

STEP 11 in the A.A movement reads as follows: 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.
This study will focus on the meaning of the words 'conscious contact with God'.

1. DISCUSS THIS STATEMENT: In a busy life it may seem that we can go for days without any 'conscious contact' with God. God is there, but he is not in the forefront of our mind. Obligations, work, family responsibilities, hobbies and other interests can keep our mind occupied to the point where we know God is there, but mostly for emergencies and intense struggles. How has this been true in your experience?
2. READ: *James 2:23*
 - a. What is Abraham called?
 - b. Why was he called this?
 - c. What do you think are some key characteristics of being a friend on the human level?

Let's examine why Abraham (ABRAM) was given the honour of being called "God's friend".

3. READ: *Genesis 12:1-4*
 - a. What was Abraham to do?
 - b. What do you think it's like to move your entire family to a place and location you don't know? What are some of the risks?
 - c. What was he leaving behind?
 - d. Where was he going?
4. READ *Hebrews 11:8*
 - a. What was Abraham's response to the call of God?
 - b. What two characteristics of Abraham do you see in this verse?
 - c. In what ways are faith and obedience related?
 - d. What conditions did Abraham put on his obedience?
 - e. Give an example of a time when you put some restrictions or conditions on your obedience to what God was asking you to do.
5. DISCUSS THIS STATEMENT: "Faith does not need an explanation!"
6. READ: *Genesis 14:17-24*
 - a. What characteristic of Abraham do we read in verse 22-23?
 - b. In what way is Abraham separating himself from the heathens around him?
 - c. What would the temptation have been for Abraham?

- d. What oath did he swear?
 - e. What is the application for our behaviour in a corrupt world?
7. READ: *2 Corinthians 6:14-18*
- a. This passage of scripture has often been used to justify believers' complete withdrawal from modern life. How would you balance Jesus' teaching to 'go into all the world and preach the gospel' with this passage of scripture?
 - b. What is the underlying principle involved here, rather than looking at specific behaviours?
8. DISCUSS: "A friend of God cannot also be a friend of the world's."
9. READ: *EXODUS 33:11-13*
- a. What is the characteristic of Moses' and God's relationship?
 - b. What does Moses ask of God?
 - c. What are the two gifts God gives to Moses?
 - d. How do you think Moses felt?
 - e. What do you think it would feel like to have the conscious, continual presence of God with you at all times?
10. What do you think this statement means?
 "WE NEED TO DESIRE THE PRESENCE OF GOD MORE THAN THE PROMISES OF GOD"
- a. Why is it important to desire God's presence more than His promises?
 - b. What are the dangers of desiring his promises more than his presence?
11. DISCUSS: "A friend of God is one who values His presence above all else."

PRACTICING THE CONSCIOUS PRESENCE OF GOD

12. READ: *John 15:4-8* (try the New Revised Standard Version NRSV)
- a. The NRSV uses the word "abide" the NIV uses the word 'remain', what does it mean to abide or remain? What is implied here?
 - b. What are the dangers of not "remaining" or "abiding"?
 - c. What are the benefits?
13. What are some of the ways we can learn to "remain" or "abide" in Christ and thereby by improve our conscious contact with the Lord?
14. STATEMENT: Christianity Today magazine released a report that states that only 19% of church goers read their Bible daily (less than one out of every five). Yet the majority of church goers seek to honour Christ with their life.
- a. What do you see as a great disconnect here?
 - b. Why do you think this is an issue?
 - c. What could we do to encourage each other to remain in God's word and also practice seeking the conscious contact with the Lord?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION THIS WEEK

1. How much daily time should I spend in prayer?

Answer:

2. How much daily time should I spend in Bible study and reflection?

Answer:

3. What time or times of the day would be best for me to spend time alone with God?

Answer:

4. Will developing and maintaining this discipline require that I give something up? If so, what?

Answer:

5. Am I willing to make the time to 'abide' or 'remain' in Christ daily?

Answer:

6. If so, describe the daily disciplines I am willing to start doing.

Answer:

SCRIPTURES FOR FOLLOW UP

John 6:56

1 John 2:6

1 John 2:27-28

1 John 4:12-13

John 8:31-32

1 John 2:14

1 John 3:24

1 John 4:15-16

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS:

GOOD FRIDAY at 7 pm '**The Power of Love**' a musical and multimedia experience examining the great love songs of all time and the discovering the greatest love of all time, Jesus Christ. This is a great night to invite friends. It's free and so is the child care. Reception to follow.

EASTER SUNDAY at 10 am THE **OFFICIAL GRAND OPENING OF ALL NATIONS CHURCH**. Join with us as we dedicate our building to the Lord and thank him for bringing us to this place. Don't miss it!

THE EASTER OFFERING: help us fund **PLUNGE IN THE PARK** our great community baptism JUNE 26th, also help with coving the expenses of owning our own building, and providing our Good Friday event free to every one! Your help is deeply appreciated.