

Recovery thru Redemption #00

What is Addiction...

Name: _____ Date: _____

To prepare ourselves for the journey of “Recovery thru Redemption” let us first arm ourselves with a few basic facts.

Addict: A person who is addicted to a particular habit or substance. To give oneself over to, as to a habit or pursuit: apply or devote habitually.

Addicted: Devoted or given up to a practice or habit or to something habit-forming, as a narcotic, cigarettes, alcohol, etc.

Addiction: The state of being given up or having yielded to a habit or practice or something that is habit-forming, as narcotics or alcohol, to such an extent that its cessation causes severe trauma. Giving over, surrendered.

Addictive: Producing, causing, or marked by addiction.

(As described in the “Random House Dictionary.”)

As described in the “RHD” above, addiction is a formed habit. It starts as a “voluntary choice” of “giving in” and/or surrendering to a behavior, practice or substance, which eventually leads to the uncontrollable use (formed habit) of that which is addictive.

We believe addiction to be: an uncontrollable, compulsive craving for a substance or behavior, the seeking of, and use of, even in the face of negative health and social consequences.

Note: Alcohol abuse, prescription drug abuse, illegal drug abuse, and wrong behavior patterns are considered addictions and for tolerant determination, will be grouped into the category of drug abuse. (IE: Since we consider alcohol to be a drug, we consider alcoholics the same as drug addicts).

The essence of addiction can range from substance abuse, to physical and mental dependence, and/or anywhere in between. There are thousands of substances and behaviors that can be classified as an addiction, and the level of each individual addiction is as unique as the person caught in the addiction.

Psychology tells us that humans will only do anything for two reasons... 1. Gain pleasure. 2. Avoid pain... As we seek to accomplish these goals, the substances and behavior patterns we use, easily form a habit that leads to a psychological dependence, also known as addiction.

Some addictions such as alcohol and heroin have a physical dependence, which trigger the cravings. This uncontrollable craving is directly linked to the buildup of a certain chemical in the body. This chemical must be maintained at a certain level to keep the body from going through withdrawal. Fortunately, there are now many ways to relieve the withdrawal symptoms of physical dependence.

It is now known in great detail the brain mechanisms through which drugs acutely modify mood, memory, perception, and emotional states. Addiction comes about through an array of neuro-adaptive changes and the laying down and strengthening of new memory connections in various circuits in the brain.

These changes are responsible for the distortions of cognitive and emotional functioning, particularly the compulsion to use drugs, which is the essence of addiction. It is as if drugs have high-jacked the brain's natural motivational control circuits, resulting in the abusive behavior becoming the sole, or at least the top, motivational priority for the individual. Over time the addict loses substantial control over their initially “voluntary” behavior, and it becomes an uncontrollable compulsion.

Alcoholism, drug abuse, wrong behavior patterns, and other addictions can shatter lives. Consequences are often reflected in the addicted individual's family life, health, spiritual happiness, social life, school or work relationships, and legal matters. In spite of these problems, the person continues in their addiction, as repeated efforts to quit or cut down on their own invariably collapse in failure. (Can you relate to any of this???)

Addiction and addictive behavior patterns are not formed overnight. As mentioned above, a repeated habit over time changes the way we think, and we ultimately form a lifestyle to accommodate this new mind-set. Thus, in order to prepare ourselves for the battle ahead, we must understand the following two aspects.

1. You must be ready and willing to change the way you think. It was your voluntary behavior that led to your addiction, and it will be your voluntary behavior that will bring the change of mind, heart and lifestyle needed to be victorious.
2. You must be ready and willing to invest yourself wholeheartedly, regardless of the time involved. Your addiction and lifestyle have been with you for a time, thus a change in lifestyle and mind-set will take determination, commitment, and time.

Are you truly ready and willing? Are you determined? We're not just talking about recovery, sobriety or breaking free from addiction. We are talking about a commitment to a total change of life, and lifestyle. A total transformation of the way you currently think, by a renewing your mind, which will lead you through this gradual process of change.

It's not going to happen on it's own, and it's not going to happen overnight. This change can be a tediously slow, yet progressive process, that can only be accomplished through the power of God. It is a choice that YOU have to make, and you must be ready, willing and determined for the long haul.

In addition to the definition above:

We believe addiction to be: a tool used by the devil to keep us oppressed and bound in sin, and to keep us away from God and His will for our lives.

We also believe that God sent His son, Jesus, to set us free from the law of sin and death, and release us from the oppression and bondage of the devil.

Romans 8:1/2 - Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. NIV

We believe in Recovery thru Redemption: by confessing the truth of our addiction, accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior, turning our life and will over to God, and learning to live according to His Word.

We believe that recovery from substance abuse, addiction and other life controlling issues is a

bi-product of salvation, discipleship, spiritual growth
and a growing relationship with our Lord.

Remember – Your addiction and recovery are as unique as you are. The level of your addiction and rate of your personal recovery will always be different from what others might expect, are experiencing, or have experienced. As an individual, you need to apply this program on a personal level, and commit to be honest about where you stand in your recovery.

The Biblical principals of this program will walk you through the spiritual growth and disciplines needed to achieve your goal of recovery. When we refer to recovery as your goal, we're not just talking about abstinence. Remaining free from addictive substances and behaviors is part of recovery, but a total change in lifestyle is the key to complete recovery.

As you purposely and voluntarily study and learn the truth of God's Word, His Spirit will renew your mind, bringing the victory, joy, peace, purpose, and fullness of life that you have been searching for.

Footnotes on addiction models: There are many different theories (referred to as models) on what addiction is. There are also just as many theories (for each model) on what the causes of addiction might be, and how one might overcome an addiction. The most popular, and the most used models are; the disease model – which says addiction is a disease; and the genetic model – which says addiction is hereditary. These are both good theories, and you will find many programs that use these models. Lets consider what God has to say in His Word. Exodus 34:7 - ...who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations. NAS. The NIV say's "He punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation". This verse tells us that addiction can actually be a hereditary sin, passed on to us from our fathers and forefathers, through four generations. The good news is that you can break the visiting of these iniquities (also known as generational curses), through obedience to God, and the blood of Jesus. Deuteronomy 11:26 – See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse – the blessing if you obey the commands of the Lord your God, ...the curse if you disobey...NIV. Galatians 3:13 – Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us... NIV. If you have accepted your salvation through God's grace (and received Jesus as your Lord and Savior), you can be set free from any curse (generational or otherwise), through obedience to God's Word. As for the disease model – Good News - Jesus was beaten and crucified so that you could be healed from ALL your diseases (including your addiction if you believe it's a disease). Isaiah 53:5 – But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed. GREAT NEWS... You can be fully healed, and free from hereditary infliction. Plus, as you break the curse, you free your children and grandchildren from punishment for their forefathers sins...

The Process of Recovery...

Recovery: Restoration or return to any former and better state or condition.
 (...from the Random House Dictionary).

Many people think of recovery as simply a matter of not using alcohol or drugs. They consider relapse a sign of complete failure, and long periods of abstinence a sign of complete success. We have found this perception of recovery to be overly simplistic.

Addiction recovery is a process, and requires a complete change of lifestyle. Working towards the goal of complete and continuous abstinence will take time, hard work, dedication, and courage. You will need to have an open mind, and consciously decide to accept, and apply the changes necessary for your recovery.

We all have a built in procrastination, fear, and resistance to change, that usually requires some sort of disaster or personal bottom to get us to seek a new course of action for our lives. This restoration to a new life condition is something that you must decide to do for yourself. If someone is trying to force you to change (spouse, family member, the law, etc.), you may be rebellious and reluctant, but it could be the onset you need to make the decision for yourself.

As you work your way into and through this recovery program, you will start to circumscribe a completely new life for yourself. As you begin to build this new life, your thoughts, desires, and actions will gradually start to change. You will begin to apply biblical morals, principals, and disciplines in your life, contrary to worldly standards.

This recovery program offers truth from God's Word that can help anyone recover from addiction. The steps that are outlined in this chapter are designed to work together in developing your new life in Christ. As you gradually grow in your spiritual walk with God, you will begin to find the strength you need for recovery.

Here you will find a brief description of the steps and biblical principals found in the "Recovery thru Redemption" program. The sections that follow will explain, and break down each step, walking you towards your goal of a successful, addiction free life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Step One: Submission

This step is about recognizing your separation from God. You must admit that you are powerless over your addiction and tendencies to do the wrong thing, which have led to your sinful lifestyle, addictive behavior, and unmanageable life.

In this step, you will need to accept your salvation through Jesus, and consciously choose to commit all of your life into His care and control. Only then can you begin your new life journey of recovery and freedom from your past.

Step Two: Spiritual Growth

This step is about recognizing the need to grow in your relationship with God through Jesus. A daily walk with God will bring the knowledge of His will for your life, and is essential for self-examination, spiritual growth, and recovery.

In this step you will learn the spiritual disciplines needed to stay strong and grow. As you continue to feed your newborn spirit with God's Word, God will develop a new desire in your heart, reveal His will for your life, and give you the power to do His will.

Step Three: Renewing Your Mind

This step is about recognizing the changes that God wants to make in your life. You must change your way of thinking and align your thoughts with His. Let God's Word renew your mind, soak into your heart, and transform your life.

In this step you will need to cast away old habits, lifestyles, friends, and maybe even some personal items that might be tugging and pulling you back to your old lifestyle of sinful and addictive behaviors.

Step Four: Confess and Repent

This step is about recognizing the sin in your life. You must confess your sins to God, and sometimes to another human being. God already knows your sins, but it's only when you confess them, that God is faithful to forgive.

In this step you will also learn true repentance, which means to turn away from. Once you've confessed your sins and asked God to forgive you, you must turn away from repeating the same sin.

Step Five: Cleanse the Conscience

This step is about recognizing past relationships, and how you may have caused harm to others. Holding on to regrets, guilt, shame and condemnation of your past will be a hindrance to your recovery, spiritual growth, and relationship with the Lord.

In this step you will learn the importance of maintaining a clean conscience. You will need to take responsibility for your actions, seek forgiveness, and make amends where possible.

Step Six: Heal the Heart

This step is about recognizing broken-heartedness, and how others have caused harm, pain and/or hurt in your life. The negative emotions and hardening of the heart that occurs must be dealt with in order to receive the healing that Jesus has for you.

In this step you will learn the difference between vertical and horizontal forgiveness, and why it is essential for healing. You will learn how to release feelings of anger and bitterness, and receive the peace and contentment that God promises.

Step Seven: Maintenance

This step is about recognizing the need for setting and maintaining boundaries, and creating a continued follow up support system. You will want to find an accountability person with whom you can discuss the many issues of your past and present life.

In this step you will learn how wrong relationships can hinder your new life, recovery, and spiritual growth. You will discover the importance of getting connected to a local church where you can fellowship, and form new healthy relationships.

Step Eight: Ministry

This step is about yielding yourself to God to be used for bringing His Good News to others. Once you have experienced the joy and freedom that comes from obedience to His Word, you will want to share this redeeming power with others.

In this step you will discover that God has created you for a reason. As you learn the purposes He has for your life, your relationship with Him will continue to grow, giving you the much needed strength and stability to stand firm against the enemy.

NOTE: This program is a process of change and healing. It has been broken down into the “well known format” of steps, for ease of comprehension. They are designed to work together as a whole, and will not work unless you take responsibility for yourself. You must be ready and willing to completely change your life. These steps, when worked together as a program, will provide the opportunity for you to take responsibility and begin to adapt the changes needed for your recovery.

About the author...

We all have horror stories of our past that could fill many a book. However, this book is not about dredging up the past. We are here to focus on our future, and freedom from our bondage's. We are here to put the past behind us, looking ahead to the prize Jesus has prepared for us in Heaven. (*Philippians 3:14 - I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. NIV.*)

This section contains a very short history of my past. You will see how I was kept a prisoner through drug addiction, and how the devil, (our enemy) used this oppression to destroy my life. You will then see how the love of God has restored my hopes and desires, giving me an inner peace, joy, and love that surpass human understanding. (*Philippians 4:7 - And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. NIV.*)

I pray that my story will help you to recognize the oppressive power of addictions in your life, and how the devil is holding you captive to a lifestyle of self-destruction. I pray that you will begin to recognize the devil's lies and deceitful ways that only lead to emptiness. I pray that you will start to identify the devil's deception and dishonesty that have you always wanting and needing something more, something that his corrupt and evil ways can never provide.

My prayer for you is that you will let Jesus into your heart and give Him total control of your life. You can have victory over all the works of the enemy, including freedom from bondage and addiction, plus so much more. God has promised in His word, an abundant, fulfilled life. I pray that you will begin to put God first in all areas of your life, and that you will seek Him, His kingdom, and the good life He has planned for you. (*Luke 12:31 - However, seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added to you. ACV.*)

I started smoking cigarettes and drinking at age twelve. Within a year, I was smoking marijuana, and by age fifteen I was doing any kind of drug I could get my hands on. By this time, I had become a daily user, which led me into selling the drugs, so I could afford to use them every day.

I always told myself that I liked to get high. I did not see myself as trying to escape from anything, or trying to suppress my feelings. I simply enjoyed the buzz. The party lifestyle. It seemed to me, the only way to live, and it soon became the only way I knew how to live.

My drug of choice was cocaine: powder at first, then rock or crack cocaine. My compulsive craving for this drug was soon out of control, and I was willing to sacrifice anything and everything to get it, regardless of the consequences. This led to a life of sexual immorality and criminal behavior that had me in and out of jail numerous times, and hopelessly lost in a completely unmanageable life and lifestyle.

As I continued this daily drug addiction and criminal lifestyle into my late thirties, I began to realize the toll it was taking. I had destroyed every relationship I ever had, I was mentally and physically worn out, and my financial situation was desperate, to say the least. I was also facing three – ten year felony charges for bank fraud, writing bad checks, and embezzlement.

By age forty-one, I couldn't take it any more, and decided it was time for a change. I tried to quit using many times through the next few years, but it seemed like a never ending, hopeless, impossible battle. I was confused, desperate, and depressed. There was an emptiness inside that could not be filled, and my addiction continued to spiral out of control as I tried to fill that empty void.

Then one night, I hit rock bottom. I hated my life and what I had become. I had lost my will to live, and was thinking of ending it all, when - out of sheer desperation - I called out to God. I wasn't even sure if there was a God, but when I called out to Him, I heard a small voice in my head telling me to "go home, tell the truth." I wasn't sure how this was going to help, but I truly believed it was God, so I decided to listen.

Admitting the truth about my addiction was truly an awesome new beginning for my life. Just a few short weeks later, I had an urge to attend a church service where I was saved / born again, confessed my sins, and gave my life to Jesus. The Holy Spirit touched my heart that day, and I had a burning desire to get closer to Jesus and God. I felt a newness of life come over me, as God gave me a renewed spirit, and filled my emptiness with His love. I began to experience an inner joy and peace that I had never found before.

Now, I wish I could say that was the end of my problems. However, I was still faced with the issues and stresses of everyday life. I started to slip back into my old addiction and lifestyle, even though Jesus was in my heart. After a year of many failed attempts to quit using, and much conviction from the Holy Spirit, God lead me to a Bible based recovery program at Mel Trotter Ministries, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I devoted over a year of my life to their program, where I learned about discipleship, disciplines, and many other aspects of living a God centered life.

My time at Mel Trotter was the beginning of my spiritual growth, and my relationship with God truly started to grow. Over the years God has blessed me in many ways – to numerous to mention. I give my life into His hands on a daily basis. He is number one in my life, and I love Him more than anything in this world.

This does not mean that I don't have troubles in this world. I must face the trials and storms of life just like everyone else, and just like you. But I can guarantee that if you surrender to him on a daily basis, you will find His strength, power, victory, peace, love, joy and contentment through all your struggles.

I have truly found all these things and much, much more through our Lord, Jesus Christ. He has filled my emptiness and His purpose has given meaning to my life. I pray that this program will help you to find the same...

Introduction... Welcome to Recovery thru Redemption. You are about to embark on a journey designed to help you discover “Who you are in Christ Jesus, our Lord.” This is a Bible based recovery program, teaching how you can be set free from addictions, bondage's, and other wrong behavior patterns. You will learn how to apply the blood of Jesus to your life, and how the knowledge and truth of God's Word can change your life, forever.

You will undergo a spiritual re-birth and spiritual growth that will totally transform your way of thinking and living. You must be ready and willing to leave your old life, and lifestyle, and become one of God's new creations. (*2 Corinthians 5:17 – Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! NIV.*)

You are going to learn how to stand on God's Word, and claim the victory that Jesus has won for you. (*1 Corinthians 15:57 - But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. NIV.*) You will see how God's Spirit works through His Word, to heal the hearts, minds, and bodies of His people.

You will see how the devil tries to defeat you with his lies and deceit. You will learn how the devil has created strongholds in your life that he uses to continually mislead you. And, you will learn how to cast down those strongholds, by aligning your thoughts with God's. (*2 Corinthians 10:4 - The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. NIV.*)

You are about to enter into a spiritual battle of great magnitude. (*2 Corinthians 10:3 - For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. NIV.*) If you want to be victorious, you must first surrender your life to God. There is no way you can win this battle by yourself. You must put it in God's Hands. Only by surrendering to God can you be victorious. (*Ephesians 6:11 - Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. NIV.*)

In today's society, the word "surrender" usually leads us to think – defeat... When we surrender, we lose. **This is Not True** in Biblical terms. God tells us that we need to surrender to Him on a daily basis (every morning and all day long), if we are to claim our daily victory in Jesus.

The devil is a very dangerous enemy. He probably knows you, and your thoughts, better than you do. He has been studying you for a long time, and he has cleverly devised an evil plan for your life. He knows what you like and don't like. He knows your weaknesses, insecurities, and fears. He is willing to invest any amount of time to defeat you. (*1 Peter 5:8 - Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. NIV.*)

As you venture into this recovery program, the enemy will be meeting you head on. He has you bound to the slavery of addiction and he wants to keep you there. Do not listen to him. He is a liar, he is your enemy, and he will use anything at his disposal to mislead and tempt you.

God will never tell you a lie. God will never tell you anything that does not line up with His Word. **The Bible HAS** stood the test of time. **It IS God's truth.** His Word tells us everything we need to live in this world, and the next. God did not create you to be a prisoner of addiction, or oppressed by the devil's lies. **God wants you to be free from all bondage**, living a full life within His will... (*John 10:10 - The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. NIV.*)

God's Words are exceedingly more powerful than the devil's lies and you will experience His power to transform your life when you agree with what He says. *Jesus says in Luke 4:18/19 – "He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners... to release the oppressed..." NIV*

You can only be victorious through God's Word. When you invite Jesus into your heart and surrender your life to God, You will begin to see the truth.

When you start to confess the truth to yourself, to others, and to God, you will start to loose the ball and chain that satan has used to imprison you. (*John 8:32 - Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. NIV.*)

You must be ready and willing for a total transformation by the renewing of your mind. (*Romans 12:2 - Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. NIV.*)

You must be willing to put God first, and learn how to love Him above everyone and everything. (*Mark 12:30 – Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. NIV.*)

Are you ready to start living a life free from the bondage of addictions? Are you ready to fill the void and emptiness in your life with the power and love of God? Are you ready to put aside your love of money, possessions, and pursuit of self pleasure, to start living a life of purpose, and on purpose for

Recovery thru Redemption #01

Step One: Submission...

Name: _____ Date: _____

Review: The previous section went over a few basic facts on what we believe about addiction.

We believe addiction to be: an uncontrollable, compulsive craving for a substance or behavior, the seeking of, and use of, even in the face of negative health and social consequences. And, that this is brought on by our – initial voluntary behavior – either to gain pleasure, or avoid pain. Which leads to the physical or mental distortions of our cognitive and emotional functioning.

We also believe addiction to be: a tool used by our enemies (the world, our flesh and the devil), to keep us oppressed, bound in sin and away from God and His will for our lives.

We mentioned that recovery is a process – and the “process of recovery” involves a conscious decision to change the way we live by surrendering our lives “wholly, completely and daily” to God. And then, we briefly described the Biblical principles found in the steps of this program.

We also talked about YOUR future HOPE in Christ. In order to receive that hope, you must first believe that God is – that He is the “One and Only” True Living God – and that ALL of His Word is true for YOU...

This step of submission / surrender – IS ONE OF THE ESSENTIAL KEY’S to your success. To surrender your life and will completely into God’s hands is truly the only way to claim victory and freedom over the bondage and sin of addiction.

