

Step 1: Honesty

KEY PRINCIPLE: Admit that you, of yourself, are powerless to overcome your addictions and that your life has become unmanageable.

Studying the scriptures and the statements of Church leaders will help you begin your recovery. This study will increase your understanding and help you learn. You can use the scriptures, statements, and questions that follow for prayerful personal study, for writing, and for group discussion. The thought of writing may frighten you, but writing is a powerful tool for recovery. It will give you time to reflect; it will help you focus your thinking; it will help you see and understand the issues, thoughts, and behaviors surrounding your addiction. When you write, you will also have a record of your thoughts. As you progress through the steps, you will be able to measure your progress. For now, just be honest and sincere as you write your thoughts, feelings, and impressions.

ENCOMPASSED BY TEMPTATIONS

“I am encompassed about, because of the temptations and the sins which do so easily beset me.

“And when I desire to rejoice, my heart groaneth because of my sins; nevertheless, I know in whom I have trusted.

“My God hath been my support; he hath led me through mine afflictions in the wilderness; and he hath preserved me upon the waters of the great deep.

“He hath filled me with his love, even unto the consuming of my flesh” (2 Nephi 4:18–21).

- Do you feel encompassed or trapped? When do you feel this way most often?
- What situations or feelings weakened you so you gave in to your addiction?
- When Nephi felt overwhelmed, in whom did he place his trust? What can you do to place more trust in the Lord?

“I KNOW THAT MAN IS NOTHING”

“It came to pass that it was for the space of many hours before Moses did again receive his natural strength like unto man; and he said unto himself:

Now, for this cause I know that man is nothing, which thing I never had supposed” (Moses 1:10).

- How did Moses describe himself as compared to God?
- How can a little child be of infinite worth and still be nothing when compared to his or her parents?
- In what ways are you nothing when you do not have the help of God?
- In what ways are you of infinite worth?
- Write about how recognizing your helplessness to overcome your addiction on your own can bring you to admit your own nothingness and become as a little child.

HUNGER AND THIRST

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled” (Matthew 5:6).

“And my soul hungered; and I kneeled down before my Maker, and I cried unto him in mighty prayer and did I cry unto him; yea, and when the night came I did still raise my voice high that it reached the heavens” (Enos 1:4).

- In these two scriptures, we learn that our souls can hunger. Do you ever feel empty inside, even when you are not physically hungry? What causes that emptiness?
- How can your hunger for things of the Spirit help you be more honest?

HONESTY

“Some may regard the quality of character known as honesty to be a most ordinary subject. But I believe it to be the very essence of the gospel. Without honesty, our lives...will degenerate into ugliness and chaos” (Gordon B. Hinckley, “We Believe in Being Honest,” Ensign, Oct. 1990, 2).

- Write about ways you have lied and attempted to hide your addiction from yourself and others. How has this behavior caused “ugliness and chaos”?

HUMILITY

“Because ye are compelled to be humble blessed are ye; for a man sometimes, if he is compelled to be humble, seeketh repentance; and now surely, whosoever repenteth shall find mercy; and he that findeth mercy and endureth to the end the same shall be saved” (Alma 32:13).

- Write about the circumstances that have compelled you to humility and to seek repentance. What hope does Alma give you? How can you find or receive that hope?

THE LORD’S DELIGHT

“Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight” (Proverbs 12:22).

- Writing the answers to these questions has called for a deep level of honesty about yourself. How does this passage of scripture relate to this kind of honesty? How can you become the Lord’s delight?

Step 2: Hope

KEY PRINCIPLE: Come to believe that the power of God can restore you to complete spiritual health.

BELIEF IN GOD

“Believe in God; believe that he is, and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth; believe that he has all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth; believe that man doth not comprehend all the things which the Lord can comprehend” (Mosiah 4:9).

- Many witnesses in heaven and in earth testify of God’s existence. What evidences of God and His love have you experienced?

FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST

“Preach unto them repentance, and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ; teach them to humble themselves and to be meek and lowly in heart; teach them to withstand every temptation of the devil, with their faith on the Lord Jesus Christ” (Alma 37:33).

- Many of us tried to get out of our addictions through sheer willpower or through having faith in a friend or therapist. Sooner or later we found that our faith in ourselves or others did not enable us to overcome our addictions fully. Write about your feelings today of being humble and willing to turn to Christ and His gospel above all other sources of help in your recovery efforts.

THE SAVIOR’S COMPASSION

“Straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief” (Mark 9:24).

- This man sought help from the Savior and obtained it. Jesus did not rebuke him for his doubt. Write about the Savior’s compassion and patience.
- How do you feel about sharing your feelings with the Lord?

THE GIFT OF GRACE

“Let us . . . come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).

- In the Bible Dictionary, grace is defined as “divine means of help or strength” given through the “bounteous mercy and love of Jesus Christ” (“Grace,” 697). This gift of divine strength enables you to do more than you would be able to do if left on your own. The Savior will do for you what you cannot do for yourself. His grace is the means by which you can repent and be changed. In what ways have you felt the gift of grace in your life?
- How can the gift of divine strength enable you to maintain continuous recovery?

HEALING

“Believest thou in the power of Christ unto salvation? . . . If thou believest in the redemption of Christ thou canst be healed” (Alma 15:6, 8).

- When we think of healing, we usually think about our bodies. What else about you might require the healing power of Jesus Christ?
- Write about your need to draw on the redeeming (liberating, transforming) power of Christ.

AWAKENING

“If ye will awake and arouse your faculties, even to an experiment upon my words, and exercise a particle of faith, yea, even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you, even until ye believe in a manner that ye can give place for a portion of my words” (Alma 32:27).

