

The Wreck & Then The Recovery



Psalms 38

The devastation of active addiction can be compared to that of a terrible car accident. The addict or alcoholic finds themselves lying by the side of the road, with compound fractures and lacerations. They are bleeding, broken and desperate for help. EMS takes them to the hospital where their broken bones are set; wounds are cleaned, stitched and dressed. They still feel terrible, but once those bones are set the healing process can begin. After a few days or a few weeks they begin the long, grueling process of rehabilitation. Their muscles are weak and it seems as though every part of them aches with pain and unrest. Their therapist knows exactly what they need and he pushes them to do things they never thought they could do. It hurts, and they want to quit a thousand times, but they keep going, getting stronger each day. After what seems an eternity, they find themselves laughing again and thinking about life outside the walls of the rehab clinic. They realize they do have a lot to live for. They understand, far more than most people, what it takes to go through this painful rehabilitation process.

1. *Chemical Dependence*...Alcohol, drugs, inhalants, prescriptions, etc: (a) Thinks that using will solve problems (b) Breaks self-imposed limits on using. (c) Lies to hide using from loved ones, employer and friends. (d) Negative impact on relationships, work and health. (e) Has to use to feel normal.
2. *Sexual Addiction*... (a) Can't control sexual appetite. (b) Lies to hide behavior from others. (c) Negative impact on relationships, work and health. (d) Creates and lives in fantasy world of sexual exploits.

Isa 40:28-31 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. 29 He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. 30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, 31 But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.



1. The prophet Isaiah gave us this promise in scripture of waiting upon the Lord. He tells us how God has proclaimed a message of hope to all who are discouraged, frightened or injured. He tells us to hope in the Lord for healing is to trust Him fully with our lives and His restoration process; it involves looking to Him as our source of help, healing and grace in our time of need.
2. Those who hope in the Lord are promised: (a) God's strength to revive them in their midst of exhaustion, injury and weakness, suffering or trial. (b) The ability to rise above their difficulties and strongholds like an eagle that soars into the sky. (c) The ability to run spiritually without tiring and to walk steadily forward in recovery without fainting. (d) God promises that if His people will patiently wait and trust, He will provide whatever is needed to sustain and heal their brokenness.

Ps 38:6-8 I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. 7 For my loins are full of inflammation, And there is no soundness in my flesh. 8 I am feeble and severely broken; I groan because of the turmoil of my heart.

It took most of us years to sink into the oblivion of chemical dependency, and we probably spent many of those years as troubled, feeble and severely broken individuals. We used to allow alcoholic beverages or drugs to control every area of our lives, making us liars and manipulators in order to avoid living with our self. For some it may not take as long to come back as it did to go down and for others freedom from active addiction is still just a desire that may never come to pass. For the addict or alcoholic who *truly repents* and *surrenders* his will and his life to God and recovery must understand; Restoration is going to be slow and even at times painful. The road to recovery is a road of honesty, open-mindedness' and willingness that should be taken hand-in hand with God, *one- step and one-day at a time*.

Matt 6:34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

1. In recovery we must live a *"One Day at a Time"* program otherwise the wreckage and insanity we have lived in will once again come to pass. The common definition of insanity is: *"Doing the same thing over and over but expecting different results."*
2. People, who live in insanity, live in a fantasy world. Sometimes their fantasies are wonderful dreams, but for those in bondage to drugs or alcohol more often they are horrific nightmares.
3. Those who struggle with addictions to chemicals, alcohol, food, sex, gambling or fixing others' problems often fall into the category of being insane because we keep drinking, drugging, starving, having immoral sex, bingeing, looking for the next big win or trying to control uncontrollable people. We assure ourselves, "This time it will be different." *But it's not!* Another tragic wreck, more pain and more time needed for ongoing healing. *Physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.*
4. The addicted live in a world of confusion. They live in a junkyard of wreckage and debris. Some have felt tremendous shame for being out of control. While others have hardened their heart to God and the leading of the Holy Spirit. They have moved beyond shame, feeling and caring. *As long as they can lie, con or manipulate the situation they believe they are still in control.*
5. Some find themselves in the pits of guilt, for what they're doing to themselves and those they love. Others harden their heart and continue on destroying themselves and those that were *once* nearest and dearest. They don't know why they keep doing the same destructive behavior over and over again, *but they can't stop doing it.*
6. Some are desperate to quit, but can't do it on their own. *But, who is this God we can turn to? What is He like? How can we relate to Him?* These questions have been asked for centuries and thankfully they are answered in the pages of Scripture and testimonies of countless believers whose lives have been transformed by the one true and living God.

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



1. God so loved the world.....This verse reveals the heart and purpose of God. (a) His love is wide enough to embrace all people. *Even you and I. . .* (b) God gave his Son as an offering for sin on the cross. (c) *"Perish"* is often the forgotten word. It points out not to physical death but to the dreadful reality of eternal punishment.
2. The world through Him might be saved and *"Eternal Life"* is the gift God bestows on us when we are born again. Perhaps tonight is a good time to make sure that your name is in the right book. (*The Book of Life*) Knowing that He came so that through Him you might be saved.

*Titus 3:3-7 For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. 4 **But** when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

1. In this passage Paul gives a not-too-pleasant description of people apart from God and this scripture reveals also the kind of people that He loves.
2. He pulls no punches as he paints the picture of people who made foolish decisions and lived entirely self-centered and self-focused lives. Then, he uses an important word....**"But."** Our condition apart from God could not have been worse, **"But"** God loved us enough to reach out to us through Jesus Christ. To rescue us from the wreckage and change our lives that we should become heirs of His promise.
3. The *"Great News"* is that God doesn't demand that we *"clean up our act"* before we come to him. **No**, we come to him as broken addicts or bruised alcoholics who have found themselves lying in the wreckage of life with compound fractures and lacerations. Bleeding, broken, needy people who are desperate for healing.
4. We are a mess, and He desires to heal us. We were headed down a collision course, but he desires to point us back in the right direction. We come as we are and He changes us from the inside out.

Matt 22:37-40 Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

1. When we finally came to the realization that God could and did for us what we could never do for ourselves, we can now see through His eyes, the new patients in wheelchairs coming into rehab for the first time. We can reassure them that they too can make it through all the suffering and discipline. *We can give them hope!*
2. Through the newcomer we can relate to this analogy: We remember the sense of shock and desperation of those first weeks when we finally were able to say, "*My life was a wreck!*" But now, God has shown me how to renew my strength and soar on eagle's wings clean and sober.
3. Be that flesh-and blood example of someone who has courage, tenacity and wisdom given from God. Be that individual who carries the message to those who may still limp from past wounds. Be that individual who not only talks the talk, but be that individual walking with Christ through this recovery process as a light in this world of sin and darkness.