



*Steps
to
Christ*

*Study
Guide*

Arnet Mathers

Ellen G. White

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A Brief Introduction to the Steps to Christ

“God is love” (1 John 4:8b). Distrust of this fundamental principle opens the door to all the sorrows sin brings in its train. To see and know and take to heart God’s love for us personally, individually, is the first step toward joy and rejoicing in the Lord.

The human heart craves to be valued by another, to be loved and cherished. We identify our worth with our ability and skill to do or perform well, or our acceptance by those whose opinion of us we value. When one’s sense of value or self-worth is threatened, all the defense mechanisms come into play. This hinders the ability to be honest about our great need. Only security in the value God places on us and His great love for us can disarm our defenses, and let the light in. We must first comprehend “**God’s Love for Man**” before we can ever find the emotional capacity to admit, let alone see “**The Sinner’s Need of Christ.**” “This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins” (1 John 4:10, NIV).

Misapprehension of God, distrust of His unselfish love, His wisdom, and His beneficent power lies at the root of rebellion against His government. The desire, the determination to have things “my way” for fear “no one else will have my best good at heart” leads us to use others to our own ends, causing pain, heartache, and alienation. When we begin to comprehend something of God’s boundless love and good will toward us, the self-protective armor begins to crack. We want to love and be loved by God. In heart we turn away from the devastating, self-destructive effects of distrusting His love for us. “The goodness of God leads [us] to repentance” (Romans 2:4b, NKJV).

“**Repentance**” is followed by “**Confession.**” The very fact that God invested the life of His Son in each one of us when we were helpless sinners at enmity with Him (see Romans 5:6, 8, 10), gives us confidence He will have compassion on us when we confess to Him our wayward, sinful condition (see Psalm 103; 1 John 1:9; Hebrews 4:16). Even as conviction settles upon us that without Him there is no hope of recovery from sin, our confidence grows that He will accept us just as we are. We step out in faith and entrust our will to His care and direction, a total “**Consecration**” of our lives to Him who loves us to Calvary and back. We have learned to our sorrow that a selfish heart cannot produce unselfishness, no matter how hard it tries, but in “**Faith and Acceptance**” of His power to save, who healed the sick, opened blind eyes, caused the deaf to hear and palsied invalids to walk, and raised the dead to live again, we rely on His life-giving promise: “I will take away your stubborn heart and give you a new heart and a desire to be faithful. You will have only pure thoughts, because I will put My Spirit in you and make you eager to obey My laws and teachings” (Ezekiel 36:26-27, CEV).

God’s Spirit at work in our hearts will bear the fruit of “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, [and] self-control” (Galatians 5:22b-27a, NKJV) that will pass “**The Test of Discipleship.**” As children of God we will find ourselves “**Growing Up Into Christ,**” becoming more and more like Him. As His love fills us more and more, it is too good to keep to ourselves. In concert with Him who exists to bless, we also enter into “**The Work and the Life**” of Christ to bless the world around us.

As in any loving relationship, God wants to be known and to know. Many are the ways He seeks to reveal Himself, to give us “**A Knowledge of God**” that will quiet undue anxiety and bring rest to our souls. And eager to let us be heard ourselves and to increase our confidence in Him, He encourages us to take full advantage of “**The Privilege of Prayer,**” to open ourselves to Him who will always be ready to listen. As we enter into this conversation with our heavenly Friend, our hearts and minds become ever more aligned with His.

While God reveals enough about Himself that we may have confidence in Him, it remains a walk of faith and not of sight. At times doubts may present themselves, yet there are many evidences upon which to base our confidence in His goodness, wisdom, and beneficent power. As we learn “**What to Do With Doubt,**” the shadows recede and we step more fully into the sunlight of His love. Focusing on the many tokens of His loving care, we will be found “**Rejoicing in the Lord**” and by our lives giving testimony to all who know us that God is love.

— Arnet Mathers

How to Use This Study Guide

It is easy to read over something and not really take the time to stop and realize what it is you have read. The study questions included in this Study Guide are designed to help us stop and think about what it is we are reading and to follow the flow of thought. As a fuller comprehension of the message and principles herein contained is realized they can have an ever more practical and real effect on our walk with Jesus.

The paragraphs of the text in the inner column are numbered as an aid in finding the answers to the questions in the Study Guide in the outer column. Space is provided for the answers to be filled in right there in the Study Guide.

At the end of each chapter there are a few Life Application Questions to help meditate a little deeper on the message of the chapter as it applies to one's life.

The standard paging is preserved in this edition by placing in-line page markers in the text. For instance the page-break marker for page 71 would look like this: <71>. The page number for a new chapter will be found at the end of the text for the previous chapter.

It is my heartfelt desire that you may grow closer to Christ Jesus and know the joy of walking together with Him through this study edition of *Steps to Christ*.

