

Thirteen Steps with Jesus

Discussion and Support Group

Date	Topic of Discussion	Assignment for the week
SESSION 1	Most Important First Step for the Christian: Understanding God's great love and care for us. (<i>Steps to Christ</i> , Ch. 1: God's Love for Man)	Review Step One
SESSION 2	Step One (of the 12 steps) is about recognizing our brokenness. (<i>Steps to Christ</i> , Ch. 2: The Sinner's Need of Christ")	Review Step Two
SESSION 3	Step Two (of the 12 steps) is about the birth of faith in us. (<i>Steps to Christ</i> , Ch. 3: Repentance)	Review Step Three
SESSION 4	Step Three (of the 12 steps) involves a decision to let God be in charge of our lives. (<i>Steps to Christ</i> , Ch. 4: Confession)	Review Step Four
SESSION 5	Step Four (of the 12 steps) involves self-examination. (<i>Steps to Christ</i> , Ch. 4: Confession, continued)	Review Step Five
SESSION 6	Step Five (of the 12 steps) is the discipline of confession, admitting our wrongs. (<i>Steps to Christ</i> , Ch. 4: Confession, continued)	Review Step Six
SESSION 7	Step Six (of the 12 steps) is about an inner transformation, asking God to change us. (<i>Steps to Christ</i> , Ch. 5: Consecration)	Review Step Seven
SESSION 8	Step Seven (of the 12 steps) involves the transformation / purification of our character. (<i>Steps to Christ</i> , Ch. 6: Faith & Acceptance)	Review Step Eight
SESSION 9	Step Eight (of the 12 steps) involves examining our relationships and preparing ourselves to make amends. (<i>Steps to Christ</i> , Ch. 7: Discipleship)	Review Step Nine
SESSION 10	Step Nine (of the 12 steps) is the discipline of making amends. (<i>Steps to Christ</i> , Ch. 8: Growing)	Review Step Ten
SESSION 11	Step Ten (of the 12 steps) is about maintaining progress in recovery. (<i>Steps to Christ</i> , Ch. 9: Work & Life)	Review Step Eleven
SESSION 12	Step Eleven (of the 12 steps) involves the spiritual disciplines of prayer and meditation to know God. (<i>Steps to Christ</i> , Ch. 10, 11, 12: Knowing God & Prayer & Doubt)	Review Step Twelve
SESSION 13	Step Twelve (of the 12 steps) is about personal ministry. (<i>Steps to Christ</i> , Ch. 13: Rejoicing in the Lord)	<i>Go and spread the joy!</i>

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FIRST SESSION ("God's Love for Man"):

Facilitators introduce themselves, then have participants go around the circle and share who they are and what the twelve steps mean to them, if anything. Facilitator should make sure no one monopolizes the time, so they should encourage participants to share for no more than 3 minutes.

Read around paragraph by paragraph the first chapter of *Steps to Christ*, called "God's Love for Man." Have anyone who wants to participate in reading aloud. Pause for comments and questions, making sure, however, that you will finish the chapter by the allotted time.

The main questions to ponder (besides those that arise naturally):

- 1) Does anything in this chapter contradict the picture you already have of God? What? How?

- 2) What about this picture of God's love spoke to you most meaningfully?

- 3) What problem, if any, do you have believing in this description of God's love?

- 4) If God really is like this, would it be more or less difficult for you to trust Him with your life and your pain?

- 5) In what ways might you still have difficulty trusting this description of God as your Higher Power? (for those familiar with the 12-Steps of A.A.)

Finish each session with prayer requests that you write down and refer to the next session for updates.

Pray to close.

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SESSION TWO (“The Sinner’s Need of Christ”):

After prayer for the Spirit Teacher’s guidance, begin with reactions to the reading in *Steps to Jesus*.

