

STEP 5 - ADMITTED TO GOD, OURSELVES AND ANOTHER HUMAN BEING THE EXACT NATURE OF OUR WRONGS.

This Step is a "freedom" step. When we confess (admit) our sins to God, ourselves and someone else, we have initiated the process that will result in our no longer carrying that guilt or burden with us.

Step 5 is also a healing step. We find that, many times, the hidden things in our lives are like tumors or growths that must be removed. James 5:16 tells us to "confess our sins to one another and pray for one another so that we may be healed."

PSALM 32:1-5 - Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For night and day your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord" - and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

1. What happens to us when we don't "acknowledge" and "confess"?
2. What relationship is there between misery and unconfessed sin? Give an example.

PROVERBS 28:13 - He who conceals his sin does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

1. What do the words "confess and renounce" mean to you?
2. Who is the hardest one to confess our wrongs to; God, ourselves, or another?
3. What does the Scripture mean when it says "not prospering"?

LUKE 12:2 & 3 - "There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs."

1. Why do we, sometimes, refuse to look at the very things within us that Jesus came to set us free from?
2. Can we also believe that there is "nothing concealed or hidden" that God will not reveal to us if we ask?

PROVERBS 20:9 - Who can say, "I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin"?

1. Is it possible for anyone to make this statement? If not, why not?
2. Is this Scripture telling us that we need to "get honest with ourselves"?

JOHN 3:19-21 - "This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."

1. Why is it that men love the darkness and hate the light? How do we come into the light?
2. What does "whoever lives by the truth comes into the light" have to do with Step 5?
3. Have you ever been ashamed because of sin? Have you ever been elated because of forgiveness? Give an example of each.

1 JOHN 1:8-10 - If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

1. There are three "if we" statements, what is the end result of each one?
2. What does this Scripture say is "our part"? What is "God's part"?
3. If we refuse to take Step 5, what are we really saying about ourselves?

1 JOHN 2:1 & 2 - My dear children I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense - Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

1. Assuming that we might sin again, what steps can we take to avoid a particular sin in our lives?
2. If we do sin, what should we do? Who will defend us?

JAMES 5:16 - Therefore confess your sins to one another and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

1. Why are we directed to confess our sins to one another?
2. Does this Scripture imply that, if we have sinned, we need to be healed?
3. This is one of the great tools God has given us for becoming transparent, have you "confessed and renounced" to another person?