

Morning & Evening

Sharing Hope from Tamassee Village

By Jon Holland, CEO of Tamassee Hope Village



As a boy, I was given a copy of Charles Haddon Spurgeon's *Morning and Evening* devotional. Spurgeon was a gifted preacher in 1800s England, and his devotional is a deep well of beautiful spiritual writing. It modeled the rhythm of spending time with God at the start and at the end of each day. As a young adult in seminary, I discovered the Anglican tradition and its *Book of Common Prayer*. In a season of deep grief, the prayer book gave my wife and me a way to connect with God when our own words failed, and it reinforced the rhythm of daily prayer.

Praying each morning and evening is biblical wisdom. Psalm 1 begins, "The good life is for the one who delights in the LORD's teaching, and they meditate on it day and night." Psalm 92 says, "It is good to...proclaim the LORD's unfailing love in the morning and faithfulness every night."

The authors of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous direct recovering people to follow this rhythm of daily prayer. "When we retire at night, we constructively review our day. ... After making our review we ask God's forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken. On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives. ... As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day 'Thy will be done.'" (pp. 86-88)

This advice from the Big Book puts Step 11 into daily practice. Morning and evening prayer keep us in conscious contact with God so we do God's will. In the morning, we center on God's loving presence until our minds are calm. Next we meditate on Scripture or other helpful literature looking for what speaks to us. Then we hold our day up to God and seek guidance. We conclude with prayer for protection, surrender to God's will, and to maintain conscious contact throughout the day. As the day unfolds we keep returning to God's presence and direction.

In the evening, we again center on God's loving presence. Then we review our day with God. We note the times we followed his will and give thanks for our growth and goodness. Next we note when we gave into self-will, ask for forgiveness, and plan to make amends. We also note how others



treated us with self-will and pray to forgive them. We close by praying for those things on our hearts and resting in God's loving presence before falling asleep. This simple daily pattern of prayer is the secret ingredient of the 12 Steps. If we stay connected to God and do his will, then in time everything else falls into place.

At Starlight at Tamassee, we believe moms and kids can live in constant contact with God, experience his love, follow his guidance, and experience the freedom and healing it brings. To learn more about Starlight, visit <https://www.mytamassee.org/starlight/>, or contact us at starlight@mytamassee.org or 864-944-1390. If your church or civic group is interested in a presentation on recovery, contact Jon Holland at jholland@mytamassee.org.

