



THE 12 STEPS – A CLASSIC MODEL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The 12-Step process is an experience of being changed by a loving, supportive God who knows what we need and helps us through our pain to see and give up our own selfish agendas and surrender to His. The 12-Steps offer a structure of discipline to become holy and whole. Our task is to remove the self-imposed blocks or character defects that stand between God and us. We do this so we can be awakened, meet God personally with our own true selves, and do his will. The 12-Steps are like scaffolding that allows the “spiritual house” of our personal life to be built. This study of the 12-Steps will be an amazing spiritual adventure. Act like a man!

A Man knows that he must be ALL IN to recover all character defects.

The 12 Steps – Step 6
Remove Character Defects!

April 12, 2018
Highland Colony Men's Roundtable
www.MensTable.com

Bible Verses: Isaiah 58:12, James 4:10, Romans 12:1,2, Psalm 139:23,24, Revelation 3:15,16, Isaiah 55:8-11, John 5:1-9, Ephesians 2:8,9

Music: WONDER Trailer (2017)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ob7fPOzbmzE>

Natalie Merchant - Wonder Lyrics

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v611MIWML8>

Video: Sad Scene | Wonder (2017) | Lionsgate

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fa1auhluqM4>

Resources: Book: *A Hunger for Healing—The Twelve Steps as a Classic Model for Christian Spiritual Growth* by J. Keith Miller

Book: *The Life Recovery Journey—Inspiring Stories and Biblical Wisdom as You Work the Twelve Steps and Let Them Work You* by Stephen Arterburn & David Stoop

Book: *The Twelve Steps—A Spiritual Journey—A Working Guide for Healing Damaged Emotions* by RPI Publishing

The Twelve Steps & Spiritual Disciplines

Goal:	Discipline:
1.Peace with God	1.Submission (Rom 7:17)
2.Peace with God	2.Conversion (Phil 2:13)
3.Peace with God	3.Conversion (Rom 12:1)
4.Peace with Ourselves	4.Confession (Lam 3:20)
5.Peace with Ourselves	5.Confession (James 5:16)
6.Peace with Ourselves	6.Repentance (James 4:10)
7.Peace with Ourselves	7.Repentance (I John 1:9)
8.Peace with Others	8.Amends (Luke 6:31)
9.Peace with Others	9.Amends (Matt 5:23,24)
10.Peace with Others	10.Maintenance (I Cor 10:12)
11.Keeping the Peace	11.Prayer (Col 3:16)
12.Keeping the Peace	12.Ministry (Gal 6:1)

The 12 Steps: Step 6 > I AM READY!

1. _____ > You want God to transform not only your character defects, but your entire mind so that you can know and do God's will (Romans 12:1,2; Psalm 139:23,24).

2. _____ > It's healthy to remember that generally your primary motivation is NOT to become better Christians but your motive is to stop the pain. Your motivation is only “good” because you are afraid to be “bad” or because the consequences might be too painful if things didn't work out.

3. _____ > Let God remove **ALL** your character defects or you'll make any character defects you still want to exercise “an exception” and continue to be in control. Destructive Character defects to consider: smoking, drinking, eating too many sweets, worrying about other people and trying to fix them, sexual fantasies, feeling superior, believe you are smarter, better than others, greed, self-righteous anger, can't let go of the past, gossip, etc.

The 12 Steps: Step 6 > THIS IS TOO DIFFICULT!

1. _____ > If you are sick enough of being miserable and want to get over the pain and confusion of the Sin-disease, this is the best way.

2. _____ > “Go for it!” It's your choice. God's view of failure to choose is alluded to in Revelation 3:15,16. You can choose to life with spiritual cancer or recovery. It's your choice.

3. _____ > **“Repentance is the most mis-translated word in the New Testament”** (Broudas). It means to change one's mind in light of new truthful information. This is the process by which believers have our minds transformed. When the truth of the finished work of Christ challenges religious mindsets, repentance allows one to embrace the new and discard the old. Isaiah 55:8-11 sheds more light on *metanoia*. *Metanoia* suggests a co-knowing with God! It is an intertwining of thought; and it is to agree with God about me. **When we put our trust into and agree with what God believes about us**, our hearts naturally, supernaturally give us impetus to turn from sin.

