

Encouraging and Inspiring... Biblically Based Business

Basic Guide to Using The Reconxile Forum

How to see what is going on and join in
with the discussions and developments

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Basic Guide to the Reconxile Forum

While many people who visit the Forum will be familiar with forums and bulletin boards, and recognise their value, many more will not, and may be surprised at the range of options available and a little concerned about 'doing the wrong thing' or 'messing things up'.

For them we have written this basic step-by-step guide to using the Reconxile Forum. This guide takes people screen-by-screen, click-by-click, through the forum; explaining simply what each thing does, and how to use the forum effectively. As a result we hope that people will grow in confidence to gain full benefit of learning from the wealth of experience that is available on the forum, and to build God-blessed and fruitful relationships with other members of the forum.

And for those who do understand how to use forums, we hope that this resource may give you a way to introduce others to the benefits you have received.

Step 1

When you first of all type

<http://forum.reconxile.org>

into your browser, or click on the forum from inside the reconxile.org website you will find yourself facing a page like the one above right. *(You will be able to see this in more detail overleaf.)*

Please take your time on the next page to understand each bit of the forum and what it does *(you may need to scroll up and down to see all of it).*



The Main Page

The screenshot shows the main page of the Reconxile Forum. At the top, there is a header panel with the forum name and a navigation bar. Below this is a 'Welcome to the Reconxile Forum' panel with a message for new visitors. The main content area is a table of forums, grouped into 'General Fora' and 'Geography Related Fora'. Each forum entry includes a title, description, author, date, and number of threads/posts. At the bottom, there is a 'What's Going On?' panel showing active users and statistics, and a footer with contact information and version details.

Forum	Last Post	Threads	Posts
General Fora Discussion of how this site works and how it might be improved			
General Guidance Post your questions concerning the site, or answer other people's queries	Get some practice in by Mike Clargo 14-01-2009	3	3
Tips and Tricks Post your ideas on how to do things in the fora, or comment on others' ideas	Instant Notification by Mike Clargo 05-12-2008	1	2
Ideas for improvement Please submit any ideas for us to improve the site here, or comment on others' ideas	Why is the Reconxile colour... by Mike Clargo 10-01-2009	2	2
Miscellaneous Post here things which do not appear to fit in any other forum	Well Done Mike by Patea 05-12-2008	1	1
Geography Related Fora - Points of Need Discussions concerning specific parts of the World, their needs & possibilities. (For fora concerning regional groups who may want to work together, see below)			
Africa Posts concerning events and opportunities in the African continent	Kenya: Mbarera and surrounding... by Mike Clargo 1 Week Ago	3	6
Asia Posts concerning events and opportunities in all parts of Asia	Mongolia, Dalanzadgad by Bill Manley 11-01-2009	1	2
Americas Posts concerning events and opportunities in the (south) continent	Never	0	0
Presentations Posts containing or linking presentation or publicity material to assist in the promotion of this work	Never	0	0
Other Resources Links to other relevant resources (this may be further split as need arises)	Letters and Emails by Mike Clargo 23 Hours Ago	1	3
Play Pen A place to practice using the fora, just type in rubbish, and post-it up till you get used to how the forum works	Just click on the 'new... by Mike Clargo 2 Weeks Ago	1	2

The tile bar is only there for decoration.

The header panel shows you ...

Where you are (*the top level of the reconxile forum*)

Who you are (*if you are already logged-in – but you can ignore this*)

And where you might want to go (*we will ignore these options for the moment*)

Below this is a 'Welcome' panel which explains that you will need to register before you can contribute to the forum – which is true, but we can ignore this too because we just want to read the forum at the moment and see what is on it.

Below this, and for the majority of the screen, is a list of all the separate fora, these are grouped into different areas of interest by the darker red bands which cross the page, and can be closed up into the red bands by clicking on the chevrons to the right of the red band,