- Becoming aware—or awaking and arousing your faculties—is an important part of the process of learning to believe. In what ways are you more aware today of Jesus Christ and His power in your life than you were last week? last month? last year?

DELIVERANCE FROM BONDAGE

“They were in captivity, and again the Lord did deliver them out of bondage by the power of his word” (Alma 5:5).

- The word of God will be powerful in releasing you from bondage. You can find the word of God in the scriptures and the talks you hear at conference and read in Church magazines. You can also receive God’s word directly through the Holy Ghost. Write some of the things you are willing to do today to receive His word to you.

Step 3: Trust in God

KEY PRINCIPLE: Decide to turn your will and your life over to the care of God the Eternal Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

IN HARMONY WITH THE WILL OF GOD

“Reconcile yourselves to the will of God, and not to the will of the devil and the flesh; and remember, after ye are reconciled unto God, that it is only in and through the grace of God that ye are saved” (2 Nephi 10:24).

- Consider what it means to live your life in harmony with the will of God. Think about how His enabling power can come into your life as you turn to Him. How do you feel about letting God direct your life?
- What prevents you from allowing Him to direct your life?

SUBMITTING TO THE WILL OF GOD

“The burdens which were laid upon Alma and his brethren were made light; yea, the Lord did strengthen them that they could bear up their burdens with ease, and they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord” (Mosiah 24:15).

- The Lord could have removed the burdens of Alma and his people; instead, He strengthened them to bear “their burdens with ease.” Notice that they did not complain but submitted cheerfully and patiently to the will of the Lord. Write about the humility it takes to want immediate relief and yet be willing to have a burden lightened gradually.
- What does it mean to submit to God? How do you submit?
- How do you feel about submitting willingly and with patience to the Lord’s timetable of change?
- How can you gain the courage to keep trying until you are free of your burdens?

FASTING AND PRAYER

“They did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts, which sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God” (Helaman 3:35).

- This verse describes a people who yielded their hearts to God. How can fasting strengthen your ability to yield your heart to God and abstain from addiction?
- Consider the importance of praying in the moment of temptation, and write about how prayer will strengthen your humility and your faith in Christ.
- How strong is your willingness to yield your heart to God instead of yielding to addiction in the moment of temptation?

HUMBLING YOURSELF BEFORE GOD

“He did deliver them because they did humble themselves before him; and because they cried mightily unto him he did deliver them out of bondage; and thus doth the Lord work with his power in all cases among the children of men, extending the arm of mercy towards them that put their trust in him” (Mosiah 29:20).

- What keeps you from “crying mightily” to God for deliverance according to His will?
- What has kept you from seeking this kind of deliverance in the past?
- In what ways can you learn to trust in God?
- To humble yourself is a decision you make. Satan may try to get you to believe that although God helped others, He won’t help you because you are helpless and hopeless. Recognize this lie for what it is. In truth, you are a child of God. How can this knowledge help you humble yourself?

THE CHOICE TO BEGIN RECOVERY

“I would that ye should be humble, and be submissive and gentle; easy to be entreated; full of patience and long-suffering; being temperate in all things; being diligent in keeping the commandments of God at all times; asking for whatsoever things ye stand in need, both spiritual and temporal; always returning thanks unto God for whatsoever things ye do receive” (Alma 7:23).

- Step 3 is a choice. Recovery happens by God’s power, but only after you choose to seek His help. Your decision opens the channels for His power to flow into your life. Consider how humility, patience, gentleness, and so on are all choices. The last quality listed in the scripture is gratitude. How does gratitude help you be humble?
- What other qualities did Alma include in this list?
- Which of these qualities do you lack?
- Which ones can you work on today? What can you do now to start?

BECOMING AS A CHILD

“The natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father” (Mosiah 3:19).

- Many of us experienced unloving treatment from parents or guardians, and becoming “as a child” is challenging, maybe even terrifying. If you have unresolved problems with a parent, what can you do to separate your feelings about your parent from your feelings about God?
- Although you may have problems to resolve with your earthly parents, you can have confidence in Heavenly Father and the Savior as perfect fathers. Why can you trust Heavenly Father and the Savior as you submit your life to Them?

COMMUNING WITH GOD

“[Jesus] kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:41–42).

- In this prayer, the Savior demonstrated His willingness to submit to the Father. He expressed His desires but then humbly did the will of His Father. Consider the blessing of being able to tell God your feelings. How does knowing that He understands your reluctance, your pain, or whatever you feel help you say, "Thy will be done," and mean it?

Step 4: Truth

KEY PRINCIPLE: Make a searching and fearless written moral inventory of yourself.

1. Incident. What happened? In just a few words, give a short description of your memory of the event. Think more in terms of a summary rather than a long story.
2. Effect. What was the effect on you or others?
3. Feelings. What were your feelings at the time of the incident? What are your feelings now about it? Consider how your fears may have contributed to it.
4. Self-examination. How did your character weaknesses or strengths affect the situation? Do you see any evidence of pride, self-pity, self-deception, or self-will in your attitudes and actions? Be sure to record also those times when you acted right.

The Holy Ghost can help you humble yourself and face the truth, even if the truth is painful. With the help of the Lord, you can recognize your strengths and weaknesses (see Ether 12:27). Questions like these may help:

- What outcome did I want in this situation and why?
 - How did I try to control the situation?
 - Was it any of my business?
 - What actions did I take or omit to get what I wanted?
 - Did I ignore reality?
 - Were my expectations reasonable for myself and for others?
 - Did I lie to myself or to others?
 - Did I ignore the feelings of others and think only of myself?
 - How did I act like a victim to control others, get attention and sympathy, be special, and so on?
 - Did I resist help from God and others?
 - Did I insist on being right?
 - Did I feel slighted for lack of recognition or acknowledgment?
1. Inspired counsel. What counsel does the Lord give concerning this incident? Remember you have nothing to fear as you submit to the Savior. You are here to learn good from evil, and the Savior can help you forgive yourself and others. Record your thoughts and impressions as you consider inspired counsel from the scriptures and from Church leaders.

