

appnotes



DAY 1

READ ACTS 2:14-41

As Paul addresses the crowd that had gathered he didn't give them a long and comprehensive to-do list. His primary goal was to break down the Gospel in a way they could understand. Paul came from a religious tradition that was full of rituals and steps but he understood something that is so vital: you cannot take your next step until you take your first step. The first and most important step you will ever make is to place your trust in Jesus Christ. Stop leaning on your own ability to work yourself into a right relationship with God. Through His death on the cross, and His resurrection, Jesus took all of your wrong and gave you all of His right. Believing that and committing to following Christ is the first step on the greatest journey of your life.

DAY 2

READ JOHN 1:43-50

The disciples teach us that we don't have to know everything to follow Jesus. One step at a time is all Jesus asks us to take. Nathanael is a great example. When his brother Philip came and told him we've found the Messiah, Nathanael was skeptical at best. He didn't have all the answers and he had plenty of doubts but he didn't let any of that stop him from taking his first step. Rather than getting bogged down by the unknown he went with his brother to investigate. That first step led him to an encounter with Jesus that

changed his life forever. From that day on, Nathanael took one next step after another as he followed Jesus and helped build His Church.

DAY 3

READ PHILIPPIANS 1:3-10

Everybody has a next step. Too often we confuse God's starting a work in our lives for His finishing that work. Coming to know God is different from becoming more like Jesus. God won't abandon you; He always finishes what He starts. But don't miss this, God wants you to partner with Him in the process. Spiritual growth never happens passively. That's why Paul addresses the believers in Philippi, encouraging and challenging them to take a next step. Next steps aren't something to check off your to do list. Next steps are about helping us grow closer to God and become more like Jesus. So what's your next step?

DAY 4

READ EXODUS 13:17-22

This account in the book of Exodus reminds us that God wants to lead us step by step. After God freed his people from the nation of Egypt, He didn't just tell them about their destination and then disappear. He remained close and led His people step by step. God was present with His people, constantly giving direction. By day, He led by a pillar of cloud and by night, in a pillar of fire. God still wants to lead His church step by step. We don't have a cloud of fire to lead the way; we have something even better—the very Spirit of God living in us, whispering to us, and directing us step by step (John 16:13).

DAY 5

READ MATTHEW 26:13-37

Don't confuse activity with progress. In many church models there is an unspoken belief that the more time spent in the church building during the week directly translates to greater spiritual maturity. In this passage Jesus puts to rest this false belief as he addresses the Pharisees, a group known for filling their days with robust spiritual activity. Yet their activities and rituals weren't growing their relationship with God but creating a chasm. Next Steps aren't meant to fill your calendar or create a false sense of spiritual maturity. They exist to help us follow Jesus, step by step. As you take next steps always ask yourself, "Is my life being transformed by Jesus, or am I just checking something off a list?"