

Quest 180°

Christ Centered Recovery

July 5-12

Lesson #3 Hope

Principle 2 (Step 2)

July 19-26

Lesson #4 Sanity

Principle 2 (Step 2)

JULY '07

find hope • get connected • discover grace

Principle 2: Earnestly believe that God exists, that I matter to Him, and that He has the power to help me to recover.

Happy are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Step 2: Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. Plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope (Jeremiah 29:11).

Biblical Teaching of the Week:

Persistent Seeking – Job 14:1-6

Saying that we “came to believe” suggests a process. Belief is the result of consideration, doubt, reasoning, and concluding. The ability to form beliefs is part of what it means to be made on God’s image. It involves emotion and logic. It leads to action. What then, is the process that leads us to solid belief and changes in life?

We start with our own experiences, and we see what doesn’t work. Looking at the condition of our life, we realize that we don’t have enough power to overcome our dependency. We try with all our might, but to no avail. When we are quiet enough to listen, we hear that still, small voice inside us saying, “There is a God, and he is extremely powerful.” The apostle Paul said it this way: “*For the truth about God is known to (all people) instinctively. God has put his knowledge in their hearts*” (Romans 1:19).

Recognizing our internal weaknesses is the first step toward recovery. When we look beyond ourselves, we see that there are others who have struggled with an addiction and recovered. We know that they, too, were unable to heal themselves, yet they now live free of addictive behaviors. We conclude that there must be a greater Power that helped them. Since we can see the similarities between their struggles and our own, we come to believe that our Powerful God can restore us to sanity. This is where many people are when they get to Step Two, and it’s a good place to be on the way to recovery.

Coming to Believe – Romans 1:18-20

One thing that may make it hard to believe in God is that life often seems unfair to us. We didn’t ask to be born into a dysfunctional family! We didn’t have any say over the injustices we have suffered! We didn’t choose our predisposition toward addiction. And yet, we are held accountable for things we can’t control on our own. This makes it hard to initially turn to God as the Power to restore our sanity. He seems unreasonable in his demands.

Job understood these feelings. In the midst of his suffering he said, “*How frail is humanity! How short is life, and how full of trouble! Like a flower, we blossom for a moment and then wither. Like the shadow of a passing cloud, we quickly disappear. Must you keep an eye on such a frail creature and demand an accounting from me? Who can create purity in one born impure?*” (Job 14:1-4). These are good questions—ones that most of us have asked in one form or another. Job persisted in his questioning because deep inside he believed God to be good and fair, even though life wasn’t. He was honest with his emotions and questions, but he never stopped seeking God.

There is a good answer to the question Job posed, one that will satisfy both our heart and mind. It will be found, however, only by those who are willing to work through the pain and unfairness of life and still seek God. Those who seek him will find him. In God’s loving arms, they will also find the answers they seek.

Lesson #3: Hope

Excerpt from current Celebrate Recovery Lesson:

Hope
Hope

While admitting we are powerless, we need to be careful not to cover the bottomless pit of our hurts, hang-ups, and habits with layers of denial or just try some quick-fix. We need to keep the hurts exposed to the light so that through God's power they can truly heal. The story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15 is about a father's love for his lost son, and is really a picture of God's love for you. God is looking for you, no matter how lost you feel. And He can find you, no matter how many times you have fallen into sin. God's hands of mercy are reaching out to pick you up and to love and forgive you.

Higher Power — Many people today believe their doubts and doubt their beliefs! Have you ever seen love or faith? Of course not. But you have seen ACTS of love and faith; they are invisible spiritual realities. The first four words of Step 2 are, "We came to believe..." Saying this in a situation describes a process. Belief is a result of consideration, doubt, reasoning, and concluding.

Openness to change — Hope opens doors where despair closes them! Hope discovers what can be done instead of grumbling about what can't be done. "*Now your attitudes and thoughts must all be constantly changing for the better...You must be a new and different person*" (Ephesians 4:23).

Power to change — This power comes from God's grace; hope draws its power from a deep trust in God, like that of the psalmist who wrote, "*Lead me; teach me; for you are the God who gives me salvation. I have no hope except in you*" (Psalm 25:5).

Expect to change — You can't do anything unless you get started, so how much faith do you need to get started? Matthew 17:20 tells us that "*if you had faith as small as a tiny mustard seed you could say to this mountain, 'Move' and it would go far away. Nothing would be impossible.*"

It's reassuring to know that you do not need large amounts of faith to begin the recovery process. You need only a small amount, "as small as a tiny mustard seed," to effect change and to begin to move your mountains of hurts, hang-ups, and habits.

Hebrews 11:6 tells us, "*Anyone who comes to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*" Psalm 62:5 says, "*Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my HOPE comes from him.*"

In the first principle, we admitted we were powerless. It is through this admission of our powerlessness that we are able to BELIEVE and RECEIVE God's power to help us recover.

