

Next Steps

Follow-Up Studies

Studies after conversion to insure a victorious start in the faith

Framework of Next Step Studies

The first-century disciples' lives are recorded in the book of Acts, and we can learn from their example of how they pursued spiritual growth and maturity. We will use this scripture as an outline for the *Next Steps* follow-up studies with the goal of having their level of devotion, and ultimately their same growth and impact! The studies will come from the concepts in bold below.

*They devoted themselves to the **apostles' teaching** and to the **fellowship**, to the **breaking of bread** and to **prayer**. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, **they gave** to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And **the Lord added** to their number daily those who were being saved.*

Acts 2:42-47

Responsibility of Caring for Young Disciples

Again Jesus said, "Simon, son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

John 21:16

What an incredible responsibility God has given to us all –to take care of His sheep! The growth of a new christian is as important as the growth of a newborn baby. As a discipler (mentor), your main responsibilities are to train and ensure that the young christian is being fed daily pure, spiritual milk from God's word. If the young christian is firmly rooted in the word of God, he will mature, leading himself and others to Christ and to our Father in heaven.

Please take this role seriously, as we are confident you will. Think about ways you can practically apply these suggestions. Together we will help fight against Satan's schemes and help each other grow to be more and more like Christ.

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel for the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:3-6

Apostles' Teaching

Study Objective - Step One

To understand the importance of the “apostles’ teaching” (the Bible) to our spiritual growth and development.

Acts 2:42-47

- What do you notice about their devotion and lives as young Christians?
- Why do you think they were devoted to the apostles’ teaching?

Romans 10:14-17

- How do we get faith?
- Why do you think the disciples in the first century went daily to the temple courts to hear the apostles’ teaching?

2 Timothy 2:15

- Why is it important to correctly handle the word of truth?
- How can we ensure that we correctly handle the word?

Deuteronomy 32:45-47

- What is the promise if we carefully obey the word?
- What do you think it means, “not just idle words, they are your life?”

Matthew 4:1-11

- What did Jesus use to battle and overcome Satan during his temptation?
- How do you think the scriptures can help us overcome Satan’s schemes?

Psalms 119:105

- How can the word of God be a lamp for our feet and a light for our path?

Hebrews 4:12-14

- How is the word living and active?
- What can it do for us?
- How can the word prepare us to meet God?

Colossians 3:16

- How can we ensure that the word dwells richly in us?
 - Should we use the word when admonishing each other?
 - Should our songs be reminders of the word?
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Practical Application

- What are some ways we can keep the word as our life?
- What time of day will you set aside to read the word?
- What can you do to help you remember the word?

Fellowship

Study Objective - Step Two

To understand the importance of the fellowship and “one-another” relationships to our spiritual growth and development.

Acts 2:42-47

- What stands out to you about the fellowship in this passage?
- How can you imitate the fellowship seen here?

John 13:34-35

- Why do you think that Jesus commands us to love one another?
- How important is our love for one another in the eyes of our non Christian friends?

Romans 12:9-13

- What are some ways we can show our devotion to one another?
- What does hospitality mean to you?

Hebrews 10:23-25

- What are some considerate ways to spur on your brothers toward love and good deeds?
- If we miss church often, what do we miss out on?

Hebrews 3:12-14

- What can sin do to our hearts?
- Why do you think that everyone needs daily encouragement?

1 Thessalonians 5:12-15

- Do you find it hard to respect people in leadership positions?
- How should we view and treat those who serve as church leaders?

James 5:16-18

- Do you think it will be easy or difficult to confess to another disciple when you sin?
- What are the promises if we humbly confess our sins to one another?

Proverbs 27:17

- How do you feel about being sharpened by and sharpening other Christians?
 - What does this mean to you?
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Practical Application

- What are some reasons that we need the fellowship?
- Which aspect of one-another relationships do you think will be the most challenging?
- What inspires you about the fellowship and relationships of the 1st-century disciples?

Breaking of Bread

Study Objective - Step Three

To understand the importance and reasons for the breaking of bread, the celebration of the Lords' Supper (also referred to as "Communion").

I Corinthians 11:23-29

- According to this scripture, what is the purpose of taking the Lord's Supper?
- What do you think it means, "to proclaim the Lord's death until he comes"?