The main questions to ponder (besides those that arise naturally):

- 1) How do you see “selfishness took the place of love” happening in your life?
- 2) How would you describe “The Sinner’s Need of Christ”?
- 3) How can a sinner be restored to communion with Christ?
- 4) How do you see the statement “It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken” relating to the first step we studied about in *Serenity*?

Step One: *We admitted we were powerless over the effects of our separation from God, that our lives had become unmanageable.*

“Step One forms the foundation for working the other steps. Admitting our powerlessness and accepting the unmanageability of our lives is not an easy thing to do. Although our behavior has caused us stress and pain, it is difficult to let go and trust that our lives can work out well. The idea that there are areas over which we are powerless is a new concept for us. It is much easier for us to feel that we have power and are in control.

- 5) In what area of your life do you experience the strongest need to be in control?
- 6) What are the consequences of your self-destructive habits?
- 7) What difficulties are you having in recognizing your powerlessness and your life’s unmanageability?
- 8) What major event in your life has caused you to realize the extent of your pain?”ⁱ
- 9) What similarities or differences do you find between what you have read in *Steps to Jesus* and the biblical information on Step One of the Twelve Steps?
- 10) What, if any, take-aways from this study and discussion might you want to incorporate in your life in the coming week?

Finish each session with prayer requests that you write down and refer to the next session for updates.

Either facilitator prays in closing, or asks specific people in the group who are willing to pray aloud for one of the items on the list not their own.

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SESSION THREE ("Repentance"):

After prayer for the Spirit Teacher's guidance, begin with reactions to the reading in *Steps to Jesus*.

The main questions to ponder (besides those that arise naturally):

- 1) What is the true nature of repentance?
- 2) How much sorrow for sin do you have to feel before Christ accepts you?
- 3) What is it that gives us a true picture of our deformed character?
- 4) Who is it that won't let you forget your past?

Step Two: *Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.*

"Step Two gives us new hope to see that help is available to us if we simply reach out and accept what our Higher Power, Jesus Christ, has to offer. It is here that we form the foundation for growth of our spiritual life, which helps us become the person we want to be. What is required of us is a willingness to believe that a power greater than ourselves is waiting to be our personal Savior. What follows as we proceed through the steps is a process that brings Jesus Christ into our lives and enables us to grow in love, health, and grace.

- 5) List experiences that caused you to lose faith in God.
- 6) Have you mistakenly believed that it was your responsibility to create faith yourself instead of accepting faith as a gift? Explain.
- 7) What is keeping you from truly believing that a power greater than yourself can restore you to sanity?
- 8) Describe your inability to manage your own affairs."ⁱ
- 9) What similarities or differences do you find between what you have read in *Steps to Jesus* and the biblical information on Step One of the Twelve Steps?
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SESSION FOUR (“Confession”):

After prayer for the Spirit Teacher’s guidance, begin with reactions to the reading in *Steps to Jesus*.

The main questions to ponder (besides those that arise naturally):

- 1) How do we go about acknowledging our guilt?
- 2) Where does the spirit of self-justification come from?
- 3) How does genuine repentance help us come to trust Christ more?
- 4) What does the phrase “humble and broken heart” mean to you?

Step Three: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

“Step Three is an affirmative step. It is time to make a decision. In the first two steps, we became aware of our condition and accepted the idea of a power greater than ourselves. Although we are beginning to know and trust God, we may find it difficult to think of allowing him to be totally in charge of our lives. However, if the alternative is facing the loss of something critical to our existence, God’s guidance may be easier to accept.

- 5) Which parts of your life are you willing to turn over to God?
- 6) Which parts of your life are you unwilling to turn over to God? What prevents you from giving them up?
- 7) Why do you suppose that surrendering your life to God reduces the stress in your life?
- 8) What do you hope to experience as a result of your decision to surrender to God’s will?”ⁱ
- 9) What similarities or differences do you find between what you have read in *Steps to Jesus* and the biblical information on Step One of the Twelve Steps?
- 10) What, if any, take-aways from this study and discussion might you want to incorporate in your life in the coming week?

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