It's in the 2nd principle that we come to believe that God exists, that we ARE important to Him. We come to understand that God wants to fill our lives with His love, His joy, and His presence.

Once we tap into God's power, Christ-like actions will follow naturally as by-products of working the principles and following the one and only Higher Power, Jesus Christ.

REMEMBER: You are only at the 2nd step! DON'T QUIT BEFORE THE MIRACLE HAPPENS! With God's help, the changes that you have longed for are just STEPS away. "*I am sure that God, who began a good work in you, will keep right on helping you grow in His grace until his task within you is finished on that day when Jesus Christ returns*" (Philippians 1:6).

God wants to fill our lives
with His love,
His joy, & His presence.

“ When you get into a tight place and everything goes against you, ‘till it seems as though you could not hold on a minute longer, never give up then, for that is just the place and time that the tide will turn. *Harriet Beecher Stow* ”

Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all. *Dale Carnegie*

Hope begins in the dark, the stubborn hope that if you just show up and try to do the right thing, the dawn will come. You wait and watch and work: You don't give up. *Anne Lamott* ”

July 5

Focus Questions:

Lesson #3 Hope

Step 2: We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

- 1 Before taking this step, where were you trying to find hope either as you began your recovery or as you were dealing with a loved one's hurts, habits or hang-ups?
- 2 What do you believe about God? What are some of His characteristics?
- 3 How are your feelings for your heavenly Father and your earthly father alike? How do they differ? (Parents – how do you believe your children would respond?)

Memory Verse: *For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.* Philippians 2:13

July 12

Principle 2: Earnestly believe that God exists, that I matter to Him, and that He has the power to help me to recover.

- 4 How can your relationship with your Higher Power, Jesus Christ, help you step out of your denial and face reality? (Parents – you might also discuss assisting your child with this issue.)
- 5 In what areas of your life are you now ready to let God help you?
- 6 What things are you ready to change in your life? Where can you find the power to change them? (Parents and codependents – this is also about you, not necessarily only about your loved one...sorry.)

Memory Verse: *Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.* Hebrews 11:1

“ Sometimes you have to look hard at a person and remember that he is doing the best he can. He’s just trying to find his way. That’s all. *Ernest Thompson*

I am more involved in unlearning than learning. I’m having to unlearn all the garbage that people have laid on me. *Leo Buscaglia*

Man is born broken. He lives by mending. The grace of God is glue! *Eugene O’Neill*

When we stop looking at whatever troubles us, and turn in faith to God, the source of good, the difficulty disappears and a new condition takes its place. *William A. Clough* ”

July 19

Focus Questions: Lesson #4 Sanity

Step 2: We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

- 1 What sorts of things have you been doing over and over again, expecting a different result each time (insanity)? This applies to everyone...the person battling the behavior and those who love him or her:
- 2 What is your definition of sanity? How do you find peace and serenity?
- 3 How have your past expectations of yourself or others been unrealistic? Please give examples. In the future how can you be more realistic in your goals or objectives?

Memory Verse: *My mind and my body may grow weak, but God is my strength; He is all I ever need. Psalm 73:26*

July 26

Principle 2: Earnestly believe that God exists, that I matter to Him, and that He has the power to help me to recover.

- 4 In the past, how has trusting only in your own feelings and emotions gotten you in trouble? (or, what have you observed in a child or another loved one?)
- 5 How can your Higher Power, Jesus Christ, help restore you to make sane decisions? How do you gain a second chance?
- 6 What areas of your life are you ready to release control of and hand over to God? Be specific. Are there any areas that are particularly difficult to release control of?

Memory Verse: *“So don’t be anxious about tomorrow. God will take care of your tomorrow too. Live one day at a time.” Matthew 6:34*

Principle 2: Earnestly believe that God exists, that I matter to Him, and that He has the power to help me to recover.

Happy are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Step 2: Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose (Philippians 2:13)

Biblical Teaching of the Week:

Internal Bondage – Mark 5:1-13

When we are under the influence of our addiction, its hold may seem to have supernatural force. We may give up on living and throw our self into self-destructive behaviors with reckless abandon. People may also give up on us. They may distance themselves from us, as though we were already dead. Whether our “insanity” is self-induced or has more sinister origin, there is no power available to restore us to sanity and wholeness.

Jesus helped a man who was acting insanely. *“This man lived among the tombs and could not be restrained, even with a chain. Whenever he was put into chains and shackles—as he often was—he snapped the chains from his wrists and enough to control him. All day long and throughout the night, he would wander among the tombs and in the hills, screaming and hitting himself with stone” (Mark 5:3-5).* Jesus went into the graveyard and assessed the situation. He dealt with the forces of darkness that were afflicting the man and restored him to sanity. He then sent him home to his friends to tell them what God had done for him.

