

**IMPROVING OUR
SPIRITUAL HEALTH**
Steps to Building a Healthier Church



**Class Series by
Ray Reynolds**

IMPROVING OUR SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Steps to Building a Healthier Church

STEP #1 – Internalize the Word
I Corinthians 10:1-13

STEP #2 – Familiarize the People
I Corinthians 12:12-31

STEP #3 – Organize the Work
I Corinthians 14:26-40

STEP #4 – Prioritize Our Lives
Galatians 4:1-11

STEP #5 – Spiritualize Our Walk
Galatians 5:16-26

STEP #6 – Scripturalize Our Mission
Galatians 6:1-10

STEP #7 – Evangelize Our Community
Ephesians 3:14-21

STEP #8 – Emphasize Godly Things
Ephesians 4:1-16

STEP #9 – Visualize Heavenly Motives
Ephesians 5:8-21

STEP #10 – Realize Important Details
I Thessalonians 1:1-10

STEP #11 – Liberalize Our Ministry
I Thessalonians 2:1-9

STEP #12 – Stabilize the Fellowship
I Thessalonians 5:11-22

CONCLUSION = Categorize The Blessings

LESSON ONE:
IMPROVING OUR SPIRITUAL HEALTH
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Introduction : The apostle Paul seems to be somewhat frustrated with some of the churches in the New Testament (Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Thessalonica, etc.). Many churches were lacking maturity and spiritual growth! The Hebrew writer also dealt with this problem when he said, “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Hebrews 5:12-14). We are Christian soldiers and we need to be marching to maturity! I believe there are twelve steps to healthier church growth

Discussion :

STEP #1 – Internalize the Word– I Corinthians 10:1-13

A. The Leaders Must Internalize The Word of God

- Growing spiritually every day!!! – II Peter 3:18, Acts 20:18
- How can we assure ourselves that our leaders are doing what’s right?

- How can we encourage them without criticizing them?

B. The Members Must Internalize The Word of God

- How can we keep ourselves on the same target?

- What happens if we hold our leaders to a higher standard than ourselves?

C. The Teachers Must Internalize The Word of God - II Timothy 4:1-5

- How important is the teaching program of the church? Bible Study?

- What will happen if we turn our Bible classes into day cares (babysitting)?

D. The Families Must Internalize The Word of God

- Why are families struggling to make home studies a priority?

- How will our nation be affected if God leaves the home?

- Who is responsible for teaching and training the families? Why?

Conclusion : If we ever hope to become a spiritually mature church we need to grow up! How will we ever grow up if we never learn and apply the Bible? Let’s do our part to grow the church!

LESSON TWO:
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Discussion :

STEP #2 – Familiarize the People – I Corinthians 12:12-31

A. You Need To Familiarize Yourself With The Leadership

- How can we hope to be led by our leaders if we don't know them?

- How can leaders lead if they don't know us?

- Who are our elders, deacons, ministers, and their wives?

C. You Need To Familiarize Yourself With The Membership

- How many members do we have on the role? How many do you know?

- How much time have you spent with the people of the church?

D. You Need To Familiarize Yourself With The Ministries

- What kind of ministries do we have in the church?

- What are some ways we can help these good works?

E. You Need To Familiarize Yourself With Your Talents

- Matthew 25, John 15:1-8, Ephesians 4:8, Romans 12:1-2
- Does everyone have a talent? What should they do with it? What if they don't?

- How can we hope to grow if we never spread our wings?

- Why are people fearful of trying new things? How can that change?

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Discussion :

STEP #3 – Organize the Work – I Corinthians 14:26-40

B. The Worship of the Church Should Be Organized

- Who ordains the elements of worship? Why?

- Who ordains the order of worship? Why?

- What would happen if we confused tradition with scripture?

C. The Teachers of the Church Should Be Organized

- Who is instructed to teach the church?

- Why are teachers held to a higher standard?

- How can you tell when a teacher is not prepared? Does it hinder your learning?

D. The Ministries of the Church Should Be Organized

- Who is instructed to lead the ministries of the church?

- What would happen if we had no accountability in those ministries?

E. The Life of the Church Should Be Organized

- Define the church. Explain.

- Why is it easier to see our building as the temple and not ourselves?

