



Rapha's Step Studies for Overcoming Sexual Addiction

STEP 3

We make a decision to turn our lives over to God through Jesus Christ.

*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
and with all your soul, and with all your mind,
and with all your strength.
Mark 12:30*

In Step 2, we acknowledged that God, in His infinite greatness, can restore us to sanity. In Step 3, we choose to turn our lives over to His care so that we can begin to experience that restoration process.

This is not just a one-time step. For the person following God, submitting to Him is a daily (or hourly!) choice (see Joshua 24:15). There are probably few of us who relish the concept of being submissive in any kind of relationship, but Scripture says we will become slaves of that which we obey (Romans 6:16). In the case of sexual addiction, we have a choice: to submit to our compulsion and allow it to direct our lives as before, or to submit to God and allow Him to be a source of new direction for us.

God knows that we will only follow one whom we know and trust (John 10:3–5). Our purpose in writing this step is to help you build upon your knowledge of God and understand why He is trustworthy. At the same time, we also want to equip you with an understanding of why man has a tendency to refuse God's help and trust instead in himself.

OBSTACLES

'Turning to Christ' sounds very simple, but it takes courage, understanding, and persistence. We have lived by controlling our environment so that our needs can be met. 'Turn to Christ' means surrendering that control and trusting God to meet our needs.



"Turning to Christ" means that we pursue God's will. But many of us become angry if He doesn't do our will. We want Him to meet our needs in our way and on our time table.

We may intellectually grasp the truths of the gospel, but that isn't true repentance. Genuine change in life's direction comes at the heart level. It is often very painful and hard. Even when we repent whole-heartedly, our journey isn't over. In many ways, it has only begun. We can then experience the long process of change—the joys and the troubles. The rest of the steps are designed to give us a firm foundation for this growth.

1. Are you willing to surrender control and trust God to meet your emotional and sexual needs? Why, or why not?
2. What are some differences between an intellectual understanding of the gospel and true repentance?
3. What is your part and what is God's part in changing your life and working towards purity?

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRIST

The following study is designed to help you develop a better understanding of Christ's character through Scripture. To help you think through each passage and consider what it means, we want you to paraphrase each passage in the space provided. The goal is not to "fill in the blanks," but to reflect on what these passages are saying. This will take some time. Be thorough with this exercise, and think both about the meaning of each passage, and how to apply it in your daily experiences.

- **Purpose** - When Adam sinned, he brought both the burden and the penalty of sin upon all mankind. As a result, man is by nature rebellious against God, separated from Him, and deserving of His righteous wrath.



Behold, the Lord's hand is not so short that it cannot save; neither is His ear so dull that it cannot hear.

But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear (Isaiah 59:1-2).

- **Paraphrase:**

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,
Instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,

Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus;

Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds (Titus 2:11-14).

- **Paraphrase:**

And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

- **Paraphrase:**

- **Unconditional love** - Sacrificing His only Son's life on our behalf is overwhelming evidence of God's love for us.

By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins (1 John 4:9-10).

- **Paraphrase:**

- **Complete forgiveness** - Christ's death not only averted the wrath of God from those who believe in Him, but completely paid our debt of sin so that we are completely forgiven.



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In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins (1 John 4:9-10).

- **Paraphrase:**

- **Total acceptance** - Christ's payment for our sins took away the barrier between Him and us so that we are now His beloved children and His beloved friends.

For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him (Romans 8:15-17).

- **Paraphrase:**

- **Authority and power** - Christ has infinite authority and power. In His life and death on earth, He achieved our redemption. He defeated every temptation known to man (Hebrews 2:14-15; 4:15), reconciled us to God (Matthew 26:28; Romans 5:8), and triumphed over every evil power and authority (Colossians 2:15). His resurrection proves that He has authority over death and that He is alive today (Luke 24:1-49; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4), and His ascension sealed His victory and ours (Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-11). Scripture tells us that Jesus Christ is now seated at the right hand of God "in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come, and that all things are in subjection to Him (Ephesians 1:20-22)."

Paraphrase the following passages about Christ's authority and power:

And He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation.

For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created by Him and for Him.

