

## Lesson 24

### Yes

**Principle 8:** Yield myself to God to be used to bring this Good News to others, both by my example and by my words.

“Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires.” (Matthew 5:10)

**Step 12:** Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we try to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

“Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.” (Galatians 6:1)

### Introduction

Modern technology is something else! Take an old, beat-up Diet Coke can—dirty, dented, holes in it. A few years ago, it would have been thrown in the garbage and deemed useless, of no value. Today it can be recycled, melted down, purified, and made into a new can—shiny and clean—that can be used again.

We’re going to talk about recycling tonight—recycling your pain by allowing God’s fire and light to shine on it, to melt down your old hurts, habits, and hang-ups so they can be used again in a positive way. They can be recycled to show others how you worked the principles and steps with Jesus’ healing into the solution and how you have come through the darkness of your pain into Christ’s glorious freedom and light.

Society tells us that pain is useless. In fact, people are coming to believe that *people* in pain are useless! At Celebrate Recovery, we know that pain has value, as do the people who experience it. So while the world says no, tonight we say yes!

## Yes

Tonight's acrostic couldn't be any more positive! It is the word YES.

Yield myself to God

Example is what is important

Serve others as Jesus Christ did

The *Y* is Principle 8 itself: YIELD myself to God to be used to bring this Good News to others, both by my example and by my words.

To truly practice this principle, we must give God the latitude He needs to use us as He sees fit. We do that by presenting everything we have—our time, talents, and treasures—to Him. We hold loosely all that we call our own, recognizing that all of it comes from His hand. When we have yielded to Him, God can use us as His instruments to carry the message to others in word and action.

Galatians 6:1–2 (TLB) tells us: “If a Christian is overcome by some sin, ... humbly help him back onto the right path, remembering that the next time it might be one of you who is in the wrong. Share each other's troubles and problems, and so obey our Lord's command.”

People take your example far more seriously than they take your advice.

That leads us to the *E* in yes: EXAMPLE is what is important!

Your walk needs to match your talk. We all know that talk is cheap, because the supply always exceeds the demand.

If you want someone to see what Christ will do for them, let them see what Christ has

done for you.

Here is a question to ask yourself when you get to this principle: Does my lifestyle reflect what I believe? In other words, does it show others the patterns of the world—selfishness, pride, and lust—or does it reflect the love, humility, and service of Jesus Christ?

“Arouse the love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and a genuine faith” (1 Timothy 1:5, GNB).

This year, we have all been blessed by some outstanding and courageous testimonies at Celebrate Recovery. I would like all those who gave their testimonies this year to stand. These people believe in Principle 8! They believe in it enough to share not only in the safety of their small groups but also with the whole recovery family. They believe in Jesus Christ enough to share their lives with others. They stood up here and shared their weaknesses and strengths with others who are suffering from similar pain, hurts, hang-ups, and habits. They gave others a piece of their heart—not a piece of their mind.

Our goal again for next year is to have two testimonies each month as we work on each step. So, if you have been in recovery for awhile and haven't shared your story as yet, get busy, write it out, and get it to me. We need to hear and you need to share your miracle in the coming year.

The last letter in *S* is *S*: SERVE others as Jesus Christ did.

When you have reached Principle 8, you are ready to pick up the “Lord’s towel,” the one with which He washed the disciples’ feet in the upper room the night before He was crucified.

Jesus said, “And since I, the Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example to follow: do as I have done to you” (John 13:14–15, TLB).

You don't all have to give your testimonies to three hundred people to do service. All service ranks the same with God. You can say "y-e-s" to Principle 8 in many ways!

1. *Be an accountability partner.* Find someone in your small group who agrees to encourage and support you as you work through the principles. You agree to do the same for that person. You hold one another accountable for working an honest program.

2. *Be a sponsor.* Sponsors are people who have worked the steps. Their job is to guide newcomers on their journey through the steps, to give a gentle nudge when they are procrastinating or to slow them down when they are rushing through a step. Sponsors do so by sharing their personal journey on their road to recovery.

3. *Become a greeter.* Greeters get to Celebrate Recovery at 6:45 p.m. They welcome and provide directions for newcomers. They provide the newcomer with the important first impression of Celebrate Recovery!

4. *Help with the Solid Rock Cafe.* You need to arrive by 6:00 p.m. to help set up. If you can't get here early, stay a few minutes after to help clean up. You can bake a cake.

5. *Help with the Bar-B-Que.* We'll be starting in the spring. We need help with set-up, clean-up, and everything in between.

6. *Invite someone to church.* Ask someone from your secular groups or a neighbor, a friend, or a coworker!

The world is full of two kinds of people—givers and takers. The takers eat well and the givers sleep well. Be a giver. There are many, many more areas to serve! Make suggestions! Get involved!

Principle 8 comes down to this: Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.

Make your life a mission, not an intermission!

## **Wrap-up**

The road to recovery leads to service. When you reach Principle 8 the road splits (see diagram on page XXX). Some of you will choose to serve at Celebrate Recovery. Others will choose to serve in other areas of the church. The fact is, we need both.