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Discussion :

STEP #4 – Prioritize Our Lives – Galatians 4:1-11

A. We Must Prioritize Our Life (Matthew 6:33)

- Why is it so hard for people to get their priorities permanently in line?

- How will people respond to us if we are not living what we believe?

B. We Must Prioritize Our Goals

- Hebrews 6:1-3, II Peter 3:18, Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16
- What are your personal spiritual goals as a Christian?

- What are our congregational goals?

C. We Must Prioritize Our Work

- How can we work more effectively to achieve our goals?

- Why do mission statements seem to be so effective in business?

D. We Must Prioritize Our Prospects (Luke 19:10)

- Have you ever made a list of people you want to see go to heaven?

- What can we do to get them saved?

- What can we offer to attract more people to the Lord?

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Discussion :

STEP #5 – Spiritualize Our Walk – Galatians 5:16-26

A. We Must Spiritualize The Leadership

- What will happen if our church leaders are not spiritual?

- Why are some people more concerned about physical qualities instead of the spiritual characteristics of those men who could serve as elders?

B. We Must Spiritualize The Membership

- What will happen if we turn the church into a social club?

- What can we do to ensure that this never happens?

C. We Must Spiritualize The Youth

- Why are our young people leaving the church when they leave the home?

- What can we do to make the work of the Lord more attractive to our kids?

D. We Must Spiritualize The Worship

- Why is it dangerous to remove spirituality from our worship services?

- Why are we afraid of talking about the Spirit and worship?

- How can we be more spiritual, charismatic, and praise oriented?

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Discussion :

STEP #6 – Scripturalize Our Mission – Galatians 6:1-10

A. If We Are Scriptural We Will Restore The Erring

- We could at least pray for them! – Acts 1-3, Matthew 7:7-16
- Why do people slip through the cracks?

- How can we close the back door and seal up those cracks?

B. If We Are Scriptural We Will Teach The Lost

- What can we do to reach the lost in our community?

- When can we implement these ideas and ministries?

C. If We Are Scriptural We Will Sow The Seed

- How can we sow the seed collectively?

- How can we sow the seed individually?

- What can we do to water the seeds that have been sown?

D. If We Are Scriptural We Will Visit The Needy

- Why is God so adamant about visit the sick, needy, widows, and orphans?

- How would God feel about our activity in this area?

- What can we do for our widows that isn't being done right now?

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LESSON SEVEN:
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Discussion :

STEP #7 – Evangelize Our Community – Ephesians 3:14-21

A. Evangelistic Congregations Are Filled With The Holy Spirit

- How can we be filled with the Spirit if we don't know Him?

- What can we do to be filled with the Spirit?

- What happens when we quench the Spirit?

B. Evangelistic Congregations Are Filled With Faith

- What happens if we don't properly establish our faith?

- What can we do to add to our faith?

C. Evangelistic Congregations Are Filled With Love

- What happens to congregations that are not filled with love?

- How does evangelism show others that we love them?

D. Evangelistic Congregations Are Filled With Knowledge

- What can we do to increase our Bible knowledge?

- What does it mean to attend Bible school? Are there tests? Why not?

- Is there anything wrong with being challenged? Explain.

Conclusion : If we ever hope to become a spiritually mature church we need to grow up! How will we ever grow up if we never learn and apply the Bible? Let's do our part to grow the church!

LESSON EIGHT:
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Discussion :

STEP #8 – Emphasize Godly Things – Ephesians 4:1-16

A. We Need To Emphasize Godliness

- How can we better learn the characteristics of Jesus?

- How can we better learn the characteristics of other great Bible characters?

- How can we better emulate these people?

B. We Need To Emphasize Unity

- How should ministry work?

- What happens when we try to work without knowing the right details?

- How does our work and ministry suffer?

C. We Need To Emphasize Jesus

- How have we missed the mark by spending so much time discussing the church?

- Why do congregations obsess with what others are doing? Competitive?

D. We Need To Emphasize Edification

- How is building up the kingdom of God important to church health?

- Who benefits when we focus on each other instead of ourselves?

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LESSON NINE:
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Discussion :

STEP #9 – Visualize Heavenly Motives – Ephesians 5:8-21

A. We Need To Have A Vision For Our Lives

- Where do you see yourself going? What do you see yourself doing?

- Why is it important to see the work of God in your life?

