



Renewed by Grace: Uniting Faith and Recovery in the 12 Step Process

In the journey of addiction recovery, many find peace, guidance, and strength in both the principles of the 12 Steps and the teachings of the Bible. The 12 Steps, developed by Alcoholics Anonymous, have provided a proven framework for recovery for decades, while the Bible has been a source of inspiration and wisdom for Christians throughout history.

The 12 Steps cornerstone provide us with a roadmap towards healing and transformation. But did you know that the origins of these steps can be traced back to the Bible? That's right – the 12 Steps draw inspiration and wisdom from the timeless teachings found within Scripture.

When Bill Wilson and Doctor Bob Smith founded Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) in the 1930s, they sought to find a solution to their own alcohol addiction. Drawing on their Christian backgrounds, they turned to Scripture for guidance and inspiration. The principles and concepts they discovered became the building blocks of what we now know as the 12 Steps.

When we take a close look at the 12 Steps, we can totally see that the 12 steps have a lot of stuff from the Bible in it. Like, they talk about surrendering (admitting when you mess up) confession (giving up control), making amends (saying sorry to people you hurt), striving for spiritual growth (trying to get closer to God).

Step 1: Acknowledging Our Limitations and Dependence on God

Step 1 revolves around recognising our powerlessness over addiction and acknowledging that our life has become unmanageable. This humility before God aligns with the biblical principle of surrendering our will to His, realising that we cannot overcome addiction on our own. The Bible reminds us that it is in our weaknesses that God's strength is made perfect (2 Corinthians 12:9). Scripture provides countless promises of redemption, forgiveness, and renewal. Verses like Romans 8:1, assures us that there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, offer a glimmer of hope for those struggling with addiction. By grounding ourselves in these biblical truths, we

can find strength to take the first step towards recovery.

Step 2: Understanding God's Character and His Role in Recovery

Step 2 calls us to believe in a power greater than ourselves that can restore us to sanity. For Christians, this higher power is none other than God Himself. Through engaging with Scripture, we gain a deeper understanding of God's character and His desire to bring healing and restoration to our lives. Recognising His sovereignty and trusting His guidance becomes an essential aspect of the recovery process. Through Scripture alone can we understand what God's design was for man in the first place.

Psalm 121:2 reminds us that our help comes from the Lord, while Proverbs 3:5-6 instructs us to trust in the Lord with all our hearts. By internalising these biblical truths, we can find peace in knowing that we are not alone on our journey, but rather, accompanied by the ultimate source of strength and support.

Step 3: Surrendering to God's Will and Trusting in His Plan

In Step 3 we are called to surrender ourselves to God's will and trust in His plan. This can be a challenging step, as it requires us to let go of our desire to control everything and instead place our trust in God's sovereignty. It's like giving up the driver's seat of our lives and allowing God to take the wheel. Surrendering to God means acknowledging that He knows what is best for us and believing that His plan is greater than anything we could ever imagine.

. "Proverbs 3:5-6 reminds us to "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

This verse encourages us to trust God completely and rely on His wisdom, rather than our limited understanding. The Bible will always offer us guidance on surrendering to God's will and trusting in Him.

Another scripture that speaks to surrender is Romans 12:1-2, which says, **"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."** This passage reminds us that surrendering to God is an act of worship and leads to transformation.

Steps 4-9: Making a Moral Inventory and Seeking Forgiveness in the Light of Scripture

Steps 4 to 9 of the 12 Steps, involves making a moral inventory, admitting our wrongs, and seeking forgiveness. To do this effectively, we can turn to the teachings of the Bible for guidance. The Bible encourages us to examine ourselves and take responsibility for our actions. In Psalm 139:23-24, David writes, **"Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."** This passage reminds us to ask God to reveal our faults and guide us in the path of righteousness.

The Bible also provides principles of confession, repentance, and seeking forgiveness. 1 John 1:9 says, **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us**

from all unrighteousness." This verse assures us that when we confess our sins to God, He is faithful to forgive us and cleanse us. We are also encouraged to seek forgiveness from those we have wronged. In Matthew 5:23-24, Jesus tells us, "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift." This teaches us the importance of seeking reconciliation and making amends with others.

Steps 10-12: Continual Spiritual Growth and Serving Others in Alignment with Christian Values

Steps 10 to 12 focus on continual spiritual growth and serving others. As Christians, we understand the importance of maintaining a strong relationship with God and being accountable for our actions. Step 10 reminds us to take personal inventory and promptly admit when we are wrong, while Step 11 encourages us to seek conscious contact with God through prayer and meditation. These steps align with biblical teachings on the need for constant self-reflection and maintaining a close relationship with God.

Step 12 calls us to carry the message to others and practice these principles in all areas of our lives. This aligns with the Christian value of serving others and living out the teachings of Jesus. In Matthew 20:26-28, Jesus says, ***"Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*** Through serving others, we can exemplify Christ's love and make a positive impact on those around us.

Living out the 12 Steps means incorporating daily spiritual practices into our recovery journey. This can include prayer, reading the Bible, attending church or support group meetings, and seeking guidance from spiritual mentors or pastors. These practices help us stay connected to God and provide us with the strength and guidance we need to navigate life's challenges.

Balancing Faith, Fellowship, and the 12 Steps

It means finding a community of believers who can support us on our recovery journey, while also actively participating in recovery programmes and applying the principles of the 12 Steps in our daily lives. By integrating our faith with recovery, we can experience holistic healing and growth.

Remember, the 12 Steps and the Bible provides us with valuable tools and guidance for recovery. While the journey may have its ups and downs, embracing our faith and relying on God's wisdom and grace can lead us to a life of freedom and transformation. So, let's surrender, seek forgiveness, grow spiritually, and live out our faith as we walk this recovery path together. The integration of the 12 Steps and the Bible offers a powerful combination of support and guidance for those seeking recovery through a Christian lens. By embracing the principles and teachings found in Scripture, you will be able to deepen your God connection, find strength in your faith, and experience true transformation. The 12 Steps provide a practical framework for addressing addiction, while the Bible offers timeless wisdom and encouragement. As Christians, aligning your steps with the Word of God, you will be able to embrace a life of sobriety, faith,

and fulfilment. In my case there was no other way to get sober, until I turned and surrendered to the one True God, Jesus Christ who has set me free. **“So if the Son sets you free you will be free indeed.”** John 8:36