

# Further Steps – Week 1 – Understanding the New Life

<b>Connect and review</b>	
<p>Take some time to get to know your group, using whatever methods you prefer! Make sure you introduce yourself and share how you first came to Jesus!</p>	<p>How did you feel when you first came to Jesus? What was your journey to faith – what has brought you here today?</p>
<b>Inspire and engage</b>	
<p>As with all the notes, these are a starting point for your discussions. You can read, then discuss, or take the main points and present it in your own way – it is up to you!</p>	<p>A decision to follow Jesus begins with us realising that we have not met God's perfect standards – and that, simply, is what we call 'sin' and it is what separates all of us from God in heaven forever. It's not just the obvious 'sins' we all think of such as cheating on someone, or stealing – it's basically when we choose our own actions and don't consider or obey God. This has been happening since Adam and Eve – and we all follow the same path! Let's look at the first bible reading – Genesis 2 verses 15-17, and Genesis 3 verses 1-6. (You might also want to read Romans 3 verse 23).</p> <p>So Adam and Eve did not die physically that day – but their bodies would no longer live forever. They died spiritually, which meant they were alienated from God and they could no longer look forward to being with God in heaven forever. However, we know that God sent a solution!</p> <p>God loves us too much to let us be separated forever from Him! He sent His Son, Jesus, to die and to save us from that eternal separation. We have to receive this by faith – we put our trust entirely in God. Let's have a look at Ephesians 2 verse 8-9 and John 3 verse 16. The act of God restoring to Himself is called redemption – which means 'buying back'. God is redeeming that which belongs to Him.</p> <p>God is so gracious. His salvation, through Jesus, is freely offered, but we must accept it!</p>
<b>Explore and apply</b>	
<p>There are 4 exercises here – attendees will also have them in their group notes. Consider exploring one at a time, and discussing in turn – or you may want to focus on just one or two, and leave the rest for attendees to explore in their own time, perhaps briefly discussing their thoughts during the 'connect and review' time next session.</p>	<p><b>Explore</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If you're intrigued by the strange account of a serpent speaking – you might want to have a look at Revelation 20 verses 1-2...</li> <li>2. How was Eve tempted? Here are a few ideas...             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) By listening to the voice of the Tempter.</li> <li>(b) By looking at the delights of something forbidden by God.</li> <li>(c) By dwelling on her desire for something forbidden.</li> <li>(d) By raising doubt about what God had said.</li> <li>(e) By raising doubt about God's motive.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. How near to perfect do we have to be for God to love us and save us? (You might want to look at Romans 5 verse 6).</li> <li>4. Who did live up to God's perfect standard? Why is this significant for us? (Have a look at 2 Corinthians 5 verse 21).</li> </ol> <p><b>Apply</b></p> <p>Temptations literally come to everyone (see 1 Corinthians 10 verse 13). How might we avoid, or resist temptation? What works? What doesn't work?</p>
<b>Reflect and review</b>	
<p>This section is vital to see how much has been taken on board. Make sure each attendee – and you – end with a call to action!</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As we consider what we have learned, how might it impact our everyday life? Where do we find temptation is strongest? How are we going to approach that differently? What are we going to pray?</li> <li>2. What has stood out to you today? What takeaways will you remember?</li> <li>3. Finally, if there are any questions that we didn't get to during our session, consider exploring them, and reading the scriptures suggested.</li> </ol>