The 12 Steps: Step 6 > Your Part is to Become “Entirely Ready.”

1. _____ > Your part in the removal of your character defects involves a new attitude toward God and how he works to change your life in the practical struggles of living. See John 5:1-9.

2. _____ > When your try to clean yourself up with your own power and “discipline” you keep yourself agitated, confused, in denial, and worn out, and you were in almost constant emotional pain. You were like the man who tore the scab off his arm every morning to see if his wound had healed. You will become exhausted trying to bring about spiritual growth and healing in your own power.

3. _____ > This attitude of readiness to let God reach into your life and uncover and remove the things that make you spiritually and emotionally sick is paradoxically the doorway to active and effective change of specific lifelong habits and sins. But it means turning loose of control – even of your healing. See Ephesians 2:8,9.

ACTION: Journal This!

1. What religious behaviors have you engaged that you now realize you were using in the hope of fixing yourself (e.g. longer prayer time, more intense Bible study, doing volunteer work).
2. Describe your feelings about doing each of those things at the time (joy, impatience, hope, frustration, boredom, anger, fear, etc.).
3. What character defects have you recognized that you need to become willing to let God remove (greed, grandiose thinking, lust, etc.)?

Bible Verses – New Living Translation

<p>Isaiah 58:12 - ¹²Some of you will rebuild the deserted ruins of your cities. Then you will be known as a rebuilders of walls and a restorer of homes.</p> <p>James 4:10 - ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor.</p> <p>Romans 12:1,2 - ¹ And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. 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.</p> <p>Psalms 139:23,24 - ²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. ²⁴ Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.</p> <p>Revelation 3:15,16 - ¹⁵ "I know all the things you do, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish that you were one or the other! ¹⁶ But since you are like lukewarm water, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth!</p>	<p>Isaiah 55:8-11 - ⁸ "My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the LORD. ⁹ "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. ⁹ For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts. ¹⁰ "The rain and snow come down from the heavens and stay on the ground to water the earth. They cause the grain to grow, producing seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry. ¹¹ It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it.</p> <p>John 5:1-9 - ¹ Afterward Jesus returned to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish holy days. ² Inside the city, near the Sheep Gate, was the pool of Bethesda, with five covered porches. ³ Crowds of sick people—blind, lame, or paralyzed—lay on the porches. ⁴ ⁵ One of the men lying there had been sick for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, "Would you like to get well?" ⁷ "I can't, sir," the sick man said, "for I have no one to put me into the pool when the water bubbles up. Someone else always gets there ahead of me." ⁸ Jesus told him, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!" ⁹ Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking! But this miracle happened on the Sabbath,</p> <p>Ephesians 2:8,9 - ⁸ God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. ⁹ Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.</p>
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"Wonder"

Natalie Merchant

<p>Doctors have come from distant cities Just to see me Stand over my bed Disbelieving what they're seeing</p> <p>They say I must be one of the wonders Of God's own creation And as far as they see they can offer No explanation</p> <p>Newspapers ask intimate questions Want confessions They reach into my head To steal the glory of my story</p> <p>They say I must be one of the wonders Of God's own creation And as far as they see they can offer No explanation</p> <p>O, I believe Fate smiled and destiny Laughed as she came to my cradle Know this child will be able</p>	<p>Laughed as my body she lifted Know this child will be gifted With love, with patience and with faith She'll make her way</p> <p>People see me I'm a challenge to your balance I'm over your heads How I confound you and astound you To know I must be one of the wonders Of God's own creation And as far as you see you can offer me No explanation</p> <p>O, I believe Fate smiled and destiny Laughed as she came to my cradle Know this child will be able Laughed as she came to my mother Know this child will not suffer Laughed as my body she lifted Know this child will be gifted With love, with patience and with faith She'll make her way</p>
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The 12 Steps

**Step 6: Were Entirely Ready to Have God Remove All These Defects of Character.
Remove Character Defects!**

Isaiah 58:12; James 4:10; Romans 12:1,2; Psalm 139:23,24.

