

GROWTH & HEALING

# SEVEN STEPS

A Weekly Guide For  
Small Groups

by David Stiles

WEEK

5

PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE



## Week 5 – Turn It Over to God

### I Can't Tell God

Even after identifying the brokenness in our lives (as we discussed last week), however, we sometimes fail to seek the One who can help us with our problems and say instead, "God won't help me."

**Lie #5**

"God won't help me."

You may have heard others say,

- "I've dealt with this for so long, I'll take care of it on my own."

Have you ever had those thoughts?

How would you complete the sentence,

"I find it hard to trust God to help me because \_\_\_\_\_."

### The Truth

The truth, according to Scripture, is that we are *dependent* upon God and that God desires to help us.

According to the Bible, the Lord is good, unchanging, our protector and our provider who *wants to help us*:

- "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." (Isaiah 41:10).
- "For I am the LORD, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you." (Isaiah 41:13)

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- “For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jer. 29:11)

So, we see in Scripture that God wants to help us.

### Specific Needs

God wants to help us, not just in a general sense, but with each of our specific needs.

In our need for *knowledge* and *wisdom* we are encouraged to “call out for insight” and “cry aloud for understanding” (Prov. 2:3) and the Lord will let us “know the word that sustains the weary.” (Isaiah 50:4)

In our need for spiritual *sustenance*, Jesus said that, “man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from God.” (Matthew 4:4)

In our *brokenness*, Jesus said that he did not come for those who had it all together, saying:

- “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” (Luke 5:31-32)

Scripture teaches that when we seek God we will find him. Jeremiah writes:

- “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,’ declares the Lord.” (Jeremiah 29:13)

As Jerry Bridges has written, “...we must learn that however difficult and frustrating our circumstances might be, God’s divine assistance through the Holy Spirit is available to help us....”

### Question for Discussion

- What do you find encouraging about God’s faithfulness and offers to help?

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### Step Five

The fifth step in our journey of spiritual growth and personal healing, is simply called, “Turn it over to God”.

**Step #5:**  
Turn it over to God.

What is *it* you might ask?

“It” is whatever your area of brokenness is that:

- the Holy Spirit is revealing to you and that He wants to address
- others are telling you is causing them pain
- an area of failure or difficulty that you are experiencing
- an area of your life that needs healing and forgiveness

The “it” for you may be:

- anger
- bitterness
- pain
- resentment
- shame
- unforgiveness

“Turning it over to God” is in many ways a combination of the first three steps in the Twelve Step Alcoholics Anonymous process:

- “We admit we are powerless over \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “We believe that a Power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity.”
- “We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God.”

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### Surrender

An important part of “turning it over to God” is *surrender*.

As we identify these broken areas and give them to God, we might use terms such like “surrender”, “trust” and “follow”.

Jesus said, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.” (Luke 9:23)

Surrender, therefore, is an important component of this step. We must “deny” ourselves and trust Christ with our brokenness and healing.

Many have written about the need to *surrender* to God.

Catholic priest and author Henri Nouwen, wrote about St. Anthony, saying that he was able to endure terrible trials, “not because of his own willpower or ascetic exploits, but because of his unconditional *surrender* to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.”

E. Stanley Jones, a Methodist missionary to India, answered someone who “wanted to know about the secret of victorious living” by telling them that “it was in *self-surrender*. The difference was in giving up the innermost self to Jesus.”

Saint Therese of Lisieux, a Catholic nun, wrote about an experience she had by saying, “Oh, how sweet the first kiss of Jesus was! It was a kiss of love. I knew that I was loved and declared: ‘I love You and I *give myself to You* for ever!’”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a Lutheran pastor in Germany during World War II wrote,

- “When Christ calls a man, he bids him *come and die*. It may be a death like that of the first disciples who had to leave home and work to follow him, or it may be a death like Luther’s, who had to leave the monastery and go out into the world. But it is the same death every time – death in Jesus Christ, the death of the old man at his call.”

And,

“Who is pure in heart? Only those who have *surrendered* their hearts completely to Jesus that he may reign in them alone.”

In his writing on the Sermon on the Mount, Bonhoeffer wrote that many could claim different ways of interpreting the text, but “Jesus knows only one possibility: simple *surrender* and obedience, not interpreting and applying it, but doing and obeying it.”

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James Houston, Chancellor of Regent College in Vancouver has written,

- “Jesus cannot simply become an occasional guest in the human heart. To allow him into our hearts means to *surrender* to his rule over our lives.”

### **We Can’t Manipulate**

As we give God ourselves and our brokenness, it is important to remember that God is *sovereign*. He will do what He wants, when He wants. What do we mean by the sovereignty of God?

Sovereignty, as writer A.W. Pink describes it, means, “the supremacy of God, the kingship of God, the god-hood of God.”

Pink continues,

- “The Sovereignty of the God is absolute, irresistible, infinite. When we say that God is Sovereign we affirm His right to govern the universe which He has made for His own glory, just as He pleases. We affirm that *His right* is the right of the Potter over the clay, i. e., that He may mold that clay into whatsoever form He chooses, fashioning out of *the same lump* one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. We affirm that He is under no rule or law outside of His own will and nature, *that God is a law* unto Himself, and that He is under no obligation to give an account of His matters to any.”

That means that God is God and we are not.

That also means that we cannot:

- Manipulate God
- Cajole
- Control
- Barter with Him
- Bargain to get our way

We can simply surrender and trust.

As we surrender and “Turn it over to God” we are acknowledging two things:

- our needs
- God’s faithfulness

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John Calvin wrote about this very thing in 1559,

- “True prayer is born first from our own sense of need, then from faith in God’s promises.”

As you think about God’s faithfulness in the past it should help you “turn things over to God” in the present.

The following prayer might also reflect your thoughts and hopes in this Step:

### Prayer

Lord, thank You for wanting to change me and help me. Lord, please give me faith to turn my brokenness over to you. Help me learn to surrender my life to You. Amen.

### Questions for Reflection:

1. Reflect for a moment on the phrase, “God won’t help me.” How much does it represent your feelings right now? Why?  
 Not what I’m thinking  
 Somewhat what I’m thinking  
 Very much what I’m thinking
2. What is difficult about turning things over to God? Why?
3. What steps might you take in light of this week’s discussion?