FOUR NECESSARY ELEMENTS

Four elements are critical to a successful moral inventory—writing, honesty, support, and prayer. These elements of a moral inventory will help you recognize and overcome sins and shortcomings.

1. Writing.

The inventory of your life will be most effective if you write it. You can hold a written list in your hands, review it, and refer to it when necessary; unwritten thoughts are easy to forget, and distractions can easily interrupt you. As you write your moral inventory, you will be able to think more clearly about the events in your life and you will be able to focus on them with less distraction.

Some people try to avoid writing their moral inventory, feeling embarrassed or fearful about their writing ability or about someone else reading what they write. Don't let these fears stop you. Your spelling, grammar, penmanship, or typing skills do not matter. You can draw stick figures, if you must, but get your inventory on paper. Until you put it in a tangible form, you still haven't done your fourth step. As you complete the fourth step, remember that perfectionism—trying to do your inventory perfectly and to please others—can block you from being complete.

The fear of someone reading what you have written can be a genuine concern, but you can overcome it. Those of us who have done an inventory have had to face this fear. We had to do all we could to keep our inventory private and then trust the results to God. We had to care more about healing than about our ego or reputation. The inventory required us to call on God's help continually, to ask Him to protect and guide us as we accomplished it. You must remember that step 4 is an act of stepping out of shadows of shame and admitting your need for repentance. If you will be prayerful about how and where to keep your inventory pages private, the Lord will guide you to do what is best.

2. Honesty.

Being honest with yourself about the sinful areas of your life can be terrifying. Often people avoid looking too closely at themselves in the mirror of the past, fearing the reflection may reveal the truth of what their lives have become. Now as you take the fourth step, you must face the truth about your life and your fears squarely. In your inventory, you will not only discover your weaknesses but you will also understand and appreciate your strengths better. Include in your inventory your good traits and the positive things you have done. In truth, you are a combination of weaknesses and strengths. As you become willing to see the whole truth about your past—good and bad—you allow the powers of heaven to reveal the truth and help you put the past in proper perspective. The Lord will help you change your life's course and fulfill your divine potential. You will learn that you are like all other humans, with strengths and weaknesses. You can begin to face others on equal footing.

3. Support.

The encouragement and support of others who understand recovery can help you in your efforts. They can guide you in discovering the method, structure, or approach that will work best for you in reviewing your past. They can encourage you if you get discouraged.

4. Prayer.

As you consider the magnitude of step 4 and the challenge it represents, think of how the Lord has helped you in each previous step. As you turned to God for comfort, courage, and guidance, you found the help that will continue with you as you do an inventory. Paul taught that God is the "God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation" (2 Corinthians 1:3–4). If you pray each time you sit down to write your inventory, God will help you. You will learn this reality as you take this seemingly impossible step—God can and will always be there for you, if you ask.

REVIEWING YOUR LIFE

"I invite each one of you to thoughtfully review your life. Have you deviated from the standards that you know will bring happiness? Is there a dark corner that needs to be cleaned out? Are you now doing things that you know are wrong? Do you fill your mind with unclean thoughts? When it is quiet and you can think clearly, does your conscience tell you to repent?"

"For your peace now and for everlasting happiness, please repent. Open your heart to the Lord and ask Him to help you. You will earn the blessing of forgiveness, peace, and the knowledge you have been purified and made whole. Find the courage to ask the Lord for strength to repent now" (Richard G. Scott, in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 103; or Ensign, May 1995, 77).

- Step 4 is one way to follow Elder Scott's counsel. Find a quiet time to pray for direction and courage as you review your life. Prayerfully seek time for self-evaluation, and record the ideas that come to you as you consider Elder Scott's questions.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE PAST

“Turn away from your sins; shake off the chains of him that would bind you fast; come unto that God who is the rock of your salvation” (2 Nephi 9:45).

- Turning away from sins and shaking off addictive chains cannot begin until you acknowledge that the sins and chains exist. Write about the resistance you feel when you think about being completely honest about your past.

REPLACING DENIAL WITH TRUTH

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8).

- A main characteristic of addiction is denial or self-deception—when an individual denies having a problem. What healing effects can come from replacing denial with truth?
- How can step 4 help you accomplish such a task?

THE HOPE OF RECOVERY

“I did remember all my sins and iniquities, for which I was tormented with the pains of hell; yea, I saw that I had rebelled against my God, and that I had not kept his holy commandments” (Alma 36:13).

- Remembering your sins may be painful, but it can propel you into a new life of peace (see Alma 36:19–21). Ask someone who has completed this step how it helped him or her. How can the hope of recovery help you through the pain of remorse to the joy of forgiveness?

THE TRUTH

“By the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:5).

- Some people have difficulty remembering or acknowledging the painful truth about the past, but the Holy Ghost can help you remember and can comfort you as you take step 4. You can receive these blessings even if you do not have the gift of the Holy Ghost. Write about how the Holy Ghost can guide you in the inventory process.
- Why is it important to know the truth about your current situation?
- Why is it important to know the truth that you are a child of God?

WEAKNESS AND STRENGTH

“If men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them” (Ether 12:27).