As an addict, we have hundreds of excuses why we use, and usually a thousand resolutions to quit using. Our first step towards recovery is realizing that our schemes for reform are hopeless, and that we cannot simply make up our minds to do better under our own power. We must admit that we are caught up in something that is way more powerful than ourselves.

Proverbs 28:26 - He who trusts in himself is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe. NIV

Substance abuse and/or addictive behavior patterns are also known as sin. As an addict, we get caught in this web of sin through the desires of our flesh (our sinful nature), the views of the world, and the temptations of the devil.

In order for us to deal with this web of sin, we must first realize and admit that we are slaves to sin. We must also realize that this bondage to sin is what keeps us trapped in our abusive and undesirable lifestyles.

However, God says in His Word that, through salvation in Christ (submitting/surrendering to Him), we can be set free from this bondage.

John 8:34 - “I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.” NIV

John 8:36 – “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” NIV

Galatians 5:1 – Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. NKJV

We need to surrender our lives to Jesus if we are to experience the freedom that He has for us. It's hard to imagine that surrendering can bring victory, because our world tells us differently. But God's Word tells us the absolute truth, and it is by the power of His Word that we can break the bondage of addiction off our lives, claiming the victory that Jesus has won for us.

Matthew 16:25 - For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. NIV

1 Corinthians 15:57 - But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. NIV

Put Your Life in God's Hands. God wants you to be free, living a peaceful, abundant life, and He will give it to you if you put your trust in Him. This means that you must believe His way is the only way, and you must be willing to surrender your life into His Hands.

God wants you to know Him on a very personal level. He already knows you personally and intimately. He created you, and He knows everything about you. But He is not content merely to know you from a distance. He wants YOU to know Him, and He has gone to great lengths to draw you to Himself.

John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. NIV

God loves you and wants you to know Him, but the fact is that your sins have separated you from God.

Romans 3:23 - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. NIV

Isaiah 59:2 - But your iniquities have separated you from your God. NIV

However, God has provided a solution. You can be forgiven of the sins and iniquities that have caused your separation, and you can begin to grow in a personal loving relationship with God, through Jesus.

John 14:6 - Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." NIV

To receive forgiveness for your sins, you must accept the gift of salvation that God offers through His grace. It is only by the grace of God, through faith, that you can be saved. You cannot earn your salvation by being good and / or doing good things.

Ephesians 2:8-9 - For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. NIV

Jesus has Bought and Paid for Your Salvation
Through His Death, Burial, and Resurrection.
You Must Receive Your Gift of Salvation - Through Faith.

John 3:3 - In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the Kingdom of God unless he is born again." NIV

You can receive your gift of salvation, (being saved / born again) by giving your heart to Jesus, and putting all your trust and faith in Him. Jesus said in *John 3:6* that "flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit," and it is this spiritual birth that gives you eternal life in Heaven (salvation), and begins your new personal walk with God.

God loves you so much that He sent Jesus to shed His precious blood and save you from your sins. He took your place on the cross, suffering the punishment that you deserve. He died on the cross so that you could be forgiven, and saved from the mighty wrath of God that is to come.

John 3:16 – For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. NIV

1 Peter 3:18 - ...Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit. NIV

You Must Believe that He Died, Was Buried, and
Rose Again on the Third Day.

1 Peter 1:3 - Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. NIV

If you believe and receive Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior, place your faith and trust in Him, and have a heart of repentance, you can receive God's gift of salvation.

2 Corinthians 7:10 - Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation... NIV

Acts 16:31 – "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved." NIV

John 1:12/13 - Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. NIV

God say's in His Word that He commands ALL people everywhere to repent. He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world with His true righteous judgment (Acts 17:30/31), and those who do not repent will perish (Luke 13:3).

What will the verdict be for you on judgment day? Will you have to face God's wrath? Will you have to spend eternity in the lake of fire? Or – will you make the decision and commitment – today – to repent, and put your life into God's hands.

Turning your life over to Jesus is the **Most Important Decision** you will ever make. You can know for sure that you are saved, not lost. You can know for sure that you are forgiven, not condemned. You can know for sure that you will spend eternity with God, in heaven.

Romans 10:9 – If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. NIV

Romans 10:10 - For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. NIV

God tells us in His Word that we can have an abundant life – filled with peace and joy. But, in order to receive God’s promises – we must surrender – we must submit to His Way.

God did not create you to be a prisoner of addiction, or to be trapped in a miserable life. He has a GOOD plan for your life.

Romans 8:31 says – If God is for us – who can be against us?

Romans 8:32 says – He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all—how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?

And Romans 8:29 says that God has predestined your life – to be like His Son – called, justified, and glorified. But, YOU have to make the choice to walk according to God’s predestined plan for your life.

Because – you see – the devil also has a plan for your life. And his plan is not a life of peace and joy. The enemy’s plan is to keep you trapped in slavery, as far away from God’s plan as possible. He wants to destroy and kill you.

John 10:10 says - the devil comes to steal, kill, and destroy --- but then goes on to say – Jesus came that we may have life, and have it to the full. The King James Version say’s – “The Abundant Life”.

SO – which do YOU want: Do you want to live the miserable, depressing life of bondage that the devil has planned for you?

Or do you want to grab on to God’s plan – and enjoy a life filled with love – filled with the joy of Jesus – and a peace that surpasses all human understanding – a life of success, prosperity and freedom --- and ---

--- MOST IMPORTANTLY ---

Assurance of Eternal life with God in Heaven --- Saved from the Wrath of Condemnation.

There are over 7000 promises that God gives us in His Word – and we can take hold of every one of them – IF we surrender – IF we submit to God – and live – BY FAITH – according to His Word.

Because this is such an important step:

PLEASE --- consider a commitment / re-commitment to God,
By saying the following prayer --- “From Your Heart”...

Remember:

*...it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved, and it is
with your heart that you believe and are justified...*

Romans 10:10

Dear Heavenly Father, I humble myself before Your Majesty,

And I open my heart to receive Jesus as my Lord and Savior.

I confess that I am a sinner, and I want to receive Your forgiveness.

Father God, I want to commit my life to You, and turn to You in true repentance.

I want to give up my will, and live by Your Word.

I know that Jesus was crucified and died for me.

I believe that He was buried, and rose from the dead on the third day.

I now offer my life for Him.

I am not going to live for myself anymore, but I will live for Jesus everyday.

Thank You Father God for hearing my prayer.

I know that by Your Grace – and through faith I am saved.

I know that my sins are forgiven, that I am Your child,

And have assurance of eternal life in heaven, in Jesus name I pray – amen.

If you just committed and/or re-committed your life to Jesus and accepted God's free gift of salvation, please fill out the form at the end of this book, and give it to your group leader (or mail to the address on the form). We would like to add you to our prayer list, and send you more information on your "New Life in Christ".

Receiving Jesus as Lord and Savior and committing your life to Him, does not mean that all your problems and life issues will just disappear. In fact, God tells us in His Word that we will have to face storms, struggles, trials and temptations, just like everyone else.

James 1:2/3 – Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. NIV.

Consider the parable from Jesus that talks about the wise and foolish builders in Matthew 7:24/27. His example shows us that we will face the same storms as the rest of the world. But, as faithful followers of Jesus (our foundation rooted on the rock of God's Word), when the storms pass our house will still be standing.

Romans 5:3/5 – Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. NIV

God also says in His Word that we can learn to be content in ALL situations, regardless of what is going on in our lives. It doesn't matter what kind of struggles or temptations we are facing, God's peace, love and presence in our lives can see us through.

1 Corinthians 10:13 – No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. NIV.

Romans 7:15/17 – The apostle Paul says... “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do...As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. NIV.

Basically, what Paul is trying to tell us is; becoming a born again Christian does NOT stop temptation or sin in our lives. We will always be vulnerable to sin because of the sinful nature within us. We must understand that the urge to sin (give in, give up, etc...), will always be lying beneath the surface, and we must always be aware that there will be some element of struggle. However, this very awareness can also serve as a constant reminder that God's presence and power are always with us.

Paul also gives us some great words of advice in Philippians, chapter four, where he tells us about the God of Peace, and how the Peace of God will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Then starting in verse eleven he says, “*I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength*”. NIV.

So, what is this great secret that Paul learned? The answer lies in your perspective, your priorities, and your source of power. Paul's perspective was to look at his life through God's eyes. He was persuaded to live his life according to God's point of view. His priorities were “God first in ALL things”. His focus was on living God's plan for his life. And, he would draw on the strength of Christ for the power to achieve his God given purpose.

If we go back to verse nine, Paul tells us that what we have learned from God's Word, needs to be put into practice in our daily lives. You see – it's not enough to read and study the Bible, or even know it well (the devil knows it proficiently). It's not enough to go to church, listen to sermons, debate passage and verse meanings, and fellowship with other good Christian people (even the Pharisee's did these things).

James 1:22 says – Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. NIV.

Exposure to God's Word – IS – where it all starts – BUT – you MUST put what you have heard, and learned, into practice in your daily life. You MUST strive to live by God's Word, and it MUST begin to lead you down the path of righteousness and obedience.

As you endeavor to live this way, your perspective of life will begin to shift. Your priorities will start to focus on putting God first, and seeking His plan for your life. Plus, you will begin learning how to draw on the strength of Christ for your power.

Not only do we need to learn how – NOT – to deceive ourselves, but we must also learn how to deal with the master deceiver – one of our greatest adversaries – the devil. You see – once you commit your life to the Lord, The devil will go to great lengths to try and knock you back down.

The devil is a master of deception and the father of ALL lies. Jesus tells us in John 8:44 that there is no truth in him, and that speaking lies is his native tongue. When he starts to fill your head with lies like these: I am worthless, I am no good, I can't do this, It's too hard, my life stinks, woe is me, etc...

You need to – SPEAK – God's Truth – OUT LOUD – so you can take those thoughts captive to God's obedience. 2 Corinthians 10:5 tells us – we can demolish all things that are against God's ways by taking every thought captive to His obedience.

Here are just a few truths from God's Word that you can SPEAK – OUT LOUD to the enemy: I am a child of God, I am an heir to the throne, I am priceless to God, I am loved by God, I am the head not the tail, I am above not beneath, I am blessed coming in, I am blessed going out, I am blessed in the city, I am blessed in the country, I am the righteousness of God through Christ, I am saved, I am forgiven, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

And remember – keep speaking – and – keep saying – and – keep confessing – out loud – God's Word and truth – and **NEVER – NEVER** let the devil get the last word.

Step One Assignments... The following Bible verses and daily confessional were specifically picked for you to memorize because they portray the road to salvation, and God's love for you. We highly suggest that you read these verses and daily confessional – out loud – on a daily basis, and commit them to memory.

Also, as you read and meditate on Scripture, look for verses that portray God's love for you. Read them out loud, and personalize them to yourself. As you keep speaking God's love into your life, you will begin to feel His love touch your heart. When that knowledge of God's love sinks from your head to an experiential feeling in your heart, you will begin to realize the power of God's love. You will also begin to see the power of love unfold in your new life, changing and renewing your heart and mind, which is a critical part of your restoration and continued recovery.

These assignments are designed to get your mind started on the path of renewal. Recovery thru Redemption will take assertive action on your part. You will need to finish all questions and memorize two of the memory verses, before moving to the next section. The next step (step two) is designed to help you in the areas of working out your salvation, walking in your deliverance, the spiritual growth process and building a stronger relationship with the Lord.

Memory Verses

John 3:16 - "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. NIV.

Romans 10:9/10 - That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. NIV.

Romans 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. NIV.

Proverbs 3:5/6 – Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight. NIV.

Daily Confessional: (Read aloud every day). Dear Heavenly Father, You are my Creator, and I surrender my life to You. I tried to do things my way, and I now know that Your Way is the only way. I know that You truly love me because You came to earth, in the flesh, and bore the punishment of a painful death to save me from myself. I know You love me because You provide all my needs. I know You love me because you have restored my soul, and filled me with Your peace. Father, I want to get to know You more, each day. Lord, I want to learn to love You as You love me. Jesus, teach me today to be more like You. In Your name, amen.

Suggested Reading: Start reading your Bible every day. It is best to set aside a certain time each day so it becomes a habit. Remember, it's very important to God that you put Him FIRST in ALL things. This including putting Him first at the very start of your day. When you put God first with prayer and Bible reading, you will find blessings and favor throughout your day. Reading your Bible every day is essential to your recovery, and it helps to reveal your true purpose in life

Read: The Book of John – Chapters 1 thru 21

Read: Proverbs – Chapters 1 thru 31

Other Suggested Reading: Your New Life – by: Duane Vander Klok

Assertive Action: Read the Book of John - Chapters 1 thru 3. Fill in the blanks below.

1. In the beginning was the _____, and the Word was with God, and the Word was _____. (John 1:1)
2. And the Word became _____ and made his dwelling among us. (John 1:14)
3. Yet to all who _____ Him, to those who _____ in His name, He gave the right to become _____ of God. (John 1:12)
4. John the Baptist was sent by God to be a _____, (John 1:7) and to baptize with _____. (John 1:26)
5. Then, John the Baptist gave his testimony, saying “I have seen _____
_____”
6. Jesus performed a miraculous sign at a wedding in Galille, thus revealing His glory, and his disciples put their faith in Him. What did He do? (John 2:1/11)

7. What did Jesus say when the Jews demanded a miraculous sign to prove His authority? _____ (John 2:12/20)
8. What was He referring to? _____ (John 2:21)
9. What happened that made His disciples believe? _____ (John 2/22)
10. Jesus declared to Nicodemus, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is _____ (John 3:3)

Recovery thru Redemption #02

Step Two: Spiritual Growth:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Review: The previous section went over the importance of your salvation and submission, and asked you to consider a commitment or re-commitment to God. This is truly the groundwork to the start of your recovery, and this is where you must distinguish your true outlook and goal for the rest of this life and into eternity.

We mentioned that your recovery comes as a bi-product of your growing relationship with God. You see, if you are only seeking sobriety, then you are seeking the wrong thing. If you are seeking peace and happiness, and think that sobriety is the answer, I can honestly tell you that it's not the answer, and once again you are seeking the wrong thing.

Recovery, abstinence and sobriety are assuredly something we need to strive for, but you must realize that you can't seek sobriety more than you are seeking God. The Bible says that when we seek God, His Kingdom and His righteousness --- FIRST --- all these things will be given to us (Matthew 6:33). When we strive to put God first and seek Him above all else, our recovery will follow.

It's true that some people can get clean and sober without God, but more often than not, they still lack the joy and happiness that comes through a loving relationship with God. In fact, I would even venture to say --- sobriety without God is just plain miserable.

If you have made it to this point and are not yet saved, or have questions on what it really means to be a "born again, child of God", please let us know. To continue this program without submission to God will most likely be a fruitless and frustrating journey for you.

Spiritual growth, like recovery, is a process, and is a necessary part of your recovery. This step will discuss the never-ending process of spiritual growth, disciplines, and biblical principles for concentrating on your recovery, your relationship with the Lord, and the development of your new life in Christ.

You are a New Creation: *2 Corinthians 5:17 - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! NIV*

When Jesus said in *John 3:3 - "You must be born again"* - He was not talking physically. He was talking about spiritual re-birth. The Bible says that you are a three part being, consisting of spirit, soul, and body. You are a spirit, (which will live forever,) you have a soul, (your mind, will, and emotions,) and you live inside a body, (which the Bible calls your flesh.)

1 Thessalonians 5:23 - May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. NIV

Your first birth was when you came into this world physically as a baby. However, due to sin in your life, you became spiritually dead in God's eyes. You were not physically dead, but spiritually dead because of sin.

God paved the way for you to become spiritually alive by sending Jesus to die for your sins. When you received your salvation through faith, by God's grace, and confessed Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior, God forgave your sins, and you became alive in God's eyes as a new "born again" spirit.

Ephesians 2:1 - As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins. NIV

1 Corinthians 15:22 - For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. NIV

This newborn spirit was the part of you that was made alive and became a new creation. You are no longer dead in transgression and sin, but alive to God in righteousness through Christ.

You are a Spiritual Infant: Being a newborn spirit can be compared to being a newborn child. As an infant must be fed to grow, so you must also feed your spirit.

1 Peter 2:2 - Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation. NIV

Spiritual growth is essential for your recovery and your new life in Christ. The pure milk that your spirit craves is the Word of God. As you begin to read the Bible and let it soak into your heart, your spirit will begin to grow.

Spiritual Disciplines

As you start to add spiritual disciplines to your daily life, you will begin to separate yourself from worldly behaviors that are unpleasing to God. As you grow in your relationship with the Lord, you will want to learn more about each discipline, how it affects your daily life, and how it helps your spiritual growth. This step will list some of the spiritual disciplines to help you get started on the right path.

As you work to add these disciplines to your daily routine, be reminded of the following issues...

1. Constantly remember the purpose of the disciplines. Keep in mind that being on the right path is not what produces change, but it puts you in the place where God can make the changes occur.
2. Be sure that you don't start pursuing spiritual disciplines more than God. Continue to pray and ask Jesus to guide you where needed, and remember that the Holy Spirit teaches us all truth.
3. Keep in mind that change is God's work, not ours. The spiritual disciplines are a means to receive God's grace, allowing us to place ourselves on the path where God can transform us.

Reading the Bible

2 Peter 1:20/21 - ...no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. NIV

God's Word is the standard by which you need to judge all things. Every way or thought that disagrees with God will eventually bring harm into your life. God did not give us His commandments and laws to keep us from enjoying life, but to keep us from the harm that comes from committing those sins.

The Bible is God's Word, and His Word is always true. John 17:17 say's, *(Your Word is truth. NIV)*

As an example, you may find something in God's Word that is different than your opinion about marriage, money, discipline, or even premarital sex. Whose thinking needs to change? God's – or yours? You must change your thinking to align with God's.

Joshua 1:8 - Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. NIV

God says to meditate on His Word, "day and night". Just reading or hearing the Word once is not enough. As you continue to think about, talk about, read, re-read, and pray about it, revelation of what God is personally speaking to you will open up.

As you read your Bible, it's a good idea to first ask God to open your spiritual eyes. Psalm 119:18 say's (*Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from your law. NIV*). You will get far more out of His Word, with His help.

Another added bonus I highly recommend is to read the Word out loud. This is another one of God's great mysteries, but it definitely spawns exponential spiritual growth and faith. The Word tells us in Proverbs 18:21 that our tongue has the power of life and death, and Romans 10:17 say's that faith comes by hearing the message through the Word. So I suggest that you get your tongue working and start speaking the Word of life, thereby also hearing the Word, which we're told, is how faith comes.

Prayer

Prayer is a very powerful and important practice for opening your life to God, and needs to be added to your daily routine. Prayer, of course, is much more than a daily spiritual discipline, but treated as such, will enable you to attain the single-mindedness needed to ward off the many distractions that can interrupt, or keep you from prayer.

Colossians 4:2 - Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. NIV

Prayer is conversing and communicating with God. Most people consider prayer to be talking to God, but is really much more than that. Prayer is also listening for what God has to say to you.

Prayer is not a complicated or pumped up version of "saying the right words". God does not want you to pray like the pagans to impress or manipulate, but to use simple, straightforward talk, as Jesus taught His disciples. (Matthew 6:9-15).

Matthew 6:7/8 – "And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him." NIV

Prayer is not something that is done only before meals or during church services. It is not limited to bowed heads, clasped hands, and closed eyes. It is paying attention to God (listening, watching), and being aware that God is ever present.

God says in His Word to pray without ceasing. (*1 Thessalonians 5:17 says - pray continually. NIV*) This means that wherever you go and whatever you do, you go and do with the awareness that God is with you.

Your prayers can be hours of talking and listening in the silence and solitude of your room, or quickly said for someone in a passing car. They may be spoken as you kneel at your bed, or silently voiced as you walk into a meeting.

When you add the discipline of continuous prayer to your life, you will be able to see more clearly what God's will is, giving you insight and knowledge on how to pray, and what to pray for. Talking and listening to God is a vital part of your spiritual growth and recovery.

Worship

Worship is experiencing the greatness of God. It goes way beyond singing songs in Sunday morning service. It is the engagement of one's entire being with the God who is. It is breathing in (inhaling) the presence of God wherever you are.

Hebrews 12:28 - ..let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe. NIV

Worship is your response to who God is. It is putting Him first in all you do, and it is committing all you do to Him. It doesn't matter if you are cooking dinner for the homeless or cleaning a toilet bowl, if you have committed the work to God, it is a form of worship.

Revelation 14:7 - Worship Him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water. NIV

Worship is not limited to music, guitars, pianos, and dancing. You worship wherever and whenever you experience the greatness of the living God. It can happen when you see God's beauty in the stillness of a glistening pond, in the laughter of innocent children, or in the aroma of fresh baked bread.