We need you to share your experiences, strengths, and hopes with newcomers here on Friday nights. You do that as leaders, sponsors, and accountability partners. But the church also needs your service. As you serve outside of Celebrate Recovery, you can share with others and get them into recovery when they are ready to work on their hurts, hang-ups, and habits.

Every morning, before I get out of bed I pray this Principle 8 prayer:

*Dear Jesus, as it would please You, bring me someone today whom I can serve. Amen.*

Will you pray it this week?

## **Principle 8 Testimony**

My name is Bob, and thanks to the power of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, I have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body commonly known as alcohol and drug addiction. I'd like to share with you how God has guided my life, led me in ways I never dreamed of, and made positive changes in my life as a result.

I came from a loving home where there was no alcoholism or abuse of any kind. I did all the normal things that kids did while I was growing up and was very involved in sports, mainly soccer.

During these years everything seemed fine, until I got into junior high, at which time I

began experimenting with drugs and alcohol. I really liked the way they made me feel and I really thought it was cool at that time. I liked what it did so much that I began doing it on a regular basis. This ultimately led to harder drugs and heavier drinking. The consequence of which was a lot more problems in my life, such as being expelled from school, arguments at home, and a continuous shortage of money. I lived in a constant state of confusion because of the direction my chemical abuse was leading me.

In spite of numerous treatments at many rehab programs, which I agreed to in order to satisfy my family, I continued to live in denial of my addiction. Drugs and alcohol appeared to be my solution for a problem based on low self-esteem. After three more years of this behavior, my family could not take it anymore; I had become a danger to my family at home and to those I worked with. My family finally put their foot down and decided to fire me from the family business and throw me out of the house unless I sobered up. The fear of being left with nothing caused me to try sobriety on my own and to redirect my path, but without the help of Jesus Christ I failed miserably, bringing more pain and frustration in my life. It was obvious to everyone that the path I was following was one of misery and destruction, created by my own self-will. I'd have to say that the first way God led me was to recognize my need for Him.

Next, God led me to realize that I was powerless to change the habits, hurts, and hang-ups that were destroying my life. This was my first step on my road to recovery. Soon after I went to an AA meeting and met a Christian man who invited me to this church and Celebrate Recovery. This program helped me realize that meetings were not enough and that my recovery depended on my relationship with Jesus Christ. It was then that I asked Him to be my Lord and Savior and director of my life. He began to guide me away from my old path and toward His holy Word where I learned in the book of Proverbs that if I trust Him with all my heart, lean not

on my own understanding, and acknowledge Him in all my ways, He promises to make my path straight.

As I started to walk down my road to recovery He had planned for me, He gave me a deep desire to mend the destruction of my past through the ministry of Celebrate Recovery led by Pastor John Baker. I had a sincere hope to be of service to others who suffered as I did with addiction. His path also led me to the completion of a New Believer's Bible Study, which was necessary in order to build a solid foundation in this exciting new relationship with Christ. In addition to laying this new foundation, He also put on my heart to attend Classes 101, 201, and 301 at Saddleback. Afterward, I was baptized, became a member of the church, and attended Life Perspectives Bible Study led by Pastor Tom Holladay, Kay Warren, and Dr. Ron Rhodes. They taught me more about God's love for me and the plans He has for my future.

Following this path that He planned for me has caused my relationship with Him to grow through prayer and regular reading of His Word. God began showing me how I could make a real difference with my life by becoming a small group leader in Celebrate Recovery, where I can be of service to those who attend our meetings. Also I have become a lay pastor at our church, which provides me with even more opportunity to serve the Lord's Supper, baptize, and help those in need. This earnest desire to serve my fellow man is a gift that only Jesus Christ could have blessed me with. He continues to bless my life by allowing me to share His love with the children in Adventure Land.

Not only has he been faithful by guiding me in my ministries, He also has been guiding me in other areas of my life such as bringing into my life a beautiful, kind, and sincere woman who loves our Lord Jesus Christ as much as or more than I do myself. As for my family and my job, instead of firing me and tossing me out of the house, they are now training me to take over

the family business. Most of all, God has seen fit to use me in bringing other members of my family to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and they are now active members of this church. My mother, who never gave up on me and faithfully prayed for me for ten years, is battling her fourth reoccurrence of cancer. Her faith continues to grow as God uses her to encourage others through the Caring Hearts ministry and Cancer Support Group. My sister has also been involved with the ministry for Young Adults.

Praise the Lord! All things do work together for good for those that love God and are called according to His purpose.

It has only been a year and a half since my Lord has taken me off my path of misery and destruction and placed me on the road to recovery. As for low self-esteem, it completely disappeared when I was brought into the service of a loving God who will never leave nor forsake me. He continues to make it very clear that the only life worth living is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Let Jesus Christ do the driving in your life. You won't get lost. He'll direct you through all the curves of life. Don't be afraid to trust God with your life! He promises to lead us down a path of righteousness for His name's sake—now and into eternity.

Thanks for letting me share.