- Apply this verse to your life by copying it and inserting your name as if the Lord were speaking directly to you. Write the thoughts that come into your mind about this scripture and its personal application.

“THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE”

“Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).

- Being honest with yourself and with the Lord, who is also known as the “Spirit of truth” (D&C 93:9), is the key to freedom from the lies that enslave you. As you come to know Him, His power and presence in your life will free you from addiction. How can recognizing truth improve your relationship with Jesus Christ?

Step 5: Confession

KEY PRINCIPLE: Admit to yourself, to your Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ, to proper priesthood authority, and to another person the exact nature of your wrongs.

CONFESSION TO GOD

“I, the Lord, forgive sins unto those who confess their sins before me and ask forgiveness” (D&C 64:7).

- How does confessing your sins to God help you make positive changes in your life?
- Most of us feel fear and an unwillingness to take step 5. How can confessing your sins to God give you courage and strength eventually to confess to another person?

CONFESSION TO OTHERS

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed” (James 5:16).

- You may fear that someone who really knew all your weaknesses and failings would reject you. But a priesthood leader or a trusted friend who understands the recovery process usually responds with understanding and compassion. How could such a response help you heal?

TRYING TO LOOK GOOD TO OTHERS

“Let not any man publish his own righteousness . . . ; sooner let him confess his sins, and then he will be forgiven, and he will bring forth more fruit” (Joseph Smith, in History of the Church, 4:479).

- One major obsession of those who struggle with addiction is a great desire to look good to others. How would this desire keep you from improving and bringing “forth more fruit” (or good works)?
- How would your behavior change if you were only concerned about looking good to God?

SINCERITY

“Whosoever transgresseth against me, him shall ye judge according to the sins which he has committed; and if he confess his sins before thee and me, and repenteth in the sincerity of his heart, him shall ye forgive, and I will forgive him also” (Mosiah 26:29).

- When you confess your sins, you must be sincere. Consider how holding back part of your confession undermines the sincerity of your efforts. What part of your inventory, if any, are you tempted to hide?
- What do you have to gain by continuing to hide this portion of your inventory? What do you have to lose?

CONFESS SINS AS SOON AS YOU RECOGNIZE THEM

“In this same year were they brought to a knowledge of their error and did confess their faults” (3 Nephi 1:25).

- This verse is an example of people who did not procrastinate confessing their faults once they were brought to a knowledge of them. What are the benefits of doing step 5 as soon as possible after step 4?
- What might be the detrimental effects of procrastinating step 5?

RELIEVING STRESS AND FINDING PEACE

“I would not dwell upon your crimes, to harrow up your soul, if it were not for your good” (Alma 39:7).

- Some people would claim that we dwell too much on negative things in life by taking steps 4 and 5 and that doing so can only add to our stress. In this verse, we are taught that facing shortcomings can do us good, not just “harrow up” (or distress) our souls. In what ways can steps 4 and 5 relieve you of stress and bring you more peace?

FORSAKING SIN

“By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins— behold, he will confess them and forsake them” (D&C 58:43).

- To forsake something means to abandon it or give it up completely. How do you demonstrate your desire to forsake your old ways by completing step 5?

Step 6: Change of Heart

KEY PRINCIPLE: Become entirely ready to have God remove all your character weaknesses.

GIVING AWAY ALL YOUR SINS

“The king said . . . what shall I do that I may be born of God, having this wicked spirit rooted out of my breast, and receive his Spirit, that I may be filled with joy. . . . I will give up all that I possess . . . that I may receive this great joy. . . . The king did bow down before the Lord, upon his knees; yea, even he did prostrate himself upon the earth, and cried mightily, saying:

“O God . . . I will give away all my sins to know thee, and that I may be raised from the dead, and be saved at the last day” (Alma 22:15, 17–18).

- Reread Alma 22:15, 17–18 carefully. What obstacles—including attitudes and feelings—keep you from giving away “all [your] sins” and more fully receiving the Spirit of the Lord?

LEARNING HUMILITY

“If men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them” (Ether 12:27).

- Being mortal and imperfect, we are all subject to many weaknesses. In this verse, the Lord explains His purpose in allowing us to experience mortality and to encounter such weaknesses—to help us be humble. Notice, though, that we choose to humble ourselves. How is becoming ready in step 6 part of humbling yourself?
- List some of your character weaknesses, and next to them list the strengths they may become as you come unto Christ.

PARTICIPATING IN THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHURCH

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God” (Ephesians 3:14–19).

- As you take upon yourself the name of Christ and are strengthened by His Spirit, you begin to identify yourself with the Saints—brothers and sisters who have been baptized and entered into His family on earth (see Mosiah 5:7). As you have come to know your fellow Saints better, how have you become more willing to participate more fully in the fellowship of priesthood, Relief Society, and Sunday School?

REDEMPTION

“The natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love” (Mosiah 3:19).

- Many of us become Saints in name only at baptism and spend the rest of our lives struggling to “put off the natural man” and develop the characteristics listed in this verse. How has this struggle prepared you to accept that only through the Atonement of Christ—by becoming one with Jesus Christ and with the Father—can you experience redemption?

COMING UNTO CHRIST

“No matter what the source of difficulty and no matter how you begin to obtain relief—through a qualified professional therapist, doctor, priesthood leader, friend, concerned parent, or loved one—no matter how you begin, those solutions will never provide a complete answer. The final healing comes through faith in Jesus Christ and His teachings, with a broken heart and a contrite spirit and obedience to His commandments” (Richard G. Scott, in Conference Report, Apr. 1994, 9; or Ensign, May 1994, 9).

- Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve taught that no amount of support or fellowship—even in recovery groups or congregations of the Church—will bring you salvation. Other people may support and bless you in your journey, but eventually you must come unto Christ Himself. Write about how your journey of recovery began.
- Who was instrumental in helping you get on the path to repentance and recovery? How has their example pointed you toward the Savior?
- What have you learned about the Savior that has helped or influenced your desire or ability to change your behavior?

PATIENCE WITH THE PROCESS

“Ye are little children and ye cannot bear all things now; ye must grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

“Fear not, little children, for you are mine, and I have overcome the world, . . .

“And none of them that my Father hath given me shall be lost” (D&C 50:40–42).

- Sometimes we become impatient or discouraged that recovery is an ongoing process. These verses show the Savior’s and our Heavenly Father’s patience with us as “little children.” Apply these verses to yourself by writing them out addressed to you personally.
- How can the promises in this scripture strengthen you when you get discouraged?

HELP FROM THE LORD

“My beloved brethren, after ye have gotten into this strait and narrow path, I would ask if all is done? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; for ye have not come thus far save it were by the word of Christ with unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to save.

“Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life” (2 Nephi 31:19–20).

- Ponder and write about how the Lord helps you along the strait and narrow path. How does your growing love for God and for others bring you out of addiction, help you continue in abstinence, and restore you to a hope of eternal life?

Step 7: Humility

KEY PRINCIPLE: Humbly ask Heavenly Father to remove your shortcomings.

CHOOSING TO BE HUMBLE

“As I said unto you, that because ye were compelled to be humble ye were blessed, do ye not suppose that they are more blessed who truly humble themselves because of the word?” (Alma 32:14).

- Most of us came to recovery meetings in desperation, driven by the consequences of our addictions. We were compelled to be humble. The humility described in step 7, however, has a different cause. It is voluntary. It is the result of your own choice to humble yourself. How have your feelings of humility changed since you started recovery?

FILLED WITH JOY

“They had viewed themselves in their own carnal state, even less than the dust of the earth. And they all cried aloud with one voice, saying: O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and our hearts may be purified; for we believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who created heaven and earth, and all things; who shall come down among the children of men.

“And it came to pass that after they had spoken these words the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy, having received a remission of their sins, and having peace of conscience, because of the exceeding faith which they had in Jesus Christ who should come” (Mosiah 4:2–3).

- The people of King Benjamin offered the kind of prayer that we offer as we take step 7. They felt peace and joy when the Spirit of the Lord came upon them and gave them a remission of their sins. Reflect on experiences you have had with these feelings. Write about how it would be to have these feelings become your way of life.

BELIEVE IN GOD

“Believe in God; believe that he is, and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth; believe that he has all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth; believe that man doth not comprehend all the things which the Lord can comprehend.

“And again, believe that ye must repent of your sins and forsake them, and humble yourselves before God; and ask in sincerity of heart that he would forgive you; and now, if you believe all these things see that ye do them.

“And again I say unto you as I have said before, that as ye have come to the knowledge of the glory of God, or if ye have known of his goodness and have tasted of his love, and have received a remission of your sins, which causeth such exceedingly great joy in your souls, even so I would that ye should remember, and always retain in remembrance, the greatness of God, and your own nothingness, and his goodness and long-suffering towards you, unworthy creatures, and humble yourselves even in the depths of humility, calling on the name of

the Lord daily, and standing steadfastly in the faith of that which is to come, which was spoken by the mouth of the angel.

“ . . . If ye do this ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of your sins; and ye shall grow in the knowledge of the glory of him that created you, or in the knowledge of that which is just and true” (Mosiah 4:9–12).

- Prayerfully write a list of the things King Benjamin said we must do. How do these things relate to taking step 7?
- What promises come from doing as King Benjamin instructed? (See the last verse.)
- If you received these promises, what would change in your life?

OBEYING THE LAW AND THE COMMANDMENTS

“For this end was the law given; wherefore the law hath become dead unto us, and we are made alive in Christ because of our faith; yet we keep the law because of the commandments” (2 Nephi 25:25).

- We are “made alive in Christ because of our faith” in Him. What does it mean that the law is dead to us? Why do we continue to keep the law or obey the commandments?
- How do you feel today about keeping the law?
- How is keeping the commandments an expression of your love for God?

THE LOVE OF GOD

“When we put God first, all other things fall into their proper place or drop out of our lives. Our love of the Lord will govern the claims for our affection, the demands on our time, the interests we pursue, and the order of our priorities” (Ezra Taft Benson, in Conference Report, Apr. 1988, 3; or Ensign, May 1988, 4).

- Coming to know the mercy and goodness of God thus far, you have probably begun to feel the love of God—love for Him and love from Him. Reflect on and write about any increase of love you have felt while working through the steps.
- How does step 7 qualify as the greatest act of your love so far?

TAKING UPON YOURSELF THE NAME OF CHRIST

“Whosoever doeth this shall be found at the right hand of God, for he shall know the name by which he is called; for he shall be called by the name of Christ” (Mosiah 5:9).

- Most of us think of taking Christ’s name upon us in context of baptism and the sacrament, and rightly so. Consider for a moment what it might mean to be called by the name of Christ and to have His reputation as your own.
- What do you need to do to be found at the right hand of God? What do you covenant to do when you are baptized and when you partake of the sacrament?
- Write about the feelings you experience when you think of His willingness to give you His name or reputation in exchange for all your shortcomings.

SURRENDERING YOUR WEAKNESSES

“A religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation” (Joseph Smith, comp., Lectures on Faith [1985], 69).

- Some people read these words and think “all things” refers to all possessions. How has surrendering all your weaknesses to the Lord increased your understanding of what it means to sacrifice all things?