- Why should we all learn out talents?

B. We Need To Have A Vision For Our Future

- What kind of people live from day to day? Anything wrong with that?

- What happens to businesses that fail to plan ahead?

- What happens to families that fail to plan ahead?

C. We Need To Have A Vision For Our Congregation

- What do visitors want? (Seating [80%], Time, Parking) – Follow up

- Where do you see the congregation going? How are we doing?

D. We Need To Have A Vision For Our Children (Ephesians 5:22-6:4)

- Why do we think about ourselves when we are planning?

- What happens when we fail to think about future generations?

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LESSON TEN:
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Discussion :

STEP #10 – Realize Important Details – I Thessalonians 1:1-10

B. We Need To Realize The Importance of Prayer

- Why did Paul spend so much time emphasizing prayer?

- Why don't we have more prayer meetings? What would happen?

C. We Need To Realize The Importance of Hard Work

- Why are we effective when we Invite the mature to teach, Rotate, and Appreciate?

- How can we show people that we appreciate their hard work?

C. We Need To Realize The Importance of Integrity

- What does it mean to be a man or woman of integrity?

- Why is integrity appreciated even among worldly non-believers?

- How can we take a stand for something if we don't believe in it? Explain.

D. We Need To Realize The Importance of Repentance

- What can we do to stay faithful?

- Why are we afraid of repentance?

- When should we let others know that we are sorry?

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LESSON ELEVEN:
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Discussion :

STEP #11 – Liberalize Our Ministry – I Thessalonians 2:1-9

A. We Must Liberalize Our Love

- What will happen when we are more sympathetic?

- What can we do to remove barriers between us and others?

B. We Must Liberalize Our Giving

- One of the proofs of our maturity is our giving (II Corinthians 8:4-6).
- Why are people afraid of talking about giving?

- Why does Jesus spend so much time talking about it?

C. We Must Liberalize Our Work

- When we give up our work, what happens?

- Why is it hard to get people to work for the Lord?

- Who will be the most dedicated disciples? Sacrificial?

D. We Must Liberalize Our Life

- What does it mean to live a liberal life?

- Why are we so uptight? Does that attract anyone? Explain.

- When did we decide to become so unhappy and negative?

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Discussion :

STEP #12 – Stabilize the Fellowship – I Thessalonians 5:11-22

- A. Stable Congregations Recognize That God Is Holy
 - What does it mean to be holy?

 - What can we do to become holy?

- B. Stable Congregations Recognize That Jesus Is Coming Again
 - Are you ready for Jesus to come again?

 - Are you eager for His return or worried?

 - What can we do to get prepared for His coming?

- C. Stable Congregations Recognize That The Holy Spirit Is Active
 - How can activity promote stability?

 - When we quench the Spirit, who suffers the most?

- D. Stable Congregations Recognize That Christians Are Submissive
 - What does it mean to trust and obey?

 - When we are completely submissive, how can it change our thinking?

 - Is it hard to give it all up? What did He do for us?

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LESSON THIRTEEN:
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Discussion :

I. The Twelve Steps to Building a Healthier Church

- STEP #1 – Internalize – I Corinthians 10:1-13
- STEP #2 – Familiarize – I Corinthians 12:12-31
- STEP #3 – Organize – I Corinthians 14:26-40
- STEP #4 – Prioritize – Galatians 4:1-11
- STEP #5 – Spiritualize – Galatians 5:16-26
- STEP #6 – Scripturalize – Galatians 6:1-10
- STEP #7 – Evangelize – Ephesians 3:14-21
- STEP #8 – Emphasize – Ephesians 4:1-16
- STEP #9 – Visualize – Ephesians 5:8-21
- STEP #10 – Realize – I Thessalonians 1:1-10
- STEP #11 – Liberalize – I Thessalonians 2:1-9
- STEP #12 – Stabilize – I Thessalonians 5:11-22

II. What Will We Do Now? – CATEGORIZE THE BLESSINGS

- Why did God put so many letters in our New Testament?

- What can we learn from each of the congregations we have considered?

- Who benefits the most from these letters? Why do we relate to the letters of Paul?

- How can we become more focused on the spiritual instead of the physical?

- When will we have a perfect church? Explain.

- Why is it so important to categorize all of our blessings from God?

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