We may have gone so far into our addiction that we have broken all restraints. We struggle to be free from the control of society and loved ones, only to discover that our bondage doesn’t come from outside sources. All hope seems lost, but where there is still life, there is still hope.

God can touch our insanity and restore us to sanity.

Restoration – Luke 15:11-24

In the natural progression of addiction, life degenerates. In one way or another, many of us wake up one day to realize that we are living like an animal. How true this is depends on the nature of our addiction. Some of us may be living like an animal in terms of our physical surroundings. Others of us may be a slave to our animal passions—powerful emotions that dehumanize us and others.

A young man took an early inheritance and traveled away from home. When the money was spent, the women just a memory, and the “high” long gone, he resorted to slopping pigs to earn a meager living. When he became so hungry that he eyed the pigs’ slop with envy, he realized he had a problem. *“When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, ‘At home even the hired men have food enough to spare, and here I am, dying of hunger! I will go home to my father..’ So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long distance away, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him” (Luke 15:17-18, 20).*

The fact that we are able to recognize our life as degenerate or insane proves that there is hope for a better way of life. We are reminded of times when life was good, and we long to have that goodness restored. When we turn to God, who is powerful enough to help us build something better, we will discover that his power can restore us to sanity.

Lesson #4: Sanity

Excerpt from current Celebrate Recovery Lesson.

Through Principle 1, we were finally able to face our denial, admit we were powerless, that our lives were out of control. How and where do we GET control? The second step tells us that we have come to believe that a POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES COULD RESTORE US TO SANITY. Step 2 doesn't say we are crazy; sanity means moving from chaos to hope, which comes when we believe that our Higher Power, Jesus Christ, can and will restore us! Jesus provides the power for our powerlessness over our addictions and compulsive behaviors.

Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again, expecting a different result each time. (Albert Einstein)

Sanity: wholeness of mind; making decisions based on the truth.

Following are the gifts we receive when we believe that our Higher Power, Jesus Christ, has the power and will restore us to sanity:

Strength – To face the fears that cause us to fight, flee, or freeze. “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-resent help in trouble.

Therefore *WE WILL NOT FEAR*” (Psalm 46:1). I choose to allow my life to run on God’s power, not my own limited power, weakness, helplessness, or sense of inferiority.

“My mind and body may grow weak, but God is my strength; he is all I ever need (Psalm 73:26). Relying on our own power, our own strength, is what got us here. We believed we didn’t need God’s help, strength, or power. We were disconnected from our true power source—God!

Acceptance – Step 2 allows us to learn to have realistic expectations of ourselves and others. We learn not to relate in the same old way, expecting a different response. “*Accept one another; then, for the glory of God, as Christ has accepted you*” (Romans 15:7). As our faith grows and we get to know Jesus Christ better, it becomes easier for us to accept others as they really are, NOT AS WE WOULD HAVE THEM BE!

“Accept one another; then, for the glory of God, as Christ has accepted you” (Romans 15:7). In Step 2 we begin to find the sanity we have been searching for. We remember to pray and ask God “to give us the courage to change the things we can and to accept the things we cannot change.” With acceptance, however, comes responsibility. We stop placing all the blame on others for our past actions and hurts.

New life – In the pit of our hurts, habits, and hang-ups, we were at our very bottom. “*We were crushed and overwhelmed, and feared we would never live through it. We felt we were doomed to die and saw how powerless we were to help ourselves; but that was good, for then we put everything into the hands of God*” (2 Corinthians 1:8-9).

The penalty for our sins was paid in full by Jesus on the cross. The hope of a new life is freedom from our bondage! “When someone becomes a Christian, he becomes a brand new person inside. He is not the same any more. A new life has begun!” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Integrity – Others start trusting us as we begin to follow through on our promises. The apostle John placed great value on integrity: “*Nothing gives me greater joy than to hear that my children are following the way of truth*” (3 John 4). Remember: a half-truth is a whole lie, and a lie is the result of weakness and fear. Truth hurts, but the lie leaves the scar.

A person of integrity is not afraid to tell the truth. And that courage comes from a power greater than ourselves—Jesus Christ, the way, the TRUTH, the life. Truth fears nothing but concealment.

Trust – As we work Step 2, we begin to trust in our relationships with others and our Higher Power. “It is dangerous to be concerned with what others think of you, but if you trust the Lord, you are safe” (Proverbs 29:25). As we “let go and let God” we learn to trust ourselves; we begin to make real friends in recovery, not fair-weather friends we knew while we were active in our addictions and compulsions.

In recovery, you find real friends, brothers and sisters in Christ to walk beside you on your journey through the steps—friends whom you can trust, with whom you can share, with whom you can grow in Christ.