Step 8: Seeking Forgiveness

KEY PRINCIPLE: Make a written list of all persons you have harmed and become willing to make restitution to them.

PEACEABLE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST

“I would speak unto you that are of the church, that are the peaceable followers of Christ, and that have obtained a sufficient hope by which ye can enter into the rest of the Lord, from this time henceforth until ye shall rest with him in heaven.

“And now my brethren, I judge these things of you because of your peaceable walk with the children of men” (Moroni 7:3–4).

- In the first seven steps, you began a process of becoming a peaceable follower of Christ. When you are at peace with the Lord, you are better prepared to be at peace with others. What other steps do you need to take to be at peace with the people in your life?
- Write about the wisdom of taking the steps in order.

THE LORD’S PERFECT LOVE

“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love [God], because he first loved us” (1 John 4:18–19).

- The idea of making amends can be frightening if you focus on doing it perfectly. How can your trust in the Lord’s perfect love for you and for the person from whom you seek forgiveness strengthen your resolve to make restitution wherever possible?

REACHING OUT TO OTHERS

“Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again” (Luke 6:37–38).

- Even though you may fear that some people will reject your efforts to make peace with them, do not let this fear keep you from putting them on your list and preparing yourself to reach out to them. The blessings are far greater than the pain. Study these verses, and write about the blessings of becoming willing to make amends.

“The nearer we get to our heavenly Father, the more we are disposed to look with compassion on perishing souls; we feel that we want to take them upon our shoulders, and cast their sins behind our backs. . . . If you would have God have mercy on you, have mercy on one another” (Joseph Smith, in *History of the Church*, 5:24).

- Without Jesus Christ, we are all perishing, imperfect souls. How does it help you to know that in taking step 8 you are one perishing soul preparing to make amends to another perishing soul?

FORGIVING AND ASKING FORGIVENESS

“Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:21–22).

- Forgiving and asking forgiveness for a single wrongdoing is easier than forgiving or asking forgiveness for longstanding situations filled with multiple offenses. Think about relationships, past or present, where multiple offenses have occurred and will need to be forgiven. How can you gain strength to forgive and seek forgiveness?
- How is Jesus Christ the greatest example of the ability to forgive? Consider His willingness to help you forgive others.

“I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin. “I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men” (D&C 64:9–10).

- Jesus taught that to fail to forgive others is a greater sin than the original trespass or offense. How is refusing to forgive yourself or someone else the equivalent of denying the Savior’s Atonement for sin?
- How do resentment and bitterness damage you physically, emotionally, and spiritually?

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF BITTERNESS AND OFFENSE

“Nothing is so much calculated to lead people to forsake sin as to take them by the hand, and watch over them with tenderness. When persons manifest the least kindness and love to me, O what power it has over my mind, while the opposite course has a tendency to harrow up all the harsh feelings and depress the human mind” (Joseph Smith, in History of the Church, 5:23–24).

- The Prophet Joseph Smith described how kindness can lead to repentance and forgiveness. Ponder and write about your willingness to be the one who breaks the cycle of bitterness and offense.
- Think about people who have shown kindness and love to you. How have their actions inspired or motivated you to act differently?
- Consider the troubled relationships in your life. In what ways might they change as you reach out to other people with love and kindness?

Step 9: Restitution and Reconciliation

KEY PRINCIPLE: Wherever possible, make direct restitution to all persons you have harmed.

INFLUENCING OTHERS FOR GOOD

“The Spirit of the Lord doth say unto me: Command thy children to do good, lest they lead away the hearts of many people to destruction; therefore I command you, my son, in the fear of God, that ye refrain from your iniquities;

“That ye turn to the Lord with all your mind, might, and strength; that ye lead away the hearts of no more to do wickedly; but rather return unto them, and acknowledge your faults and that wrong which ye have done” (Alma 39:12–13).

- Some of the greatest harm we have done to others is by influencing them to develop addictions themselves. Write about the people in your life whom you have influenced in this way.
- Where can you find courage to face these people, according to Alma’s teachings in these verses?

PERSUASION OR COMPULSION

“Whosoever will come may come and partake of the waters of life freely; and whosoever will not come the same is not compelled to come; but in the last day it shall be restored unto him according to his deeds” (Alma 42:27).

- With many powerful reasons to take step 9, you must never get caught up in the rationalization or lie that you have no choice. The Addiction Recovery Program is a program of persuasion, not compulsion. Write about whether you feel persuaded or compelled to take step 9. What reasons for being persuaded are listed in this verse?

PREPARING TO MEET GOD

“I would that ye would come forth and harden not your hearts any longer; for behold, now is the time and the day of your salvation; and therefore, if ye will repent and harden not your hearts, immediately shall the great plan of redemption be brought about unto you.

“For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors” (Alma 34:31–32).

- What else do you accomplish when you soften your heart and go to make amends?
- How does your willingness to make amends increase when you realize that you are also preparing to meet God?

ACTIVITY IN THE CHURCH

“[The sons of Mosiah] traveled throughout all the land . . . zealously striving to repair all the injuries which they had done to the church, confessing all their sins, and publishing all the things which they had seen, and explaining the prophecies and the scriptures to all who desired to hear them” (Mosiah 27:35).

- Because of addictions, many people quit attending church. Some used the faults of others to justify their limited involvement. Write about your own experiences with activity in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
- How has becoming closer to the Savior through recovery helped you feel reunited with His Church?
- How does being active in the Church help you make amends and recover more fully?

WILLING RESTITUTION

“You must restore as far as possible all that which is stolen, damaged, or defiled. Willing restitution is concrete evidence to the Lord that you are committed to do all you can to repent” (Richard G. Scott, in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 102; or Ensign, May 1995, 76).