THE 12 STEPS: A CLASSIC MODEL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH



The 12 Step process is an experience of being changed by a loving, supportive God who knows what we need and helps us through our pain to see and give up our own selfish agendas and surrender to His. The 12-Steps offer a structure of discipline to become holy and whole. Our task is to remove the self-imposed blocks or character defects that stand between God and us. We do this so we can be awakened, meet God personally with our own true selves, and do his will. The 12-Steps are like scaffolding that allows the “spiritual house” of our personal life to be built. This study of the 12-Steps will be an amazing spiritual adventure. Act like a man!

The 12 Steps: Goals & Spiritual Disciplines



Goal:

1. Peace with God.
2. Peace with God.
3. Peace with God.
4. Peace with Ourselves.
5. Peace with Ourselves.
6. Peace with Ourselves.
7. Peace with Ourselves.
8. Peace with Others.
9. Peace with Others.
10. Peace with Others.
11. Keeping the Peace.
12. Keeping the Peace.

Discipline:

1. Submission (Rom. 7:17).
2. Conversion (Phil. 2:13).
3. Conversion (Rom. 12:1).
4. Confession (Lam. 3:40).
5. Confession (James 5:16).
6. Repentance (James 4:10).
7. Repentance (I John 1:9).
8. Amends (Luke 6:31).
9. Amends (Matt. 5:23-24).
10. Maintenance (I Cor. 10:12).
11. Prayer (Col. 3:16).
12. Ministry (Gal. 6:1).

The 12 Steps

Step 6: I AM READY!



1. **Commit Your Whole Life to God** > You want God to transform not only your character defects, but your entire mind so that you can know and do God's will (Romans 12:1,2; Psalm 139:23,24).
2. **More Than "Stop the Pain"** > It's healthy to remember that generally your primary motivation is NOT to become better Christians but your motive is to stop the pain. Your motivation is only "good" because you are afraid to be "bad" or because the consequences might be too painful if things didn't work out.
3. **Impossible** > Let God remove **ALL** your character defects or you'll make any character defects you still want to exercise "an exception" and continue to be in control. Destructive Character defects to consider: smoking, drinking, eating too many sweets, worrying about other people and trying to fix them, sexual fantasies, feeling superior, believe you are smarter, better than others, greed, self-righteous anger, can't let go of the past, gossip, etc.

The 12 Steps

Step 6 > THIS IS TOO DIFFICULT!



1. **Spiritual Cancer** > If you are sick enough of being miserable and want to get over the pain and confusion of the Sin-disease, this is the best way.
2. **Your Choice** > "Go for it!" It's your choice. God's view of failure to choose is alluded to in Revelation 3:15,16. You can choose to life with spiritual cancer or recovery. It's your choice.
3. **Repentance** > "**Repentance is the most mis-translated word in the New Testament**" (Broudus). It means to change one's mind in light of new truthful information. This is the process by which believers have our minds transformed. When the truth of the finished work of Christ challenges religious mindsets, repentance allows one to embrace the new and discard the old. Isaiah 55:8-11 sheds more light on *metanoia*. *Metanoia* suggests a co-knowing with God! It is an intertwining of thought; and it is to agree with God about me. **When we put our trust into and agree with what God believes about us**, our hearts naturally, supernaturally give us impetus to turn from sin.

The 12 Steps

Step 6 > Your Part is to Become “Entirely Ready”



1. **Attitude** > Your part in the removal of your character defects involves a new attitude toward God and how he works to change your life in the practical struggles of living. See John 5:1-9.
2. **God's Power** > When you try to clean yourself up with your own power and “discipline” you keep yourself agitated, confused, in denial, and worn out, and you were in almost constant emotional pain. You were like the man who tore the scab off his arm every morning to see if his wound had healed. You will become exhausted trying to bring about spiritual growth and healing in your own power.
3. **Grace -- NOT WORKS!** > This attitude of readiness to let God reach into your life and uncover and remove the things that make you spiritually and emotionally sick is paradoxically the doorway to active and effective change of specific lifelong habits and sins. But it means turning loose of control – even of your healing. See Ephesians 2:8,9.

ACTION: Journal This!



1. What religious behaviors have you engaged that you now realize you were using in the hope of fixing yourself (e.g. longer prayer time, more intense Bible study, doing volunteer work).
2. Describe your feelings about doing each of those things at the time (joy, impatience, hope, frustration, boredom, anger, fear, etc.).
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