Your Higher Power – Jesus Christ loves you just the way you are! No matter what comes your way, together you and God can handle it! “*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*” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

“Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens” (Psalm 68:19). When we accept Jesus Christ as our Higher Power and Savior, we are not only guaranteed eternal life, but we also have God’s protection in time of trials. “The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in Him” (Nahum 1:7).

Recovery is a DAILY program and we need a power greater than ourselves, a Higher Power who will provide us with the strength, acceptance, new life, integrity, and trust to allow us to make sane decisions based on His truth!

Only Jesus can provide power where we were powerless over our addictions and compulsive behaviors. He alone can restore order and meaning to our lives. He alone can restore us to sanity.

And when you complete Principle 3, your future will be blessed and secure. “*So don’t be anxious about tomorrow. God will take care of your tomorrow too. Live one day at a time*” (Matthew 6:34).

The Five Gs

A Healthy Church & Worshipful Life

Grace

Receiving, living in, and sharing God's grace.

Growth

Growing in wisdom, character and obedience.

Group

Experiencing biblically-functioning community.

Gifts

In order to serve God and others, we discover and use our SHAPE: spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality and experiences.

Good Stewardship

Using money and resources in a God-honoring way.



Partners in the Mission

Lino Lakes: Tuesday, July 10; 6-9pm

An important seminar for those who want to find out more about EBC or for those wanting to become members, Partners in the Mission covers everything you need to know about the mission, vision, values, beliefs and strategies that you'd be supporting as a member of Eagle Brook. It also covers spiritual growth and transformation as you make steps to become an authentic follower of Christ and reach others for him. \$10 (\$5 for Tues. class) covers lunch or snacks and materials.*

SHAPE

Lino Lakes: Tuesday, July 17th 6:30pm - 9:00pm

Lino Lakes: Tuesday, July 24th 6:30pm - 9:00pm

This course is a gift identification and service discovery experience designed to your schedule and help you get connected. \$5.00 to cover material and snack cost.

Stepping Stones

Lino Lakes room 290: July 14th - 4pm - 5pm

This is a class for kids in 2nd - 5th grade who have accepted Christ and plan on participating in baptism. Contact Vanessa @ ext. 1153.

Register for all G-training at the White Bear or Lino Lakes campus or at www.eaglebrookchurch.com!

Eagle Brook Service Times

Lino Lakes:

7775 20th Avenue North (Zip 55038)

Saturday 4 & 6 pm

Sunday 9 & 11 am

White Bear Lake:

2401 E Buffalo Street (Zip 55110)

Saturday 6:30 pm, The Edge

Sunday 9:30 am, The Brook

Sunday 11 am

Check out other Christ Centered Recovery Groups...

on Sundays

Constance Free Church at 5:00 p.m.
16150 Crosstown Blvd. NW, Andover, MN 55304
Larry Weight: (763) 434-5995
smedleyldw@aol.com

Christ Center Assembly of God at 9:00 a.m.
810 Northview Drive, Hudson, WI 54016
Rev. Tom Hennes: (715) 220-5319
t.hennes@sbcglobal.net

Ezekiel Lutheran Church at 5:00 pm
202 South Second Street, River Falls, WI 54022
715.425.8294
CelebrateRecovery@ezekiellutheran.org
www.EzekielLutheran.org/CR

on Mondays

Oak Haven Church at 7:00 p.m.
1555 NE Constance Blvd., Ham Lake, MN 55304
Susan Freeburg: (612) 280-9760
susan_4723@yahoo.com

on Tuesdays

Sonlight Church of the Nazarene, at 6:30 pm
3860 Flowerfield Road, Blaine, 55014
Bruce Hill: (763) 784-1607
bhhjcgf@msn.com

Crystal Evangelical Free Church at 6:30 p.m.
4741 Zealand Avenue N., New Hope, MN 55428
Donna Hoshor: (763) 971-5118
dhoshor@cefc.com

East Immanuel Church at 6:30 pm
1473 E. Payne Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55101
Robert Thiboldeaux
eiline@juno.com

Brooklyn Park Evangelical Free Church at 6:30 p.m.
7849 West Broadway, Brooklyn Park, MN 55445
Rick Ensrud: (763) 3941-6140
plaubershelmer@bpefc.org

The River Community Church at 7:00 p.m.
510 Central Avenue, Fairbault, MN 55021
Angela Ubl: (507) 333-9751
angelaubl@charter.net

River Valley Church at 7:00 pm
14898 Energy Way, Apple Valley, MN 55124
Chris Manthey: (952) 210-3876
crrvc@hotmail.com

North Haven Church at 6:00 p.m.
2240 15th Avenue East, North St. Paul, MN 55109

Church of the Open Door at 6:45 p.m.
9060 Zanzibar Lane North, Maple Grove, 55311
Julia: (763) 416-5887

on Fridays

Word of Life Church at 6:30 p.m.
10730 University Ave N.W. Coon Rapids, 55448
763-757-2478