Matthew 26:26-29

- What does Jesus want us to remember when we take the bread and the cup?

Acts 20:7

- When did they take the Lord's Supper?
- What are some good reasons to take the Lord's Supper weekly?

I Corinthians 10:16-21

- What point is Paul trying to make about the Lord's Supper?
- How significant is the act of taking the Lord's Supper, according to this scripture?

John 6:35

- What do you think Jesus means when he says he is the "bread of life"?

John 6:51

- What does the bread represent according to Jesus?

Hebrew 10:19-22

- How should Jesus' sacrifice and the Lord's Supper make us feel?
- How important do you think confidence is in approaching God?

Acts 2:42-47

- What were their hearts like when they broke bread together?
 - Why do you think they enjoyed this kind of gladness and sincerity of heart?
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Practical Application

- Why do you think it is important to remember Jesus weekly during the Lord's Supper?
- What could happen to our faith and hearts if we don't take the Lord's Supper seriously?
- What should happen to our hearts if we consider Jesus sacrifice and love for us weekly?

Prayer

Study Objective - Step Four

To understand the different types of prayer and the importance of our hearts in our prayers to God.

Deuteronomy 4:7

- What happens when we pray to God?
- What does it mean to you that God will not only answer your prayers, yet also be near to you?

Luke 11:1-13

- Why do you think Jesus gives us this clear outline of how we should pray?
- Does Jesus encourage us to ask God for good things for ourselves and others?

Hebrews 11:1-6

- What is faith?
- What should we believe when coming to God?

Colossians 4:12

- How can we wrestle in prayer?
- Can you find some time in your prayer life to wrestle in prayer for others?

Mark 11:22-24

- Is it difficult to believe you have received something when praying for it?
- What can help us pray with more belief?

Luke 18:1-6

- What type of faith did this widow have?
- What does it show about our hearts if our prayers are persistent?

Philippians 4:4-7

- What's the best way to deal with anxiety?
- What are the different types of prayers according to this verse?

1 Peter 5:6-8

- What does it show about our hearts when we go to God in prayer?
 - Does God care about our troubles?
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Practical Application

- What do you think you will need to do to ensure that you spend ample time in prayer?
- What can help you be consistent and persistent in your prayers?
- What will help you remember other's to wrestle for in your prayers?

They Gave

Study Objective - Step Five

To understand the importance faith in our giving to God and the Church.

Acts 4:32-37

- How did they prepare to give in the first century?
- What did their giving show about their hearts?

2 Corinthians 8:1-15

- What is the spirit of giving according to this passage?
- What does our giving show about our hearts?

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

- What is the promise to us if we are generous?
- What type of giving will make you cheerful?

I Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19

- What is the danger with the love of money?
- Why do you think it is important to command the rich to be generous?

Luke 21:1-4

- What does the woman's gift show about her heart?
- How can we give in faith?

Malachi 3:6-12

- How is giving a tithe an expression of faith?
- Can God take care of our needs?

Genesis 4:3-5, Hebrews 11:4

- Why do you think God looked with favor on Abel's offering?
 - How can we give from our hearts, in faith like Abel?
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Practical Application

- What is the appropriate heart to have when giving to God and the Church?
- If we are stingy in our giving, what does it reveal about our hearts?
- How can you show faith in your giving?

The Lord Added

Study Objective - Step Six

To understand our part and God's part in bring other's to faith in Christ.

Acts 2:47

- Who added the disciples to their number?

1 Corinthians 3:5-7

- What is God's part in converting people?
- What is our part in reaching out to people?

1 Peter 3:15-16

- Why is it important to always be prepared to reach out?
- How should we answer those who ask us about our faith?

Matthew 28:18-20

- What is God's desire for everyone on earth to become?
- What is the command of Jesus?
- What does this mean for us today?

2 Corinthians 5:11-20

- What should be our motivation for our Christian acts and evangelism?
- What important role does God give us on earth?

Acts 8:4

- Why do you think the disciples preached wherever they went?
- What does this mean for you?

Romans 10:14-17

- What must happen in order for someone to be saved according to this passage?
- What makes your feet beautiful?
- Why is Jesus good news to you?

