

Celebrate Recovery Lesson 22 Gratitude

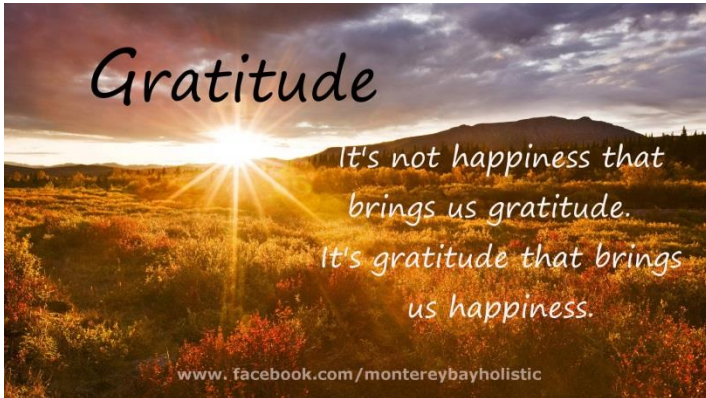
Celebrate Recovery

Lesson 22 Gratitude

Principle 7: Reserve a Daily time with God for self-examination. Bible reading, and prayer in order to know God and his will for my life and to gain the power to follow His will.

Step 11: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and power to carry that out.

“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly.” (Colossians 3:16)



Introduction

Tonight we are going to focus our attention outward rather than inward. We have taken many steps on our road to recovery. Our first step was to admit that we were (and are) **powerless**. Our second step led us to choose, once and for all, **a power by which to live**. We took our third and most important step when we chose to **turn our lives and wills over to the only true Higher Power, Jesus Christ**.

As we continue our journey, we grow in our conscious contact with God and He begins to unfold in our lives. And, as we begin to grow in our understanding of Him, we begin to live out the decision we made in Principle 3. We keep walking now, in peace, as **we maintain inventories on a regular basis** and as we continue to deepen our relationship with Christ. The way we do this according to **Principle 7, is to “reserve a daily time with God.”** During this time we focus on Him by praying and meditating.

Prayer is talking to God. Meditation is listening to God on a daily basis. When I meditate, I don't get into some yoga-type position or murmur, “om, om, um.” I simply focus on and think about God or a certain Scripture verse or maybe even just one or two words. This morning I spent ten or fifteen minutes just trying to focus on one word: **gratitude.**

I need to meditate every morning, but I don't. Some mornings my mind wanders and I find it very difficult to concentrate. Those old familiar friends will come back. You know, that old familiar committee of past dysfunction. **The committee will try to do everything it can to interrupt my quiet time with God.** Through daily working the principles to the best of my ability, however, I've learned to shut them up most of the time. **(Satan, the enemy)**

I've learned to listen to God, who tells me **that I have great worth.** And He will say the same to you — if you will listen.

When I start my day with Principle 7 and end it by doing my daily inventory, I have a pretty good day — a reasonably happy day. This is one way I choose to live “one day at a time” and one way I can prevent relapse.

Another way to prevent relapse, especially during the holidays, is by maintaining an attitude of gratitude.

Gratitude

This week, I suggest that your prayers be focused on your gratitude in four areas of your life: toward God, others, your recovery, and your church. I'm going to ask you to write them down on your **“gratitude list.”** **This is an interactive lesson.**

Celebrate Recovery Lesson 22 Gratitude

We are going to take some time now for you to build your gratitude list.

First, for what are you thankful to God? Offer prayers of gratitude to your Creator.

In *Philippians 4:6*, we're told, *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."*

Psalm 107:15 encourages us to "give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and wonderful deeds for mankind."

What wonderful deeds they are! **What are at least two areas of your life in which you can see God's work and that you are thankful for this holiday season?**

You can reflect on the last eleven months or on what God has done for you this week or even today. Then take a moment to list just a few of the special things for which you are thankful to your Higher Power (God).

The next area is to **list the individuals whom God has placed in your life to walk alongside you** on your road of recovery. We need to be thankful for others.

"Let the peace of Christ keep you in tune with each other, in step with each other. None of this going off and doing your own thing. And cultivate thankfulness. Let the Word of Christ —the Message —have the run of the house" (Colossians 3:15 – 16, MSG).

Who are you thankful for? Why? Take a moment to list them. **The third area we can be thankful for is our recovery.**

"As for us, we have this large crowd of witnesses around us. So then, let us rid ourselves of everything that gets in the way, and of the sin which holds on to us so tightly, and let us run with determination the race that lies before us" (Hebrews 12:1, GNT).