- Write about how taking step 9 is evidence not only to the Lord but also to yourself and others that you are committed to a life of humility and honesty.

THE INTENTS OF YOUR HEART

“He that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven” (D&C 1:32).

- In making amends, you may face people who will not forgive you. Maybe their hearts are still hard toward you, or perhaps they do not trust your intentions. How does it help you to know that the Lord understands the true intent of your heart and that He will receive your offer to repent and make restitution, even if other people may not?

WHAT THE SAVIOR CAN DO FOR YOU

“Men cannot forgive their own sins; they cannot cleanse themselves from the consequences of their sins. Men can stop sinning and can do right in the future, and so far their acts are acceptable before the Lord and worthy of consideration. But who shall repair the wrongs they have done to themselves and to others, which it seems impossible for them to repair themselves? By the atonement of Jesus Christ the sins of the repentant shall be washed away; though they be crimson they shall be made white as wool. This is the promise given to you” (Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine, 5th ed. [1939], 98–99).

- As you go out to make amends, do not be discouraged by thoughts such as, “This is impossible! There’s no way I can adequately make up for the wrong I’ve done this person!” Although that may be true, consider the power of Jesus Christ to repair those things you cannot repair. Write about the necessity of trusting that Jesus Christ will do what you cannot do.
- In what ways can you show the Lord your trust in Him? How can you increase that trust?
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Step 10: Daily Accountability

KEY PRINCIPLE: Continue to take personal inventory, and when you are wrong promptly admit it.

WATCH YOUR THOUGHTS, WORDS, AND DEEDS

“If ye do not watch yourselves, and your thoughts, and your words, and your deeds, and observe the commandments of God, and continue in the faith of what ye have heard concerning the coming of our Lord, even unto the end of your lives, ye must perish. And now, O man, remember, and perish not” (Mosiah 4:30).

- It could be dangerous or deadly if you didn’t pay attention to what you were doing while driving a car. How does step 10 help you to stay awake and alert to where you are going in life?
- Write about being self-observant. How does self-appraisal help you avoid lapsing again into your addictions (and perishing)?

HUMILITY AND SELF-CONTROL

“Blessed are they who humble themselves without being compelled to be humble” (Alma 32:16).

- Being willing to eliminate negative thoughts before they erupt into hurtful behavior is a way of humbling yourself without being compelled. Write about your willingness to humble yourself. Experiment for a day with eliminating negative thoughts. What blessings come to you?

LIVING IN THE PRESENT

“The more enlightened a person is, the more he seeks the gift of repentance, and the harder he strives to free himself from sin as often as he falls short of the divine will. . . . It follows that the sins of the god-fearing and the righteous are continually remitted because they repent and seek the Lord anew every day and every hour” (Bruce R. McConkie, Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 3 vols. [1966–73], 3:342–43).

- One of the most beneficial effects—mentally, emotionally, and spiritually—of living the principles described in these steps is that you learn to live in the present. How does step 10 help you to deal with life one hour at a time when necessary?
- How does it help you to know that you only have to live these principles one day at a time?

CONTINUING REPENTANCE AND FORGIVENESS

“As oft as they repented and sought forgiveness, with real intent, they were forgiven” (Moroni 6:8).

- Knowing that the Lord is willing to forgive you as often as you repent with real intent can give you courage to try again each time you fall short. Write what you think it means to repent and seek forgiveness with real intent.

CONTINUING IN YOUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

“I would that ye should be humble, and be submissive and gentle; easy to be entreated; full of patience and long-suffering; being temperate in all things” (Alma 7:23).

- Whoever coined the old saying “Practice makes perfect” didn’t mention how much patience it takes to keep practicing. How does self-appraisal and making amends on a daily basis ensure you will continue in your humility and your spiritual development?

“Behold, in the last days, . . . both those who shall come upon this land and those who shall be upon other lands, yea, even upon all the lands of the earth, behold, they will be drunken with iniquity and all manner of abominations. . . .

“. . . Behold, all ye that doeth iniquity, stay yourselves and wonder, for ye shall cry out, and cry; yea, ye shall be drunken but not with wine, ye shall stagger but not with strong drink” (2 Nephi 27:1, 4).

“When the night came they were drunken with anger, even as a man who is drunken with wine; and they slept again upon their swords” (Ether 15:22).

- In these verses, people are described as drunken but not with wine. Recovering addicts often refer to this kind of situation as being on a “dry drunk” or “an emotional bender.” Write about any tendency you might have to hold on to anger or other hurtful emotions.
- How does taking an inventory at the end of each day help you overcome this tendency?

LIFELONG IMPROVEMENT

“I still feel to urge upon the Latter-day Saints the necessity of a close application of the principles of the Gospel in our lives, conduct and words and all that we do; and it requires the whole man, the whole life to be devoted to improvement in order to come to knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ” (Brigham Young, Discourses of Brigham Young, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1954], 11).

- Taking these steps could definitely be described as a “close application” of gospel principles. How does being willing to evaluate yourself daily at every level—actions, words, thoughts, feelings, and beliefs—help you devote yourself to lifelong improvement?

Step 11: Personal Revelation

KEY PRINCIPLE: Seek through prayer and meditation to know the Lord's will and to have the power to carry it out.

DRAW NEAR TO THE LORD

"Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (D&C 88:63).

- The Lord respects your will and your agency. He allows you to choose to approach Him without compulsion. He draws near to you when you invite Him to be near. Write about how you will draw near to Him today.

GRATITUDE

"Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 5:17–19).