Romans 12:1 - Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. NIV

Worship can be praising God's holiness, yearning for knowledge of His Word, growing in compassion for others, or surrendering your desires to God's will. Worship is a spiritual act, and can open you up to supernatural and spiritual communication with God.

John 4:23/24 – Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and His worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

As you grow to love God above all earthly things, you will start to experience this “spirit and truth” worship that the Father seeks. You will also discover that a true heart of praise and worship can derail any spiritual heaviness and/or despair that might have befallen you.

Reading the Bible, prayer and worship are the disciplines you should start with. Also keep in mind God's desire to be FIRST in ALL areas of your life. I really don't know any other way to stress the importance of reading the Word, praying and worshiping when you first get up in the morning. Of course they are important throughout the day, but honoring God by making Him the FIRST part of your day is very pleasing to God, and his grace will be with you all through the day.

Listed below are more spiritual disciplines for your consideration. As you read the list, carefully pray about each one, and start adding them as led by the Spirit. If you want to learn more about spiritual growth and disciplines, check the suggested reading in the assertive action pages.

Tithing: The word tithe means tenth. God tells us that we need to give the first tenth of all we earn back to Him. Everything we earn is allowed by God, and belongs to God, and He wants us to honor Him by giving the first ten percent back to Him.

Malachi 3:10 - Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test Me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. NIV

The tithe goes to the storehouse, which is your home church, the place where you are spiritually fed. God wants you to be a faithful tither because it provides spiritual food so that others might be saved. It also helps to break the love of money off your life, and shows God that He is more important to you than money.

Proverbs 3:9-10 - Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine. NIV

God honors and blesses those who are faithful and cheerful tithers. Test Him on this, as He says in Malachi, and you will receive many blessings from God.

Offerings: An offering is a gift that you give over and above the tithe. Tithes always go to your home church, but an offering is something extra.

An offering could be in the form of money to a local charity, or it could be an offering of your time as a volunteer in a local ministry. God may put on your heart to give to a visiting pastor in your church, or you may feel the need to donate your old clothes to a homeless shelter.

Giving of your time, money, and other resources shows God your true intentions towards others. Jesus teaches that we should love our neighbors, and be willing to help others. Giving of offerings also helps break the love of materialism off your life.

Mark 12:41-44 - Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. Calling His disciples to Him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on. NIV

Good Stewardship: Practicing good stewardship is an essential spiritual discipline that will help remove worldly desires such as status, glamour, and luxury. Good stewardship goes completely against the world culture and obsession of the pursuit of happiness (comfort, indulgence, leisure, luxury, self pleasure, etc...)

Good stewardship involves being frugal with the resources that God allows you to have. Frugality is not necessarily being stingy, but it is being aware of your attitude towards money and possessions. It means to use your resources wisely, not wastefully. Faithful tithing and timely offerings are a big part of good stewardship.

Fasting: Fasting is to give something up for a specific time, usually involving food, although not always. Fasting reveals our dependence and helps to break the lustful desires of our flesh, giving us spiritual strength, and revelation of how God's Word can be working in our life.

Prayer and fasting go hand in hand. If you are depriving your body of food, and you are not seeking God, then you are simply starving yourself for no reason. When you are fasting, you need to be in diligent prayer, seeking God's face, asking for wisdom, knowledge, and revelation of His Word.

Matthew 6:16-18 - "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. NIV

Jesus said that fasting should be done in secret. You should not fast to impress others, or to make yourself feel spiritually better than others. Fasting should be done to bring yourself into God's presence, asking Him to reveal your character, and heighten your spiritual awareness

Mark 9:29 - He said unto them, this kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting. KJV

This verse is found in the story of a young man who was demon possessed from childhood. Jesus told the young man's father that anything is possible for him who believes. The father replied, "I do believe, help me overcome my unbelief" (Mark 9:23-24).

What Jesus was saying in this story is that there are certain levels of spirituality and belief that can only be reached by fasting. Everything is possible for him who believes. Seeking God's face and prayer, while fasting, will help you to overcome areas of unbelief in your life.

Solitude and Silence: You need to create a time and place in your daily schedule that is solely for the purpose of being alone and still before God. Focus your attention on scripture, prayer, and seeking God's presence.

Silence and solitude combined with attention to the presence of God is the starting point for all other practices. It can be a place where God's voice can touch your heart, revealing His perspective on the world, your circumstances, your goals, your relationships, and more.

Service: Service is more than a spiritual discipline, and should be considered as a way of regulating your entire life. When done with the right attitude, serving others will free you from resentment, hierarchy, arrogance, the need for control, and more.

You should serve others out of love in your heart, to please God, not for recognition, appreciation, or praise. Jesus came to serve (Matthew 20:28), and God created you to serve. Be ready and open to serve at anytime, and never refuse anyone a good deed.

Submission: This discipline brings freedom from the need to have things your way. We need the freedom that comes from living life in complete honesty, transparency, and openness to correction and discipline. We must be open and accountable to each other, particularly those who we entrust with our spiritual care (i.e., pastors, deacons, teachers, mentors, etc...).

Hebrews 13:17 tells us to submit to authority and obey our leaders, as those who must give account. Submit yourself to others in confession, correction, service, and obedience "out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21). Submission means to reject the idea that you are above anyone, and acknowledge that you are under the authority of the King of kings.

Sacrifice: This is the practice of giving up things that make us feel secure, to find our security in God. It is giving up the security of our own resources, stepping out in faith, knowing that God will bear with us. It is reaching beyond our comfort zone where we must trust in the resources of God.

This, however, does not mean to become irresponsible, avoiding debts to give to a good cause. Because God wants you to be a good steward, He will never call you to sacrifice out of irresponsibility.

When you choose to sacrifice, you will experience the amazing depths of God's ability to provide. Only when you are totally abandoned to God will you discover the full wealth of His resources. Consider this image... the careful faith that never jumps from the plane without a parachute, can never experience the ways that God can land them safely...

Celebration: The life of a Christian is about living in the joy and peace of Christ. Our lives, as disciples of Jesus, should be one of celebration. Even though we live in a dark and suffering world, we live with the confidence that Jesus has overcome the world (John 16:33).

We can celebrate through the sadness of death because we know that Jesus has conquered death. We can celebrate in times of suffering because we know that God is with us, and can use all things for His glory.

Beyond suffering, God has given us many good things to celebrate. God is good, and the life He gives us is good. His Word offers us an abundant life of beauty and love. There is answered prayer, there is victory, there are changed lives, there is a hope, there is a future and so much more to celebrate. Rejoice always, and be glad in the Lord (Psalm 40:16).

Fellowship: Fellowship is the reality of the church. We cannot serve Christ through isolation. God calls us to come together as a community, and a church. You do need times of solitude and silence, but that is only a part of your healthy spiritual growth, which will give you better understanding and service when returning to the group.

Fellowship can be practiced in several ways. First, and foremost, it will include your regular attendance to a church of which you are a member, and getting involved with people in the church. Fellowship involves reaching out, participating, sharing, giving of your time, energy, love, and encouragement.

Maybe you can start a bible study or small group. Maybe you can get involved in local community programs. Maybe you can visit local nursing homes and hospitals. Try reaching out to local shut-ins and isolated elderly people. As Christians, we should not allow people to sit and suffer in isolation. God calls us to fellowship.

Confess and Repent: Secret and un-confessed sin is one of the most destructive forces to your spiritual life. Sin breaks your fellowship with God, and un-confessed sin will lead to a stronghold of sinful behavior in your life. Your sins cannot be hidden from God (Psalm 139:7-12). But, when you confess your sins, it restores your fellowship with God, and He forgives your sins (1 John 1:9).

Repenting of your sins means to turn away from them. As a Christian you will not want to continue in a sinful life, because God's seed is in you (1 John 3:9). As you confess your sins, ask God to give you the strength to resist the temptations, and to turn away from those sins.

Water Baptism: Water baptism is not necessarily a spiritual discipline, but it is an act of obedience. Jesus Himself commanded the disciples to baptize believers (Matthew 28:19-20). Water baptism identifies with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

Some of us might have been brought up in a denomination where we were baptized as a baby. But the Bible tells us to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38), and as a baby just a few months old, we are not able to repent. The Bible teaches that we are to be baptized after we have repented and made Jesus the Lord of our life.

Romans 6:3-4 tells us what happens when we get baptized: *Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. NIV*

When you get saved, you become a new person on the inside. The old you, the person you used to be, has past away (2 Corinthians 5:17). When you get water baptized, you are taking the "old you" and "burying" it in a watery grave. When you come up out of the water you leave behind any past sins, condemnation, and shame, and you come up to live a brand new life.

Colossians 2:11-12 explains it this way: *In Him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with Him in baptism and raised with Him through your faith in the power of God, who raised Him from the dead. NIV*

God is saying that when you get water baptized, He will cut (circumcise) the hardness and bondage out of your heart, so that you come up out of the water with a brand new heart.

If you have not yet been water baptized, you should do so as soon as possible. When you get water baptized as an act of obedience, God will circumcise your heart, and you will experience a new level of freedom in your life.

There are... many other spiritual disciplines that you need to consider such as, devotional readings, journalizing, scripture memorization and baptism in the Holy Spirit, to name a few. As you seek God's face in prayer, ask Him to reveal other areas where you might need to add disciplines to your spiritual journey.

Step Two Assignments: Once again, we suggest that you read these verses and daily confession out loud on a daily basis. And again, as you read and meditate on Scripture, look for verses that portray God's love for you. Read them out loud, and personalize them to yourself. Remember, as you keep speaking God's love into your life – you will begin to feel His love touch your heart, and it is the power of God's love that will cause the changes to take place in your life.

Also – remember – that your recovery will take deliberate action on your part. God has done His part. You were delivered from your past, including your addictions, when you received Jesus as your Lord and Savior. BUT – the Bible tells us that we need to work out our salvation, and learn to walk in that deliverance – through obedience, trust and fear.

You will need to finish all questions and memorize two of the memory verses, before moving to step three (renewing the mind).

Memory Verses

2 Corinthians 5:17 - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! NIV

Joshua 1:8 - Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Ephesians 2:8/9 - For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. NIV

1 Corinthians 6:19/20 - Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. NIV

Daily Confessional: Father God, thank You for being the Author of my life. Thank You for loving me, and knitting me together in my mothers womb. I know You love me Lord, because You have made me the head, not the tail – I am above, not beneath – I am blessed coming in – I am blessed going out – I am the righteousness of God through Christ – I am saved – I am forgiven – and I am on my way to heaven. Open my spiritual eyes as I read Your Word so that I may see the knowledge and wisdom of Your will. I want to hide Your Word in my heart, that I might not sin against You. Teach me, Father, how to pray continuously and how to worship You in all I do. Teach me, Father, to love You unconditionally, as You love me, and to love my neighbor as myself. Show me this day how to be more like Jesus. In His holy name, amen.

Suggested Reading: Continue to read your Bible **out loud** every day. There is great power in God's Word, and much power in your spoken words. The power of your tongue mixed with the power of God's Word is a combination that will spawn considerable growth to your faith and spirit.

Proverbs 18:21 - The tongue has the power of life and death. NIV

Romans 10:17 - ...faith comes from hearing the message. NIV

Read: Acts – Chapters 1 thru 28

Re-read: Proverbs – Chapters 1 thru 31

Other Suggested Reading: Growing Up, Spiritually – by: Kenneth E. Hagin

Assertive Action: Set some short-term goals to get you started in your recovery.

Spiritual:

Physical:

Mental/Emotional:

Application to a spiritual life is not hard to understand. If “life-as-usual” has not produced the fertile ground in which God can bring recovery and change, then “life-as-usual” must go. Ask yourself:

1. What am I currently **not** doing that, if I were doing, would open myself up to God.

2. What am I currently doing that, if eliminated, would open myself up to God.

The formation of your spiritual life through discipline is known as discipleship. It is the desire to follow Jesus, conforming your life to be like Him.

3. As obedient children, do not _____ to the _____ you had when you lived in ignorance; for it is written: _____
(1 Peter 1:14)

4. No _____ seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of _____ and _____ for those who have been trained by it. (Hebrews 12:11)

God’s Word is always true, and needs to be your standard by which you judge ALL things. Spending time in His Word, through reading and meditation, gives God an open door to renewing your heart and mind.

5. Above all, you must understand that no _____ came about by the _____. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from _____ as they were carried along by the _____. (2 Peter 1:20/21)

6. All Scripture is _____ and is useful for _____.
_____. (2 Timothy 3:16)

These scriptures tell us that the Bible is God’s Word.

7. Then they believed the _____ and the words that _____ had spoken. (John 2:22)

Spending quality “one on one” time with God, is an essential part of your new life. Talking to, and listening to God, is called prayer, although does not always have to be in the form of what our society considers to be prayer.

8. And when you pray, do not keep on _____. (Matthew 6:7/8)

Prayer is not something you do to make yourself look good. It's about opening your heart to God for reflection, healing, instruction, request, and more.

9. "Woe to you, teachers of the law and _____, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which _____ on the outside but on the inside are _____ everything unclean. (Matthew 23:27)

10. God says that we should pray _____. (1 Thessalonians 5:17) This means that you should always be aware of God's presence.

Worship is also a great way to spend time with God. Worship can range from Sunday morning songs, to singing alone in your room, to committing everything to Him, and putting Him first in all you do.

11. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so _____ acceptably with _____ and awe. (Hebrews 12:28)

Worship can be an offering, a sacrifice, and a spiritual act.

12. I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to _____ as _____, holy and pleasing to God, this is your _____ act of worship. (Romans 12:1)

13. Jesus said that the _____ would come to convict the world of guilt and sin. (John 16:7/8)

14. The Counselor, also known as _____, will guide you into all _____. (John 16:13)

This step reflects on three basic disciplines of reading and meditation on God's Word, prayer, and worship. However, there are many other disciplines mentioned in His Word that you need to apply, for your recovery and spiritual growth.

Please read and answer the following questions. Keep in mind that your willingness to be totally open and honest will be to your own advantage. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and are intended for your own journaling and growth.

1. What disciplines are you currently doing? Which ones do you need to start doing?

Recovery thru Redemption #03

Step Three: Renewing the Mind:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Review: In the previous step we talked about spiritual growth, and the need of spiritual disciplines in our daily lives as a means of spiritual nurturing. We mentioned the fact that as we grow in our walk with God, we start to see, and recognize, God at work in our lives.

This continued growth allows God to give us the strength, courage, wisdom and knowledge to stand strong against the temptations that we face. As we continue to grow closer to God, we find His power at work, helping us to live more by the spirit, and less by the desires of our flesh.

Spiritual growth is a never-ending process. We can grow to become more mature in our spirituality, but we can never reach complete maturity in this life because of our human limitations. This means we must NEVER stop striving to grow closer to God.

There are only two directions you can choose in this life --- the narrow path that leads to God, or the wide path that leads to death, destruction and everlasting condemnation. There are only two sides to the fence --- God's Way, or the world's way. There is no in between. There is no middle of the road. You can't ride the fence with one foot on either side. You need to pick God's side, and jump in with both feet.

Recovery is a process of change, and the process of spiritual growth is what will bring the necessary changes. You must continue to seek God and submit to Him on a daily basis. This is truly the only way to live in the process that God is working out in you.

The process of mind renewal is about changing the way you think. It's about altering your way of thinking to align with God's way of thinking. Renewing your mind is an essential - and necessary part - of your recovery and spiritual growth process.

Everything you do is directly related to your thoughts. If you want to change anything in your life, you must first change the way you think. You will never get different results in your life if you continue to think and act in the same old ways.

In the last chapter/step you learned that you are three part being, consisting of spirit, soul, and body (*1 Thessalonians 5:23*). You also learned that when you were born again, God renewed your spirit and made you a new creation (*2 Corinthians 5:17*).

However, when you (the spirit) got renewed, your body and your mind did not get renewed. You still have the same old body of flesh and same old mind, which will continue to be tempted to fall back into your addiction and old sinful lifestyle.

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

Victory Begins in Your Mind: Everything you do is motivated by the things that go into your mind. Your thoughts affect your feelings, and your feelings control your actions and behaviors. You must be aware of the things around you that are having an influence on your thoughts.

Take a look at the worldly things around you, and make a conscious decision to avoid those things that are not of God's will. Today's media for example, has been infiltrated with worldly standards that are contrary to the Word of God.

Do an honest inventory of your habits, friends, and personal items such as books, music, movies, etc., and get rid of the negative influences that might be pulling you back to your old lifestyle of sinful and addictive behaviors.

Colossians 2:8 – See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. NIV

There are many scriptures throughout the Bible that tell us not to conform to the ways of this world. On a deeper level, you need to get rid of old worldly behaviors and customs such as, pride, selfishness, covetousness, arrogance, etc...

Colossians 3:5 – Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. NIV

Colossians 3:8 – But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. NIV

As you begin to put off these worldly characteristics and start to fill your mind with the Word of God, the Holy Spirit will begin His work of re-educating and renewing your mind.

James 1:21 – Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the Word planted in you, which can save you. NIV

As you lay aside the evil and wickedness, it is absolutely essential that you get God's Word planted into the soil of your heart. This will lay the foundation for the spiritual growth you will need to claim your victory in the Lord.

This foundation, which comes from the renewing your mind and planting God's Word in your heart, is the basis for your spiritual growth, relationship with the Lord, and your continued recovery.

Daily Steps to Mind Renewal: You can start to renew your mind by reading and meditating on God's Word every day. As you continue in this spiritual discipline, you will begin to replace your old way of thinking with God's way of thinking.

Read aloud, and meditate on God's Word every day. As you read, watch for descriptions of God's love for you. Write these verses down, personalizing them to yourself. Read the verses aloud, over and over again.

Talk to God personally, out loud, confirming that He loves you because.....Example: God, I know you love me because you sent Jesus to die on the cross for my sins. I know you love me God, because you promised to take care of all my needs.

As you continue to do these things on a daily basis, using your mouth to speak it, so your ears hear it; your transformation will begin; your faith will start to grow; and God's Word will get implanted into your heart, giving you a deep rooted foundation.

Romans 10:17 – Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the Word of Christ. NIV

Proverbs 18:21 – The tongue has the power of life and death. NIV

Your Mind Will Follow Your Words - Open Your Mouth and Speak God's Word

As this transformation starts to take place you will begin to develop a commitment to God, over and above your emotions and feelings. You will find a rising of confidence and faith that will help you make right choices based on His Truth.

Your Flesh: As for your body (your flesh,) being saved did not change the fact that it still wants to do wrong things. Your flesh wants to dominate your life with its selfish demands and lustful desires.

Some of the sins of the flesh include; drunkenness, addiction, gluttony, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, covetousness, greed, idolatry, love of money, financial dishonesty, and even the desire for worldly honors, fame, and reputation.

Romans 7:23 - but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. NIV

You must take authority over the lustful desires of your flesh and its sinful nature. Your newborn spirit, where the life of God now resides, will never agree to these sinful desires.

1 John 3:9 - No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. NIV

You must deliberately choose to live by the spirit and not under control of your flesh. Your spirit, which has God's life and nature in it, must dominate your life if you are to overcome temptation and claim victory over the bondage of sin and addiction.

Romans 8:5 – Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the spirit desires. NIV

The renewing of your mind will give you power to live by your spirit. As you grow in knowledge and wisdom of God's Word, you will learn to live under the control of His Spirit, giving you strength to fight the lustful temptations of your flesh.

Romans 8:6 – The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace.

You must consciously decide to center your life on God, and let His Spirit guide you. As you continue to read the Bible on a daily basis, you will discover God's way of living, which brings true life, and a peace that surpasses human understanding.

Ephesians 4:22/24 – You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. NIV

The apostle Paul gives a very good example of putting on your new self when he says to: set your heart and your mind on things above, not on earthly things, for Christ is now your life (Colossians 3: 1/3).

Three Areas of Temptation: Temptation will always be knocking at your door. The three biggest enemies you will face are – the world – your flesh – and the devil.

The World: Your mind is influenced by the people and things around you. Much of today's media (music, television, movies, books, magazines, and the internet), have corrupt persuasion. You must be very careful as to what is influencing your mind.

1 John 2:15 – Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. NIV

Psalms 101:3 – I will set before my eyes no vile thing. The deeds of faithless men I hate; they will not cling to me. NIV

Your Flesh: The Bible refers to your flesh as a “sinful nature” that wants to dominate your life. As you allow the Holy Spirit to renew your mind, you will learn to live through your spirit, letting God's Spirit dominate your life.