What are two recent growth areas of your recovery for which you are thankful? Again, list them now. **The fourth and final area to be thankful for is your church. "Enter the Temple gates with thanksgiving" (Psalm 100:4, GNT).** What are two things for which you are thankful to your church?

Wrap-Up

Take your "gratitude list" home with you tonight and put it in a place where you will see it often. It will remind you that you have made progress in your recovery and that you are not alone, that Jesus Christ is always with you.

Using your gratitude list, going to your recovery meetings and making them a priority, and getting involved in service in your church are the best ways I know to prevent relapse during the holidays.

Celebrate Recovery
Lesson 22 Gratitude

Gratitude List Principle 7-Step 11

I'm thankful to God:

I'm thankful to God for placing others in my life:

I'm thankful for my recovery program: _____

I'm thankful for my church: _____

Remember, maintaining an "attitude of gratitude" is the best prevention against relapse. (Philippians 4: 6-7, NCV):

"Do not worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks. And God's peace, which is so great we cannot understand it, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

Baker, John. Celebrate Recovery Updated Leader's Guide (p. 239). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

Let's close in prayer.

Dear God, help me set aside all the hassles and noise of the world to focus and listen just to You for the next few minutes. Help me get to know You better. Help me to better understand Your plan, Your purpose for my life. Father, help me live within today, seeking Your will and living this day as You would have me.

It is my prayer to have others see me as Yours; not just in my words but more importantly, in my actions. Thank You for Your love, Your grace, Your perfect forgiveness. Thank You for all those You have placed in my life, for my program, my recovery, and my church family. Your will be done, not mine. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray Amen.

**Celebrate Recovery
Lesson 22 Gratitude**

Think/write/discuss

1. Why do you think it is important for you to maintain an “attitude of gratitude” in your recovery?

2. In what three areas of your recovery are you especially thankful for God’s power? Try to think of areas of growth or positive change in you that only God could have accomplished.

3. Name three people God has placed in your recovery to whom you are grateful and why?

1.

2.

3.

4. For what three areas of your recovery ministry, small groups, or other events are you thankful? Why?

1.

2.

**Celebrate Recovery
Lesson 22 Gratitude**

3.

5. List three things that you are thankful for in your church. Be specific.

1.

2.

3.

6. Congratulations! You have just completed your first gratitude list. Review it. How does it make you feel?

Let the individuals on your list know what an impact they have had on your recovery, and thank each of them personally!

Principle 7b Verses

“The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us do what is tight” (2 Timothy 3:16, TLB).

“Now your attitudes and thoughts must all be constantly changing for the better” (Ephesians 4:23, TLB).

“Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10).

“Listen to this: Stop and notice God’s miracles” (Job 37:14, NCV).

“And if you leave God’s paths and go astray, you will hear a voice behind you say, ‘No, this is the way; walk here’” (Isaiah 30:21, TLB).

“Oh, the joys of those who do not follow evil men’s advice, who do not hang around with sinners, scoffing at the things of God. But they delight in doing everything God wants them to, and day and night are always meditating on His laws and thinking about ways to follow Him more closely” (Psalm 1:1-2, TLB).

“So now you can look forward soberly and intelligently to more of God’s kindness to you when Jesus Christ returns. Obey God because you are His children; don’t slip back into your old ways – doing evil because you knew no better” (1 Peter 1:13-14, TLB).

**Celebrate Recovery
Lesson 22 Gratitude**

“Watch your step. Stick to the path and be safe. Don’t sidetrack; pull back your foot from danger” (Proverbs 4:26-27, TLB).

“Watch with Me and pray lest the Tempter overpower you. For though the spirit is willing enough, the body is weak” (Mark 14:38, TLB).

“Be glad for all God is planning for you. Be patient in trouble, and prayerful always” (Romans 12:12, TLB).

“You are living a brand new kind of life that is continually learning more and more of what is right, and trying constantly to be more and more like Christ who created this new life within you” (Colossians 3:10, TLB).

“If you want to know what God wants you to do, ask Him, and He will gladly tell you, for He is always ready to give a bountiful supply of wisdom, to all who ask Him; He will not resent it” (James 1:5 TLB).

Prayer

“Dear God, help me set aside all the hassles and noise of the world to focus and listen just to You for the next few minutes. Help me get to know You better. Help me to better understand Your plan, Your purpose for my life. Father, help me live within today, seeking Your will and living this day as You would have me.

It is my prayer to have others see me as Yours; not just in my words, but more importantly, in my actions. Thank You for Your love, Your grace, Your perfect forgiveness. Thank You for all those You have placed in my life, for my program, my recovery, and my church family. Your will be done, not mine. In Your Son’s name I pray, Amen.”