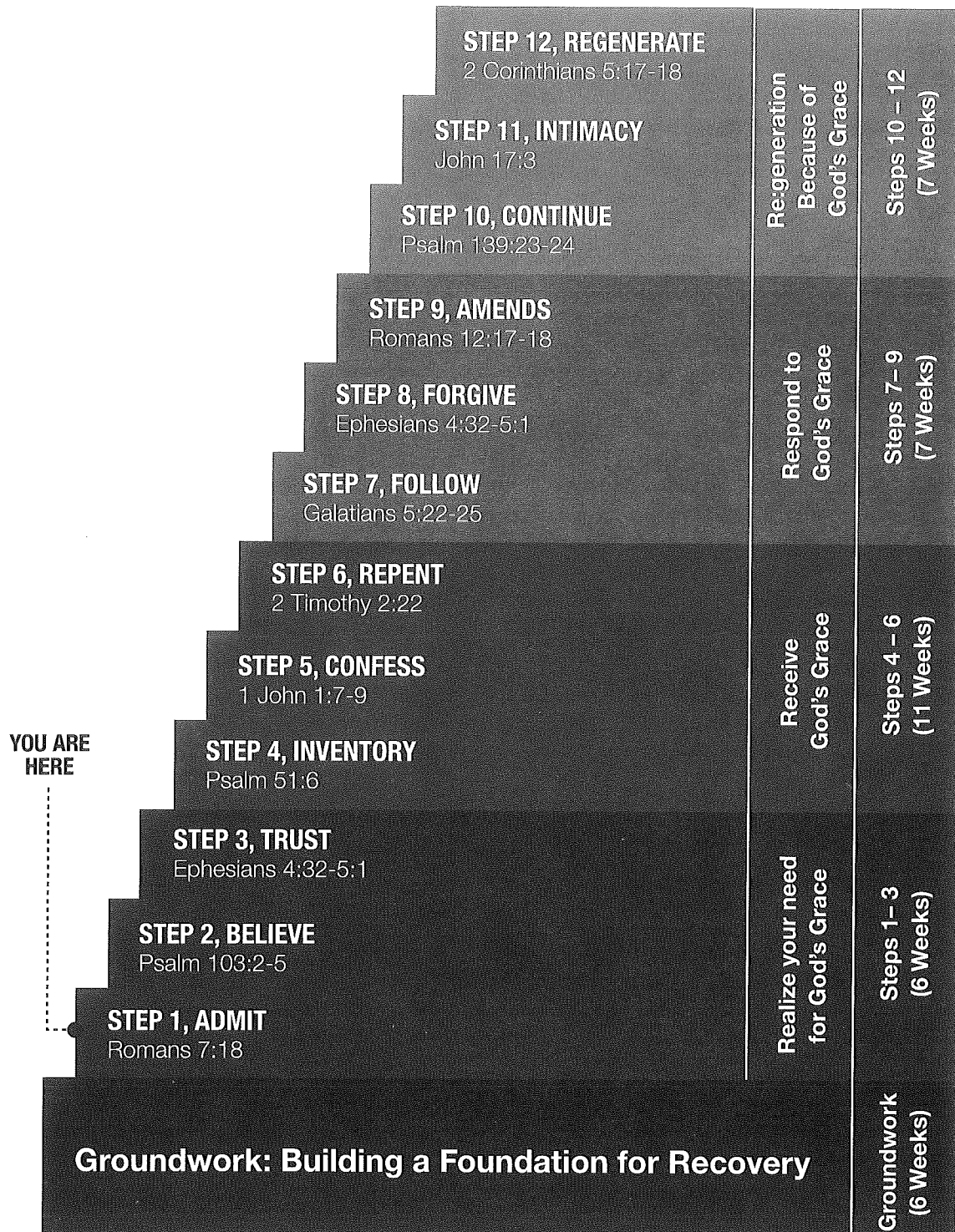


TIMELINE

12 STEPS PROGRESSION



THE 12 STEPS¹ OF *re:generation* AND BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

re:generation 12 Steps

Step 1, Admit: We admit we are powerless over our addictions, brokenness, and sinful patterns — that in our own power our lives are unmanageable.

Step 2, Believe: We come to believe that God is the one whose power can fully restore us.

Step 3, Trust: We decide to trust God with our lives and wills by accepting his grace through Jesus Christ.

Step 4, Inventory: We make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Step 5, Confess: We confess to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our sins.

Step 6, Repent: We become entirely ready to turn away from our patterns of sin and turn to God.