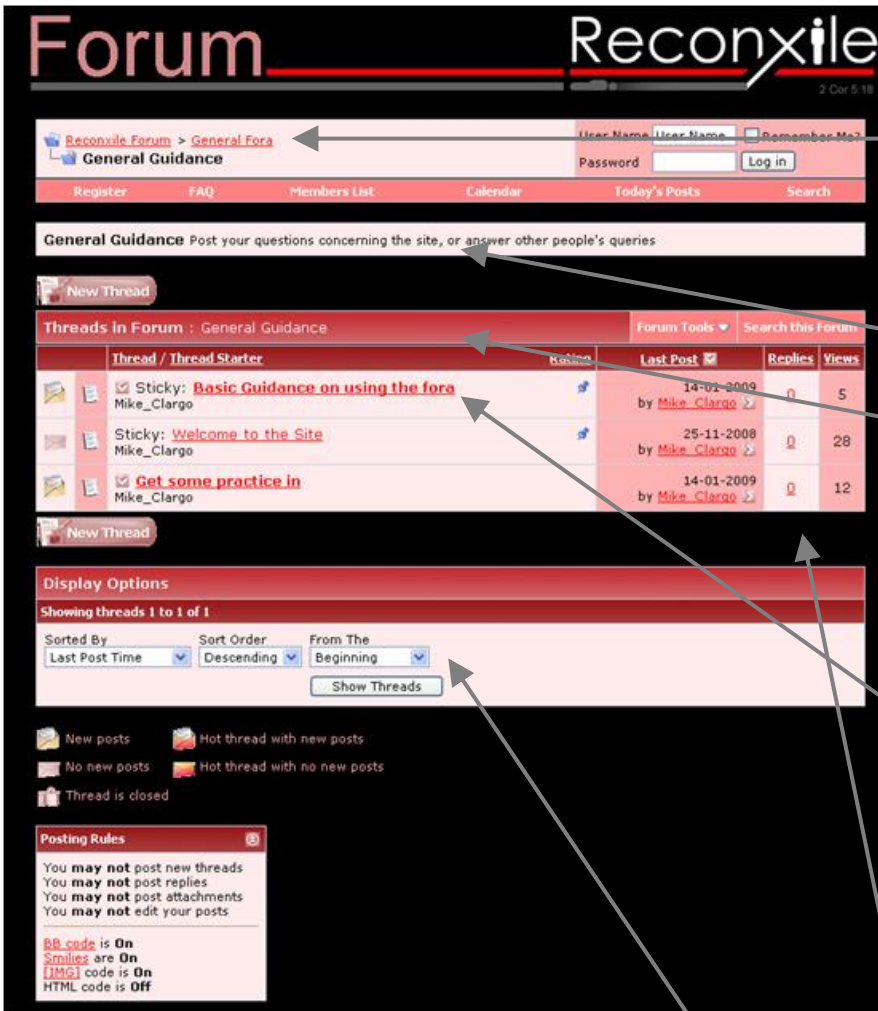
Within each group there is a list of the fora that you may be interested in, and you can see what is within each forum by clicking on its name in the paler pink column toward the left hand side (*for example, clicking on 'General Guidance' will take you to a screen like the one on the next page – but please don't do this quite yet.*)

In the darker pink column to the right, there is the title of the last contribution made in that forum, and who made it.

Toward the bottom of the screen you will find the 'What's going on?' panel which shows you how many people are currently using the forum (*and sometimes who they are*) and also how many people are members of the forum.

The bright red band at the bottom provides quick links for you to return to the Reconxile website, or make contact

Please click on 'General Guidance'..



Viewing the Fora

This is what an individual forum looks like. As before, the header panel shows you where you are: In the Reconxile forum, within the General Fora 'group' – clicking on either of these titles will take you immediately back up to that level.

Just below the Header panel is the title for this forum.

