

STEPS TO FREEDOM IN CHRIST

by

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<p>1. <u>Diagnosis</u> through the law of God and the life of Christ.</p>	<p>I will check my actions and attitudes by the Ten Commandments. <i>I would not have known sin except through the law. Romans 7:8</i> <i>Sin is the transgression of the law. I John 3:4</i> <i>All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 2 Tim. 2:16.</i> I will check my life by Scripture principles. I will examine my life according to the pattern of the life of Jesus Christ. <i>Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Phil. 2:5</i></p>
<p>2. <u>Diagnosis</u> through my reactions to the sins of others and the golden rule.</p>	<p>What are the sins of other people that really disgust me? What are the sins in others that I am critical of? Do I experience pride because I think I am not like others are? <i>Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own. Matt. 7:2</i> <i>Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. Matthew 7:12</i> I will ask the Holy Spirit to show me where similar sins occur in my life. Do I do unto others that which I would not want them to do to me?</p>
<p>3. <u>Diagnosis</u> through my response to trials and adversities.</p>	<p>What kind of person do I become when things do not go my way? How do I respond to trials and adversity? I will check my attitudes according to Gal. 5:19-21 <i>It is obvious what kind of life develops out of trying to get your own way all the time: repetitive, loveless, cheap sex; a stinking accumulation of mental and emotional garbage; frenzied and joyless grabs for happiness; trinket gods; magic-show religion; paranoid loneliness; cutthroat competition; all-consuming-yet-never-satisfied wants; a brutal temper; an impotence to love or to be loved; divided homes and divided lives; small-minded and lopsided pursuits; the vicious habit of depersonalizing everyone into a rival; uncontrolled and uncontrollable addictions; ugly parodies of community. Gal 5:18-21. <u>The Message Bible</u></i></p>
<p>4. <u>Diagnosis</u> through the responses of my family</p>	<p>What kind of person am I in my own home? Am I a different person there than in public? Do the members of my family mirror what I am? <i>Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted [compassionate- NIV] forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. Eph. 4:29,31,32</i></p>
<p>5. <u>Diagnosis</u>: conviction and confession</p> <p>[If you experience difficulty with this section, then go first to section 9, and then return to section 5]</p>	<p><i>And when He (the Holy Spirit) is come He will convict the world...of sin...of sin because they do not believe in Me." John 16:8</i> <i>Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23,24</i> <i>Search me, O God. and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me. NIV.</i> <i>You desire truth in the inward parts. Psalm 51:6</i> Name and confess all sinful behaviors, actions, and attitudes (be specific):</p>

<p>6. The consequences of my sin.</p>	<p>How has my sin affected me? Has it diminished my capacity to discern right from wrong? How have my sins affected and hurt others? How did my sin hurt Jesus Christ? <i>He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. We have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. For the transgressions of my people was He stricken. Isaiah 53:5,6,8.</i> Identify with the sufferings of Jesus. What did my sin cost Him? Remember, He died for that sin.</p>
<p>7. Discern and confess generational sins.</p>	<p>Is this sin transmitted to me from past generations? Are there sins in my life that I am transmitting to my children and future generations? <i>...for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me. Exod. 20:5.</i> (We are not held accountable for the sins of our fathers, but we are still to acknowledge and confess them so that the power of those sins over us may be broken). <i>The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin. Deut. 24:16</i> <i>...and they confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers. Nehemiah 9:2</i> I will confess all personal sins that have a general foundation and that will affect my children and future generations.</p>
<p>8. Repentance and forgiveness</p>	<p><i>...the goodness of God leads you to repentance. Romans 2:4</i> <i>Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Romans 3:24.</i> <i>If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins. 1 John 2:1,2.</i> <i>But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:10.</i> I acknowledge God's great goodness in sending Jesus Christ to take my place and die for my sins, even though I do not deserve it. I will confess and repent of my sin, and I receive Jesus' forgiveness as a free gift, and I trust in Him only for my salvation.</p>
<p>9. The healing of my wounds and hurts arising from the offenses of others.</p>	<p><i>He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed. Luke 4:18.</i></p> <p>a. <u>Good News to the poor</u>: Jesus wants to set me free to experience His abundant life of love, joy, and peace, rather than wallowing in my woundedness arising from real or alleged offenses of others.</p> <p>b. <u>Heal the brokenhearted</u>. The wounds inflicted upon me by the offenses of others can be healed. Jesus understands, because He has experienced all I go through by carrying my griefs and sorrows. Isa. 53:4.</p> <p>c. <u>I can through the power of the Holy Spirit be set free from bitterness and unforgiveness</u>. Lies of Satan that have held me captive can be removed and replaced with God's truth. <i>The truth shall set you free...you shall be free indeed." John 8:32,36</i></p> <p>d. <u>Recovery of sight to the blind</u>. My blind spots are removed as I see everything from God's perspective. I see Him working out good in the midst of pain. Romans 28:18. I see both the offender and myself in a new light as precious beings for whom Jesus died. I can be free!</p> <p><i>Surely, He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Isaiah 53:4. If you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matt. 6:15.</i></p>