Biblical Foundations

Foundation 1: “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.” (Romans 7:18)

Foundation 2: “Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.” (Psalm 103:2-5)

Foundation 3: “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.” (Ephesians 2:4-5)

Foundation 4: “Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.” (Psalm 51:6)

Foundation 5: “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:7-9)

Foundation 6: “So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.” (2 Timothy 2:22)

¹ See Appendix B for permissions

re:generation 12 Steps

Step 7, Follow: We humbly ask God's Spirit to change our hearts and minds in order to follow Christ fully.

Step 8, Forgive: We forgive those who have harmed us and become willing to make amends to those we have harmed.

Step 9, Amends: We make direct amends whenever possible, submitting to God, his Word, and biblical counsel.

Step 10, Continue: We continue to examine our lives and when we sin promptly confess and turn to walk with Christ.

Step 11, Intimacy: We seek to deepen our relationship with God daily and depend on his power to do his will.

Step 12, Regenerate: Because of our new lives in Christ, we carry God's message of reconciliation to others and practice these principles in every aspect of our lives.

Biblical Foundations

Foundation 7: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit." (Galatians 5:22-25)

Foundation 8: "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children." (Ephesians 4:32-5:1)

Foundation 9: "Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all." (Romans 12:17-18)

Foundation 10: "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!" (Psalm 139:23-24)

Foundation 11: "And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." (John 17:3)

Foundation 12: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation." (2 Corinthians 5:17-18)

WEEK 2 DAY 5

MAIN POINT:

Honestly revealing specific thoughts and actions is essential for your recovery.

KEY SCRIPTURE:

"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us."

(1 John 1:8-10)

RIGOROUS HONESTY

PRAYER: Dear God, you see every part of my life, both past and present. Thank you for loving me in spite of what I may have hidden from others and perhaps even from myself. Please show me my true thoughts, motives, and actions, and give me the courage to tell that truth without exaggeration and without cover-up.

Rigorous means "severe, harsh, exact, or accurate." When was the last time you had a rigorous (severe or harsh) workout? You know, when you sweated a little harder by running ten minutes longer, or by lifting 20 extra pounds on the weight machine.

Although it hurts at the start, over time, rigorous workouts generate clear results. Your muscles are firmer. Your energy is higher. Your stamina increases.

The same is true in recovery when you exercise your "honesty" muscle. Half-hearted efforts produce little or no change, while rigorous honesty changes you.

For most of us entering recovery, there are things that we've been dishonest about. Our addictions and sinful patterns have caused us to twist or hide the truth from others and ourselves. Perhaps you have been hiding for so long that you've forgotten who you truly are. Or you continue to distort the truth because the truth is too painful to face. An honest review will help you come clean, freeing you from your secret prison.

Remember to tell on yourself (with specifics) to God and to others. Rigorous honesty is speaking the truth with no wiggle room. It is a commitment to thoroughness and to not blurring the truth.

As you are freed from protecting the past, you then can begin moving forward, honesty recovering your day-to-day thoughts and actions.

The idea of rigorous honesty might sound frightening or overwhelming, but if you really want to get well, there are no other options.

The truth will indeed set you free.

APPLICATION: Commit to telling on yourself today. Call a friend or someone from *re:generation* and tell them, with rigorous honesty, something that you're struggling with. Bringing your secret into the light will lead you to freedom and peace.

NOTES/JOURNAL:

Lined area for notes/journal.

WEEK 2 DAY 6

REVIEW AND CATCH UP

Catch up on any of the *re:generation* work from this week. Complete the **Week 2 Review** below:

Q1: Look over this week's work. What lesson was most meaningful to you? Why?

Q2: What lessons were difficult or did you struggle with?

Q3: Have you gained hope from God's work in the lives of others? If so, describe what encouraged you?

Q4: Have you started a plan for your recovery? If so, with whom have you shared it with?

Q5: Pick one note or journal entry from this week that you may be willing to share with your group.

Q6: Do you have anything to confess to the group or any encouragement for the group?

RECEIVE THE GRACE OF GOD THROUGH CHRIST

STEP 3 TRUST WEEK 2 DAY 5

PRAY FIRST: God, open my heart to your grace through Jesus Christ.

God has shown you kindness and mercy. He has made eternal life with him available to all as a gift through his son, Jesus Christ.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”
(Ephesians 2:8-9)

Grace is a free gift from God that we don't deserve. It is God's unearned favor. A gift is something given without expecting a payment in return. All that you must do to receive a gift is to take it.

Faith is a belief which places confidence or trust in God. If you trust the gift of Christ's sacrifice as payment for your sin, you will be saved from the penalty of sin by God's grace.

“...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 3:23-24)

Christ's sacrifice doesn't only save you from God's wrath, but it saves you to a new life through a relationship with him. When you receive his grace you become a child of God (John 1:12-13). God gives his spirit as a sign of this new relationship. The Spirit will regenerate new life in you now. Christ buried sin so you can be raised with him to eternal life and be resurrected from sin in this life also.