Acts 20:24

- What are the 2 most important tasks to accomplish for Paul?
 - How can we testify to gospel of God's grace?
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Practical Application

- What does it do for your heart knowing that God is the primary factor in helping other's become Christians?
- How can we effectively plant seeds?
- How can we effectively water the seeds?

Sound Doctrine

Study Objective

Review and discuss the conversions accounts in Acts and the different false teachings prevalent today

Begin the session with a summary of the New Testament teaching on conversion:

- Hear the message - **Romans 10:17, Acts 11:14**
- Believe (trust) - **John 3:16, Acts 16:31**
- Repent - **Luke 13:3, Acts 3:19**
- Confess Jesus as Lord - **Romans 10:9, 1 Timothy 6:12**
- Be baptized - **Acts 2:38, 1 Peter 3:21**

The Major Conversions in Acts

Acts 2:36-47	First Christians in Jerusalem
Acts 8:26-39	Ethiopian Eunuch
Acts 16:22-34	Philippian jailer and his family
Acts 18:24-26	Apollos
Acts 19:1-5	Ephesians
Acts 9:1-22	Paul
Acts 22:3-16	Paul

Questions concerning conversions

- What was preached?
- What was the person's (people's) response to the message?
- How long did the person (people) take to make the decision?
- What was their response after baptism?

False Teachings

2 Timothy 4:1-5.

- Why are there so many denominations today?

Galatians 1:6-10

- We must take a stand and not be “people-pleasers” (v10).
- No one—religious leader, angel, apostle—has the right to “update” the gospel!

Infant Baptism (“Original Sin”)

Ezekiel 18:20

- Clearly, this Scripture shows that guilt is nontransferable.

- Infant baptism is refuted by **Colossians 2:12** and **Galatians 3:26-27** because personal, not proxy faith is key in baptism.
- Can babies have faith? No. Neither do babies have the ability to repent.

“Baptism is Not Necessary for Salvation”

I Peter 3:21

- Some say “Baptism does not save you”, yet this passage says that baptism does save you through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- **Acts 2:38** teaches that sin is forgiven at baptism - one is saved at the point that sin is forgiven.

“Baptism is an outward sign of an inward grace”

Romans 6:1-4

- This passage states that baptism is an actual participation in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. It is not merely a sign, seal or symbol.

“Once saved, always saved”

Hebrews 10:26-31

- This passage clearly teaches that someone can lose their salvation by rejecting God.

Salvation by “Faith Alone”

James 2:14-26

- This passage clearly shows that “faith alone” is not sufficient for salvation.

John 3:16

- Faith/belief is the basis of our entire response to the gospel. But this must not be taken out of context.
- Consider all relevant passages (**John 8:30-32, Hebrews 5:9, Romans 1:5, Romans 16:26**)

The “Sinner’s Prayer”

Revelation 3:20

- The false doctrine of **“praying Jesus into your heart,” “accepting Christ”** or **“receiving Christ”** was invented on the American frontier in the early nineteenth century from this verse. For more info refer to article written by Steve Staten (made available through our website studies section, www.coastallachurch.com)

- Must examine this passage carefully, and its context! Not instructing us to be born again.
- It was written to Christians, who had *already* saved (**Revelation 3:14, 22**).
- The passage mentions nothing about faith, confession or baptism, as the readers were already converted.

The “Thief on the Cross”

Luke 23:39-43

- The false doctrine of the thief on the cross says, “The thief was not baptized, but Jesus said he would see him in heaven. What do you say about that?”

Mark 2:10

- Jesus had authority during his earthly ministry to forgive sins. If he told anyone their sins were forgiven, they were!

Romans 6:3-4

- Baptism is a participation in Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection.
- The penitent thief could not have been baptized, as Jesus had not yet died, been buried or resurrected.

Hebrews 9:17

- The new covenant (New Testament) was not yet in effect, as Jesus had not yet died under the old covenant.

Practical Application and Challenges

- Which false doctrine have you personally run into the most? Which scriptures would you use to refute it?
- What portion of this study challenges you most to accept?
- Are you willing and ready to accept the teachings of the Bible? People must have a deep conviction of the Biblical doctrine of conversion.