

4.

commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.' (1 John 3:22).

Read the **Bible** daily. *'These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.'* (Acts 17:11). You can get good books, and Bible studies, which will help you learn in a short time, what would otherwise take a lifetime to sift out.

The Bible is called the Word of God, it is also called a sword, and a sword is used for personal protection. The Bible is full of promises which have been put there for our use, to protect us from harm, evil, and want.

'A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.' (Psalm 91:7).

'..greater is he (the Holy Spirit) that is in you, than he (the devil) that is in the world.' (1 John 4:4).

'But my God shall supply all your need.' (Philippians 4:19).

'..they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.' (Mark 16:18).

'..with God all things are possible.' (Matthew 19:26).

There is a promise for every need we could ever have in our lives, so claim them in the Name of Jesus Christ, and God will be faithful to His Word for you.

Baptism is a public confession that you have taken the Name of Jesus Christ (a Christian),

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and have died and been buried with Him in the waters, and have risen, to live a new life.

Go and **tell** others what the Lord has done for you, and the changes He is making in your life. If we have spent 40 years getting our lives into the mess they are in today, then they won't change overnight, it will take some time. First our heart and attitudes will change, then everything else will follow. Jesus said, *'But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things (everything else) shall be added unto you.'* (Matthew 6:33).

Find a **Church** where Jesus Christ is honoured as Lord and Saviour, and where the Bible is honoured as the Word of God, and make it your Spiritual home.

Find a way to **serve** God, when you are ready to, and step out with Jesus Christ, on the adventure of a lifetime, which will stretch on into eternity.

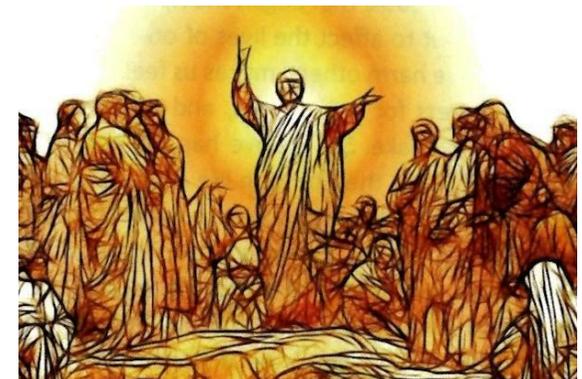
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The Second Step

A New Relationship

For those who have committed
their lives to Jesus Christ



1.

The first step for us, who were wandering away from God, was to turn *toward* Him, and ask His forgiveness. The Second Step, is walking *with* Him through life, in a new relationship made possible by the taking away of the sin that separated us.

‘It’s not what you know, it’s who you know,’ sums up Christianity perfectly. Reading the Bible and going to Church are good, but unless we have a personal relationship with the God of the Church and Bible, they don’t have any real value. We read the Bible and go to Church, because we want to learn more about this One who loved us so much, that He was willing to be tortured and crucified to save us. Christianity is a love story, about the One who **‘so loved the world,’** and us, who love Him because of what He has done for us.

As St Paul said, **‘Therefore, if any man (or woman) be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.’** (2 Corinthians 5:17). So, as new creatures, we live a life that is better for ourselves, and ultimately better for others.

Our sin harms us when we do it, and it always harms others. We stole from *someone*, we lied to *someone*, we abused *someone*. So, our sin is the pebble that began the ripples on the pond, that move out to affect the lives of others. Avoiding a life where we harm others makes us feel good, there are no regrets for our actions,

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and no embarrassing apologies to make, so we live happier and healthier lives.

But is living the Christian life all our own efforts? No! God did not leave us alone, to bravely muddle on in our own efforts. Jesus promised, **‘.and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.’** (Matthew 28:20).

In Acts 2:38, we are told to, **‘Repent, and be baptized..in the name of Jesus Christ..and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.’** The Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit, is God living in us. But, *why* do we need Him? Well, I cannot live *your* life, because I am not *you*. And I cannot live a *Godly* life, because I am not *God*. The Holy Spirit is, **‘God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure,’** as St Paul puts it in Philippians 2:13. So, the Holy Spirit is God *in* us, living *His* life *through* us. How can the Holy Spirit do that? It takes our **surrendering**.

When I hear a beautiful song played on a piano, I never tell the piano I loved its playing, because it *doesn’t* play. It surrenders itself, and lets someone else play it. That’s how the Holy Spirit works through us, not by me playing my own tune, but by surrendering to Him, as Jesus did at Gethsemane when He said, **‘Not my will but thine be done.’** (Luke 22:42). The Holy Spirit is the power of God, to live a Holy life.

What else does He do? He **leads** us personally. **‘.as many as are led by the Spirit**

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of God, they are the sons (children) of God.’ (Romans 8:14).

He **teaches** us. **‘He will guide you into all truth.’** (John 16:13).

He **empowers** us. **‘But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: And ye shall be witnesses unto me.’** (Acts 1:8).

He continues the **works** of Jesus on earth today. **‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father’** (John 14:12).

So, we are a new creation, living a new life; not following a set of rules, but following a living God. What does that involve?

Firstly, a **relationship**. If you were in love with someone, there is nothing you would desire more, than to be sitting beside them, talking intimately with them, which is the backbone of any relationship. That is the place of **prayer**. It is conversing with God, on your knees, honouring Him as supreme, but also, as you’re walking, or driving. Prayer changes things, because ‘God does *nothing*, except in *answer* to prayer,’ as John Wesley reminded us.

Loving someone brings a personal **commitment** to be faithful to them, and to avoid doing anything that would offend them. Commitment is an integral part of loving Jesus Christ. **‘And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His**