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. (Romans 8:11)

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:3-7)

Step 3, Trust, says: *We made a decision to trust God with our lives and wills by accepting his grace through Jesus Christ.*

In order to accept God's grace you must agree with the following:

1. You are a sinner; you have not lived a perfect life. Step 1, Admit.

In your own power, you are “powerless over your addictions, brokenness, and sinful patterns.”

2. Only the God of the Bible is powerful to save you. Step 2, Believe.

- God is holy (absolute moral perfection). Because he is perfect, he must judge all sin (imperfection). No one is able to satisfy God's perfect standard. Good works cannot overcome sin because death is the penalty for sin.
(Step 2, Week 2)

jus • ti • fy

to declare innocent or guiltless; acquit

re • demp • tion

to buy or pay off; recover by payment or other satisfaction

“But to all who did receive [Christ], who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”

(John 1:12-13)

re • gen • er • ate

1. To affect a moral reform in someone
2. re-create, or make over, in a better condition
3. revive or produce anew; bring into existence again
4. renew or restore (a lost or injured part)

WEEK 2 DAY 5

“...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For **with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.**”
(Romans 10:9-10)

“And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.”
(1 John 5:11-13)

“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.”
(Jesus Christ, John 5:24)

- **God loves you and wants to restore you.** God desires that all would come to experience eternal life. (Step 2, Week 2, Day 4)
- **God is powerful enough to restore you.** (Step 2, Week 2)

3. **God sent his Son, Jesus, to be the payment for all sin.** Step 3, Trust.

The fullness of God dwelled in Jesus Christ; he was with God at creation. He came into the world to rescue it, lived a sinless life, and died as a perfect sacrifice for sins. On the third day he rose from the dead. He is Lord and his death is an acceptable sacrifice for sin. (Step 3, Week 2)

However, saving faith is more than agreeing with the Bible about the things above. Saving faith is trusting Christ with your heart as the way to be saved (Romans 10:9-10).

If you are ready to trust Christ as the payment for your sin and the method for your recovery, you can pray the following prayer...

God, I am a sinner unable to meet your perfect standard. I believe that you sent Jesus, your Son, to recover me from the debt of my sin and restore me to a right relationship with you. I confess that Jesus is Lord and believe with my heart that God raised him from the dead. I receive Christ's payment for my sins as free gift of your grace. I ask that you bring me to full recovery by your Spirit so that I can fulfill my purpose in your creation and find satisfaction in you. Help me to serve you with my heart, soul, and mind. Amen.

If you prayed this prayer and transferred your trust to Christ, you can be 100 percent sure that you have eternal life! Read the verses in the margin.

You may have trusted Christ's sacrifice for your sins and prayed a prayer similar to the one above in the past. Your eternity is secure, however, your need for recovery means that you have not yet fully trusted Christ for daily living. Though Jesus is Lord of your eternity, you have not let him be Lord of today. If you are ready to trust Christ as Lord of all areas of your life and will today, pray the following prayer of trust...

God, thank you for saving me through Christ. Though my eternity is secure, I confess that I have not surrendered all of my life to you. I am still trying to rule parts of my life today. I am ready to trust you fully. Be Lord of my life and my will each day. God, bring me to full recovery by your Spirit so that I can fulfill my purpose and find satisfaction in you. Help me to serve you with my heart, soul, and mind each step of the way. Amen.

When you fully trust God with all of your life and will, he promises to show you the path of life. “*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.*” (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Q1: Did you trust Christ as your eternal savior with prayer on the previous page?
Is there anything keeping you from trusting Christ as your savior?

WEEK 2 DAY 5

Q2: If you received Christ as your savior in the past, did you pray the prayer for daily trust on the previous page? What things are you struggling to trust him with daily?

Q3: If you have accepted Christ as your savior (in this lesson or in the past) write a prayer of thanks for what God has done for you. If you've not yet accepted Christ, write a prayer asking God help you through any fears, concerns, or questions keeping you from him.

CLOSING PRAYER: God, thank you for the offer of a new, eternal life in Christ. Bring me to complete recovery through your son.

TAKE ACTION:

- If you have received Christ as your savior today or in the past, take a minute to praise God for his grace and mercy. Pray that the other members of your group would also come to faith in Christ. If you received Christ today, contact your mentor and tell him or her you have decided to trust Jesus!
- *Begin working on Footprint 3* at the bottom of tomorrow's lesson (Day 6).
- If you are not yet ready to receive Christ, pray that God would give you answers to your questions, strength to face your fears, and that he would open your eyes to anything keeping you from him. List some of those questions, fears, or barriers below:

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION

STEP 12 REGENERATE

WEEK 2 DAY 1

PRAY FIRST: God, you have reconciled me to you. Help me to now reconcile with others.

