


The Potholes of Life


Luke 15:11-32

While hopping frantically about and not taking into consideration his surroundings a frog happened to slip into a very large pothole along a country road. All the frogs' attempts at jumping out of this pothole were in vain. He should know how to get out; after all he had done it multiple times before. But, then again this hole seemed to be much deeper. Soon a rabbit came upon the imprisoned frog and offered to help him out. He, too, failed in all his attempts. Over and over again various animals from the forest tried to help the poor frog out by coaxing him to jump higher and be stronger in his attempts. But, finally they all surrendered their aid and gave up. "We'll go and get you some food," they said. "Through all your attempts and all of ours it looks like you are going to be here awhile, if not forever."  However, not long after they had left him there in that pothole, they heard the frog hopping along after them. They couldn't believe it! "We thought you would never get out!" they explained. "Oh, I couldn't," replied the frog. "But you see, just over the edge of that hole I could see a big, dark and ugly object coming straight at me and I ultimately had to get out of there or die in the pothole because death was imminent."

1. It is only when we ultimately have to get out of those potholes of life that we can change. As long as our addict minds believe we have acceptable options, we will not change. *Options for us no longer work.*
2. ***Luke 15:14-16 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.***
3. Headstrong and wayward, the prodigal son demanded all his inheritance so he could leave home and do as he pleased without interference from anyone. His father, knowing there was nothing he would be able to do or say that would change his son's mind, watched him go.
4. The same mulish determination to go our own way is seen in the addict. We are going to do as we please, when we please and as much as we want. If the addict chooses to squander away his inheritance by falling into another pothole all of the arguments, nagging, begging, pleading, threats, or ultimatums thrown will never stop him. Not even his coming to the point of longing to fill his stomachs with the slop the pigs eat.
5. The parable of the prodigal son illustrates that when we are looking up from the bottom of the pothole or pigpen it is possible to come to the understanding that it stinks down there and we had better get out, stay away from and avoid at all costs our personal potholes in life and get back to the Father's house.

Rom 7:15-For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.

1. Addicts and alcoholics understand the meaning of this verse better than most. We want to do what is right, but never seem able to succeed. We want to be restored to our families and to become respected members of the community. But, our craving for drugs or alcohol is so powerful that in our flesh alone we cannot overcome it and we fall into another pothole of life.
2. As we are looking up and over the edge of that hole with vague uneasiness, we know while in active addiction our ability to be what God has called us to be and our vision and purpose in Him is slipping away. Something big, dark and ugly is coming straight at us and; if *we don't get out of that hole we can die both spiritually and physically.*
3. While in that hole we become strangers to our loved ones. To get our drug of choice, whatever that may be we will lie, cheat and steal with animal cunning in an effort to outsmart those who are actually trying to help us.

4. We make miserable exhibitions of ourselves before anyone who happens to be around, yet we are too proud to admit that we have a problem. We hate what we are and long for help, yet are too self-centered to ask for it.
5. Added to all those doubts and inner problems is an inner nagging that people neither love nor respect us. *But, why should they?* In fact, we even lose any love or self-respect we may have had for ourselves. We are caught in a terrifying wheel within a wheel. We are trying to make it in recovery and back to the Father's house while at the same time we are trying to satisfy our cravings. *Experiencing yet, as we look up to the edge of that deep pothole, another failure.*
6. We make those fox hole cries and promises: *"I promise me."* *"I promise you."* *"I promise God"* to leave drugs and alcohol alone. But, once again we fall into the pothole of active addiction. This is followed by a full scale losing battle and another miserable sickening drunk or drug episode that goes onto another.
7. Over and over again various animals (*family & recovery friends*) tried to help the poor frog  out. (the addicted) They tried coaxing him to jump higher and be stronger in his attempts, but finally they all surrendered their aid and gave up.
8. *At last we reach that place.* We reach the deepest pothole where we are convinced that there is no hope for us, and we give ourselves over to the dark misery of existing from one bottle to another. One pill to another. One hit off that crack pipe to another. One pornographic movie to another. One affair to another. One needle to another. And another. And another. And another. And another.
9. Yet, we are still attempting to convince our families and friends we are still in charge of our lives and we can still stop this addict behavior any time we want. In all truthfulness and reality we know we are helpless and alone. *And the higher we jump the further the edge of that pothole seems away.*

Avoid Those Potholes of Life By
Living One-Day-At-A-Time

Jesus taught the value of living one day at a time. He said to His disciples, *"Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof"* (Matthew 6:34)

1. Whether we have failed or succeeded in the past makes no difference because we must start where we are today in this 24-hour period. Each day has its own potholes, troubles and challenges to be reasonably handled, without worrying about all the hypothetical problems that could arise tomorrow or next week.
2. It took many of us years to sink into our deepest and yet darkest pothole of addiction and we pray that it won't take as long to get back out as it did to fall in. It is our responsibility to avoid the potholes which could lead us back to our old ways. We need to remove--- or remove ourselves from—those people, places, things and thoughts which will tempt us. When we cannot avoid such contact we need to prepare in advance to deal with it. *If we fail to plan, then we plan to fail.*
3. Don't become discouraged or impatient for God to work in your life and recovery. Understand that restoration can be slow, it will not be easy but it can be easier if you just take it: *"One Day at a Time."* Be constantly alert and ready to deal with signs of trouble by walking hand in hand with God *"One Step at a Time."*

4. In recovery and especially in early recovery we may ask, "Am I only kidding myself?" "How in the world am I ever going to get through the rest of my life with never taking another drink?" "How can I ever be sure that I won't drink or drug again as long as I live, especially when I don't know what the future holds for me?"
5. Answer is: Working a "One Day at a Time" program and taking one sure and solid step at a time because frantically leaping around like that frog can only land you in another terrifying situation. 🐸
6. Truthfully, for many of us living in the here and now, a 24-hour segment, or a "One Day at a Time" program is going to be the only way we will ever reach the long-objective goal of staying clean and sober. **Prov 27:1 Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring forth.**
7. Emotionally speaking we must not live in our yesterdays or our tomorrows. We must live just "One Day at a Time" for only 12 months out of the year. 52 weeks...365 days...8,760 hours... 525,600 minutes. "Within that time period of "One Day at a Time" we must live that day according to God's will and God's Word. If not, there could be an even deeper pothole coming up around the next bend of your life and recovery.
8. God's grace comes in 24-hour a day doses and that is the best way for us to face life. Not trying to escape back into our past or into our unknown tomorrows. The grace God provides is sufficient and there is strength promised by Him for the troubles that may arise.. "Just For Today."
9. Choosing recovery "One Day at a Time" means choosing life. We must decide, "Just For Today" in this 24-hour period that we want to live and be free. Every time we avoid the pothole of self-destructive behavior, we choose recovery. *We choose life. We have chosen to obey God and live.*

Lam 3:22-26 22 Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. 24 "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!" 25 The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him. 26 It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the LORD.

Do Not Boast About Tomorrow

James 4:13-17 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. 15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." 16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. 17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

*We never know what this 24-hour day will bring,
But, rest assured there is an answer in God's Word for every situation
And we can only follow His instructions one-day-at-a-time.*