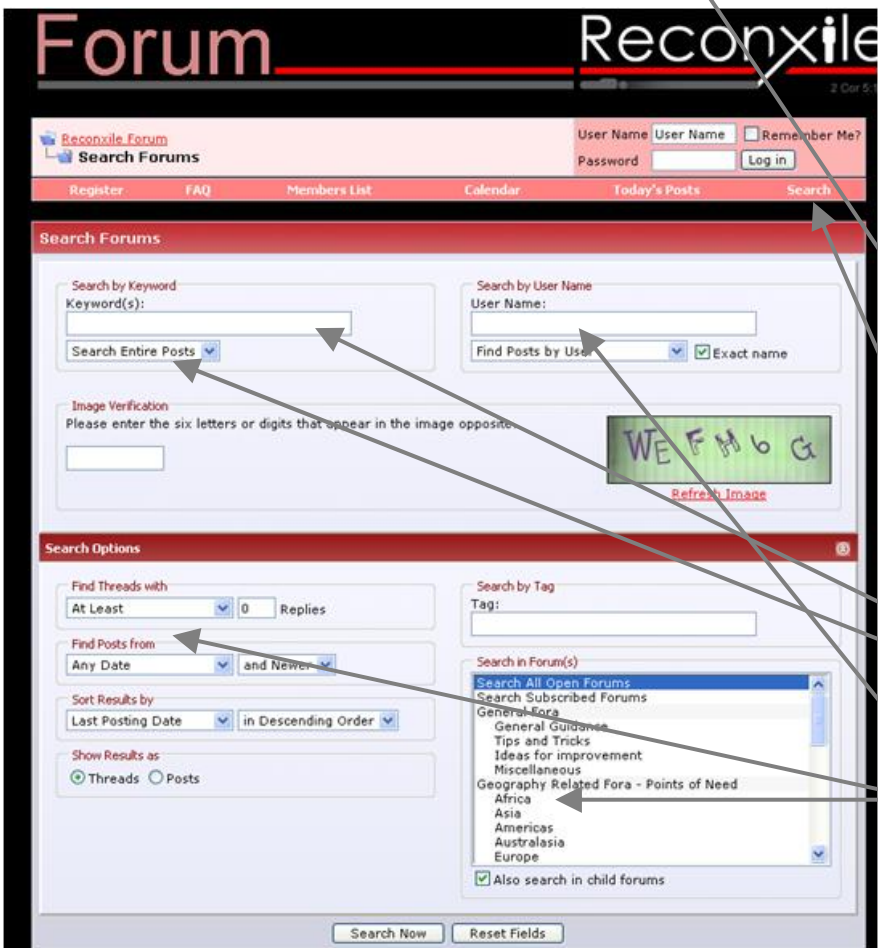
And the main panel shows all of the topics raised so far in this forum – these topics are called 'threads'.

Threads are topics raised by forum members. They may be in the form of a question, or a piece of information, or an invitation to debate – practically anything really. By clicking on the thread title you can see what the question, comment, or challenge was, and also all of the responses to the topic by other members, and even the responses to the responses.

The forum shown is a small one – just 3 threads. When the forum builds, it is not unusual to have hundreds of threads – where this happens, you will see only about twenty threads on this screen, but the black area to the right of the button which says 'new thread' will show a list of all of the pages in the forum (*with the other threads on them*) and can be used to navigate between them.

Where there is a lot of threads, the 'Display Options' panel just below the main panel gives the opportunity for you to sort the threads into different orders. Or you can click on 'Search' to the far left of the header panel, and you will get a page open up like the one on the right.

In the search page you can put words you are looking for in 'keywords' and indicate where to look for them e.g. in the title or in the entire post (body) or you can search for posts by a particular member of the forum. And you can include other criteria as well. And to read the forum, that is basically all you need to know – it is a lot simpler than it looks!



Registering on the Forum

However we would like to encourage you to join more fully in the forum, and raise your own questions, and respond to other people. To do this you will need to register with the forum.