1 John 2:16 – For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world. NKJV

Romans 6:6 – For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin. NIV

The Devil: Satan and his fallen angels are a very real threat. The devil is at the root of everything evil, and is constantly trying to cause destruction to believers. He wants to destroy every work of Christ and stop you from receiving God's promises.

1 Peter 5:8 – Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. NIV

Ephesians 6:12 – For our struggle is not against the flesh and blood, but... against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realm... NIV

The good news is that the devil has already been defeated by the finished work of Christ on the cross. When you learn how to use the authority given you by Christ, you won't have to fear the devil or his works.

1 John 3:8 – For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. NKJV

Luke 10:19 – I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy. NIV

When you learn to defend yourself from the attacks of the devil with the Word of God, you will no longer need to fear him. In fact, he should be afraid of you.

Breaking Mental Strongholds: One of the books in the suggested reading of this step is “A Mind Set Free” by Jimmy Evans. It is a short book that is very easy to read and understand, and it gives great insight into overcoming mental strongholds through biblical meditation. Overcoming these strongholds is a very necessary part of renewing your mind. Mental strongholds that are contrary to God’s Word will always hold you back from the faith that you need for victory.

In this raging war against our enemies, there can be times when we ourselves are the enemy because we start to believe the deceptions and lies of the world and the devil. One of the biggest and most destructive lies is about God’s true motives. Many people tend to believe that God’s Word is a legalistic standard from an uncaring, authoritarian God who is trying to keep them from enjoying life and fulfilling their potential.

Another serious lie that many people believe is there will be no serious penalty for breaking God’s laws. We often see people on television and in the movies, as well as professional athletes and everyday people, who are living in sin and doing very well --- at least it appears that way from a distance. Then we occasionally see people living in obedience to God that seem to be miserable.

These are huge deceptions from our enemies that can often become strongholds in our minds. We start to believe and accept these worldly standards, even though it goes against the truth of God’s Word.

2 Corinthians 10:3/5 – For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. NIV

These verses tell us that the weapons we fight with are spiritual, and they have divine power to demolish strongholds, arguments and pretensions (thoughts and ideas that do not line up with God’s Word). Then it goes on to tell us how to take hold of this divine power by taking EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE to the obedience of Christ.

As mentioned earlier, any thought that does not line up with the Word of God will eventually bring about sinful behavior. One of the best examples of this would be the worldly view on sex. With all the immorality in today’s society, God’s Word on sexual purity becomes something that we tend to ignore.

This is “One of the BIGGEST Mental Strongholds” in our culture because it goes totally against what we should believe. Sometimes, even those acting like strong Christians will say that sexual purity was God’s old-fashioned way, and just isn’t true for today’s society. HOGWASH!!! God and His Word never change. He doesn’t make new or more lenient laws to fit with society; He expects us, and our culture to live by the absolute truth of His “never changing” Word.

Hebrews 13:8 – Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. NIV

Biblical Meditation: Meditating on God’s Word is your primary weapon to fight the battle of sinful thoughts and behaviors. It is the key to taking your thoughts captive through the divine supernatural power of God. In Ephesians, chapter six, the Apostle Paul talks about putting on the full armor of God. He mentions several parts of the armor that are important, but there are two that are critical.

According to Paul, when we are fighting evil, one of our spiritual hands must be wielding the “Sword of the Spirit” (which is the Word of God), while the other holds the “Shield of Faith.” Faith and God’s Word must go together because one will not work without the other.

The issue of having faith in God and His Word is one that is decided by our hearts more than our minds. You don’t necessarily have to understand everything the Bible says, but it is essential that you believe in the character and integrity of God, and that His Word is an extension of Himself to you.

Hebrews 11:6 – And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him. NIV

There are two things we can learn about faith from this verse. First, we must believe that “God is.” This means to believe in the presence of God as being real and personable, though invisible. Second, we must believe that God rewards those who seek Him.

Many people misunderstand biblical meditation, thinking it’s too hard, impractical or too spiritual for them. But the truth is, it’s not hard, and anyone can meditate on Scripture, day and night. In fact, I found that adding biblical meditation was an easy thing to do. I was only sorry that my own unbelief and procrastination kept me from it, causing me much un-needed suffering and defeat.

Examine the following verses closely. You will see some GREAT promises from God to those who add the discipline of biblical meditation.

Psalm 1:1/3 – Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His Law he meditates day and night.

He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. NIV

Joshua 1:8 – Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

God is telling us that meditating on His Word day and night is the key to success and prosperity. This does not mean finding success from a worldly point of view. It means that you will be prosperous in your soul (3 John 1:2), and successful in fulfilling your God given purpose.

Mentally Rehearsing Scripture: Put simply, biblical meditation is mentally rehearsing a portion of Scripture that in turn causes you to consider God and the things of God. The two basics of meditation are first, to ponder or consider, and second, to speak or murmur.

A good mental image would be that of a cow. He chews his food, swallows, and regurgitates to chew on it some more. Likewise, biblical meditation is to take a Bible verse, text, or story and put it into your mind. Then, throughout your day, keep bringing it back to your mind to “mentally chew on it.”

Meditating on God’s Word “day and night” might seem impossible when our minds are pre-occupied with work, schedules and other daily routines. But the fact is, there will be many times throughout the day, and night, when your mind will be idle or filled with tempting thoughts. Those are the times that God is talking about. Biblical meditation is essential to renewing your mind, and plays an important role in your continued spiritual growth and recovery.

Step Three Assignments: Read the memory verses and daily confession out loud on a daily basis. You will need to finish all questions and memorize two of the memory verses, before moving to step four (confess and repent).

Memory Verses

Romans 12:2 – Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – His good, pleasing, and perfect will. NIV

1 John 3:9 – No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. NIV

Psalm 101:3 – I will set before my eyes no vile thing. The deeds of faithless men I hate; they will not cling to me. NIV

Psalm 119:9/11 – How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to Your Word. I seek You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commands. I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You.

Daily Confessional

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for loving me so much that You came to earth in the flesh, as Your Son, and bore the punishment of my sins. Your Word says that You are love, that You created me to be Your child, and that You cherish me with an agape love that goes beyond human understanding. I know Lord, that You have chosen me and filled me with Your Spirit. Thank You Father, that Your peace is upon me, that I am accepted, that I am forgiven, and that I am redeemed by the Blood of Jesus. As I read and meditate on Your Word each day, I ask that You would renew my mind and plant Your seed of faith and love in my heart. I want to love You God, as You love me. I want to grow closer to You each day, and learn to live by Your Spirit. Thank You Lord, for saving me from my own selfish desires. Please put a new desire in my heart – a desire to please You and make You smile. Thank You Father God, for loving me. In Jesus name, amen.

Suggested Reading

Remember: It is very important that you continue to read your Bible **ALoud** every day. Your mind and your heart will follow your words, so open your mouth when you read, and build your spiritual foundation on God’s Word.

Read: Romans – Chapters 1 thru 16

Re-read: Proverbs – Chapters 1 thru 31

Other Suggested Reading

Battlefield of the Mind - by: Joyce Meyers

A Mind Set Free – by: Jimmy Evans

Assertive Action: Make a list of your habits, friends, and items that have a negative influence on your life. If you are in question about a particular persuasion, seek wise Godly counsel to help you determine the effect it may be having. Then list some changes that would have a positive impact on your new life.

Old Habits: (Example #1: Monday night poker game. Example #2: Clubbing and bar hopping).

New Habits: (Example #1: Saturday night church service. Example #2: Soup line volunteer).

Old Friends: (Example #1: Dave, my old drug dealer. Example #2: Bob, drinkin buddy).

New Friends: (Example #1: Mark, from church. Example #2: Frank, from Bible study).

Old Items: (Example #1: AC/DC Album; Highway to Hell. Example #2: Playboy Magazines).

New Items: (Example #1: Toby Mac Album; Christian Rock. Example #2: Rev. Hagin Magazines).

Mind renewal is a process brought on by purposely seeking God through spiritual disciplines. As you grow in your relationship with God, the Holy Spirit will change the desires of your heart and renew your mind with the Word of God.

1. God's Word say's that we should not conform to the _____,
but be transformed by the _____. (Romans 12:2)
2. When you received Jesus as your Lord, God sent forth _____ into
your heart. (Galatians 4:6)

When Jesus ascended into heaven, He promised that God would send us a Helper, His Holy Spirit, and that His Spirit would dwell in all believers, teaching us all the things we need to know about God, His Word, and His will for our lives.

3. Jesus said that he would give us another _____, to be with us forever,
and he referred to the counselor as _____. (John 14:16/17).

The power of the Holy Spirit living in you is essential to your successful recovery. It is the Holy Spirit that will renew your mind, give you the power to resist temptation, and guide you into your new spiritual life and relationship with the Lord.

4. What are the two natures in your life that are in conflict with each other?
_____ (Galatians 5:16/17).
5. Who should control your life? _____.

The Holy Spirit also gives you the power to lead a Christ centered life, and live in obedience to God.

6. What is the "Sword" of the Spirit? _____ (Ephesians 6:17).
7. What effect does the Word of God have in the believer? (Hebrews 4:12)

Reading and meditating on God's Word allows the Holy Spirit to work on your mind and heart, revealing God's standards for a life of obedience, and His provisions for a life of victory.

8. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you _____ (Colossians 3:16). Reflect
carefully on this verse. What steps can you take to let God's Word dwell in you richly?
-

God does not expect you to live an obedient life in your own power. He has provided you with everything you need to live under His commands. However, your attitude is a key to using God's resources effectively.

9. The Lord your God commands you this day to follow these decrees and laws; carefully observe them _____ (Deuteronomy 26:16).

10. _____, oh my God; Your law is within my heart (Psalm 40:8).

11. Read Ephesians 4, verses 22 through 24. What do they teach us about our attitude?

12. Your attitude should be _____ (Philippinas 2:5).

13. His divine power has given us _____

As you practice biblical meditation, you will start to live by biblical principles that will be very pleasing to God. As you continue to renew your mind with His Word and take your thoughts captive, you will find His divine power at work within you.

14. What do you think it means to meditate on God's Word day and night?

15. How can the discipline of biblical meditation be adapted to your life?

16. Ask God in prayer for two specific Scriptures that He wants you to meditate on throughout the coming week. Write the verses below. Also, write them on a separate piece of paper that you can carry in your pocket every day. Be prepared to recite one of these verses from memory, and explain how it may have helped as you worked through this step.

Recovery thru Redemption #04

Step Four: Confess and Repent:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Review: In the previous step we talked about renewing our mind with the Word of God. We went over the importance of mind renewal as a process that inspires our spiritual growth, and transforms us to be more like Jesus.

As we continue to renew our mind with God's Word, we start to realize the many changes that need to be made. As this process brings us closer to God, He reveals these changes and He starts our transformation through the power of His Spirit.

As we begin to shape our thoughts, and align them with God's, our priorities start to line up, more and more, with God's Way of holier living. We also get the benefit of victory for many of the battles that wage in our head.

Plus, the aspects of biblical meditation (rehearsing Scripture verbally, and in our mind), gives us power to fight temptation by taking our thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ.

The step of mind renewal and the transformation that comes will help you realize mental strongholds. And, you will begin to break these strongholds, as well as worldly thoughts, conformities, traditions and inner-vows that might have you in bondage to your old way of thinking and living.

This step is about recognizing sins in your life, confessing those sins, and turning away from continually repeating them (repenting). You must confess all your sins to God, to yourself, and in some cases, to another human being. God already knows your sins, but when you confess them, He is faithful to forgive you.

1 John 1:9 – If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. NIV

Confession is more than just saying you're sorry; it's also admitting that you sinned. Many of your past sins will be sufficiently confessed on your own, by taking them to God. However, there will be sins that God will want you to confess to another person.

James 5:16 – Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. NIV

Confessing your sins is not the same as confessing your faith in Jesus. When you received your salvation, through your confession of faith in Jesus, God washed away all your sins, however...

... you must still bring those sins into the light by confessing them, so you can be healed and set free from the shame, guilt and other consequences those sins bring into your life.

This will be an ongoing process. As you confess your past sins that come to mind, you should also ask God to reveal sins from your past that you may not remember. God wants you to be healed, and He will help you in this process if you truly want His healing.

1 John 1:8 – If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves. NIV

All people are sinners by nature, and even as a born again Christian you will have struggles with sin in your life. The ongoing process of confessing your past sins is essential for your healing, but you must also realize the importance of daily confession for the sins you currently struggle with. Sin separates you from fellowship with God, and un-confessed sin will eventually lead you away from God, and most likely, back into your old lifestyle.

Romans 3:23 – For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. NIV

Psalm 32:5 – Then I acknowledged my sin to You and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,” - and You forgave the guilt of my sin. NIV

Confession will give you freedom to enjoy a healthy relationship with the Lord. It will ease your conscience, lighten your burdens, and begin a healing process that is essential for your spiritual growth and recovery.

Confession is the Start of a Healing Process that Must take place for your Recovery

You need to start by confessing those sins that first come to mind, and you need to go as far back as you can remember. An example would be – from the candy bar you took when you were 12 years old, to the lust in your heart yesterday afternoon.

As you continue in this process, you also need to pray, asking God to reveal past sins that you may have forgotten. If God requires your confession, His Spirit will bring these other sins to mind so you can bring them to God.

As an example... When I started to confess my past sins, and asked God to reveal sins that I had forgotten – He started showing me faces of people where I was sexually immoral – I saw things I had stolen – crimes I committed – lies I told – and so much more. At times, there were images of faces, places and things rolling through my head so fast, it seemed like a thousand things a minute. YES – I most definitely had thousands of sins from my past that needed to be confessed.

BUT – as God brought these memories of my past sins into my head, I was able to confess, and release them, and in most cases was instantly healed and set free from their bondage.

HOWEVER – there were some sins from my past that – even though I had confessed them to God, still left nagging memories, feelings of shame, feelings of guilt, wounds, scars and regrets that just would not let go.

As I prayed about this, God revealed to me, the need to heal my wounded conscience by confessing these specific sins to another person. This was one of the hardest things for me to do in my recovery, because the devil had me bound in so much shame, I just could not imagine telling anyone about these things.

BUT – when I got these sins out into the open, it brought a healing and release that I really don't know how to explain – but the shame – the guilt – it simply melted away... And, the devil could no longer haunt me or condemn me in that area.

James 5:16 – Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. NIV

You see – God tells us to confess our sins one to another, so that we can be healed. Our conscience needs to be set free from the distressing memories, guilt, shame, brokenness, regrets and other feelings that these sins bring into our life.

Genuine confession also involves repentance; turning away from, not wanting to continue in the sins that you are confessing. If you are truly confessing your sins, then your desire should be to turn away from repeatedly walking in those same sins again.

Acts 17:30 - ...but now God commands all people everywhere to repent. NIV

Luke 13:3 - ...but unless you repent, you too will perish. NIV

Repentance Always Involves Making a Change Away from sin - and turning Towards God

True repentance will involve building your relationship with God, through Jesus, and submitting yourself to the discipline of the Holy Spirit. It will involve much prayer, asking and seeking God's help in areas of continued bondage.

2 Peter 3:9 – The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise... He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. NIV

God did not give us His commandments to keep us from enjoying life. The exact opposite is true. God gave us His commandments because He knows – it's the consequence of SIN that keeps us from enjoying life.

2 Corinthians 7:10 - Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret...

Confession and repentance will involve a daily commitment of; self examination, fellowship with other Christians, prayer, meditation, study of God's Word, and your continued daily practice of spiritual disciplines.

Please note the different forms of confession:

1. Confession of faith in God's Word unto salvation:

To receive your free gift of salvation through God's grace, you must confess your faith in His Word – and confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord...

Romans 10:9 – That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. NIV

2. Confession of God's Word to build faith:

When you read daily confessionals, such as those at the end of each step in this program, you are using God's Word to build yourself up in faith and strength.

Hebrews 3:1 – Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.

3. Right and Wrong Confession:

The confession of your lips – what you speak – the words from your mouth - will give either God or the enemy dominion over you. Right confession gives God dominion, wrong confession gives the enemy dominion.

Proverbs 18:21 – The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

The book of James, chapter 3, verses 1-12 is a good example of the power of your tongue, and the words you speak. Study these verses, then put into practice speaking confessions that give God dominion over your life.

4. Confession of your sins to restore broken fellowship with God:

Due to God's holiness and purity, He cannot be in fellowship with anyone harboring un-confessed sin. Your sins must be confessed in order to restore your fellowship with God.

1 John 1:6 – If we claim to have fellowship with Him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. NIV

Confession and repentance are essential to your healing process and are a necessary part of your spiritual growth and recovery. We can stand before God, righteous through the eyes of Jesus.

If we are to be in fellowship with God, if we are to grow in an intimate relationship with Him, we must NOT hide things in the darkness. Get **everything** into the light where it can be released, and you can receive the help and healing that God promises.

There was a --- not-so-popular-ditty --- at a church I once attended. It wasn't popular because it was truthful and to the point (although sometimes easier said than done)...

Confess: Admit it... and... **Repent:** Quit it **** **Admit it and Quit It...**

Step Four Assignments: Read the memory verses and daily confession out loud on a daily basis. You will need to finish all questions and memorize two of the memory verses, before moving to step five (cleansing the conscience).

Memory Verses

Romans 3:23 – For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. NIV

1 John 1:6 – If we claim to have fellowship with Him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. NIV

1 John 1:9 – If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. NIV

Proverbs 18:21 – The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

Daily Confessional: Father God, I know that You love me because You died for me. I know that You love me because You are my Father in heaven. You love me enough to know the number of hairs on my head. You love me enough to supply all my needs according to Your riches in glory through Christ Jesus. Thank you God, for Your never-ending love, for Your amazing grace, and for Your new mercies every day. Thank You Father, for washing away my past and forgiving me of my sins. Thank You for my salvation by Your grace and my confession of faith in Jesus. Help me Lord, to resist temptation and to confess my sins daily, so I can stay in strong fellowship with You. I pray Father God, that You would reveal character traits that I need to work on, and that You would help me in my shortcomings. I know that I can come boldly to your throne, standing righteous through Christ Jesus, who gives me strength. Thank You Lord, for loving me. In Jesus name, amen.

Suggested Reading: Once again I will stress the importance of reading your Bible **ALoud** every day. Put the power of your tongue to work, and continue to read and confess God's Word as a reality in your life.

Read: 1st and 2nd Corinthians – All Chapters

Other Reading Suggestions: Crossing the Threshold – Series by Kenneth E. Hagin

Assertive Action: This step of confession and repentance will be the start of self-examination that will also be required for the next two steps. As God reveals past occurrences, you may see areas where people caused you pain, or where you may have hurt others.

Your humility and honesty will play a huge role in the cleansing of your conscience and healing of your heart. Sometimes these instances will be hard to face as you start to realize that many of them were excuses to drink, use drugs and fall into other sinful behaviors.

It will be necessary for you to start journaling, and writing down the things that come to mind. You will find this very helpful through the confession and repentance process. It will also be of help when it comes to forgiving and making amends. You will find a place to start journaling on page 49.

Confession and repentance are not merely suggestions from God. They are commands He gives us that bring salvation, growth, healing and much more.

2. This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and _____ will be preached in His Name to all nations. (Luke 24:46/47)
3. When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, “So then, God has granted even the Gentiles _____ (Acts 11:18)
4. When anyone is guilty in any of these ways, _____ in what way he has sinned. (Leviticus 5:5)

4. Therefore _____ to each other and pray for each other so that you may _____. (James 5:16)

5. Read Luke 13:1/9 - Explain in your own words what these verses and parable mean to you.

6. God commands all people everywhere _____, because He has set a day when He will _____. (Acts 17:30/31)

7. If we _____ He is faithful and just and will _____ . (1 John 1:9)

8. Define “confess and repent” in your own words, and explain their importance as you see it.

9. Write down some of your past sins that first come to mind, while working on this step.

10. How do you see yourself confessing and turning away from (repenting) of those sins?

11. Read, study and meditate on 2 Corinthians 7:10. Give your personal thoughts and/or revelations on this verse, and explain how it might effect your walk with God.

The following two pages are for your personal journaling as you work through this step. It is essential that you write down the many thoughts that God reveals to you, so you can begin to work them out. This journal and list of thoughts will also be helpful in future steps, as you work on the continued healing of your conscience and heart.

Note: This journal will be held in complete confidence by the group leader, and will not be seen or discussed with anyone else. Your notes and journal will help us to pray for specific areas of your life.

If you are revealing things that have never surfaced and/or have been hidden in the darkest recesses of your heart, remember --- this gives you an opportunity to confess these sins “one to another” as the Bible say’s. Simply request on this journal a “one-on-one private meeting” with your group leader.