And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.



He is also the head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything.

For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven (Colossians 1:15-19).

- **Paraphrase:**

... and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority... (Colossians 2:10).

- **Paraphrase:**

- **Hope** - There is no hope of forgiveness and reconciliation to God apart from Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead... (1 Peter 1:3).

- **Paraphrase:**

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28).

- **Paraphrase:**

- **Faithfulness** - Christ is always faithful to do what He has promised.

No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it (1 Corinthians 10:13).

- **Paraphrase:**



- **Wisdom** - The Lord has all knowledge and all wisdom. He knows what is best for us, and He will give us wisdom to know how we can honor Him in every situation.

But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

But let him ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind (James 1:5–6).

- **Paraphrase:**

TRUSTING IN CHRIST

Augustine observed, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O God, and the heart of man is restless until it finds its rest in Thee." God desires to have an intimate relationship with us, and He has given us a provision for continual access to Him through His Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16–17; Hebrews 2:17). John 1:12 says, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name."

Are you trusting in your own abilities to earn acceptance with God, or are you trusting in the death of Christ to pay for your sins, and the resurrection of Christ to give you new life? Take a moment to reflect on this question: *On a scale of 0–100 percent, how sure are you that you would spend eternity with God if you died today?* An answer of less than 100 percent may indicate that you are trusting, at least in part, in yourself. You may be thinking, *Isn't it arrogant to say that I am 100 percent sure?* Indeed, it would be arrogance if you were trusting in yourself—your abilities, your actions and good deeds—to earn your salvation. However, if you are no longer trusting in your own efforts, but in the all-sufficient payment of Christ, then 100 percent certainty is a response of humility and thankfulness, not arrogance.

Reflect on a second question: *If you were to die today and stand before God, and He were to ask you, "Why should I let you into heaven?" what would you tell Him?* Would you mention your abilities, church attendance, kindness to others, Christian service, abstinence from a particular sin. or some other good deed? Paul wrote to Titus:

But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared,

He saved us. not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy... (Titus 3:4-5).



And to the Ephesians he wrote:

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves,
it is the gift of God;
not as a result of works, that no one should boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).

We must give up our own efforts to achieve righteousness, and instead believe that Christ's death and resurrection alone are sufficient to pay for our sin and separation from God.

In Acts 16:31, Luke wrote,

... Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved

Jesus said:

I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me (John 14:6).

We receive Jesus by invitation. He does not force Himself on us, but says:

Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me (Revelations 3:20).

Take some time to reflect on the two questions we examined on page 3. Reflect on God's love, which He has expressed to you by sending His only Son to die in your place. Read Luke 22:39–46. Consider the selfless sacrifice of Jesus to carry out this divine plan. Realize that if you were the only person to walk this earth, Jesus would have done this for you.

If you are not 100 percent sure that you would spend eternity with God if you died today, and if you are willing to trust in Christ and accept His payment for your sins, you may use this prayer to express your faith:

Lord Jesus, I need You. I want You to be my Savior and my Lord. I accept Your death on the cross as payment for my sins, and now entrust my life to Your care. Thank You for forgiving me and for giving me a new life. Thank You for the new life that is now mine through You. Please help me grow in my understanding of Your love and power so that my life will bring glory and honor to You. Amen.

(date)

(signature)



If you have placed your trust in Jesus Christ prior to reading this, consider reaffirming your faith and commitment to serve Him. You may do so by using this prayer:

Lord, Jesus, I need You, and thank You that I am Yours. I confess that I have sinned against You, and ask You to "create in me a clean heart, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalms 51:10). I renew my commitment to serve You. Thank You for loving me and for forgiving me. Please give me Your strength and wisdom to continue growing in You so that my life can bring glory and honor to You. Amen.

(date)

(signature)

It is important to understand that trusting in Christ does not guarantee an instantaneous deliverance from compulsive behavior or any other problem in life. However, it does mean you are forgiven for your rebellion against God; you are restored to a relationship with Him that will last throughout eternity; and you will receive His unconditional love and acceptance, as well as His strength and wisdom, as you continue to grow in recovery.

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