



## The Scriptural Basis of the Twelve Steps

The Twelve Steps were divinely inspired and based on scriptural principles. Bill Wilson, one of the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous, where the Twelve Steps originated, was heavily influenced by Dr. Frank Buchman, the founder of a Christian group called the Oxford Group. Dr. Buchman, a recovering alcoholic and minister, worked with alcoholics using many of the principles upon which the Twelve Steps are based. Bill Wilson experienced a spiritual conversion while working with the Oxford Group. He eventually broke away from them, as he wanted to appeal to people of all faiths and persuasions. The biblical principles he learned while working with the Oxford Group appear in the Twelve Steps.

Here are the Twelve Steps with their scriptural basis:

**1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol {addictions, compulsions, people, places, and things} – that our lives had become unmanageable.**

Powerlessness: I can't do it and my attempts have messed up my life. (Romans 7:18)

**2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.**

Hope: God can help me. (Philippians 2:13)

**3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.**

Surrender: I will let God work in my life. (Romans 12:1)

**4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.**

Self-examination: I will be open to having God show me my sins. (Lamentations 3:40)

**5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**

Confession: I will admit my faults to God, myself, and another safe person. (James 5:16)

**6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.**

Willingness: I am willing to change. (1 John 1:8-9)

**7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.**

Humility: I recognize I can't do it alone. I need God's help. (James 4:10)

**8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.**

Accountability: I am willing to take responsibility for what I have done wrong. (Luke 6:31)

**9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**

Restitution: I am willing to make restitution to the people I have harmed. (Matthew 5:23-24)

**10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.**

Sanctification: I am committed to continued self-evaluation and righteousness. (1 Corinthians 10:12)

**11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.**

Fellowship: I commit to working on my relationship with God daily. (Philippians 4:6)

**12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.**

Restoration: Once I am restored, I am willing to share my encouragement, strength and hope with others. (Galatians 6:1)

As you can see, the Twelve Steps are based on biblical principles. They are an effective God-given tool to help you change patterns of behavior that are causing problems in your life and relationships.

#### THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

*The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous have been reprinted and adapted with the permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. ("AAWS"). Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps does not mean that Alcoholics Anonymous is affiliated with this program. A.A. is a program of recovery from alcoholism only - use of A.A.'s Steps or an adapted version in connection with programs and activities which are patterned after A.A., but which address other problems, or use in any other non-A.A. context, does not imply otherwise. . Although Alcoholics Anonymous is a spiritual program, A.A. is not a religious program, and use of A.A. material in the present connection does not imply A.A.'s affiliation with or endorsement of, any sect, denomination, or specific religious belief.*