— Arnet Mathers

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Chap. 1 - God's Love for Man

1. Nature and revelation alike testify of God's love. Our Father in heaven is the source of life, of wisdom, and of joy. Look at the wonderful and beautiful things of nature. Think of their marvelous adaptation to the needs and happiness, not only of man, but of all living creatures. The sunshine and the rain, that gladden and refresh the earth, the hills and seas and plains, all speak to us of the Creator's love. It is God who supplies the daily needs of all His creatures. In the beautiful words of the psalmist—

“The eyes of all wait upon Thee;
And Thou givest them their meat in due season.
Thou openest Thine hand,
And satisfiest the desire of every living thing.”
Psalm 145:15, 16.

2. God made man perfectly holy and happy; and the fair earth, as it came from the Creator's hand, bore no blight of decay or shadow of the curse. It is transgression of God's law—the law of love—that has brought woe and death. Yet even amid the suffering that results from sin, God's love is revealed. It is written that God cursed the ground for man's sake. Genesis 3:17. The thorn and the thistle—the difficulties and trials that make his life one of toil and care—were appointed for his good as a part of the training needful in God's plan for his uplifting from the ruin and degradation that sin has wrought. The world, though fallen, is not all sorrow and misery. In nature itself are messages of hope and comfort. There are flowers upon the thistles, and the thorns are covered with roses.

3. “God is love” is written upon every opening bud, upon every spire of springing grass. The lovely birds making the air vocal with their happy songs, the delicately tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air, the lofty trees of the forest with their rich foliage of living green — all testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God and to His desire to make His children happy.

4. The word of God reveals His character. He Himself has declared His infinite love and pity. When Moses prayed, “Show me Thy glory,” the Lord answered, “I will make all My goodness pass before thee.” Exodus 33:18, 19. This is His glory. The Lord passed before Moses, and proclaimed, “The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.” Exodus 34:6, 7. He is “slow to anger, and of great kindness,” “be-

Paragraph 1

What two witnesses testify of God's love?

A. _____

B. _____

To what are the things of nature marvelously adapted?

A. _____

B. _____

Paragraphs 2-3

God made man perfectly...

A. _____

B. _____

The newly created earth bore no...

A. _____

B. _____

What is responsible for woe and death?

List ways that even amidst the suffering that results from sin, God's love is still revealed.

Paragraph 4

What is the Lord's Glory?

Study Questions

Paragraphs 5-6

Through what has God sought to reveal himself to us?

Through the things of _____, and the _____ and _____ earthly ties that human _____ can know.

What attributes does Satan ascribe to God?

He has blinded the minds of men so they looked upon God with _____; they thought of Him as _____ and _____. His chief attribute to be _____ justice, a _____ judge, a _____ creditor, watching with _____ eye to _____ the _____ and _____ of men.

Why did Jesus come to live among us?

Paragraph 7

What was Jesus' earthly mission?

- A. Preach _____
- B. Heal _____
- C. Preach _____
- D. and _____
- E. To set at _____

What were the evidences of Jesus' divine anointing, that were revealed in every act of His life?

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

How approachable was Jesus?

Paragraphs 8-10

How much truth did Jesus gloss over?

cause He delighteth in mercy." Jonah 4:2; Micah 7:18.

5. God has bound our hearts to Him by unnumbered tokens in heaven and in earth. Through the things of nature, and the deepest and tenderest earthly ties that human hearts can know, He has sought to reveal Himself to us. Yet these but imperfectly represent His love. Though all these evidences have been given, the enemy of good blinded the minds of men, so that they looked upon God with fear; they thought of <11> Him as severe and unforgiving. Satan led men to conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice,—one who is a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He pictured the Creator as a being who is watching with jealous eye to discern the errors and mistakes of men, that He may visit judgments upon them. It was to remove this dark shadow, by revealing to the world the infinite love of God, that Jesus came to live among men.

6. The Son of God came from heaven to make manifest the Father. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." John 1:18. "Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." Matthew 11:27. When one of the disciples made the request, "Show us the Father," Jesus answered, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" John 14:8, 9.

7. In describing His earthly mission, Jesus said, The Lord "hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke 4:18. This was His work. He went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by Satan. There were whole villages where there was not a moan of sickness in any house, for He had passed through them and healed all their sick. His work gave evidence of His divine anointing. Love, mercy, and compassion were revealed in every act of <12> His life; His heart went out in tender sympathy to the children of men. He took man's nature, that He might reach man's wants. The poorest and humblest were not afraid to approach Him. Even little children were attracted to Him. They loved to climb upon His knees and gaze into the pensive face, benignant with love.

8. Jesus did not suppress one word of truth, but He uttered it always in love. He exercised the greatest tact and thoughtful, kind attention in His intercourse with