<p>10. Discover the effect of 'word curses'</p>	<p>By accusing others I curse (or limit) them, and I also limit the power of God from operating in my life. Examples of curses are: criticism, faultfinding, gossip, slander, negativity, condemnation, et cetera. Satan's work is that of an accuser (slanderer). Rev. 12:10.</p> <p><u>Renounce the curses</u> and remove the limitations. <u>Replace the curses with words of blessing.</u></p> <p><i>But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they <u>defile</u> the man. Matthew 15:18 It is not what enters a man from outside that <u>defiles</u> him. Mark 7:22.</i></p> <p><i>And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it <u>defiles</u> the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. James 3:6</i></p> <p><i>But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceeds blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. James 3:8-10</i></p>
<p>11. Intercessory prayer for those who have hurt and offended me.</p>	<p>I ask God to give me compassion for those who have offended me. My past pain enables me to identify with and to pray for others. If you harbor grudges toward someone who has not hurt you, but you heard about the offense through gossip, then immediately ask Jesus to remove that offense from your thoughts. God's grace is only for the offended and the offender.</p> <p><i>Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. Matt. 5:44.</i> <i>Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. James 5:16</i> <i>Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. Luke 23:34</i></p>
<p>12. Restitution for damages done.</p>	<p>I will honestly assess the damage to the lives of others as a result of my sin. I will confess and acknowledge my wrong to all who have been damaged thereby. Public sins should be publicly acknowledged. I will make restitution where necessary.</p> <p><i>If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. Ezekiel 33:15,16</i> <i>If I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house. Luke 19.8.</i></p>
<p>13. Discern demonic involvement.</p>	<p>Has Satan gained a <u>foothold</u> in my life which has become a <u>stronghold</u>? Satan's primary tool is the lie, for he is the father of lies. Is there present in this <u>stronghold</u> the lie of an ungodly belief? When we worship idols we open the doors to unclean spirits who hide behind our idols and contaminate our lives.</p> <p><i>Do not let the sun go down on your wrath and thus make a foothold for the devil.. Eph. 4:29.</i> <i>Our weapons are mighty for the pulling down of strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. 2 Cor. 10:4</i> <i>For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 1 John 3:8.</i></p>

<p>14. Bind the enemy</p>	<p>As a believer in Christ I will exercise the authority He has given me to bind the enemy. <i>I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven, Matt. 16:18,19.</i> In <u>Jesus' name</u> I will command the enemy and his agents to leave as I praise God for the <u>power of Jesus' blood</u>. [What is needed is not so much a power encounter as a truth encounter]. <i>They overcame him by the <u>blood</u> of the Lamb and the <u>word</u> of their testimony. Rev. 12:11.</i> The worship of the slain Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, is God's appointed way of defeating the enemy. As you worship Jesus Christ through your testimony of songs of praise to the Lamb of God, then the joy of the Lord will be your strength. "<i>Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to <u>receive power and riches and wisdom and strength, and honor and glory and blessing.</u></i>" When you surrender these seven things to the Lord, He is then able to work exceedingly abundantly above all that you ask or think. Satan can take no advantage of anything which is given to Jesus in an act of worship.</p>
<p>15. Detect the lies of Satan and replace them with God's truths.</p>	<p>Satan's primary tool is the lie. An ungodly belief has at its root lies about God, yourself, and others. Detect the ungodly beliefs which are the roots of all sin. <u>Renounce</u> and <u>replace</u> them with a <u>godly beliefs</u>, God's truth. <i>Who changed the truth of God into a lie. Rom.1:25</i> <i>And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. John 8:32</i> <i>Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. Rom. 12:2</i> <i>To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Acts 26:18.</i></p>
<p>16. <u>Restoration:</u> a new life</p>	<p>As I receive God's gift of the Holy Spirit I will again experience His love, joy, and peace, and be filled with all the fullness of God. <i>If any man thirst let him come to Me and drink, and out of his innermost being will flow rivers of living water. John 7:37-39.</i> <i>The love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Romans 5:5</i> <i>In Your presence is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. Psalm 16:11</i> <i>...to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Eph. 3:19</i></p>
<p>17. <u>Restoration:</u> a new witness</p>	<p>My life-message will be a personal testimony about God's faithfulness in turning bad things into something good. <i>He has put a new song in my mouth - many will see it and fear and trust in the Lord. Psalm 40:3.</i> <i>Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways and sinners shall be converted to You. Psalm 51:12,13. All your works shall bless You. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, and talk of Your power, to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts...Psalm 145:10-12.</i></p>
<p>18. <u>Restoration:</u> renewal for the church.</p>	<p><i>There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God. Psalm 46:4.</i> <i>Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; build the walls of Jerusalem. Psalm 51:18.</i> <i>I will build my church. Matthew 16:18</i></p>

Victory over sin is not so much about us overcoming sin as it is about Jesus overcoming us. Victory over sin is to accept by faith the new identity as God's very own children that God gives us through. Satan's lie is that what you do determines who you are; God's truth is that who you are determines what you do.