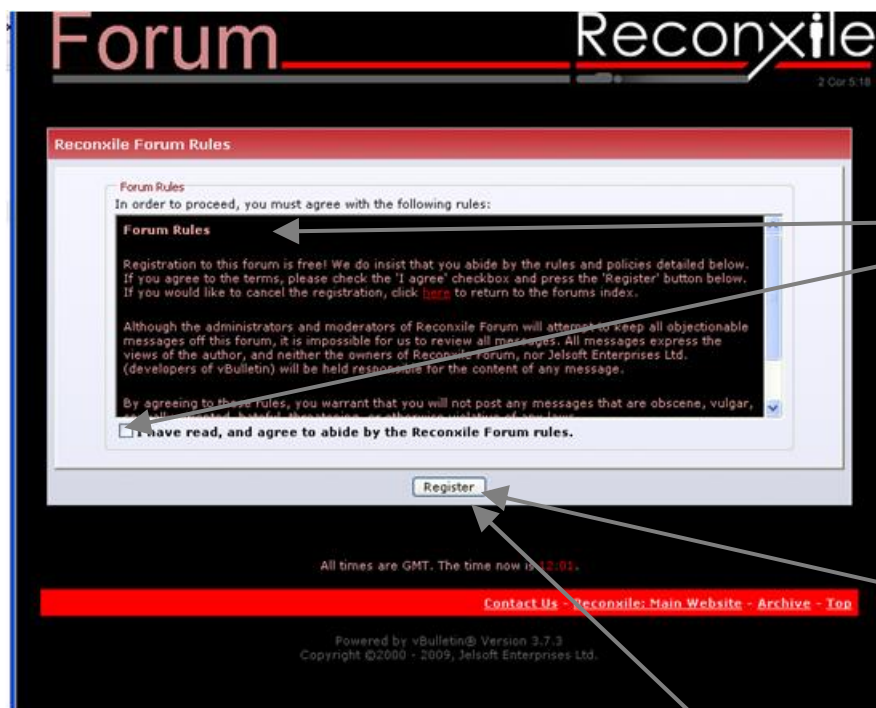
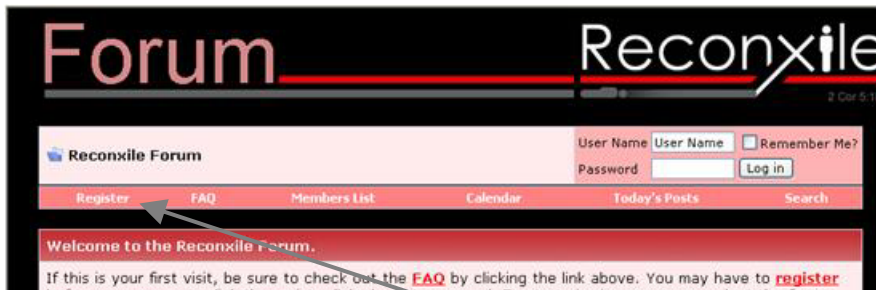
Membership of the forum costs nothing, but it is a practical means to ensure that we can respond to any abuse of the forum and ensure that the debates remain considerate and productive. It also means that people can know who is responding to them, and membership provides a way of identifying people with common interests who may want to work more closely together.

The first step to membership is to click on the 'Register' link on the far left of the header panel on the opening page of the forum (Click on where it says 'Reconxile Forum' to get there quickly). This will take you to a screen where you will be required to agree with the terms and conditions of the forum (please read them, they are brief and not onerous, and then make sure you click on the little box beside where it says 'I have read and agree to abide by the Reconxile Forum rules'). You do not need to agree to these, but if you cannot agree them then we regret you will have to remain content with reading the site but not writing to it.

If you have agreed to the rules, clicking on the register button will take you to the page shown overleaf.

There are a lot of questions on the membership page, but we hope that when you join us you will see the benefit of them in being able to identify like-minded people, and in being able to form good relationships and understanding.

Please click on the 'Register' button, and over the page, I will talk you through each part of the membership form...



The Registration Form


Register at Reconxile Forum

In order to be able to post messages on the Reconxile Forum forums, you must first register. Please enter your desired user name, your email address and other required details in the form below.

User Name:

Password
Please enter a password for your user account. Note that passwords are case-sensitive.
Password: Confirm Password:

Email Address
Please enter a valid email address for yourself.
Email Address: Confirm Email Address:

Image Verification
Please enter the six letters or digits that appear in the image opposite.
 
[Refresh Image](#)

Additional Required Information (profile)

Biography
A few details about yourself, your background, and any experience you have.

Location
Whereabouts are you based? Please be fairly specific i.e. Harlow, Essex, South East, UK

Interests
What might you like to get involved in through your participation in this group?

Background to date
Outline what involvement you have in this work to date (even if it is 'none') & please keep updated
none to date

Roles you have an interest in
Please tick all of the ways of getting involved in this work which are relevant to you at this time

<input type="checkbox"/> Purely Curious	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Making Suggestions
<input type="checkbox"/> Praying	<input type="checkbox"/> Promoting Interest	<input type="checkbox"/> Joining a Team
<input type="checkbox"/> Training	<input type="checkbox"/> Leading a Team	<input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising
<input type="checkbox"/> Finding points of need	<input type="checkbox"/> Youthwork	<input type="checkbox"/> Coaching/Guiding

Your part in the Reconxile community ethos
The Reconxile community is open to all who share our aims and are willing to respect our ethos. The community is not here to debate the underlying principles of the ethos (there are perhaps too many fora already which serve that need) but to get on with focusing on the business of putting that ethos into action. Please therefore indicate below your acceptance of this position.

