

## Success In Recovery

There are many steps and principles that will bring us success in our recovery process, and this study does not claim to be a complete list by any means. However, we are going to look at a few Scriptures that give us some **basic principles from God's word** that will help in our recovery, and in many areas of our walk with the Lord.

•**Isaiah 57:14-21** "And it shall be said, 'Build up, build up, prepare the way, remove every obstacle out of the way of My people.' For thus says the High and Exalted One who lives forever, whose name is Holy, 'I dwell on a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly (humble) of spirit, in order to revive the heart of the contrite. For I will not contend forever, neither will I always be angry; for the spirit would grow faint before Me, and the breath (soul) of those whom I have made. Because of the iniquity of his unjust gain I was angry and struck him; I hid My face and was angry, and he went on turning away (rebelliously), in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and to his mourners, creating the praise of the lips. Peace, peace to him who is far and to him who is near,' says the Lord, 'and I will heal him. But the wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet (rest) and its waters churn up refuse and mud. There is no peace,' says my God, 'for the wicked.'"

**1.) Remove Obstacles** — Isaiah 57:14 "And it shall be said, '**Build up, build up**, prepare the way, **remove every obstacle** out of the way of My people.'" The first step is to **remove obstacles and stumbling blocks from your way**. Don't keep things around that remind you of your addiction or your past sinful life in any way - they are stumbling blocks. This includes **friendships** with people who do not encourage you in your recovery or in your walk with Christ. Don't keep friendships with people who drag you down. Don't hang out with friends who are still drinking or using drugs, if that is your area of weakness. Don't go to unsaved family or friends for **counsel or advice**, especially if they are full of negativity, or pull you down into depression. Don't go out with old friends who are living a sexually immoral life, if that is your area of weakness. Fellowship with people who will **BUILD you up**, not tear you down or cause you to stumble. Read, study and meditate in God's word "day and night" to build up your faith and your spiritual strength.

•**Proverbs 4:14-15** "Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not proceed in the way of evil men. Avoid it, do not pass by it, **turn away from it** and pass on. For they cannot sleep unless they do evil; and they are robbed of sleep unless they make some stumble."

•**Proverbs 1:10 & 15** "My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. My son, do not walk in the way with them, keep your feet from their path."

•**Psalm 1:1-2** "Blessed is the man who does not walk in **the counsel of the ungodly**, nor stands in the way of (hangs out with) sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful (scoffers); but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night."

**2.) Humble Yourself** — Verse 15 "For thus says the High and Exalted One who lives forever, whose name is Holy, 'I dwell on a high and holy place, and also with the **CONTRITE and lowly of spirit (humble)**, in order **to revive the HEART** of the contrite.'" If you want to have a close relationship with the Lord, and "dwell with Him in a high and holy place," you **MUST** come to a place where you **HUMBLE** yourself before Him, and weep and mourn for the awfulness of your sin. You must come to God with a broken heart, not with **PRIDE** and arrogance, or rationalizing your sins. This mourning and weeping will not last forever, as God desires to "REVIVE the heart of the contrite" (the one who is sorry for their sins), and Jesus said He came to "**HEAL the broken hearted**." There is much **JOY** in the Christian life, but only after you have

come to God with a broken and contrite spirit, and THEN He will lift you up (exalt you), heal you, and give you His joy.

•**Luke 4:18** "He has sent Me **to heal the broken hearted**, to preach deliverance to the captives, recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty those who are oppressed."

•**Matthew 5:3-4** "Blessed are the **poor in spirit** (humble), for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

•**Psalm 34:18** "The Lord is near to those who have a **broken heart**; and saves such as are of a **contrite spirit**."

•**James 4:8-10** "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you SINNERS; and **PURIFY your HEARTS**, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to gloom. **Humble yourselves** in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you."

**3.) Get Rid of Rebellion — Vs. 16-17** "For I will not contend forever, neither will I always be angry; for the spirit would grow faint before Me, and the breath (soul) of those whom I have made. Because of the iniquity of his unjust gain **I was angry** and struck him; **I hid My face and was angry**, and **he went on turning away (rebelliously), in the way of his heart.**" Rebellion is a killer. To go on in your own way, to keep drinking, using drugs, living a sexually immoral life, or whatever is keeping you estranged from the Lord, is stupid at best, and deadly in some cases (I John 5:16-17). Some people just don't like the idea of obeying or "fearing God," because they want a "touchy-feely" religion, and want to think of God ONLY as a loving, indulgent Heavenly Father. God IS a loving God, but He is not indulgent - **He practices "tough love."** There are negative consequences for disobeying God, just as there are positive consequences (blessings) for obeying God.

