

**STEP 7 - HUMBLY ASKED HIM TO REMOVE ALL OUR SHORTCOMINGS AND TO FORGIVE US BELIEVING AND RECEIVING.**

In Step 3 we "made the decision to turn from the things of the past." We come to a point now in Step 7 where that decision becomes a "reality". James 4:10 says, "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up." There are times when we go to the Lord and ask Him to remove a particular sin and nothing seems to happen. This may be because we have not yet given it over to Him. We cannot ask God to remove our sin and to forgive us and keep right on sinning. We must first humbly give it over to Him and turn away from whatever it is; and then, should the temptation arise, we turn to the Lord for strength to resist.

Forgiveness of sins has been positionally provided (set in place) for us by Jesus at the cross. We now have the opportunity for that forgiveness to become experiential (to know it in our hearts) by appropriating and receiving it in those areas of our lives where God has revealed to us, through the inventory Steps, that it is needed.

**PSALM 41:4** - I said, "O Lord have mercy on me; heal me, for I have sinned against you."

1. Against whom have we sinned?
2. If God already knows our thoughts, why do we have to ask?
3. Are we really ready to let God heal us?

**PSALM 51:1-13** - Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place. Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you.

1. Are we all sinners from birth?
2. Are we becoming transparent and honest with God about everything in our lives?

**PROVERBS 1:7** - The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.

1. What is the "fear of the Lord"? (Jer. 32:39 & 40) Why do "fools despise wisdom and discipline"?
2. What are we afraid of: God? Looking at ourselves? Wondering if God will heal us? What others think? Satan? It goes on and on.

**PROVERBS 15:33** - The fear of the Lord teaches a man wisdom, and humility comes before honor.

1. If the fear of the Lord teaches a man wisdom, what teaches him humility?
2. How does humility bring honor? What is honor?
3. Does humility come by confessing to our brothers and asking them to pray that we be forgiven and healed?

**PROVERBS 22:4** - Humility and the fear of the Lord bring wealth and honor and life.

1. What will "humility and the fear of the Lord" bring us? Why do you think this is true?
2. What is the meaning of "wealth" as it is used here?
3. Are we personally applying humility and the fear of the Lord in our lives? Are we reaping the benefits?

**MATTHEW 18:1-4** - At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven".

1. What hinders us from "becoming like little children"?
2. What does it mean to "humble ourselves as children"?

**LUKE 18:10-14** - "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men - robbers, evildoers, adulterers - or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner'. I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

1. What was uppermost in the minds of the Pharisee and the tax collector as they prayed? Why was the tax collector justified?
2. What will keep us from becoming Pharisees as we follow after the Lord?
3. Give an example of when you have exalted yourself, and also, when you have humbled yourself.

**1 PETER 5:6 & 7** - Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

1. How do we humble ourselves? What are we to do with anxiety?
2. Can we be "beaten down" and still not be humble?
3. Do we really believe that God will be true to his word and remove our defects?

**MATTHEW 3:1 & 2** - In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

1. What hinders us from repenting?
2. What are some practical acts of repentance that we can do?

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

Can anyone say this? Why can't we say it?

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

1. What is the difference between "confessing" and "renouncing"? Give some examples of renouncing.
2. Is it possible for us to conceal sin from ourselves?
3. What does "proper" mean to you as it is used here? What is promised when we confess our sins?

**PSALM 32:5** - 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 does "cover up my iniquity" mean to you?
2. What should we do when we have hidden sin in our lives?
3. Do we "believe in our hearts" that, when we confess, God really forgives us?

**1 JOHN 1:9** - If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1. What does God do for us when we confess our sins?
2. Have we really learned to receive God's forgiveness?

**HEBREWS 11:6** - And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

1. What does the word "faith" mean? How are we rewarded by God? Note the word "earnestly".
2. Do we really expect God to remove our defects?
3. Can we picture God as a "rewarder"? Can we receive it if we do?

**REMEMBER - WE CAN "TRUST GOD!"**