Recovery thru Redemption #05

Step Five: Cleanse the Conscience

Name: _____

Date: _____

Review: In the previous step we talked about confessing ALL our past and present sins to God. We mentioned the fact that God already knows our sins, but we can only be forgiven and released from the shame and guilt when we confess.

As we continue in the daily process of confession, we must also learn to repent, which means to turn away from sin. Confession without repentance is like taking a bath without water. It doesn't work very well.

Many people try to rely on their own confidence, strength and will power to turn from sin and resist temptation. However, this only leads to a legalistic self-righteousness that eventually leads to a belief that true repentance is not possible.

The truth is --- true repentance can be achieved if you rely on the Holy Spirit, the strength of Christ and the power of love. This means giving up your pride, being humble before God and man, realizing and admitting that you can't fight this battle on your own.

1 Corinthians 10:13 – No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. NIV

Whatever trials, temptations and battles you face, someone else has and/or is facing the same issues. However, God is always faithful and He promises to give you a way out, so you can stand strong against it. His Spirit will stir-up your conscience, helping you discern right from wrong, and urging you to choose God over sin.

This step will guide you through the cleansing of your conscience, which is a very important part of your recovery and spiritual growth. If your conscience is riddled with guilt, shame and condemnation of past or present sin, it will be very difficult for you to hear the absolute truth of God's righteous ways as opposed to worldly standards of right and wrong.

One of the consequences of sin is a guilty conscience. Jesus tells us in John 16:8 that the Holy Spirit will convict us of guilt in regard to sin. However, due to our own fallen sinful nature, we have taught ourselves to ignore the promptings of the Holy Spirit so we don't have to deal with the shame and guilt of our sins.

Hebrews 10:22 – ...let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience. NIV

If you continue to hide or suppress the shame and guilt of your sins, you will find yourself bound by a spirit of fear, and trapped in a life of self-condemnation. If you want to be free of this condemnation, with full assurance of faith, then you must be cleansed of your guilty conscience.

Romans 8:1/2 – Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death... NIV

Letting go of past issues can be very difficult because it requires you to bring up things that you have buried for specific reasons. However, it is a necessary part of your recovery and an essential step in getting your heart right with God.

You will need to take responsibility for your behavior, without giving thought of the wrongs done to you by others. Taking responsibility, without blaming others for your actions, will release you from the bondage of guilt, shame, regret and condemnation.

You will need to recognize how your actions have affected, and caused harm to others. As you take responsibility, you will need to seek forgiveness from the people you have harmed, and make amends where possible.

Proverbs 14:9 - Fools mock at making amends for sin, but goodwill is found among the upright. NIV

Under your own strength, you will tend to believe that you acted the way you did because of how people treated you. To make amends without blame means to take responsibility regardless of how others acted towards you.

Making amends and seeking forgiveness from those you have harmed will take much insight and strength from God. You will need to give up many of your own thoughts and beliefs, and accept God's Word as truth in each situation.

Matthew 7:12 – “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.” NIV

This verse as spoken by Jesus is the groundwork of our love for others, which results in our active goodness and mercy towards others. Also known as the Golden Rule, this verse reflects the fact that we need to take the initiative to do good to others, and make amends for the harm we have caused to others.

To make amends can be defined as, repairing the damage of the past. It can be as simple as an apology, or it may involve paying restitution for financial and/or physical liabilities and wrongs.

Matthew 5:9 – “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.” NIV

With God's help, start a list of people whom you have hurt. You will need to examine your relationship with these people, and determine how you hurt them. You can help yourself by being totally honest, and as thorough as possible in your considerations.

Your willingness to be humble and put your life into proper perspective will help to put you in agreement with God. As you set aside your pride, you will see that the thoughts and feelings of others have worth and value.

John 13:34 - “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” NIV

To love others was not a new command and can be found several times throughout scripture, but to love others as Jesus loves you, was a new and essential command. You are to love others based on the sacrificial love that Jesus has for you.

Loving others as Jesus loves you is an attitude that is revealed by your action. Helping others when it's not convenient, giving when it hurts, devoting energy to others, and absorbing hurts without complaining, are a few examples.

You will need to have this kind of love as you seek to make amends, especially in the face of direct opposition. People on your list may be bitter, hold a grudge, unwilling to reconcile, and/or resist your attempts at amends. However, you must be willing to proceed regardless of how you are received. The amends you make are out of obedience to God's Word, for your own benefit and healing.

This does not mean that you need to agree with everyone, and they don't need to agree with you. But you can stop disliking and resenting people when they have a different point of view than yours.

Luke 6:27 – “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. NIV

When Jesus said to love your enemies, He was talking about acting in their best interest, praying for them, thinking of ways to help them, and granting them the respect and rights that you desire for yourself.

1 John 2:9-11 - Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness. Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him. NIV

Making amends and asking forgiveness can be very difficult, and will most likely stir up thoughts of how others have harmed you. This is a normal reaction of self-preservation that will keep your attention focused away from your own wrongs, preventing your healing and growth.

There is no doubt that others have shortcomings, but your job right now is to focus on your behaviors. The next step of healing your heart will deal with the issues of how others have harmed you.

As you prepare to make your list, ask God for His guidance and help. The previous step of confession from past sins will also be very helpful in determining necessary amends. Keep in mind that your willingness to be completely humble and totally honest will be to your own advantage.

It is also urgent that you start to examine your character. Determining your weaknesses and strengths will play a crucial role in how you respond and work through your amends list. Part of your assignment for this step will be to go over the traits listed, while praying and asking God to reveal your specific strengths and weaknesses.

As you start with the list of weaknesses, keep in mind these are NOT here to discourage you, but to help you recognize and pray about areas of your life that you might need to work on. Character faults do not usually reflect God's will, thus asking Him to help you recognize, and deal with these issues will open you up to God's will.

God's good, pleasing and perfect will is that you are completely healed and free from all bondage. However, this does not mean that He will instantly remove your shortcomings and weaknesses. You see, we cannot see the big picture of eternity or possibly know the timing of God's perfect will.

You may have to walk in a specific area of weakness for a season or two, for a year or five years, and it may be to chasten, to teach, to reveal something, to strengthen, to prepare, to build your faith, to keep you focused on God, etc...

Romans 5:3/4 – Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. NIV

There is no way we could even begin to understand why God would choose to leave certain traits in our lives. But, if we trust in Him, knowing that He has our best interest at heart, we can learn to accept those traits as they are. And, we can be assured that God will give us the power to live through and with them.

Proverbs 3:5 – Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding... NIV.

SO --- as God reveals, removes and/or helps you to recognize and overcome certain areas, you must also learn to ACCEPT the things where you do not see change. You should also realize that your character traits are not a reason to relapse or backslide from your walk with God, but a gift from God that He uses to help you, and bring glory to Himself through you.

Step Five Assignments: This step is a critical part of your restoration, and should be considered as such. Please take your time on the assignments and wait for the prompting of the Holy Spirit before moving to the next step of this program. Your thoughts, insights and healing from this step will help you to move into step six with better understanding and knowledge of broken-heartedness.

Memory Verses

1 Timothy 3:9 – Keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. NIV

Acts 24:16 – So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man. NIV

Daily Confessional

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for rescuing me from Your wrath. Thank You for making me a new creation in Christ. I know that all my sins were paid for on the cross, and I thank You that I have been raised up with Jesus through faith. I know that I am loved by You Lord, because You have chosen me to be Your child, and You have sanctified me by the Spirit and faith in the truth. Lord, teach me to love others as You love them. Show me how to take responsibility for my actions without blaming others. Lord, reveal to me all areas where I have caused harm to others, and give me the courage to seek forgiveness and make amends where needed. Lord I know that a clean conscience is essential to my relationship with you, so I ask that You would help me stay humble and completely honest in preparing my list. I know that You have called me to a holy life according to Your own purpose and grace, and I thank You for redeeming me from my own works and deeds. Thank You for filling me with the knowledge of every good thing, and cleansing my heart from an evil conscience. In Jesus name, amen.

Suggested Reading

Read: Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians – All Chapters

Other Reading Suggestions: Biblical Faith Simplified – Series by Kenneth E. Hagin

Self-Character Examination

Listed below are several specific character traits of weaknesses and strengths. Take your time and think through each of these traits carefully. As you do this, write down areas from each specific trait that might be having a negative effect in your life (page 58).

Keep in mind that you are the beneficiary of your honesty. It is important to refrain from generalizing. Be as specific as possible. You will need to work on this with God's help, through diligent prayer, and guidance from the Holy Spirit.

Character Weaknesses

Resentment: An unhealthy condition that is an underlying cause of many forms of spiritual illness. You cannot hold on to resentment and receive healing at the same time. You may experience: feeling injured; violated; left out; low self-worth; angry; bitter; revengeful; unforgiving...

Fear: Another elemental cause of spiritual disease, also associated with many other mental and physical problems. Fear often prevents us from seeing the cause or resolve of itself. You may feel; threatened; rejection; fighting for survival; resistant to change; anticipating loss; facing mortality...

Anger: It is not a sin to be angry, but how you handle your anger can be the root of many problems. Repressing, denying, or expressing your anger inappropriately can lead to serious depression, resentment, physical problems, and relational issues. You may experience; resentment; self-pity; anxiety; depression; jealousy; stress...

Frozen feelings: Suppressing your feelings is a form of survival this distorts the nature of reality and protects against what is truly happening. Repressed feelings cause resentment, anger, depression, spiritual, and physical illness. You may; be unaware of your feelings; withhold conversation; suppress positive feelings; have distorted feelings; be depressed; struggle with relationships...

Irresponsibility: You may believe that life has been unfair, so you do not want to claim responsibility for your condition. You may be overwhelmed with problems, not knowing how you can make a difference. You may; become detached; feel like a victim; appear uncaring; have false pride; be an under-achiever...

Control: Wanting to control your feelings and behaviors is a basic need. However, trying to control the feelings and behaviors of others will lead to manipulation, stress, and anxiety. You may; lack trust; fear failure; over-react to change; be intolerant; be judgmental; manipulate others...

Fear of abandonment: The need to reduce the risk of abandonment takes the lead over dealing with issues or conflicts. This behavior produces a tense environment with poor communication. You may; feel insecure; worry excessively; feel rejected; become co-dependent; avoid being alone...

Fear of authority: Simple assertiveness by others might make you feel intimidated. You may have feelings of inadequacy, and will compromise your integrity to avoid criticism. This may cause you to; fear rejection; be arrogant; feel inadequate; take things personally; compare yourself to others...

Isolation: It feels safer to withdraw from surroundings that are uncomfortable. Choosing to hide rather than face the risk eliminates the need to face uncertain outcome. If you have isolated yourself, you may; fear rejection; be lonely; be timid or shy; feel defeated; procrastinate; see yourself as different...

Low self-esteem: This affects your ability to set and achieve goals. You always feel responsible for things that go wrong, and you never take credit for the right things. You may; be non-assertive; fear failure; isolate from others; feel inadequate; have a negative self-image; always try to please others...

Other areas: The list above covers some of the most common character traits and weaknesses. Take time now and pray, asking God to reveal any other areas that you need to work on. You may; be an approval seeker; a caregiver; sexually repressed; have an overdeveloped sense of responsibility, etc...

Character Strengths

You must also consider the positive character strengths that you may already possess. Write down thoughts that come to mind, and continue to pray, asking God to reveal your specific character traits.

Emotional: Proper responses and healthy feelings to yourself and to others.
(e.g., I can express my feelings and love for my spouse and children).

Spiritual: Relating to God in good ways, and building a strong relationship with Him.
(e.g., I have a strong commitment to Jesus Christ).

Relational: Having positive, understanding, and supportive interaction with others.
(e.g., I have a great friendship and healthy relationship with Thomas).

Moral: Proper behavior and good ethics in your actions and thoughts.
(e.g., I have a clear conscience in business affairs and personal conduct).

Intellectual: Quality energy and attention devoted to mental activities.
(e.g., I devote time to read and study).

Self respect / care: Healthy concerns, proper hygiene, and time for yourself.
(e.g., I will take time to go golfing).

Other areas: As you continue to do your self assessment, keep praying to God that He will continue to reveal your character traits. Be sure to write them down, so you have a journal of your progress...

Recovery thru Redemption #06

Step Six: Heal the Heart

Name: _____

Date: _____

Review: In the previous step we mentioned the importance of making amends to cleanse your conscience of negative emotions, nagging memories, shame, guilt, regrets, condemnation, etc... We also brought up several character traits to stir your thoughts into a self-examination that can help you to understand and accept your current situation.

One of our top goals as Christians and disciples of Jesus is to conform to His image. This means that each day we should strive to be more like Him, growing closer in our relationship with God, growing in spiritual strength and maturity, and learning to say no to ungodly and sinful ways.

We must realize that we will always be vulnerable to falling into sin, but God tells us throughout His Word that through salvation, and by His grace, we can learn to say “NO” to ungodly ways.

Titus 2:11/12 – For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say “NO” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age... NIV

One of our weakest and most susceptible areas and enemy strongholds is an unclean conscience. When we are carrying around guilt, shame and regrets of our past, we become exposed to attacks in those areas. This is why the cleansing of the conscience is such an important step.

When you can stand before God and man with a clear conscience, the Holy Spirit can convict, teach and lead you into all truth. The spiritual fruit of self-control will blossom and grow within, giving you a stronger walk in your salvation, deliverance, recovery and relationship with the Lord.

A clean conscience will also be very helpful in the healing of your heart, which is the next step in your new life journey...

Your heart, which is the inner you (spirit and soul together), has been damaged in many different ways. From childhood to the present you have endured many hurts and wounds that have led to a hardening of your heart, also known as broken heartedness.

The idea of having a hardened, scarred, and broken heart is usually one of the biggest forms of denial for those who truly need healing. Because of this denial, the healing never takes place, and will ultimately lead to a barrier in the spiritual growth and recovery process, that can eventually lead to relapse.

All of us have had to face hurts in our past, and no one is immune from the broken heartedness that occurs. This means – you have issues from your past that need to be addressed, and released, so you can receive the healing that God has promised.

As people living in the flesh, we tend to stuff the feelings that cause pain so we don't have to deal with them. We simply are not strong enough under our own power, so we hide the wounds, damage, pain, and hurts by abusive behaviors, excessive use of drugs, alcohol, and/or other mind-altering substances. This condition leads to an uncontrollable and/or repressed anger and un-forgiveness that causes a root of bitterness to grow deep within our hearts.

The difference between this step (healing the heart) and the last step (cleansing the conscience) is simple. To cleanse your conscience, you are bringing up issues where you have caused harm to others. To heal the heart you will be bringing up issues where others have caused harm to you.

As mentioned above, many people will be in denial over this issue for many different reasons. Let's take a look at why some will deny and/or resist this, thinking it does not apply to them.

1. Seeing the issues of broken heartedness as "In The Past".
 - a. "Can't we just let sleeping dogs lie?"
2. Incomplete concept of healing.
 - a. "I've already forgiven them!"
3. Unsupportable assumption.
 - a. "Everything I need I received through salvation – right?"
4. Weariness from past efforts to "Get Fixed".
 - a. Nothing else has worked; this won't either!"
5. Discomfort in dealing with the real serious issues of abuse.
 - a. "That's too painful; let's not go there."
6. Revisionist family history.
 - a. "I had great parents, leave them alone and drop it."
7. Burying the past.
 - a. "Our relationship is just fine today, therefore there are no issues!"
8. Resting on their own accomplishments.
 - a. "Look at all the good I've done; there can't be anything wrong inside me?"
9. Feeling criticized.
 - a. "Why do you think I'm the problem; take a look at them!"

The Healing of Your Heart is Essential to Your Spiritual Growth and Recovery

Your heart holds the key to your relationship with God, which is ultimately the key to walking in victory. God does not look at your outward appearance, He looks at what is in your heart.

1 Samuel 16:7 - The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." NIV

If your heart is full of anger, bitterness and un-forgiveness, your relationship with God and your spiritual growth will be hindered. You must receive healing from these scars if you want to continue your walk in the victory that Jesus has won for you.

Proverbs 23:7 – For as a man thinks in his heart, so he is. NKJV

Jesus compares our hearts to a fruit tree in Matthew 12 – showing us that our hearts ultimately control our words and actions.

Matthew 12:33-35 - “Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.” NIV

It is the issues of your heart, and what is in your heart that controls your words, actions, and behavior. Thus, you must have a change of heart if you are to change your life. As you allow God to heal you, He will remove the old sinful desires of your heart, and give you new desires that are pleasing to Him.

Psalm 37:4 - Delight yourself in the LORD and He will give you the desires of your heart. NIV

God wants you to be healed. He wants you to know that you are His creation, loved and cherished by Him who created you. He wants you to be a whole person by finding your identity in His love, through Jesus Christ. He knows about your broken heartedness, and He has made a way for you to be healed. Jesus say's...

Luke 4:18 - “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted...” NKJV

Forgiveness is the key to your healing.

Mark 11:25 - And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.’” NIV

Jesus said if you hold anything against anyone, you must forgive them, so that God can forgive you. He repeats this command when He gives us an example of how to pray

(Matthew 6:12 – “and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors”). And He goes on to say...

Matthew 6:14-15 – “For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” NIV

Jesus gives us this intensely compelling command because He knows that it is the only way to receive healing. As you forgive others, it releases you from the pain and anger that have been holding you prisoner, and sets you free from the roots of bitterness that have been the cause of your grief and suffering.

Matthew 18:21-22 - Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.” NIV

Forgiveness is a choice you must make. It is an attitude of your heart. As you release your un-forgiveness, God forgives and heals your heart. As you go to God in prayer, forgiving from your heart those who harmed you, asking God to forgive them, and praying for them, you've attained the "vertical forgiveness" that God commands.

Horizontal forgiveness is confronting the offending party to discuss specific offenses. God does NOT require this for healing, and this should only be done with explicit direction from God.

Forgiveness is very often misunderstood. The following facts might help to clear up many of these worldly ideals.

Forgiveness is NOT...

Forgiveness is NOT a feeling...
 Forgiveness is NOT minimizing the offense...
 Forgiveness is NOT condoning the other person's behavior...
 Forgiveness is NOT trusting the other person...
 Forgiveness is NOT letting the other person off the hook...
 Forgiveness is NOT expecting an apology...
 Forgiveness is NOT forgetting...

In most cases you will NOT feel like forgiving, but keep in mind it is commanded by God that you do so. This does not mean that you are saying what the person did is OK (because chances are if it hurt you, it was not OK). It does mean that you are willing to give the burden of the pain up to God (setting down the load, never to pick it up again).

Forgiveness does NOT mean that you need to forget what that person did. In fact, it is the memories of your past that make you who you are, and God is going to use you as you are, for His glory.

Romans 12:19-20 - Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is Mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink... NIV

Forgiveness IS...

Forgiveness IS life-changing...
 Forgiveness IS a decision only you can make...
 Forgiveness IS obeying God...
 Forgiveness IS freedom and release...
 Forgiveness IS a process...
 Forgiveness IS living in a higher realm...
 Forgiveness IS unilateral...
 Forgiveness IS a reflection of your maturity...

Forgiveness depends solely on you. It does not depend on the other party or their reaction to your forgiveness. Forgiveness is a process. You must make the decision to always keep on forgiving, and repent from holding on to any un-forgiveness.

Forgiveness is letting go. It's transferring the hurts and offenses that you've been carrying over to God. It's a release of burden and weariness that brings freedom, change, and healing to your heart.

You can know you have forgiven when:

God's love can flow through you to the other person,
 You continue to grow spiritually,
 You grow stronger in your relationship with God,
 You can feel joy, peace, freedom, and healing in your heart.

The consequences of un-forgiveness can lead to depression, bitterness, negativity, physical sickness, disease, emotional sickness, loneliness and more.

The benefits of forgiveness will release you from the bondage of the hurtful situation, bringing freedom, healing, power, restoration, and victory in your new life with Christ.

Some things that "Healing the Heart" will NOT do for you...

1. It will not crucify the flesh for you. Adam and Eve weren't broken hearted, and still sinned.
2. It will not defeat the devil permanently. You will still do spiritual warfare.
3. It will not take away the need for spiritual disciplines such as reading scripture, meditation, renewing the mind, prayer, fellowship, church attendance, etc...
4. It will not automatically restore broken relationships, but will give you the grace with which to approach reconciliation.

Some things "Healing the Heart" – WILL do for you...