•**I Samuel 15: 22** "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in OBEYING the voice of the Lord? Behold, **to OBEY** is better than sacrifice....for **rebellion** is as the sin of witchcraft, and **stubbornness** is as iniquity and idolatry."

•**Proverbs 1:22-33** "How long, you simple (naive, ignorant) ones, will you love simplicity? For scorners delight in their scorning. And **FOOLS hate knowledge**. Turn (repent) at My reproof; surely I will pour out My Spirit on you; I will make My words known to you. Because I have called and you refused, I have stretched out My hand and no one regarded, because you despised (ignored) all **My counsel**, and would have none of My reproof, I will also laugh at your calamity.....when distress and anguish come upon you. Then you will call on Me, but I will not answer; they will seek Me diligently, but they will not find me. Because they hated knowledge and **did not CHOOSE the FEAR of the Lord**, they would have none of My counsel and despised all My reproof, therefore they shall eat the fruit of **their own way**, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away (rebellion) of the simple will slay them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them; but whoever listens to Me will dwell safely, and will be secure, without fear of evil."

•**Proverbs 8:13** "The **FEAR of the LORD is to hate evil**; pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the disobedient (rebellious) mouth do I hate."

**4.) Let God Heal You — Vs. 18-19** "I have seen his ways, but **I will HEAL him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him** and to his mourners, creating the praise of the lips. Peace, peace to him who is far and to him who is near,' says the Lord, 'and **I will HEAL him.**" God is truly a God of grace, mercy and more-than-second chances. If you are still alive here on this earth, there is still **hope for God to heal you, deliver you from your destructive behavior**, and put you back on the path of righteousness and blessing. Not only for your own benefit, but He will use the testimony of your healing and deliverance to bring many more to faith in Jesus Christ.

•**Psalm 40:1-4** "I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined to me, and heard my cry. **He brought me up out of the pit of destruction**, out of the miry clay; and he set

my feet upon a rock, making my footsteps firm. And He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God; many will see it and fear, and will trust in the Lord."

•**James 5:14-16** "Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and **the prayer of faith will HEAL the one who is sick**, and the Lord will raise him up, and **if he has committed SINS, they will be FORGIVEN him.**"

•**Psalm 103:2-3** "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not **all His benefits**: Who FORGIVES ALL your iniquities; who HEALS ALL your diseases, who **redeems your life from destruction**, and who crowns you with mercy (loving kindness) and compassion. "

**5.) Surrender Completely** — Vs. 20-21 "But the wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet (rest) and its waters churn up refuse and mud. **There is no peace,**' says my God, 'for the wicked.'" Although this Scripture is referring to the non-Christian (the "wicked"), it can apply to the Christian who is not walking in obedience to the Lord. You cannot have the **true joy and peace of Jesus** in your life if you still have some dark corners of sin you have not confessed to Him and repented of. There must be complete surrender of your life to the Lord, without any compromise, before you can experience His peace. If your life is full of turbulence and confusion, without any rest or peace in trusting God, there may be some sin you are holding onto and have not yet confessed to the Lord.

•**Psalm 46:10** "Be still (at peace), and know that I am God..."

•**Philippians 4:6-9** "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and **the PEACE of God**, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is any PRAISE — meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these DO, and **the God of PEACE** will be with you."

•**Colossians 3:15** "And LET the PEACE of CHRIST rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be THANKFUL."

God promises you His peace in these verses, but EXPERIENCING His peace is not automatic. You have to **LET it rule in your heart**, and NOT allow your heart to be troubled. The only way you can do that is to **TAKE your thoughts captive** whenever negative thoughts come into your mind (II Cor. 10:3-5), **REPLACE those negative thoughts with the WORD of GOD**, and **be THANKFUL and PRAISE the Lord** for EVERY situation and circumstance in your life. Jesus said that **you CAN have PEACE** in the midst of tribulation (John 16:33) simply because you TRUST in Him, and He promises that He will work ALL things together for your GOOD (Rom. 8:28). However, you will not **experience His PEACE** until you believe it, and start thanking Him for everything and **praising Him in all situations**. You CAN'T AFFORD to lean and rely on your own understanding (Proverbs 3:5-6). God is much smarter and far more powerful than you are, and **He is in control of your life! Start acting like it!** Then and only then will you have real peace and victory in your life, and then God will be able to start making whatever changes need to be made. Until you trust Him completely, you block His power from working in your life by your unbelief (Matthew 13:58).