others, these wise sayings from Proverbs suggest that an especially powerful way to carry the message to others is to live well and do what is right in God's eyes. It is certainly a way to live the "attraction rather than promotion" principle.

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to carry the message to others by practicing Your principles in all my affairs. Help me to live honestly and with kindness and transparency before You and others, praying only for the knowledge of Your will and the power to carry it out. Amen

If we choose to do the right thing, we not only find the life we long to have but will have a positive influence on others as well.