1. It is the key to emerging whole, including emotion mending, from childhood to present.
2. It will increase your ability to work on restoration, and be a blessing in relationships.
3. It will have a positive impact on how you perceive God and yourself.
4. It will help you receive the benefits of redemption through salvation (your new spiritual birth).
 - a. deliverance
 - b. physical healing
 - c. mental and emotional healing
 - d. blessing and favor in finances and more...
5. It will strike at the root of mental problems and issues.
6. It will help break the shame and blame cycle off your life.
7. It will help you relate to others in a healthier way.
8. It will increase your emotional intelligence and people skills.

Basically, there are two sides to broken heartedness. We must deal with the problems of; UN-FORGIVENESS and PAIN...

1. The problem of UN-FORGIVENESS.
 - a. When pain is experienced on an emotional level, the healthy emotional response is anger.
 - b. This anger becomes un-forgiveness when we feel that justice has not been served.
 - c. Most of us were never trained in how to deal with the injustices of abuse and/or neglect (especially from our childhood).
 - d. The problem of un-forgiveness is solved by obedience to Christ, who requires us to forgive.
 - e. Many Christians have exercised forgiveness, but still carry the pain on the inside.

2. The problem of PAIN.
 - a. Pain comes from the iniquities of others.
 - b. Abuse and/or neglect from others, including our parents.
 - c. When our emotional needs are not met, it produces emotional pain.
 - d. When our basic childhood needs are not met, emotional pain is also produced.
 - e. The problem of pain requires a healer. This is the role of Jesus Christ as our Savior.
 - f. Forgiveness must come first, before the pain can be healed.
 - g. Pain does not get forgiven, washed or forgotten. It needs to be healed.

How to Get Healed of a Broken Heart

You must have a sincere desire to be healed, and refuse to let the enemy hold you in the bondage of un-forgiveness and bitterness.

You must identify and acknowledge the pain, wounds, damage, and scars.

- a. Start with parental figures who didn't provide for your needs (neglect and/or abuse – see page 65 for more details).
- b. Identify specific grievances.
- c. Identify others who have hurt you (siblings, other family, spouse, etc).
- d. Identify specific memories.
- e. Ask God in prayer to bring to mind all other areas needing to be released.
- f. Write down the names and all specifics that you have identified.

You must verbalize forgiveness to the Lord. (This vertical forgiveness can be done by praying – out loud - verbalizing your sincere heartfelt forgiveness).

- a. Mention specifically the person and identified area of abuse, neglect, etc...
- b. Ask the Lord to forgive them for the specific grievance.
- c. Forgive them from your heart, and do not hold it against them.
- d. Repent of any un-forgiveness.
- e. Pray for them.
- f. Cross that person and specific area off your list.

Bind and cast out any root of bitterness, wounded spirit and curses (generational or otherwise), through your God given authority, in Jesus name (Luke 10:19).

Ask the Lord to heal your heart.

- a. Based on the promise of Luke 4:18, Psalm 147:3, Isaiah 53:5, and 61:1

Luke 4:18 - "...He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted..." NKJV

Psalm 147:3 - He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. NIV

Isaiah 53:5 - ...and by His wounds we are healed. NIV

Isaiah 61:1 - "...He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted..." NIV

You must believe that you have received your healing.

- a. Based on the promise of Mark 11:23-24, and Matthew 8:13.

Mark 11:23-24 - "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. NIV

The following list might help you relate to areas of your past, from childhood to present, where wrong family patterns, siblings, parents, or others may have caused harm that led to broken heartedness.

1. Abuse is easily identified, unless occurring in mild forms.
 - a. Things they did that they should not have done
 - b. Things they said that they should not have said

2. Five known forms of abuse.
 - a. Physical abuse
 - b. Verbal abuse
 - c. Mental / emotional abuse
 - d. Sexual abuse
 - e. Willful neglect / deprivation

3. Neglect is often difficult to identify.
 - a. Things they should have done that they did not do
 - b. Things they should have said that they did not say

4. Four known emotional needs (especially as a child)
 - a. Security / safety
 - b. Acceptance / bonding
 - c. Identity / significance
 - d. Purpose / direction

5. Divorce
 - a. Parents divorce as a child
 - b. Un-forgiveness of previous spouse

6. Unfaithfulness
 - a. Spouse committed adultery
 - b. You committed adultery

7. Sexual immorality
 - a. Sex outside of marriage
 - b. Other forms of sexual impurity

Other areas to consider might be:

Relationships and activities with friends: Loss of jobs due to getting fired or quitting: Criminal activity that you were involved in: Criminal activity of which you were a victim.

Note: these areas are just examples to get your mind thinking of different areas where you may have experienced broken heartedness. Your best source of revealing areas where you need healing is to examine your own heart, with the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Step Six Assignments: Read the memory verses and daily confession out loud on a daily basis. You will need to finish all questions and memorize two of the memory verses, before moving to the next step.

Memory Verses

Mark 11:23-25 - “I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.” NIV

Matthew 6:14-15 – “For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” NIV

1 John 2:9-10 - Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness. Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble. NIV

Daily Confessional:

Dear Father God, I thank You that You knew me before the world was founded. You knew my name before You created the heavens and earth. You chose me to be Your child, to walk with You, to have fellowship with You, and to fulfill Your will and destiny for my life. Father God, You know all the hurts that have caused brokenness in my heart. Lord, I ask that You would reveal to me all areas of parental neglect or abuse, and every area where they did not meet my needs. Lord, please reveal to me all other areas of my broken heart, and the people that have hurt me, so that I can forgive them and receive Your healing. Father God, I make the choice to forgive this day, and I ask that You would show me how to repent from any un-forgiveness that I am harboring. I command every root of bitterness to be plucked from my heart, in Jesus name. Thank You Lord for Your love, grace, and mercy. Thank You Lord for providing the healing of my heart. Please remove my old sinful desires and fill my heart with the desire to do Your will. In Jesus name, amen.

Suggested Reading

Read: 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, 1st and 2nd Timothy – All Chapters

Other Reading Suggestions: Get the junk out of your trunk – by: Duane Vander Klok

Assertive Action

Healing your heart is a process that plays a major role in deliverance from addiction. It is also a necessary part of your spiritual growth process, and is essential to finding your true identity in Christ. Forgiveness – IS the KEY – to healing !!!

You may be so angry or hurt by what someone has done to you, that you might not feel like forgiving. But remember, forgiveness is not a feeling, it’s something that God expects you to do.

1. Get rid of all _____ and _____ and _____ along with every form of _____ (Ephesians 4:31).
2. Be kind and compassionate to one another, _____ just as in Christ _____ (Ephesians 4:32).

3. Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourself with _____ (Colossians 3:12).

4. What does Colossians 3:13 tell you to do? _____

5. How does Colossians 3:13 tell you to forgive? _____

6. Read Matthew 5:44. How are you suppose to respond to those who have hurt You? _____

7. Read Romans 12:14-18. How might you pray for those who have hurt you?

8. How can your enemies live at peace with you? (Proverbs 16:7)

9. Are those who hurt you really your enemies? _____

Un-forgiveness has many consequences. It leads to bitterness, can affect your health, and more importantly can affect your relationship with God.

10. For if you _____ your heavenly Father will _____ (Matthew 6:14).

11. But if you do not _____, your Father will _____ (Matthew 6:15).

12. Read Psalm 66:18. How can un-forgiveness affect your prayers?

Letting go of your pain is a key step in reaching the point of forgiveness. It allows you to move your attention from the past to what lies ahead.

13. Read Philippians 3:13-14. What was Paul's attitude about his past, and what was his focus? _____

14. Read Isaiah 43:25. What does God do when He forgives?

Recovery thru Redemption #07

Step Seven: Maintenance

Name: _____

Date: _____

Review: The last few steps have been about cleansing and healing. As we release the stuff from our past, we open ourselves up to receive more of God's Word into our heart.

James 1:21 tells us to "...humbly accept the Word planted in you" ... NIV

The King James, and other versions say to "...receive with meekness, the implanted (or engrafted) Word...

So, in order for you to plant, or engraft more of God's Word into your heart, you must first prepare your heart to receive it. Just as a farmer must prepare the ground for planting by removing the weeds and bad roots, tilling, turning and softening the soil --- you must also prepare your heart by tilling, turning and softening the scars and hardened spots, and removing the weeds and roots of bitterness, caused by sin and un-forgiveness.

Cleansing the conscience and healing the heart are crucial elements to your continued spiritual growth and recovery process. Forgiving others is not something God merely suggests, but rather, it is a command He expects us to carry out as His children.

Mark 11:25 – And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. NIV

Matthew 6:14/15 – For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. NIV

Confession, repentance and forgiveness are, and should always be, an ongoing process. As you continue to do these things for past grievances, you will also need to do a daily check for present situations. There will be circumstances throughout your everyday life that will bring the need for you to safeguard your heart and conscience on a regular basis.

This step is going to discuss the importance of maintaining your new life in Christ as an essential element of working out your salvation, and standing strong in your freedom and deliverance.

Congratulations... If you have made it to this point, you are well on your way to finding who you are in Christ Jesus. As we refer to maintenance in this chapter, we are not just referring to continued abstinence, although that is one definite goal of recovery.

We will be referring to the many aspects of recovery, which involves a total change of lifestyle, as well as your spiritual growth and relationship with the Lord. We will also be covering ways for you to fight the temptations, urges, thoughts, and enemy attacks that will try to lure you back into your old lifestyle.

The lifestyle change that you must accomplish to achieve your goal of recovery can only be attained through a spiritual awakening, and the realization that you are powerless to make the needed changes on your own. You must also realize that recovery is much more than abstinence. It is a process of complete change which involves overcoming the negative effects of your past life (including your addiction).

When we refer to a “Spiritual Awakening” we are talking about our “New Birth” in Christ. When we became a born again Christian by confessing Jesus as our Lord and Savior, God made us a new creation – thus – awakening us to the realm of spirituality.

However, this does not guarantee spiritual growth, which is a key factor to maintaining and walking in our salvation and deliverance. Once our spirit has been awakened (made alive in God’s eyes / born again), we must purposely work towards growing spiritually stronger by seeking God on a daily basis.

As we continue to add spiritual disciplines to our daily life, we start to grow closer in a loving relationship with the Lord, and He begins to make the necessary changes that lead to a more mature and stable spiritual life.

God has made each of us as unique individuals, with our own personalities. For this reason, there is not a simple magical formula for continued sobriety. Every person will be at their own point of recovery, just as they were in their addiction. Each of us as individuals must learn to know and understand where we are at in our recovery, and in our walk with God.

As an example, one person may have struggled with drug abuse for a few years, and at a certain point was completely delivered from their abusive tendencies, never to crave again. Another person may have gone beyond abuse to a level of addiction and dependency for thirty years, and though completely delivered, may still have cravings for many years. The complexities of addiction and recovery are as vast as the number of people on this planet, and thus cannot be tied to any one distinct derivation.

Whatever the case may be for you, it is highly recommended that you set up and maintain a program for lasting provision. When you received Jesus as your Lord and Savior, God delivered you from your past. However, you must work to maintain your spiritual growth and deliverance. The Apostle Paul tells us in Philippians 2:12 that we must work out our salvation with fear and trembling.

You will need to continue building your relationship with the Lord through spiritual growth and discipleship, develop a good set of boundaries, set up accountability, and get involved in a solid fellowship group of like-minded (delivered) believers.

Recovery, like spiritual growth, is the process of becoming a whole person, knowing who you are in Christ, and how you relate to God as the caring person God is. Spiritual growth, like recovery, involves shedding the “acts of the sinful nature,” and growing in the “fruit of the spirit.” As a born again Christian, your recovery becomes part of the never-ending path of spiritual growth.

Because Spiritual Growth and Recovery go Hand in Hand, Your Continued Discipleship is a Key Factor to Maintaining Your New Lifestyle

The most important part of your maintenance needs to be your relationship with the Lord. Victory comes only through the blood of Jesus. THERE IS NO OTHER WAY....

1 John 5:3-5 - This is love for God: to obey His commands. And His commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. NIV

Your love for God and your desire to live for Him will give you great strength to continue walking in victory. God needs to be “Number One” in your life. Your love for God needs to be greater than your love for anything else.

Luke 10:27 - Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind. NIV

Your faith and love for God will continue to grow stronger each day, as you purposely seek Him, and add spiritual disciplines to your daily schedule (step two lists several disciplines). You should become a member of a local Bible believing church, and you should get involved in some form of ministry, and fellowship, in that church (we will be discussing the importance of ministry in the next step).

The next part of your maintenance schedule is to develop a good set of boundaries. There will be many aspects of life that bring strong temptations, and you will need to know what they are, and how to avoid them. Be totally honest with yourself in creating these boundaries.

Some areas you need to consider when setting boundaries would be; not hanging out with old drinking / drug buddies; avoiding parties where you know drugs and alcohol will be present; staying out of bars; and maybe even avoiding liquor stores.

You need to recognize, and avoid places and situations that put you at risk. Find your weakest and most vulnerable areas, write them down, and be constantly aware of the temptations in those areas.

This may involve breaking off many of your old relationships, avoiding old hangouts, getting rid of drinking and drug related paraphernalia, and maybe disposing of some personal items such as music and magazines. Start surrounding yourself with good Godly people who will have a good influence, and positive impact on your new life.

As a born again Christian, you have entered into a spiritual war of great magnitude. Because you are learning to live by the spirit, instead of the lustful temptations of your flesh, you will need to learn how to battle the wiles of the enemy (the devil). A good set of boundaries will help to squelch temptations in many of your weakest areas.

You should also attend a good Christian based fellowship group of like-minded (delivered) believers, on a regular basis. Make it a mandatory part of your schedule, and keep it as a top priority. Too often we tend to say – “I’ll attend the meeting, if I have time”... when we should be saying – “this meeting is essential, it is a top priority, I love the spiritual guidance and fellowship, I will schedule other events around this meeting so I don’t have to miss a single one”...

This “Recovery thru Redemption” eight step lifestyle change / support groups are very strongly endorsed for your continued guidance. These groups are deliverance specific, and help to encourage spiritual growth, discipleship, fellowship, accountability, ministry, etc... for the recovering and delivered Christian

Another important aspect of maintaining your continued recovery will be to put your life back into some form of normality. Throughout your addiction many areas of your life suffered, and putting things back in order will play a major role in your maintenance. Securing a job, finding a place to live, paying off debts, fixing the car, and rebuilding damaged relationships might be a few things that you need to start working on.

While these external needs are all very important, you must always remember that the strength to consistently follow through on them comes from your inner – spiritual life – and your relationship with God.

When you take time each and every day to acknowledge God’s presence in your life, purposely seek His face, and ask for the power and wisdom to do His will, you will find a new sense of balance in your life. And with that balance comes peace, and strength to fight temptation.

Trials, and temptation are a part of life, even for the strong and faithful Christian. God never promised that we would not have to face these things, but He did promise that He would not allow us to face more than we could bear, and that He would always provide a way out.

1 Corinthians 10:13 - No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. NIV

You need to understand and accept the fact that because you are human, you will always have to struggle with temptation and sin. God may choose to completely heal and deliver you from addiction, but you still need to do your part. You must learn to walk in the deliverance of your salvation, even as your enemies (the world, your flesh, and the devil), try to sabotage your success.

Matthew 7:24/27 - “Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” NIV

Jesus tells us in Matthew 7 that there **WILL BE** storms in our life. He is saying that there will be trials, temptations, problems and life issues that we are going to have to face. But, He also said that (if you believe the Word, and DO the Word) when the storms pass – your house will still be standing.

JOB 5:7 – Yet man is born to trouble, as surely as sparks fly upward. NIV

1 Peter 4:12 – do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. NIV

Many times the Christian life is misrepresented as being just a flowery bed of roses. But the fact is, for non-Christians and Christians alike; life is a struggle from the womb to the tomb. God tells us throughout His Word that we will have to face all the things of life just like everybody else.

The difference is that we are called to face our trials without growing weary in the midst of them, finding God’s peace and contentment, as we trust in Him to get us through.

Isaiah 40:31 - but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. NIV

Hebrews 12:3 - Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. NIV

Galatians 6:9 - Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. NIV

We all have to face hard times and temptations of discouragement. In fact, most of the people that we talk about in the Bible - Jacob, Joseph, Joshua, Jeremiah, Moses - even Jesus was tempted to be discouraged...

King Solomon tells us in... Proverbs 24:10 – if you faint in the day of adversity - If you falter in times of trouble, how small is your strength! – your faith – it is small.

SO – how then do we NOT faint in the hard times??? How do we stay strong when tempted to give up or get discouraged???

Maintenance... growing in our faith through continued discipleship, continued spiritual growth, and a constant growing relationship with the Lord – through persistent daily spiritual disciplines...

Some of the most important KEY factors in maintaining your deliverance, recovery and new life in Christ is... your HOPE – TRUST – FEAR – and FAITH in God.

John 16:33 – “I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. NIV

Jesus has overcome the world so that in Him, you can have peace, victory, and freedom. But, you must take into account your humanity. You must always be aware of your human compulsive sinful nature, and your individual limitations.

For this reason it is very important that you realize your limitations, and areas of least resistance to temptation. The devil knows your weak areas, and he will continue to tempt you in those areas. You need to be consciously aware that these temptations and/or urges to “sin” will always bring some element of struggle...

However – it is that very awareness that can serve as your constant reminder that...

God’s Presence and Power are Faithfully Available to You

God is your “Number One” Source of Strength Build your Foundation on His Word

Titus 2:11-12 - For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age... NIV

Step Seven Assignments: The following Bible verses and daily confessional were specifically picked for you to memorize because they portray the road to maintaining your spiritual growth, which will help you in the areas of self control and living in obedience to God’s Word.

It is highly suggest that you read these verses and daily confession – out loud – on a daily basis, and commit them to memory. Also, as you read and meditate on Scripture, look for verses that portray God’s love for you. Read them out loud, and personalize them to yourself, so that you can start forming your own very personal daily devotion.

You need to keep speaking God’s love into your life on a daily basis. God does love you unconditionally, but – the world, your flesh and the devil will continually try to seduce you away from God, thus – daily reminders of His love for you will help you to stay on the right path.

Remember

Maintaining your deliverance and recovery will take deliberate action on your part.

God has done His part. You were delivered from your past, including your addictions, when you received Jesus as your Lord and Savior. BUT – the Bible tells us that we need to work out our salvation. And you need to learn to walk in that deliverance – through obedience, trust and fear.

Read the memory verses and daily confession out loud on a daily basis. You will need to finish all questions and memorize two of the memory verses, before moving to the next step.

Memory Verses

Luke 10:27 - Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind. NIV

Galatians 5:16 - So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. NIV

Galatians 5:22-26 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other. NIV

Psalms 119:9-11 - How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to Your Word. I seek You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commands. I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You. NIV

Daily Confessional:

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for Your never-ending agape love. Thank You for Your amazing grace and new mercies every day. Lord, I pray that You would teach me to live by the fruit of Your Spirit. I ask for wisdom and knowledge of Your Word, as I seek You each day, with all my heart. Lord, I know that I will face temptation and trials, and I thank You for always providing my way out. Father God, I pray for Your guidance as I work to set boundaries, and I ask that You would reveal my weak and vulnerable areas. Lord, I know You have not given me a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind. Let these attributes give me strength and courage to stay within the boundaries that I set. Father God, I know that my continued spiritual growth is essential to my recovery, and I pray that I would grow closer to You, and stronger in my spiritual walk each day. Please reveal Your will and purpose for my life Lord, and teach me how to love You more than anything in this world. In Jesus name, amen.

Suggested Reading

Read: Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, and James – All Chapters

Other Reading Suggestions: Boundaries – by: Henry Cloud

Assertive Action

Having the right attitude about your recovery and maintenance is essential to your continued abstinence and spiritual growth process. Growing in your relationship with the Lord and learning to live His purpose for your life is a key factor in avoiding the pitfalls that can lead to relapse.

1. All scripture is _____ and is useful for _____
correcting and training in _____ (2 Timothy 3:16).

2. What do you think “God-Breathed” means?

The Bible was written by many authors, but they all shared a common issue – God’s divine inspiration.

3. Read 2 Peter 1:20-21. What does this tell you about prophecy of Scripture?

The Bible is your source of God’s Word on how to face trials and temptations. When you apply the guidance it provides, you can deal with tough situations the way God would have you respond.

4. How can a young man keep his way pure?

_____ (Psalm 119:9).

5. How can you keep from swaying out of God’s commands?

_____ (Psalm 119:10).

6. How can you keep from sinning against God?

_____ (Psalm 119:11).

7. What are the benefits of hiding God’s Word in your heart?

8. Name some ways that you can hide God’s Word in your heart.

The Bible is a very powerful book. Because it is God's Word and truth, it is capable of changing your life, helping you through difficult times, and giving you a better understanding of who God is.

