

In God's Time and God's Way

Step 7 - We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

We may be impatient to have our weaknesses and shortcomings removed immediately. It's hard to struggle along, feeling we don't have what it takes to live the life God wants for us. We may wish that He would just wave a magic wand and *poof!*... a perfect person!

The Bible makes it clear that it is God's plan to perfect us. But it also clear that God doesn't always work according to our timetable. Even the birth of the Messiah had to wait until "the right time."

The apostle Peter left us another reminder: *"But don't forget this, dear friends, that a day or a thousand years from now is like tomorrow to the Lord" (2 Peter 3:8).*

God wants our life to be worthwhile, but we must remember that truly valuable things take time to purify. The Bible reminds us that our faith (reliance upon God for complete recovery) *"is being tested as fire tests gold and purifies it" (1 Peter 1:7).* When gold is purified it is melted by severe heat. In the molten state, the impurities rise to the surface where they can be

skimmed off. The gold is then allowed to cool again and the process is repeated, over and over, until the gold is pure enough for its intended purpose. God will deal with us in a similar manner, continually revealing and removing our shortcomings in an ongoing fashion.

God is moving us toward a goal, one day at a time. He has planned "the right time" and "the right way" to remove our shortcomings. He takes everything into account when He decides how and when our prayers will be answered. It may seem like He's too slow in fulfilling His promises. It may seem like the process is too difficult. In the Bible, God says *"My thoughts are completely different from yours...and My ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts" (Is. 55: 8-9)*

When we ask God to remove our shortcomings, we must leave with Him the timing and the method. He has His reasons for doing what He is doing and it will ultimately be for our good. In the meantime, He refreshes us and gives us the strength and courage we need to go on.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. In what ways do I believe that I do not have what it takes to live the life God wants for me?
2. How do I feel knowing that the process of purification takes time and heat?
3. In what ways have I experienced the fire of purification?
4. What defects have I prayed for God to remove and still struggle with? Is there any evidence of the refining process with regard to these shortcomings?
5. What can I do to maintain my faith during difficult times and when the healing process seems to take a long time?
6. In what ways have I experienced God's refreshing during a lengthy and difficult healing process?
7. In what areas do I need God's strength and courage?