

Sermon  SNAPSHOTS



SPIRITUAL GROWTH

**NEXT**  
STEPS

LEARNING HOW TO MOVE FORWARD

*Our journey with God is described as walking (Ephesians 4:1; Romans. 6:4). Walking is made up of one step at a time, one after another. Walking implies progress – many little steps all in the same direction. This shows us that our relationship with God is not simply one step (believing, being baptized). Rather our relationship with God is made up of a series of steps. It is continual progress in the direction of heaven. It is asking the question, “What’s Next?”*

## **God Wants us to Grow (2 Peter 3:18; 2 Peter 1:5-8; 1 Timothy 4:15)**

- ✓ The problem is we don’t know how. Practically what do I do next? What steps should I take to reach a higher, stronger, deeper relationship with God?
- ✓ **Knowing where to begin and what steps to take are very important to reaching your goal**
- ✓ Think about the “Couch to 5k Program.”
  - It is an exercise program that starts with the assumption you are not exercising, and sets the goal of 5k.
  - What makes the plan effective is the daily small steps personally tailored to help one not exercising to reach the goal.

## **Jesus Gave People the Next Steps**

- ✓ Mark 5:18-20 – Jesus told the man healed from his demon possession what to do next
- ✓ Matthew 19:21-22 – the rich young ruler who sought for eternal life had kept the commandments. When Jesus told him what to do next (sell his good, give the money to the poor, and follow Him), he left, unwilling to put Jesus before his wealth.
- ✓ These are two of many instances where Jesus gave people the practical instruction of what they were to do next.
- ✓ What about us? What are the next steps we should take if we want to grow in our relationship with God?

**There are 2 important principles in determining your next steps:**

### **1. Determine Where You Are**

- a. Only when you know where you are can you ever find your way to where you belong.
- b. It requires us to be completely honest with ourselves (2 Corinthians 13:5)



- c. Here are some questions to help:
  - i. Are you a Christian? How long have you been a Christian?
  - ii. How are your habits (Bible reading, praying, private devotion)?
  - iii. How's your knowledge of the Bible?
  - iv. How's your daily living (keeping from sin/serving others)?

## 2. Realize There's No One Size Fits All

- a. The problem with a one size fits all approach (just pray, read the Bible, come to services, etc.) is that we are all different, and are at different places in our walk with the Lord.
- b. The next steps for a new Christian are different than those for a mature Christian (1 Corinthians 3:2; Hebrews 5:12)
- c. We need a specific plan tailored to us

## The Next Steps for Spiritual Growth (Acts 2:37-47)

### ✓ Remove the Sin in Your Life

- No future progress or good things done will make any difference if we don't first deal with that which separates us from God
- God is willing to forgive you of all of your sins (Acts 22:16; 1 John 1:9)
- We need to make sure we truly repent and remove the things that caused us to sin in the first place (Matthew 5:29-30)

### ✓ Draw Close to God

- The Jews didn't just end their sin – they took small daily steps in drawing closer to God

#### ■ They Continued to Learn (v. 42)

- Continue to read, study, and challenge yourself in the Bible (2 Peter 3:18)

#### ■ They Continued to Associate with Each Other (v. 43)

- Pursue relationships with Christians

#### ■ They Continued to Change (v. 45)

- Change into become more and more like Jesus (Romans 8:29)

**-Jordan Shouse**

# *fishers* Church of Christ

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## Times of Service

**Sunday Worship: 10 am**

**Sunday Bible Study: 5 pm**

**Wednesday Bible Study 7 pm**

## Elders

**Jan Boser**

**(H) 773-3178 (C) 509-1828**

**Al Easter**

**(H) 585-9846 (C) 698-1846**

**Randy Shouse 570-4908**

**Lanny Smith 770-8077**

## Contact Information

**10082 East 126th Street**

**Fishers, IN 46038**

**(317) 577-3788**

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