

Let us continue with Step 4, as we look into the 12 Steps with God

Step 4 – Examine – We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Tonight, we are going to continue looking at our sin that God knows too well, and we are just beginning to admit to...

...it is a matter of being honest with ourselves and acknowledging that He already knows.

In the previous lesson we went straight to honesty with God about our sinfulness. It may have been overwhelming, and may have caused you to be intimidated, frustrated, or feel hopeless. Now may be a great time to actively seek out someone who can help you. We believe there is a model to be followed given in

Titus 2:1-6, “But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. ²Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. ³Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, ⁴and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, ⁵to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. ⁶Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.”

The context is clear about mature women mentoring younger women, and by inference, that older men would mentor younger men. For this reason, we believe it is the very best for men to look for help from other men, and women to find help from other women. There are other logical reasons for this too, such as relatability, understandability, and empathy.

We believe the general concept that is taught in God’s Word is referred to as *discipleship*. In the discipleship model there is a hint of the traditional **Alcohol Anonymous** sponsorship, as well as the **Celebrate Recovery** accountability partnership. In discipleship, the discipler is basically a teacher, trainer, or coach. He, or she, is responsible for imparting information to educate, but he, or she, does so in the context of a personal relationship where there is trust, care, and intent.

The perfect example of discipleship is Jesus’ relationship to the twelve whom he called. Just before Matthew records Jesus’ famous Sermon on the Mount, it says in...

Matthew 5:2, “And he opened his mouth and taught them...”

If we are going to be successful at correcting sin and walking in righteousness, we have a lot to learn. We need a teacher. Someone who knows the way. Someone who knows the ropes. Someone who knows Jesus and the path of obedience better than we. Our recommendation for engaging the help of someone who can disciple you is to find someone of the same gender who: 1) has and fosters a healthy relationship with God, 2) studies the Word of God consistently, 3) spends quality time in prayer, 4) already has good relationships, 5) exhibits characteristics of godliness that you want to emulate. If they have these qualities, there is a very good chance that they are looking for you too.

Matthew 28:19-20, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”

Christ intends that His people disciple others as they are being disciplined. Someone is out there to help you. Find that person and learn from them.

So, how does discipleship work? Well, several considerations should be made:

1. **Recognize your needs.** Trying to grow in Christ on your own is often overwhelming. Many give up and revert to their sinful lifestyles. The discipleship relationship can help you grow in Christ and provide the support and encouragement that we all need from time to time.
2. **Recognize your position.** You can't learn from someone if you aren't humbly submissive to their authority or position. When Jesus called his disciples, He consistently said, "follow me." They were followers, He was the leader. Let your discipler lead you and humbly follow.
3. **Recognize your commitment.** Change can be slow. Old habits die hard. Righteousness develops over time. However, change is necessary. Righteousness must be developed as rapidly as possible. The process of leaving our sinfulness is a worthwhile, but a long-term commitment.

What does discipleship look like? It usually happens intentionally where two or three individuals establish times of regular fellowship, Bible study, and prayer together. This time is intended to develop you in righteousness and move you away from your sin.

Discipleship can overlap with biblical counseling when there are issues that need to be addressed. The objective is the restoration of an erring brother/sister to a right relationship with Christ...it can be summed up as change through confrontation out of concern. Both discipleship and biblical counseling are personal, relational, and intimate (Romans 15:14).

Consider and Confess:

1. Being discipled is to admit you need help. This is difficult for the proud. You make things a whole lot easier when you honestly admit your need and submit to the leadership of your discipler.
2. Being a disciple is an opportunity to encourage your discipler. Remember, the human you are following is also flawed and fighting sin in their life. When they falter you are in a perfect position to help and encourage them. This does not reverse the roles, but it does provide an occasion for you to bless the one who often blesses you.
3. If you are not being discipled, you are forfeiting a great blessing as a Christian. Even the giants of the faith followed and learned from someone (Hebrews 10:23-24).
4. By whom are you being discipled? How serious are you about growing with them?
5. If you are not yet in that kind of relationship, who do you know would be a good discipler for you? Make a short list of individuals you believe to be a godly influence and teacher for you. Commit to speaking with them about this possibility.
6. What things have you already learned from Christians you know? What specific things do you want to learn from a solid Christian?

Looking Forward:

We do not even realize the damage that is done by the sin we have allowed in our lives. To sin with the body is to have carried out a sin of the heart. Our spiritual health, mental health, and physical health are all at stake when we sin. In our next lesson we will walk through a more thorough evaluation of sin's consequences in our body, soul, and spirit, and will look at how God's grace in forgiveness heals each as well.