- When you remember to be grateful for everything in your life, even the things you don't understand, you will be able to maintain the continual contact with God that Paul called praying "without ceasing." Try to thank God throughout the day. How does this practice affect your closeness to the Spirit?

FEAST ON THE WORDS OF CHRIST

"Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do" (2 Nephi 32:3).

- In this verse, Nephi taught that when you feast on the words of Christ, these words will guide you in all you need to know and do. Picture how it would be to have Jesus Christ walk and talk with you all day long. Write about the feelings you have when you meditate on this image.

PERSONAL REVELATION

"The Savior said 'I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost' (D&C 8:2, emphasis added). . . An impression to the mind is very specific. Detailed words can be heard or felt and written as though the instructions were being dictated. A communication to the heart is a more general impression" (Richard G. Scott, "Helping Others to Be Spiritually Led," Doctrine and Covenants and Church history symposium, August 11, 1998, 2).

- As your understanding of personal revelation increases, you will recognize it more often and in a greater variety of ways. Write about how you have experienced impressions and revelations from the Lord.

"I say unto you [these things whereof I have spoken] are made known unto me by the Holy Spirit of God. Behold, I have fasted and prayed many days that I might know these things of myself. And now I do know of myself that they are true; for the Lord God hath made them manifest unto me by his Holy Spirit; and this is the spirit of revelation which is in me" (Alma 5:46).

- Alma testified that when he prayed and fasted, his ability to receive revelation increased. Abstinence from your addiction can be considered a form of fasting. Write about how abstaining has increased your ability to have the spirit of revelation.

"The idea that scripture reading can lead to inspiration and revelation opens the door to the truth that a scripture is not limited to what it meant when it was written but may also include what that scripture means to a reader today. Even more, scripture reading may also lead to current revelation on whatever else the Lord wishes to communicate to the reader at that time. We do not overstate the point when we say that the scriptures can be a Urim and Thummim to assist each of us to receive personal revelation" (Dallin H. Oaks, "Scripture Reading and Revelation," Ensign, Jan. 1995, 8).

- Learning the language of the scriptures is a lot like learning a foreign language. The best way to learn is to immerse yourself in them, to read and study them every day. Write about a passage of scripture that has opened up to you and become a personal revelation to you.

RECEIVING COUNSEL FROM THE LORD

"Seek not to counsel the Lord, but to take counsel from his hand. For behold, ye yourselves know that he counseleth in wisdom, and in justice, and in great mercy, over all his works" (Jacob 4:10).

- Our prayers may have been ineffective in the past because we spent more time counseling the Lord—telling Him what we wanted—than seeking His will about our decisions and conduct. Think of a recent experience with prayer. Was it full of counsel to the Lord or from the Lord? Write about your willingness to listen for and receive His counsel to you.

Step 12: Service

KEY PRINCIPLE: Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, share this message with others and practice these principles in all you do.

CONVERSION AND RECOVERY

“Converted means to turn from one belief or course of action to another. Conversion is a spiritual and moral change. Converted implies not merely mental acceptance of Jesus and his teachings but also a motivating faith in him and his gospel—a faith which works a transformation, an actual change in one’s understanding of life’s meaning and in his allegiance to God in interest, in thought, and in conduct” (Marion G. Romney, in Conference Report, Guatemala Area Conference 1977, 8).

- The Savior counseled Peter to strengthen his brethren after he was converted (see Luke 22:32). Write about President Romney’s definition of conversion and how it applies to your experience in recovery.
- How do you feel about strengthening others as they recover from addictive behaviors?

GREAT PROGRESS FROM LITTLE STEPS

“Be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great” (D&C 64:33).

- Write about the feelings you have when you think of living these principles in all aspects of your life. How does it help to realize that great works are done in small steps?

STRENGTHENING OTHERS

“This is my glory, that perhaps I may be an instrument in the hands of God to bring some soul to repentance; and this is my joy.

“And behold, when I see many of my brethren truly penitent, and coming to the Lord their God, then is my soul filled with joy; then do I remember what the Lord has done for me, yea, even that he hath heard my prayer; yea, then do I remember his merciful arm which he extended towards me” (Alma 29:9–10).

- We have learned that it is critical to recovery to be willing to share our testimonies of these principles. How will sharing your experience help you remain strong in your recovery?

“[As ye] are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life—

“Now I say unto you, if this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?” (Mosiah 18:9–10).

- Your experience with addiction helps you empathize with those who struggle with addiction; your experience in recovery helps you comfort them. Write about your increased desire and your ability to stand as a witness of God since you have followed the steps of recovery.

SERVING WITH THE HELP OF THE LORD

“The Redeemer chose imperfect men to teach the way to perfection. He did so then; He does so now” (Thomas S. Monson, in Conference Report, Apr. 2004, 19; or Ensign, May 2004, 20).

- Sometimes we wonder if we are ready to share recovery with others because we are not yet practicing these principles perfectly. How does it quiet your fears to realize that the Savior works through imperfect people?

THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Romans 1:16).

- Write your thoughts and feelings as you look back and consider that it took a spiritual experience to help you overcome your addiction. Write about any feelings of reluctance you may have to tell others that you were healed by applying the principles of the gospel of Christ.

“Go your way whithersoever I will, and it shall be given you by the Comforter what you shall do and whither you shall go.

“Pray always, lest you enter into temptation and lose your reward.

“Be faithful unto the end, and lo, I am with you. These words are not of man nor of men, but of me, even Jesus Christ, your Redeemer, by the will of the Father” (D&C 31:11–13).

- The scriptures are full of guidance for those who wish to maintain a spiritual way of life that will lead them back to God. What specific guidance do you find in these verses?