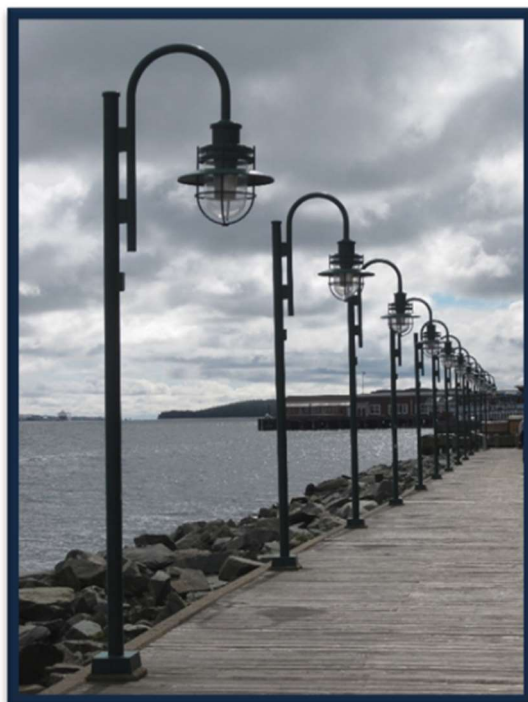


Life With God In Recovery

Step Seven Asking With Humility



Step Seven: We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

What does it mean to humbly ask God to remove our shortcomings? If we truly have come to that place where we want God to remove our shortcomings, then we will have given some thought to what they actually are. We will be aware of the negative effect they have had on our lives and strongly desire to have them removed.

When you take a stained jacket to the dry cleaners and ask them to remove a stubborn stain, they will ask if you know what it is. In this way they will more readily be able to treat it. God does know what our “stains” are but he wants us to acknowledge the stain, think about how it got there, and the impact it had on our lives.

The Lord is good and does what is right; he shows the proper path to those who go astray. He leads the humble in doing right, teaching them his way. The Lord leads with unfailing love and faithfulness all who keep his covenant and obey his demands. (Psalm 25:8-10 NLT)

When we think of the shortcomings in our character, is there a sense of remorse or do we justify them? To humbly ask God to remove our shortcomings shows we have become aware of how far we have strayed from being the person God created us to be. We are humbled by the gift of new life God is offering us. We know that only the power of the Holy Spirit working in us will enable us to follow this path of life.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9 NIV)

As we grow with God in recovery, we lay a new foundation by admitting that without God we can do nothing. We will finally begin

to experience life as God presents it in His word when we look through the lens of humility, and leave the stubborn pride in our own knowledge behind. God's teaching is different from what we have previously known, but it is the way to victory over self-absorption. God does not want us to focus on our faults but rather on getting to know His will as it is revealed in His Word, and putting that into effect.

We humbly ask God for help when we are confused or unable to handle the events of our lives. Over and over again we humbly acknowledge that even though we may have stumbled, there is no condemnation for those who are following the way of Jesus. His finished work on the cross is "payment in full" for ALL our sins. Asking with humility to have our shortcomings removed means coming before God one more time for cleansing and healing and a fresh start.

For the Lord takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with victory. Let his faithful people rejoice in this honor and sing for joy on their beds. (Psalm 149:4-5 NIV)

A humble life is grounded in a realistic view of ourselves. We feel secure in the safety of God's acceptance and unconditional love. We believe that God cares, therefore we no longer need to hide behind either too much self-confidence or the burden of self-doubt. A humble person is not someone who feels inferior but someone who is overwhelmed by

the undeserved goodness of God. To be "humble in heart" means that we accept both the awesome uniqueness of our experience and the limited nature of our knowledge.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (Matthew 11:29 NIV)

An attitude of humility allows us to accept our dependence on God and encouragement from one another. Humility helps us to listen to God's warning signals when we are treading a familiar path that may be harmful. Humility permits us to follow an unknown path with our hand in the hand of God, which is even better than a known way on our own. Humility helps us deal with each day, one day at a time. Humility allows us to lay down our way of thinking and believing and embrace God's way which will ultimately produce fullness of life.

My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body. Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life. (Proverbs 4:20-23 NLT)

Genuine humility increases our desire to act correctly when our awareness of the ugliness of our past behaviour becomes plain to us.

The accuser is ready and willing, through condemnation, to help us re-attach to our shame. Genuine remorse may rise up and cause us to feel unworthy of God's wonderful grace. We may even struggle with self-hatred against who we once were. It is the humble person who opens the door to God's forgiveness, healing, and rebuilding every time the need for it is evident.

Investigate my life, O God, find out everything about me; Cross-examine and test me, get a clear picture of what I'm about; See for yourself whether I've done anything wrong— then guide me on the road to eternal life. (Psalm 139:23-24 MSG)

Humility is not gained by seeking it directly. Rather, humility comes quietly to those who, over and over again, draw close to the Lord, trust His goodness, and express that in obedient behaviour. The God of time and eternity, who created us in love, comes close to us every day and invites us to rest close to His heart. There with Him we can finally live as people of honour, dignity, value, and respect. Then we can sincerely say, "God, here I am, I humbly ask you to remove all my shortcomings so I can abide in your presence for time and eternity."

What then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31 NIV)

Questions for Reflection

- 1) What does it mean to humbly ask God to remove our shortcomings?
- 2) When we think of the shortcomings in our character, is there a sense of remorse or do we justify them?
- 3) In the moment where we realize we've stumbled again, how do we get beyond the embarrassment or shame of our defects of character so we can welcome God to remove them?
- 4) A humble life is grounded in a realistic view of ourselves. How do I attain such a perspective?
- 5) What keeps us from humbly surrendering ourselves, including our shortcomings, to God?
- 6) How do I notice the role of the accuser as I work this step and how do I resist hearing his negative talk?
- 7) How am I practicing this relationship of "coming close to God"?

Heavenly Father, I come to you because you are an awesome loving God and I can do nothing without you. Thank you for your faithful love for me. Thank you for inviting me to come to You and learn. I need you. I want you. I come to you. I give my life to you. I recognize the shortcomings in my character and am willing to exchange my brokenness for new life from you. Change my thinking and believing until I'm secure in your goodness. I surrender my fear and worries to You. I receive Your faithful forgiveness for my sins and look to You for rest for my soul. Cleanse and heal me and fill me with Your peace which passes all understanding. Fill me anew with

Your Holy Spirit so that I may rely on His strength and guidance as I continue to walk in freedom from my past. I humbly embrace life on your terms. Thank you for caring for me.
AMEN