**Coming Home: Using First Steps/First Principles Bible Study Series**

**The Sin Study/Light and Darkness**

Remember the challenge: Every member in a study with someone this Fall (restoration, follow-up, Jesus Studies of First Steps)

For those we believe are most likely lost, we have two Bible study series:

1. Jesus Study Series.

2. His Steps (that we used to call First Principles)

**1. Is this person relatively religious? Does the person think he or she is probably saved? Do they, at least theoretically believe the Bible is from God?**

**This person should do the His Steps/First Principles Bible study series.**

**Or**

**2. This person has almost no or only a limited background in Christianity. He or she is not even completely sure that they believe Jesus is the Son of God or that the Bible is inspired by God.**

**This person should do the Jesus study series.**

**Light and Darkness/The Sin Study**

Purpose:

1. To help people come to the point of repentance for their sins.

2. If necessary, to help people realize that they might be lost.

1 Peter 2:9-10 Light and Darkness The reason for the title.

Q: Is there a grey area here between being in the light or in the darkness?

Q: What is the difference in state between the two? (forgiven or not forgiven)

Q: And this is key. Do not back off on this. Which are you right now and why?

(do not try to talk them out of their position, but perhaps push gently on their why if they say that they are in the light. Remember, you already did a timeline.)

Isaiah 59:1-2

Q: What is the effect of sin in our lives?

This infinitely high wall must be broken down in order for us to have the kind of relationship with God we want.

Q: Who is more lost/separated, the blatant sinner or the “good” person?

Q: Who might find it hardest to repent?

Def of sin: *Harmateo*  missing the mark. A word from Greek archery.

Galatians 5:19-21

Q: What is the result of living like this? (not see the kingdom/not go to heaven)

Note that this passage is written to people who have been saved.

Note: Something we do, something in our mind, something we do, something in our mind…. What does this tell you?

Instructions: Go through this list, defining the terms, and setting an example by sharing you own personal experience with these sins.

Then, ask them to do the same. Do not be afraid to ask specific questions. Explain you are trying to help them to come to a solid repentance.

Sexual immorality *pornea*  Any sexual contact with someone you are not married to.

Impurity. Impure thoughts lust, desire for someone to die, violent thoughts

Debauchery Wanton appeal to the senses. Gorging on food, masturbation

Idolatry Any thing we put above God

Witchcraft *pharmaceo* use of mind-altering drugs marijuana for example

Hatred

Discord argumentativeness, divisiveness

Jealousy (rivalry competition), Envy (discontent, wanting something not yours)

Fits of rage outbursts of anger, shouting, road rage

Selfish ambition

Dissensions Factions racism, party spirit, divisiveness

Drunkenness

Orgies

And the like… stealing, lying, arrogance, selfishness There are other lists.

James 4:17 Sins of omission.

Q: Are there any obvious examples in your life?

Romans 6:23

Q: What are the ultimate consequences of unrepented, unforgiven sin?

Q: Why?

Homework:

Write a letter to God in which you open up with yourself about the sins you have committed. It may even include things you have not felt comfortable sharing with us. Spend significant time thinking about and praying about these things.

Read 2 Tim 3:1-5 (and also Colossians 3:5-11?) to help you to think about your list.

We will talk about the letter next time, but it is for your eyes only.

**Salvation Study**

Purpose: To establish a solid doctrine of how and when one is saved.

Ephesians 2:1-10

v. 1-3 Q: What is the problem? Who has that problem?

v. 4-8 Q: What is the solution?

Note the idea of being raised (v. 6). We will see what that refers to later.

v. 9 Q: What definitely does not save us?

Does this mean that God does not require any works?

Illustration. Give reach out with an object as a gift (but coach your helper ahead of time not to take it). Then, do this again, but this time have him/her take the gift.

Q: Did the person earn the gift? Would he/she have received it without doing something? Did doing that thing earn the gift?

Our works, no matter how awesome, do absolutely zero to earn salvation, but this does not mean that God does not ask us to do something in order to receive it.

So, what response on our part to God’s offer of salvation is required?

1. John 3:16 To believe. Q: What kind of belief is this—intellectual assent that something is true, or faith and trust in God?

2. John 3:3-6 To be born again.

Q: What MUST happen for us to enter the kingdom?

Q: What is involved in being born again? (water and spirit) We will see what this means in the next passage.

3. Acts 2:36-41 Repent and be baptized.

Q: What does “cut to the heart” mean?

Q: What two things did Peter tell them to do?

Q: What does repent mean? (*metanoia* 180o mind change)

Q: What does baptism mean? (*baptizo* immersion in water)

Q: What two things would God do for us if we do those two things?

Q: Who is this for?

Romans 6:1-7

Note: The only thing in the Bible ever connected with into Christ is baptism (Gal 3:26).

Q: What happens when we are baptized into Christ?

(buried with him AND raised with him)

v. 5,7 What if we have not been united with him in a death like his?

Note: This explains the born again language in John 3:3-6

1 Peter 3:21-22

Q: What does the water of Noah’s flood symbolize?

Q: What does baptism do?

Romans 10:8-10

Q: What act on our part is connected with our salvation here?

Q: Do we need to actually say these words, or is the actual taking on of lordship sufficient?

Summary:

In order to receive the offered gift of salvation, the Bible tells us we must:

1. Have biblical belief/faith in Jesus—in his death burial and resurrection.

2. Repent of our sins.

3. Confess Jesus as Lord.

4. Be baptized by immersion into Christ

Q: Does the order matter?

2 Corinthians 7:8-11

Q: What is worldly guilt, and what is the result of this?

Note: There are two categories of repentance—the deep, 180o turnaround repentance that leads to salvation, and daily life-style repentance of those already saved.

Go through each of these qualities that define the repentant person/heart and ask the person what that will look like for them. Assure them that if they do these things, then they are ready to be baptized.

Assignment: Review your letter to God and spend time praying and perhaps even fasting.

Discussion group:

Do you feel good about leading the sin study with another person? Why or why not?

Of those qualities of godly sorrow, which has meaning for you right now? Which one can you work on this week?