

15 Practical Steps to a Deeper Walk with Christ

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Christian Reflections to Build your Faith, By Melkisedeck Leon Shine

Deepening the Christ-Follower's Journey: 15 Intentional Steps Toward Intimacy with God

In contemporary society, characterized by its rapid pace and relentless demands, cultivating a robust and meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ necessitates a deliberate and intentional approach. For believers, pursuing a deeper communion with God is not merely a spiritual aspiration; it constitutes the very essence of faith, the wellspring of genuine purpose, and the pathway to profound fulfillment. This transformative journey, while demanding consistent effort, yields immeasurable rewards. This article outlines fifteen practical strategies to facilitate a closer walk with Christ, grounded in relevant theological frameworks and psychological principles.

1. Establishing a Daily Rhythm of Prayer: Commencing each day with a dedicated time of prayer establishes a foundation for spiritual communion. This practice, consistent with the concept of *Lectio Divina*, involves engaging with God through contemplative prayer, allowing for a dialogue characterized by both petition and gratitude. This intentional act sets the tone for a life lived in conscious awareness of God's presence, fostering a sense of abiding reliance. This aligns with the psychological principle of self-efficacy, as regularly engaging in prayer can strengthen one's perceived ability to connect with and receive guidance from God.

2. Engaging with Sacred Scripture: Regular engagement with the Bible, the divinely inspired Word of God, is paramount. The application of *lectio divina*, a method of prayerful reading and meditation, enables deeper engagement with the text. This allows the teachings and narratives within Scripture to penetrate the heart and mind, fostering spiritual transformation and shaping one's behavior in accordance with God's will. This process is consistent with the cognitive behavioral model, where thoughts, feelings, and actions are interconnected, influenced by one's interpretation and internalization of God's Word.

3. Emulating Christ's Life and Character: The life of Jesus Christ serves as the ultimate exemplar of love, compassion, and selfless service. Contemplating His actions and attitudes, through practices like *visio divina*, allows followers to internalize His virtues and strive toward moral excellence. This intentional imitation cultivates character development and strengthens one's spiritual identity, consistent with social learning theory; individuals learn by observing and modeling the behavior of others, especially those they admire and respect.

4. Active Participation in Christian Community: Active involvement in a thriving Christian fellowship offers invaluable opportunities for worship, spiritual encouragement, and mutual accountability. The communal aspect reinforces spiritual growth through shared experiences, support, and the collective pursuit of spiritual maturity. This is consistent with the concept of social support, where belonging to a supportive community provides emotional and spiritual strength.

6. **Practicing Gratitude:** Cultivating a heart overflowing with gratitude for God's blessings fosters contentment and enhances one's receptiveness to divine grace. This is supported by positive psychology, which emphasizes the importance of gratitude in improving well-being and fostering a positive outlook on life. A grateful heart is naturally inclined towards joy and a deeper appreciation for God's provision.

8. **Extending Forgiveness:** Forgiveness, mirroring God's grace, is crucial for spiritual health. Holding onto resentment obstructs intimacy with God and burdens the heart. Releasing bitterness and embracing forgiveness fosters inner peace and aligns with the restorative justice model, which seeks reconciliation and healing.

10. **Trusting in Divine Timing:** Accepting God's sovereignty and trusting His perfect timing, even amidst uncertainty, is essential. This aligns with the concept of surrendering to God's will. Trusting in God's plan promotes peace and acceptance, mitigating anxiety and fostering resilience.

11. **Embracing Stillness and Contemplation:** In a world saturated with noise and distractions, carving out moments of stillness is vital for spiritual discernment and connection with God. This promotes mindfulness and allows for deeper introspection, improving self-awareness and enhancing spiritual sensitivity.

12. **Seeking Spiritual Guidance:** Seeking guidance from spiritually mature mentors provides invaluable support and direction on the faith journey. This aligns with the principles of mentorship and apprenticeships, where knowledge, experience, and wisdom are shared to facilitate growth.

13. **Expressing Heartfelt Worship:** Expressing adoration and praise through heartfelt worship deepens one's relationship with God and fosters spiritual intimacy. This is central to many spiritual traditions and provides an outlet for emotional expression and spiritual affirmation.

15. **Loving God Unconditionally:** A wholehearted love for God forms the cornerstone of a flourishing spiritual relationship. Allowing love for God to permeate every aspect of life fosters spiritual growth and deepens intimacy with the divine.

Reader Pool: Considering the presented framework, what practical adjustments or additions might enhance the effectiveness of these strategies for individuals navigating specific life challenges or cultural contexts?