**Stress vs Peace**

I remembered the successes and I remembered the relapses, and I began to see a common thread to all the woven stories: *"motive of the heart".* Those that succeeded had Ps63 above as their motive for coming to group, going to church, and living their life. But those that struggled seemed to have a motive of striving to perform well enough that they would not drink or drug. The difference is one is thinking about Father God and the other is thinking about not sinning or messing up.

So we have two options: striving for success in doing the right thing, or walk in grace with the Father.  What I have found is that striving to not drink or not drug or not get angry or not look at porn....always results in stress. Strife leads me to anxiety. Many of us live in a constant state of anxiety over life.  Of myself I will never be good enough. That in itself stresses me out. We can never resolve sin in our life by working on it... our striving to sin less, never keeps us from future sin....thus we always end up "stressed out." The intention is noble, but our flesh is weak. It is our anxiety that leads us back to the false belief that drinking or drugging or "whatever/not God"....will take the anxiety away.

In my life,  *my success* in sobriety has come from an acceptance that I am powerless over the flesh on my own. But if I change my motive from me controlling the flesh, to Abba Father helping me(cause He says He wants to help us) then my motive changes to one of seeking God...being desperate for God's help and focusing on Him.  Psalm 63 becomes my heart's desire. The more my soul(my feelings, thoughts and emotions) thirsts for God the less I strive for perfect performance and the more I have peace as I walk in His grace.  When I focused on Father God and walking in His grace, then I came to believe that I am who God says I am. I am forgiven, I am redeemed, I am his child, I am friends with Jesus, I am adopted into His kingdom despite my shortcomings. That truly old things are passed away and today I am a new creation. (2 Cor.5:17)

Strife is self imposed but grace is God given. He said, ***"my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."***  Walking in God's calling should not be stressful. So if you are really struggling today with your sobriety, take Ps.63:1 to heart, and ask the Father to walk you into the room of Grace. Where living out of who God says I am means my actions will result in standing with God...with my sin or addiction in front of **US** working on it together. **You will overcome!!!!** Focus on Him to win! And the peace of God will be upon you.