

The Twelve Steps – a Spiritual Journey: Step Seven: Humble Prayer

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In our last step (#6), after having completed a fearless moral inventory of ourselves, and admitted to God, ourselves and another human being the exact nature of our wrongs, we were finally ready for God to remove our defects of character.

“The first six steps have prepared us for this time. Our hearts have been plowed and exposed. Now is the time for humble prayer.” (*Meditations for the Twelve Steps*).

“Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.”

Humility. That’s not a very popular word in today’s world. In a culture that celebrates power, achievement and success, pride is exalted, and humility is brushed aside. But on the journey towards freedom in Christ, we must learn to humble ourselves.

What is humility? J. Keith Miller says, “according to the *Twelve and Twelve*, humility is a clear recognition of who we are followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be. (It) is seeing ourselves as we actually are, good and bad, strong and weak, and acting authentically on those truths.” (*A Hunger for Healing*).

My dad was an alcoholic who abandoned my mom, my two younger sisters and I, before I was even five years old. And so, as I grew up with a strong sense of rejection and abandonment, I became a people pleaser, doing whatever I could to get people to like me. Even if it meant putting on a mask and pretending to be better than I was. I wasn’t being real.

One of the greatest things I learned through Overcomers Outreach and the 12-step program is that spiritual growth isn’t about perfection, it’s about direction. It’s about accepting the fact that I don’t have it all together – and that’s okay – and one day at a time, doing my best to become a better person.

Today I admit that I still struggle with sin. I am weak. But the good news I have discovered is that in my weakness, God’s strength is made perfect. When I admit that I can’t do it on my own, He can come in and do what only He can do – to remove my shortcomings.

The Biblical basis for this step is found in Isaiah 66:2: “I will bless those who have humble and contrite hearts, who tremble at my word.” The Bible clearly teaches in many different places that God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. When we humble ourselves, and are not too proud to accept the handout of amazing grace, God comes and does wonderful things in our lives and removes our shortcomings one by one. He chips away at everything in us that doesn’t reflect His glory, until more and more of Jesus shines through.

Seventh Step Prayer:

“My Creator, I am willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength as I go out from here to do your bidding.” Amen!
(*Prayers for the Twelve Steps – A Spiritual Journey*).