9. Read Hebrews 4:12. How does this verse describe God's Word?

10. What else does the verse say about penetrating and judging?

11. What effect does this verse have on you, and how can it affect your life?

12. Your Word is a _____ and a _____ (Psalm 119:105).

God is your rock and shield. In Him you will find the strength needed to maintain your abstinence. You can resist the trials and temptations by casting your burdens on the Lord and taking refuge in Him.

13. As for God _____ the Word of the Lord _____

He is _____ for all who _____ (2 Samuel 22:31).

14. Read 2 Samuel 22:31-33. How is God's Way different from your way?

15. How do these verses describe God, and how does it say that He helps you?

16. Read Ephesians 6:10-18. What does this mean to you? How can it help you?

Personal Interjection: (front and back)

1. Why do you think the areas listed below are such an essential part of your maintenance program, continued deliverance, abstinence and recovery? Please give reasons for each, praying for God's insight, understanding and significance of each area.

a: Salvation

b: Spiritual Growth

c: Relationship with the Lord

d: Church Membership

e: Accountability

f: Support

g: Fellowship

h: Boundaries

i: List all other areas that God reveals to you.

2. Start a list of identifiable areas where boundaries will be needed, and then list ideas on how you can avoid those pitfalls. Be very specific to your personal experiences and situations.

Recovery thru Redemption #08**Step Eight: Ministry**

Name: _____

Date: _____

Review: In the last step we discussed the importance of maintenance. We mentioned the fact that our focus is not merely on continued sobriety, but on the unrelenting journey of spiritual growth, and building a relationship with God Himself.

Although continued abstinence is most definitely one of your goals, you must remember that your temperance is a bi-product of your continued discipleship. Your primary goal should be conforming to the image of Jesus, by focusing on God, and allowing Him to transform you.

You must never become too comfortable or placid in your spiritual journey. Spiritual maturity or stability does not mean that you can stop seeking God. The day that you think you're a spiritual giant and can go back to doing things your way, is the day you will start to backslide.

It is essential that you remain constantly aware of the situations that surround you. Everyday life is full of trials, pressures, stresses and other temptations that will ultimately be tugging you in the wrong direction.

Setting strict boundaries, especially in the areas of your weakest resistance, will give you an upper hand to circumvent many of the situations before they happen. But you must also be aware of your boundaries, and make a firm commitment to stay within the limitations that you set.

We also talked about support. This is an area where many fall short because they do not understand the importance of staying connected, or they think as a delivered Christian they should not need support groups.

The truth is – support is provision – it is sustenance – it is nourishment – and it is quintessential to standing strong in your spiritual walk.

Isolation is a tool that the enemy uses to break down our barriers. He knows that there is power in numbers, so if he can get you alone he has a better chance of knocking you down. If you find yourself starting to withdraw from friends, family, church and support groups, you need to do a thorough check of your situation, and get back to surrounding yourself with strong Christian friends.

Hebrews 10:25 - Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another... NIV

Ecclesiastes 4:9/10 - Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! NIV

God tells us in His Word that we are called to stand together in fellowship. We are called to encourage one another and to lift each other up in time of need. Don't let the lies of the enemy get you to fall into the isolation trap. The truth is – support is provision, sustenance, fuel and nourishment for your spirit and soul.

Another important ingredient in maintaining your new Christian lifestyle is learning to live within God's will and purpose for your life. This chapter on ministry will help you to uncover and fulfill that purpose.

First, you must know and believe that God created you, and that He has designed a specific plan for your life. He made you completely unique, unlike anybody else, and he created you with an individual and unique plan and purpose.

Ephesians 1:11 – In Him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of Him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will. NIV

These verses from Ephesians that talk about God's chosen elect being predestined often confuse many people. Some doctrines teach that it does not matter what we do because God has already chosen His elect (those that will go to Heaven) and predestined their lives.

Lets first take a look at those who have been chosen as God's elect from Ephesians 1:11, in context with the scripture passages from Ephesians 1:4 through 1:14. We can plainly see from verse 4 that God has the uncanny ability to see our future. In fact, He knew before the creation of the world, those that would - **by their own free will** - choose Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Thus, since God knew that you would receive salvation through Jesus, He chose you as one of His elect, and He designed a plan, a predestined specific mission and purpose for your life.

However, you must realize that predestination does not take away your free will. You still have to make the choice to follow God's will and the destiny that He has planned for you.

Unfortunately, many born again / saved Christians do not know the purpose and plan that God has for them. They stumble around through life with no direction, unaware that they are far from the predestination of God's will.

If you do not yet have a vision from God, I suggest that you get heavily into His Word, and start praying for Him to reveal your destiny – your explicit mission – your individual purpose and predestined life that He made ready for you.

Habakkuk 2:2/3 – The Lord answered me and said: “write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time... and though it tarries, wait for it...” NKJV

When you get your vision from God, write it down and make it plain. Then write down specific plans and goals so that, as it says in verse three, he may run who reads it. These are the steps that will move you towards that vision.

Don't expect the vision to just happen on it's own. You must have a plan of action, goals that will move you towards it's achievement. And don't expect it to happen overnight. Though it tarries, wait for it.

Proverbs 29:18 says – Where there is no vision, the people perish.

Proverbs 13:12 tells us – Where there in no hope, the heart becomes sick.

So you see, it's the vision, the purpose, the mission that God has chosen specifically for you that gives your life meaning. And ultimately, this is what develops your future hope in Christ, moving you to discover who you are (your true identity in Christ).

“The Purpose Driven Life” by Rick Warren, lists the following five specific purposes that are common to all Christians:

1. Worship – Planned for God’s pleasure.
2. Fellowship – Formed to be a member of God’s family.
3. Discipleship – Created to become like Christ.
4. Ministry – Shaped for serving God.
5. Evangelism – Made for a mission.

As you center your life around God’s Word, these common purposes become part of your everyday life. As you continue to grow in your relationship with the Lord, He will begin to reveal explicit areas where your individual purpose will be acknowledged.

Ephesians 2:10 – It is God Himself who has made us what we are and given us new lives in Christ Jesus; and long ago He planned that we should spend these lives in helping others. LB

Ministry is yielding yourself to God and His plan for your life. Ministry is serving God by serving others. God did not create you simply to exist. You were not made just to use up resources or take up space in this world. You were created to give something to this world. God formed you to fulfill a special purpose for this generation.

Mark 10:43 – Jesus said ...”whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” NIV

You were designed by God for serving God – by serving others. Society leads us to believe that we should be served by others, defined by power, possessions, status, and prestige. This fabricates the thought that serving others is a very unpopular concept. God, however, does not measure your greatness by your worldly status, but by how many people you serve. To be like Jesus is to be a servant.

Philippians 2:5-7 - Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness... NIV

Ministry is an opportunity to help others, but it's your attitude about serving that God is most concerned with. You should not be helping others as an obligation, or with expectations, but out of a heart that would serve the Lord with gladness.

To become a real servant, as Jesus was, you must find your identity in Christ. You need to know there is nothing in this world that can complete you as a person. Only God can make you whole. If you are searching for relationships, money, or other worldly things as your identity, then your concerns are in the wrong areas.

When you can completely serve God with all your heart, and not worry about your identity in this world, you will find your true identity in Christ. Only then can you serve the Lord with gladness, and only then can you minister to others from your heart.

Proverbs 19:21 - Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD'S purpose that prevails. NIV

One of the great aspects of serving and helping others is what it actually does for you. It gives birth to healing in your heart, and it fills you with a joy and peace that this world cannot understand. The ministry of service is part of the very essence of who God created you to be. It also has a very strong influence on your recovery and will be a healthy deterrent to relapse.

Sharing Your Faith

Another one of God's purposes for your life is to share your faith. Jesus said "Go everywhere in the world, and tell the Good News to everyone" (Mark 16:15).

Sharing your faith with others is a by-product of your personal Bible study and growth in discipleship. The Lord will reveal new personal applications and life challenges as you share His truth, and will frequently use your words to challenge or encourage other Christians, or to awaken an unbeliever to his need for Christ.

Matthew 5:13-16 – Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." NIV

Colossians 4:5-6 - Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. NIV

As Jesus explains in Matthew 5, God calls all Christians to share their faith. We are to be salt and light of the world, sharing our faith by letting His love shine through us. Likewise our actions, deeds, and words need to always reflect God's grace so that others can see God's truth through us.

Your Mission

Another part of sharing your faith will be giving your life message. God created you with a specific purpose, and that mission is to share your life message. As a believer, you are God's messenger, and He wants to speak to the world through you. The Bible says, "Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony of God in them." (1 John 5:10 GWT)

Your life message will consist of your *testimony*: which is the story of how you began a relationship with God, through Jesus. It will consist of *life lessons*: important things that you learned through your life, and things that God has taught you. It will consist of *new desires*: as God takes away your old sinful desires and fills you with desires that please Him. And lastly, your life message will consist of God's great message of salvation.

John 17:18 – Jesus said, "In the same way that you gave Me a mission in the world, I give them a mission in the world. MSG

Your mission is a big responsibility, but it is also a wonderful privilege and honor to be used by God. Nothing else you do will ever have as much significance as helping people to establish a relationship with God. The consequences of your mission are eternal, which makes it more important than anything else you could do in this world.

To fulfill your mission will require that you give up your life plan and accept God's agenda for your life. You will need to abandon your expectations, dreams, plans, and desires, and start praying that God will fill you with His desires.

Psalm 37:4 - Delight yourself in the LORD and He will give you the desires of your heart. NIV

This is by far the most misinterpreted verse in the Bible. This verse does not mean that God will give you millions of dollars, a new Porsche, or a mansion on the ocean, because that is what you desire. It means that God will remove those carnal desires from your heart, and fill your heart with desires to do His will.

Living With Purpose... There are three basic issues that most of us struggle with in life (Identity, who am I? Importance, do I matter? Impact, what is my place in life?). The answer to these three questions can be found in living God's purpose for your life. When your life has a purpose – when you have a vision – when you have a mission – your life has meaning. Living such a life is truly the only way to live. Everything else is simply existing.

It is your obligation as a Christian to share the good news of the Gospel with everyone. Be ready to speak of Christ in every situation. Prepare yourself by knowing the essentials of the Bible, then plan and practice gentle, respectful, and non-overbearing ways to explain Jesus to others.

1 Peter 3:15-16 - Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect... NIV

The best way to always be prepared is to write down your testimony, and then memorize the main points. Use the following outline as a guide to get you started.

- a. What was your life like before you received Jesus.
- b. How you came to realize your need for Jesus.
- c. The circumstances that led you to receiving Jesus.
- d. How your life has changed since you received Jesus.

Your personal salvation story always makes a great testimony, but you may have many other experience testimonies where God has helped you. Different situations will call for different testimonies and/or life messages.

The following list may help to stir up some areas where God has used situations to teach you certain lessons that could be used in your message. What has God taught you through; failure; lack of money; pain; sorrow; depression; illness; waiting; disappointment; relationships; other areas; etc...

Your message should include sharing your Godly passions. God gives each of us a passion so that everything He wants done in this world will get accomplished. But you should not expect everyone else to share the same passion as you.

Finally, your message should include the “Good News” of God’s saving grace. You need to show how God makes people right with Himself, through faith. They need to know how their sins can be forgiven to avoid God’s wrath, and how repentance saves them from eternal condemnation. You should portray how God’s plan will give purpose and meaning to their life, and that they can know, for sure, where they stand with God on judgment day. That they are saved, not condemned, and will spend eternity with Him in heaven.

Your testimony should not dwell too much on your past, although people will need to know where you were, so they can see what God has brought you through. Highlight the points of your salvation, and the amazing things God has done, and is doing, in restoring your life.

It’s also good to have a short witness prepared (brief testimony / message). After compiling a message, summarize it into a very short two to three minute talk. Do this with each story, so that you will be ready in many different situations. This short witness can be used to plant God’s seed where time might be limited, and can sometimes open the opportunity to a better testimony.

When you start living on purpose for God, your life takes on a whole new meaning and direction. When you are a complete person, knowing your identity in Christ, serving others through ministry, sharing your faith, giving your life message, and purposely living to please God, the desires to live for yourself will gradually start to fade.

When you are faced with temptations, urges, and sinful desires of the flesh, dig deep into your heart and find the new desires that God has placed in you. You will find a new strength and power, knowing that ---

God is using YOU to fulfill a Special Purpose for this Generation...

I would like to take a moment and elaborate on the word MINISTRY... Most people, when they hear this word, they automatically think; OH, I could never be a minister. I’m just not cut out to be an evangelist. I’m not the preacher type. No - I think God has different plans for me.

And that could very well be true, because you see --- THOSE THINGS are just ONE FORM of ministry. The bottom line – Ministry is simply honoring God by living out His purpose for your life.

YOU SEE – God designed you with a special purpose in mind. And one of your purposes **IS** to share your faith with others. And this may shock you **BUT** – you don’t have to be a preacher, teacher, evangelist, etc... to share your faith...

*Revelation 12:11 says – They overcame him by the **blood of the Lamb** and by the **word of their testimony**... NIV*

This verse says – “they” (that’s you) --- “overcame him” (that’s the devil and all his works) --- by the “blood of the Lamb” (that’s the sacrificial blood of Jesus) --- and the “word of their (that’s you again) --- YOUR testimony...

According to Rev 12:11 there is no such thing as overcoming, and victory, without “**The Word of Your Testimony**”...

And I believe – this is one of the **most overlooked steps** in our deliverance / recovery / and spiritual growth process.

We want to overcome – we want victory over our bondage – but we're not too crazy about the last step of the program --- ministry, sharing our spiritual awakening, sharing our faith, telling people how awesome God is, how He is transforming us, how He is working in our lives.

But, it **HAS TO BE** a part of your program. God is very clear on this. You release your faith by what you say, and you overcome, you claim your victory

Through the **Blood of Jesus** – and the **Word of Your Testimony...**

The Bible says, (1 John 5:10 GWT) “Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony of God in them.”

This verse makes it very easy to understand. Your testimony is --- The testimony of God in you --- how He plucked you up from the miry clay, how He delivered you from your past, how He is continuing to transform you, how He is continuing to work in your life today, how His love has touched your heart, how He has filled your emptiness, how He has given you hope, peace, joy, salvation, healing, freedom, restoration, and so much more...

YOU SEE – it's not just about getting rid of a few old bad habits, addictions and bondages

...it's about TOTAL transformation

...it's about **becoming the person that God created you to be!**

Step Eight Assignments: The following daily confessional was specifically written to help prepare you for serving in some form of ministry, sharing your faith, releasing your faith and claiming your victory through the testimony of God in you.

Maintaining your deliverance and recovery will take hard work on your part. You will have to face many difficult decisions in your future, but if you continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, your choices will start to reflect your heart-felt desire for godly living. Remember; seek first God, His kingdom and His righteousness... and all these things will be added unto you...

Memory Verse

Psalm 23 - The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. NIV

Daily Confession

Father God, I want to live a life of purpose. I want to live for Your pleasure. I want to learn to be more like Christ every day. Lord, I know you have created me to serve You and to serve others. Help me to grow in serving with a true heart for other people. I want to be a true servant as Jesus was. Lord, reveal to me areas where I can be a cheerful giver of my time and resources. Lord, I yield my life to Your will. Take away my old desires Lord, and fill me with the desires to share my faith and complete my mission. Lord, give me the strength to fulfill the purpose that You have designed me for. Lord, fill me with Your Holy Spirit so that I can witness effectively in Your name. I ask for revelation, knowledge, and wisdom of Your Word. In Jesus name, amen.

Suggested Reading

Read: 1st and 2nd Peter, 1st 2nd and 3rd John, Jude, and Revelation – All Chapters

Other Reading Suggestions: The Purpose Driven Life – by: Rick Warren

Assertive Action

To be a good servant and witness you must be a disciple of Jesus Christ. This means to be a follower of Christ and a learner of God's Word. You must be willing to lay down your life and surrender all to follow Jesus.

1. Read Luke 14:25-33. According to the following verses, what characterizes a disciple?

Verse 26 _____

Verse 27 _____

Verse 33 _____

2. From the following verses, what does Jesus say should characterize the lives of His disciples?

John 8:31 _____

John 13:34-35 _____

John 15:8 _____

3. From reading the scriptures in questions 1 and 2, write a brief definition of a disciple.

Discipleship also involves stewardship. This means managing and using the things that God has allowed you to have, in such a way that it brings glory to God. You need to be accountable to God, and a responsible steward of your possessions, time, money, gifts, and even your life.

4. Read 1 Corinthians 4:2. What does this teach about being a steward?

5. Using cross references, explain what this means to you.

6. In the following verses list some of the areas where God expects you to be a faithful steward.

Romans 12:6-8 _____

Ephesians 5:15-16 _____

Proverbs 3:9-10 _____

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 _____

7. Read Matthew 25:14-30. On what basis are servants found to be faithful?

Sharing your faith with others should be a main by-product of your personal Bible study. God has called you to help others by passing on what you have learned, and by sharing the testimony of your experiences.

8. Read Philippians 2:14-16. What terms describe the kind of life that reveals Christ through you, that attracts others.

9. Read Matthew 4:19. How can you prepare to share Christ with others?

10. Read Hebrews 4:12. What does God's Word do?

11. Read Isaiah 55:11. What does God promise concerning His Word?

12. Why is it important to introduce those who are lost to Jesus Christ?

Acts 4:12 _____

John 14:6 _____

13. Read John 3:16-18. Pick out four points that you could use to summarize the Gospel.

14. List the things that you think are necessary to escape condemnation?

Personal Interjection:

1. What does Revelation 12:11 mean to you, and why do you think sharing your faith is so important to maintaining your deliverance, recovery and spiritual growth?

2. The Bible tells us that without “vision” we will perish, and without “hope” we become sick. Please share a vision and a hope that you have.

Use these pages to start journaling your thoughts, and to start writing your first testimony.

Recovery thru Redemption #09

Your New Beginning...

Name: _____ Date: _____

As you worked your way through the steps of this program, you learned many important factors about substance abuse, addiction, deliverance and recovery. We mentioned many times that your sustained abstinence is a bi-product of your continued discipleship.

Although continued sobriety is most definitely one of your goals, your primary goal should be conforming to the image of Jesus, by focusing on God, and allowing Him to transform you.

You must never become too comfortable or placid in your spiritual journey. Spiritual maturity or stability does not mean that you can stop seeking God. In fact, it has been said that we never really reach true spiritual maturity until we die and meet Jesus face to face.

It is essential that you remain constantly aware of the situations that surround you. Everyday life is full of trials, pressures, stresses and other temptations that will ultimately be tugging you in the wrong direction.

Salvation is the start of a new life journey. Receiving Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior is only the beginning of your new Christian life. As a born again believer, your life takes on a whole new meaning.

The promises and blessings that God has acknowledged in His Word are waiting to be claimed, but you cannot experience them if you don't know about them. The good news is that once you learn how to receive what God has for you, the devil won't be able to keep you in a life of misery and bondage.

Many people respond to alter calls and say the prayer of salvation because they are prompted with promises of peace, joy, happiness, contentment, freedom, power, success, prosperity, blessings and more. And these are promises from God that we can all receive, but the excitement of these promises often blur the reality of...

2 Corinthians 7:10 – which clearly tells us that it is repentance that leads to salvation.

Luke 13:3 – “...unless you repent, you too will all perish.” NIV

Acts 3:19 – Repent, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out. NIV

Acts 17:30-31 – God commands all people everywhere to repent. For He has set a day when He will judge the world with justice... NIV

Consider this scenario... a man gets on a plane and is handed a parachute. They tell him to put it on and wear it for the flight, as it will make his flight much better, and even more enjoyable. So he agrees to try it, but finds the flight not any better. He can't get comfortable in his seat, and people are pointing and laughing at him, so he jumps up, rips off the chute and throws it to the ground.

Compare this to the man who receives Jesus because he is told that his life will be much better, even more enjoyable. He is prompted with promises of peace, joy, happiness, contentment, freedom, power, success, prosperity, blessings and more. But then the trials, stresses and hardships of life go on, and he is wondering where is this better life he was promised through Jesus.

He has not been working out his salvation with fear and trembling, he is simply looking for the abundant life he was promised, so in anger and bitterness he throws his decision for Jesus to the ground. He may even develop resentment towards the church and decide that the Christian life just isn't for him.

