

Open - Serenity Prayer

The Step before the Steps

Psalm 51:5 – “For I was born a sinner - yes, from the moment my mother conceived me.”

Romans 7:24 – “Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death?”

STEP 1 / HONESTY / *We admitted that we were powerless over our dependencies and that our lives had become unmanageable.*

Luke 15:11-32

A good Biblical example of hitting bottom and admitting powerlessness is found in the story of the Prodigal Son found in Luke 15:11-31. This is the story where the rebellious son demanded his share of the family money and he left home to be able to manage his own life and do whatever he wanted. The son went to a faraway city and spent his money on wild living.

This kid obviously had an addictive personality and what we call a "life controlling problem." He spent all his wealth on partying and ended up broke and feeding someone's pigs just to get by. The pigs were better off than he was because he longed to eat the food they had.

We can't miss the point here - that when he was living under control of the father, he was living in comfort as a wealthy son. The result of self-management was disaster. ***"When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger!"*** (Luke 15:17) He got up and went to his father where he was loved, forgiven and restored. Step one can be summed up in a few words "I have a problem and I need help!"

We came, we came to, we came to believe....

STEP 2 / HOPE / *Came to believe that Jesus Christ could restore us to sanity.*

Hebrews 11:6 tells us, “It is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.”

STEP 3 / FAITH / *Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of the Lord.*

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.” (Proverbs 3:5-6).

“Commit everything you do to the LORD. Trust him, and he will help you.” (Psalms 37:5).

“God does not give us a thing called peace; He gives us Jesus Christ who is our peace.”

STEP 4 / COURAGE / *Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.*

1 Corinthians 11:28 (NKJV) ("But let a man examine himself"), 2 Corinthians 13:5 ("Examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine."), and Galatians 6:4 (NKJV) ("Let each one examine his own work").

STEP 5 / INTEGRITY (Sponsor) / *Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.*

"But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness." (1 John 1:9).

The Bible does not require confession to a human being for the purpose of gaining forgiveness from God. However, if we are seeking to be healed... remember, it is hard to spot self-deception all by ourselves.

"Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results." (James 5:16)

STEP 6 / WILLINGNESS / *Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.*

"...throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes." (Ephesians 4:22-23)

STEP 7 / HUMILITY / *Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.*

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life." (Psalms 139:23-24)

"Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin." (Psalms 51:2)

STEP 8 / BROTHERLY LOVE / *Made a list of all people we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.*

"Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone." (Romans 12:18)

"For instance, they might give back a debtor's security, return what they have stolen, and obey my life-giving laws, no longer doing what is evil. If they do this, then they will surely live and not die." (Ezekiel 33:15)

STEP 9 / DISCIPLINE & RESPONSIBILITY / *Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.*

"So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God." (Matthew 5:23-24)

"God does not give us a thing called peace; He gives us Jesus Christ who is our peace."

STEP 10 / PATIENCE & PERSEVERANCE (Continue to examine) / *Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.*

“Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.” (Colossians 3:12-13)

STEP 11 / AWARENESS / *Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with the Lord, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.*

“Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.” (Matthew 6:33) “For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him” (Philippians 2:13)

STEP 12 / SERVICE / *Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all of our affairs.*

“Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.” (Philippians 2:4)

“Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. Share each other’s burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:1-2)

Sponsorship

“A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need.” (Proverbs 17:17).

“Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble.” (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10).

Proverbs 27:17: “As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.”

One Day at A Time

Matthew 6:34: “So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”

Courage to change the things I can...

Paul tells us, “Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.” (Romans 12:2) (NASB)

“God does not give us a thing called peace; He gives us Jesus Christ who is our peace.”

The Gospel (Sort of)

Romans 3:11 (NLT)

“No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God.”

Romans 3:23

“For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.”

In chapter 2 of both Ephesians and Colossians, it says our state is that we are DEAD in our trespasses, sins and wrongdoings.

Romans 5:8

“But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.”

Hebrews 11:6

“It is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.”

Mark 9:24

The father instantly cried out, “I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!”

John 1:12

“To all who believed him (Jesus) and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.”

Romans 12:2

“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”

John 4:14

“But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life.”

Ephesians 5:25-27

“...just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God’s word. He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault.”

Hebrews 10:21-23

“And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God’s house, let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ’s blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.”