God loves us. He created us to have healthy relationships—first with him, then with others.

Sin damages our relationship with God and harms human relationships. Through Christ, God offers **reconciliation** with himself to all. When we agree to reconcile with God *according to his standards* and live by the Spirit in a healthy relationship with him, God changes our relationships with others. He uses our reconciled relationship with him to lead us to reconcile with others and to show others that reconciliation with him is needed and possible. God can heal our human relationships from sin's damage and restructure them to be based on his truth and love.

We, who have been reconciled to God, are called to carry the ministry of reconciliation to others. Read Foundation 12 in the margin.

Q1: How is God using your reconciled relationship with him to bring health to your earthly relationships? Give one example.

FOUNDATION 12:

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of **reconciliation**."

(2 Corinthians 5:17–18)

God is transforming you into a peacemaker like Christ. Peacemaking is a three-part process that you are learning through *re:generation*.

The first part of the peace process is forgiveness (Step 8)—a transaction between you and God. Forgiveness is transferring to God the debt of sin you are owed by others. When you forgive someone's sin against you, you accept that Christ's blood (for those who receive Christ) or God's wrath (for those who reject Christ) is sufficient payment for the harm you suffered. Vengeance for that sin against you belongs to God.

Making amends (Step 9) is the second part of peacemaking. It is seeking forgiveness for your wrongs and doing your part to repair your sin's damage. Honestly addressing your sin without excuse, blame, or expectation from others honors God. His love for the other person is honored too. Forgiving sin against you and making amends for your sin help you to see yourself, God, and the other person through God's eyes rather than through the lens of sin. These two steps create opportunities for biblical reconciliation.

Reconciliation is the final stage of peacemaking. Reconciliation is *agreement between people that debts are settled*. Nothing more is owed for past sin, and past sin does not prevent a healthy relationship in the future. Forgiveness and amends do not require a response from the other person; however, full reconciliation does require that both persons agree about their wrongs and both take the necessary steps to repair the damage. You will not be fully reconciled until you both agree about the nature of sin and what it will take to settle it. You can forgive someone, make amends, and still remain unreconciled.

for • give

1. To grant pardon for an offense; absolve
2. To release or give up all claim on account of a debt or obligation
3. To [give up] resentment against another

a • mends

reparation or [payment] for a loss, damage, or injury of any kind; to pay back

rec • on • cile

1. to restore to friendship or harmony
2. settle, resolve, bring to agreement
3. to make consistent or conform to requirements of a situation

Q2: Do you have a relationship in which you have forgiven someone, made amends for your sin, but remain unreconciled? Explain.

am • bas • sa • dor
a person appointed
by a ruler to declare
his will

“All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”

(2 Corinthians 5:18–20)

“Christian faith is... basically about love and being loved and reconciliation. These things are so important, they're foundational and they can transform individuals, families.

(Philip Yancey)

Reconciliation with God is the most important thing that can happen in someone's life. You were not able to reconcile with God until you became aware of your sin, agreed with God about the nature of your sin, recognized your need for a savior, and accepted Christ's sacrifice as your payment for sin. Your sinful condition stood in the way of a personal relationship with a holy God.

When you accepted Christ, you were reconciled with God eternally: Your relationship was sealed. Now, by the Spirit, God continues to bring your personal relationship more and more into unity with him. He is revealing sin hindering your relationship with him and freeing you from destructive patterns. He is healing you, and helping you to forgive others so that you can live free of sin's power. He is leading you to amend your wrongs to heal pain you have caused. God is making peace for you and through you. He is transforming you into a peacemaker.

The human relationships God intends for us are impossible if we are not first reconciled to God. People will only be able to reconcile with you as God intends when they become aware of their sin and reconcile with you according to God's standards. *It is more important for someone to reconcile with God than with you.* Now that you have experienced reconciliation with God, he wants to use you as his **ambassador** so that others can be reconciled with him, too. Read 2 Corinthians 5:18–20.

This is the ministry of reconciliation: We are all sinners unable to overcome sin by our own power, yet God still loves us, sending his son, Jesus, to die for our sins. Christ rose from the dead and offers forgiveness for any sin to anyone who by faith will receive Christ's payment for sin. Reconciliation with God is available through Christ. When we are reconciled with God, he transforms us into whom he created us to be, and he leads us to reconcile our human relationships (see Philip Yancey's quote).

Q3: How has God used you as an ambassador of reconciliation over the past few months? Write one example.

CLOSING PRAYER: God, use your work in my life to show others that reconciliation with you is possible. Give me courage to lovingly share your message of reconciliation with others.

TAKE ACTION: Review your memory verse, 2 Corinthians 5:17–18.