Now, consider this scenario... a man gets on a plane and is handed a parachute. They tell him to put it on and wear it because he will need to jump from the plane about half way through the flight. Despite the fact that he can't get comfortable and people are pointing and laughing, he clings to the chute as if his very life depends on it.

Compare this to the man who receives Jesus as Lord and Savior for the atonement of sins, and righteousness before God on judgment day, to escape the wrath of God and an eternity of torment in the lake of fire. He is not likely to cast off his decision for Jesus, even through the trials of life, because he knows and fears the reality of his eternal life.

Salvation is making a commitment from your heart, to believe and receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior, and turn to God in true repentance, not merely to receive the blessings and promises of an abundant life, but to escape the wrath of God, and the justice of eternal condemnation that we all deserve.

Philippians 2:12 - ...continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” NIV

The good news is that we can know for sure we are saved, and not condemned. We can know for sure where we stand when faced with God's holy justice on judgment day. We can know for sure that we will spend eternity with Him in heaven.

If you do not know for sure that you are saved – if you do not know for sure where you stand with God – you NEED to get right with God today. Go back to step one – Submission – and seek wise godly counsel for becoming a born again, child of God.

The blessings and promises from God's Word are a reality, and an added bonus for those who truly commit their heart to Jesus. As we continue to work out our salvation with reverent fear, faith, love, and trust, we can learn to receive the many promises of peace, joy, contentment, blessings, favor, prosperity, success, healing, freedom and more.

Note the writings of the Apostle Paul in Philippians 4:9-13. He says that he has LEARNED to be content whatever the circumstance. He says that he has LEARNED the SECRET of being content in any and every situation.

He also tells us that whatever we have LEARNED – put it into practice, and the peace of God, and the God of peace WILL be with us.

If the Apostle Paul, one of the greatest men of all time, and one of the most dramatic salvations ever recorded, had to LEARN these things, do you think we might have to learn them as well?

God's great and precious promises don't just fall out of the sky. Receiving from God requires a process of learning His Word and putting it into practice in our lives. We must constantly work on our spiritual growth and discipleship, and continue to build our relationship with the Lord

As mentioned several times before, your recovery and deliverance from your past, is a bi-product of your salvation. God has done His part. He now expects you to do your part, and learn how to walk in the deliverance and freedom He has given you.

The steps outlined in this program walk you through some basic essentials that are needed to get you started on the road of recovery through redemption. As you work through this program, you will start to grow in your spiritual walk with God, building a strong foundation, and loving relationship with Him.

This program and the steps listed here in, are not a one-time deal, and should not be considered as such. Getting to this point does take much time and commitment, but this is only the start of your new life. Spiritual growth is a never ending, life long journey, and your recovery is part of that journey.

Some Essential Points to Remember...

Life is full of uncertainty, doubt, problems, issues, trials, temptations and more. As a Christian, you will have to face all the issues of life, just like everyone else. God did not promise to keep you away from such things, but He did promise to help you through them. As you grow spiritually stronger, you will learn to find God's answer for each situation.

You must realize that life issues and problems do not cause you to use. You can get and remain substance free even with your problems. Don't try to rationalize, make excuses, blame, or justify your situations. This will only lead to deception and a service of self-permission to use.

Your history and self-image are other factors that you must consider. While you were growing up, your brain was conditioned to think in certain ways, directly related to your upbringing. If you have a poor self-image and/or thoughts of things that you cannot do, realize that these are not excuses to use.

You can get and remain substance free even with these thoughts. You might even be able to improve the way you think about yourself, but you may always have limitations in some areas. You must learn to accept your limitations as part of who you are, and don't use them as a reason to relapse.

You must never forget where you came from, where your addiction led you, and how hard it was when you hit bottom. When the enemy starts to fill your mind with lies of how good your past was, remember the reality of the pit it led you into. Remember the fact of how terrible your bottom was. The truth is, if your past was really so good, you most likely would not be seeking to get away from it.

You need to keep seeking God on a daily basis. As mentioned before, recovery is not just about becoming substance free, it is about becoming the person God wants you to be. There are only two directions in this life – towards God or away from God. If you are not seeking to move closer to God, you will be sliding away from Him.

My prayer for you is: that you will continue to seek God and put Him first in your life; that you will continue to increase in spiritual strength; that you will realize your purpose; that you will find your mission in life; that your walk with Christ will help many find salvation; that you will continue to learn through these discipleship meetings; and that your witness will help many find "Recovery thru Redemption" . . .

Matthew 6:33 – But seek FIRST – His Kingdom and His righteousness... NIV

More Memory Verses...

Ephesians 6:10-18 – Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. NIV

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 – For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. NIV

Psalms 18:2 – The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. NIV

You are a shield around me, O LORD... PSALM 3:3

So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Romans 13:12

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him. Romans 15:13

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God. John 14:1

The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in Him. Nahum 1:7

In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength. Isaiah 30:15

Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD is the Rock eternal. Isaiah 26:4

Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. Isaiah 12:2

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. Proverbs 3:5

Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever.
Psalm 125:1

Trust in the LORD; he is your help and shield. Psalm 115:11

I will say of the LORD, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust. Psalm 91:2

Daily Devotional... (Read Out Loud at Least Once a day)...

Surely God is my salvation
I will trust and will not be afraid
The Lord is my strength and my song
He has become my salvation
I am the righteousness of God in Christ

He took up my sickness and carried my sorrows
He was pierced for my transgressions
He was crushed for my iniquities
The Punishment that brought me peace was upon Him
By His wounds I am healed

I am a new creation in Christ
The old has gone and the new has come
I have everlasting life and citizenship in Heaven
I have been delivered from the power of darkness
My name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life

I have power over the enemy
Nothing shall by any means hurt me
I am more than a conquer through Christ Jesus
I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me
No weapon formed against me shall prosper
I have great endurance and patience
His grace is sufficient for me

I cast all my cares on God because He cares for me
My God will never leave me nor forsake me
He upholds me with His righteous right hand
He has given me a spirit of power and love
I am covered by the Blood of the Lamb

Underneath me are the everlasting arms of God
The angel of the Lord surrounds me
The Lord goes before me
Jesus is in me

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days
of my life. Fear has no place in my life. I am healed.
I am filled with the love of God. I am filled with the
joy of the Lord. I am filled with the peace of God.
I am filled with the wisdom of God. I am filled with the
Holy Spirit. My God shall supply ALL my needs according
To HIS riches Glory by Christ Jesus.

NIV Bible Verses from the Book of... Ephesians

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; **to be made new in the attitude of your mind**; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

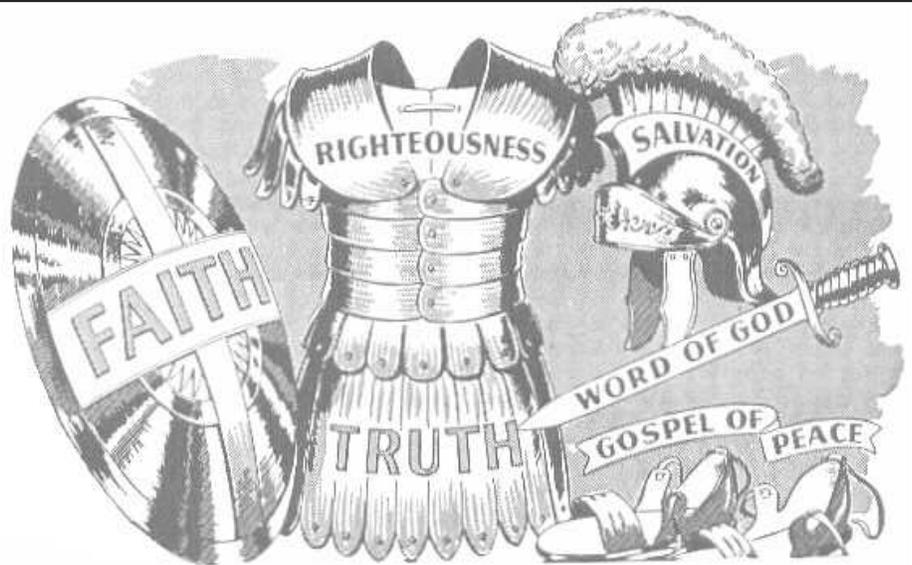
Therefore put off falsehood and **speak truthfully** to your neighbor. In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and **do not give the devil a foothold**.

He who has been stealing must steal no longer. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, **that it may benefit those who listen**.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Be imitators of God as dearly loved children, and **live a life of love, just as Christ loves us**.

Be strong in the Lord and in His Mighty Power. Put on the Full Armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.



Therefore **put on the Full Armor of God**, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

Stand firm then, with the **Belt of Truth** buckled around your waist, with the **Breastplate of Righteousness** in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the **Gospel of Peace**.

In addition to all this, take up the **Shield of Faith**, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the **Helmet of Salvation** and the **Sword of the Spirit**, which is the **Word of God**.

And **Pray in the Spirit** on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and **always keep on praying** for all the saints.

NIV Bible Verses from the Book of Romans, Chapter 12

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil, cling to what is good.

Be devoted to others in brotherly **Love**. Honor others above yourself.

Never be lacking in zeal. Keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, **faithful in prayer**.

Share with God's people who are in need.

Practice hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you.

Bless and do not curse.

Rejoice with those who rejoice.

Mourn with those who mourn.

Live in harmony with one another.

Do not be proud.

Do not be conceited.

Do not repay anyone evil for evil.

Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody.

Live at **Peace** with everyone.

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to

Love one Another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law.

The commandments; do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal,

do not covet and whatever other commands there may be,

are summed up in this one rule: "**Love Your Neighbor as Yourself**"

Love does no harm to its neighbor.



➔ **Therefore LOVE --- IS --- the fulfillment of the law.**

LOVE Devotional...

Dear Heavenly Father,
 You are my Creator, and I Surrender my life to You.
 I know You LOVE me, because you fill me with Your peace.
 I know You LOVE me, because You provide all my needs.
 I know You LOVE me, because you restore my soul.
 I know You LOVE me, because You died for me.

Dear Heavenly Father,
 You are King of Kings, and I Lay Down all
 things for You.
 I know You LOVE me, because You lead
 Me beside still waters.
 I know You LOVE me, because You make
 Me rest in green pastures.
 I know You LOVE me, because You guide
 Me down paths of righteousness.
 I know You LOVE me, because my cup overflows.

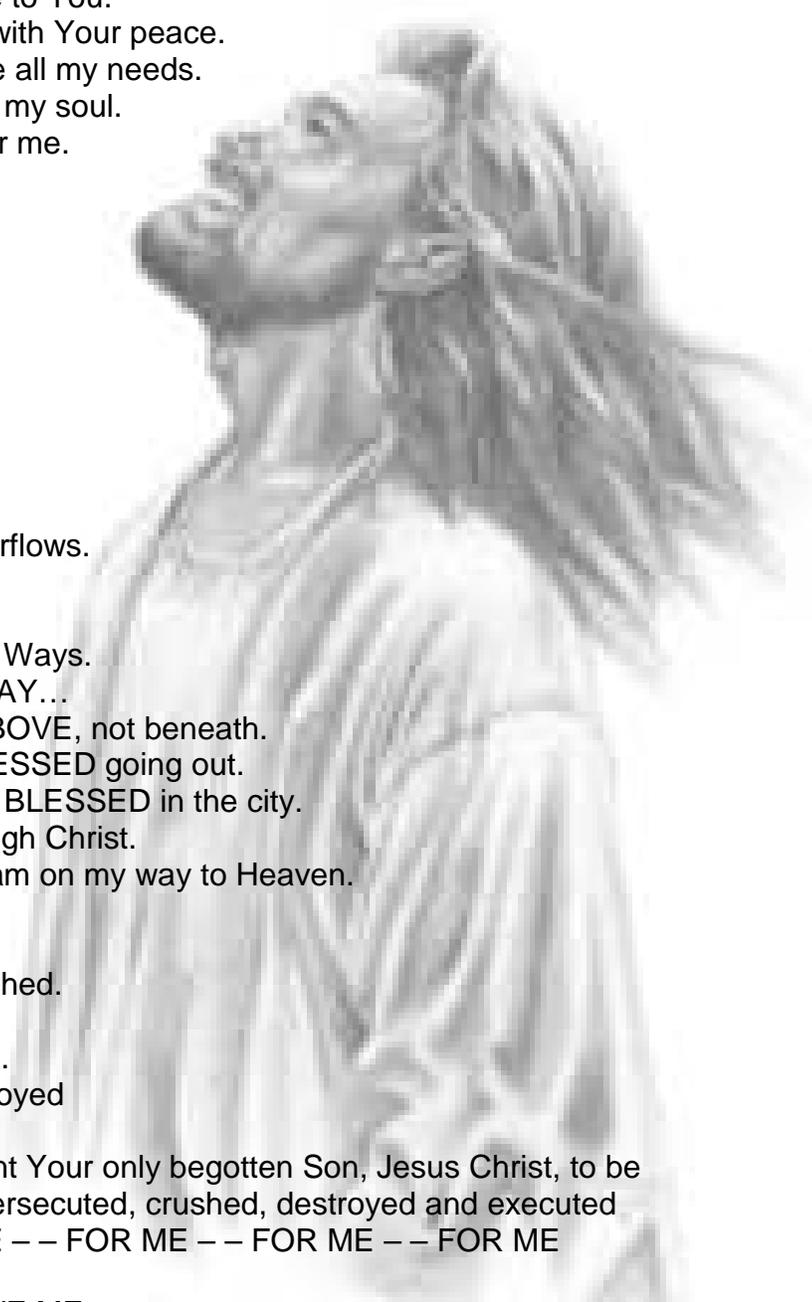
Dear Father God,
 You are Lord of Lords, and I submit to Your Ways.
 I know You LOVE me Lord, because You SAY...
 – I am the HEAD, not the tail – I am ABOVE, not beneath.
 – I am BLESSED coming in – I am BLESSED going out.
 – I am BLESSED in the country – I am BLESSED in the city.
 – I am the Righteousness of God through Christ.
 – I am Saved – I am Forgiven – and I am on my way to Heaven.

I know You LOVE me, because...
 – When hard pressed – I am NOT crushed.
 – When perplexed – NOT in despair.
 – When persecuted – NOT abandoned.
 – When struck down – I am NOT destroyed

I know YOU LOVE me, because You sent Your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to be
 whipped, beaten, scorned, ridiculed, persecuted, crushed, destroyed and executed
 FOR ME -- FOR ME

You did all of this for me because YOU LOVE ME...
 I know You LOVE me, because the life of Jesus now resides within me.
 I know You LOVE me, because through Jesus You offer peace, joy, love, deliverance,
 healing, blessings, success, prosperity, freedom, forgiveness, salvation and so much more.

Dear Heavenly Father,
I know You LOVE me, because You are teaching me to LOVE as You do.



ATTITUDE

The longer I live, the more I realize
the **Impact of Attitude on Life.**

Attitude is more important than facts.
It is more important than the past,
than education, than money,
than circumstances, than failures,
than successes, than what other people
think, or say or do.

It is more important than appearance,
giftedness or skill.

It will make or break a business...
a company... an organization...
a church... a family... a home...
a relationship... a person... etc...

The Remarkable Thing is...

**We Have a Choice Every Day
Regarding the Attitude We
Will Embrace for that Day.**

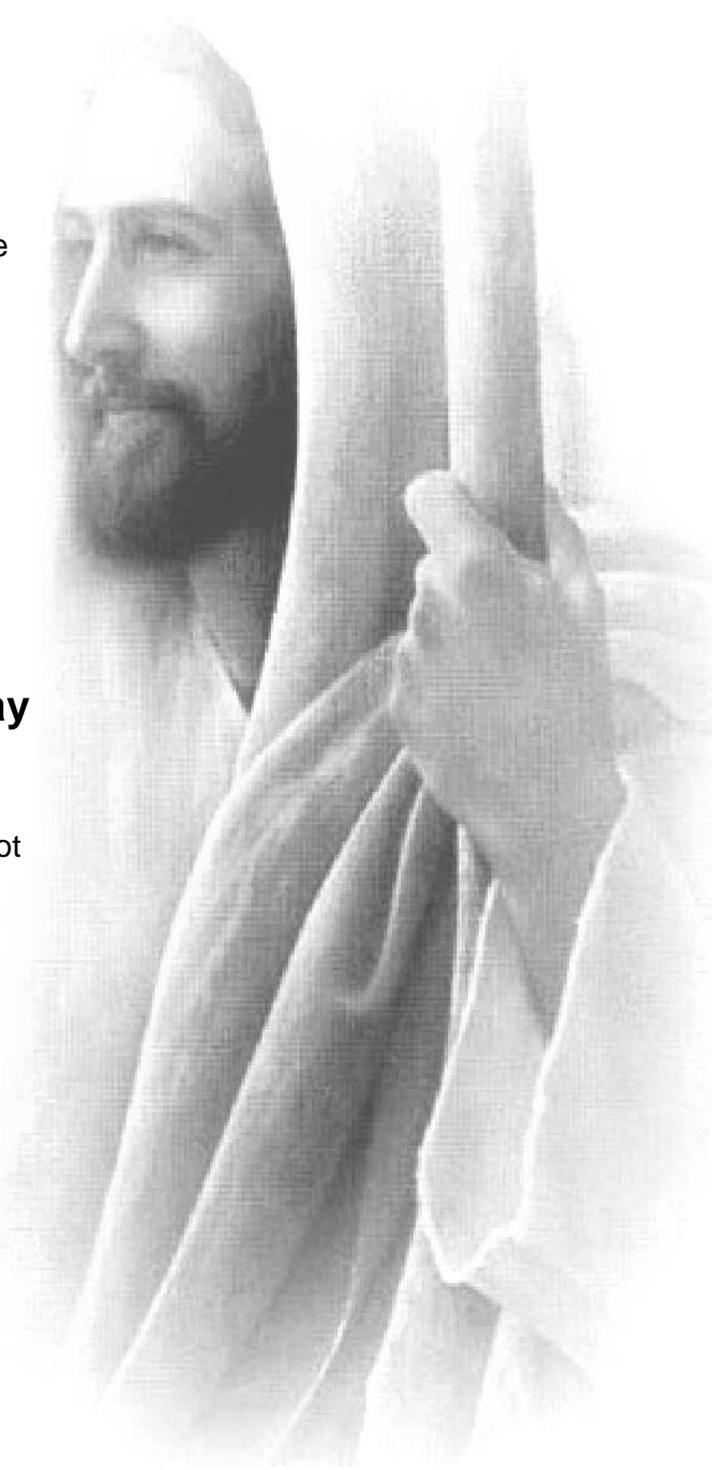
We cannot change the past... we cannot
change the fact that people will act in a
certain way. We cannot change the
inevitable.

The only thing we can do is play on the
one string we have; and that is our
ATTITUDE...

I am convinced that life is 10% what
happens to me...

and 90% how I react to it...

**I WILL EMBRACE A
POSITIVE ATTITUDE
TODAY**



Philippians 2:5 – Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus. NIV.

Resources

The following books and resources used are highly recommended, and can be found at most bookstores. If there are any listed resources that you cannot find, please contact:

3 SOS Ministries, Inc.
Sand Lake, MI 49343

The Holy Bible, NKJV – by: Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Life Application Study Bible, NIV – by: The Zondervan Corporation

New Spirit Filled Life Bible, NKJV – by: Thomas Nelson, Inc.

The Quest Study Bible, NIV – by: The Zondervan Corporation

Recovery Devotional Bible, NIV – by: The Zondervan Corporation

Comparative Study Bible, KJV, Amplified, NAS, NIV – by: The Zondervan Corporation

The Random House Dictionary – by: Random House, Inc.

The New Strong's Complete Dictionary of Bible Words – by: James Strong

The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible – by: James Strong

Your New Life – by: Duane Vander Klok

Baptism in the Holy Spirit – by: Duane Vander Klok

Walking by Faith Articles – by: Duane Vander Klok

Get the Junk out of Your Trunk – by: Duane Vander Klok

Growing Up, Spiritually – by: Kenneth E. Hagin

Crossing the Threshold – Series by Kenneth E. Hagin

Biblical Faith Simplified – Series by Kenneth E. Hagin

Boundaries – by: Henry Cloud

Battlefield of the Mind - by: Joyce Meyers

The Purpose Driven Life – by: Rick Warren

The Purple Book – by: Rice Broock and Steve Murrell

Design for Discipleship – Series by Navpress Books

When the Enemy Strikes – by: Charles F. Stanley

Counter Attack – by: Jay Carty

For an exhaustive list of other books and resources used, please contact the copyright owner.