While I do not personally share the beliefs of the Reconxile community, I share their aims and am willing to respect their ethos.

I would like to record that I do share the beliefs of the Reconxile community. I share their aims and am willing to respect their ethos.

I would like to keep my position on the beliefs of the Reconxile community private, but I share their aims and am willing to respect their ethos.

Additional Information

Referrer
If you were referred to this site by an existing member of Reconxile Forum, enter their username here.
Referrer:

Time Zone
All timestamps displayed on the forums can be automatically corrected to show the correct time for your location in the world. Simply select the appropriate time zone from the list below.
Time Zone:
In addition, you may set the appropriate option to allow for daylight savings time in your part of the world.
DST Correction Option:

Receive Email
From time to time, the administrators may want to send you email notices.
If you do not want to receive these notices, disable this option.

Receive Email from Administrators
You can allow other members to send you email messages.

Receive Email from Other Members

All times are GMT. The time now is 12:03.

[Contact Us](#) - [Reconxile: Main Website](#) - [Archive](#) - [Top](#)

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The form begins by asking the name you wish to be known by on the forum. Personally I use my given name 'Mike_Clargo' – I feel it is more open, and it is easier for people to know me as I am – but it is your choice. You are then asked to suggest a password, and to enter your email address (*and to repeat both to avoid typing errors*). Your email address is important both for our security, and for alerting you to any problems (*or other things you want to be alerted about*).

You are then asked to read and type in the symbols in a difficult to read image (*sorry*). This is apparently key to avoiding certain attacks to which the internet is prone (*I am told*) – if the image is too difficult to read, clicking the red link under it will change it to something I hope you will find easier,

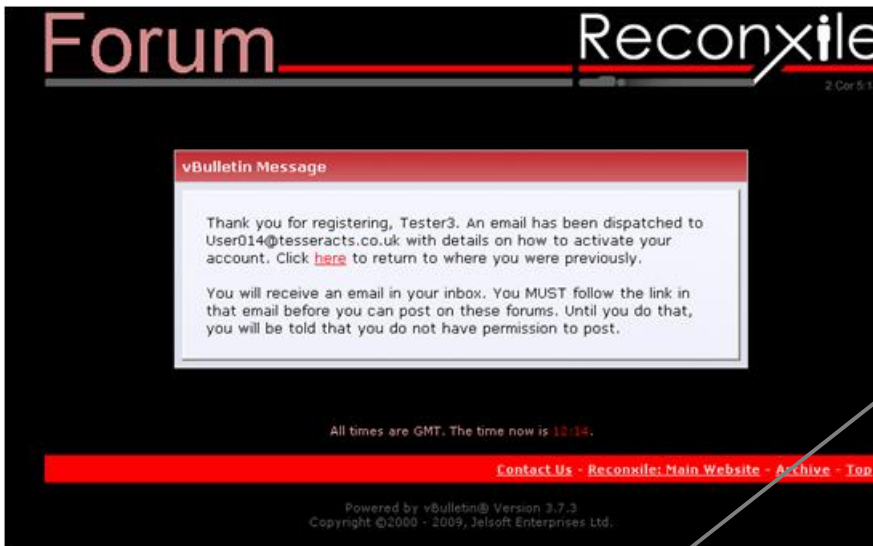
The next step is to fill in some real information about yourself: your background; where you are; why you want to join the forum ... please do not worry if you are just starting out on this stuff – you will be among the majority of us! But please put any useful information that may help others of similar interests to make contact with you where appropriate.

You will have the opportunity to keep all of this information up to date once you have joined the forum.

You are also asked in this section to confirm you are willing to respect the aims and the ethos of the Reconxile community. Our ethos can be found at www.reconxile.org/ethos.html

Finally there is a section where you can adjust your time zone, and select how you would like to receive emails. We strongly recommend that you tick both of the email boxes to start with (*you can fine tune them later*) since we have found that not ticking the boxes leaves people totally unaware that people are trying to reach them.

Last of all, please click the 'Complete Registration' button which will take you to the following screen...



Confirming your Membership

You have now done all the 'hard work' part of joining the forum, but you will need to wait until you receive an email before you can complete registration – in the meantime you can still view all of the forums and see what is going on, but you will not be able to post to them.

The confirmatory email has taken as long as 24 hours to reach my inbox in the tests that I have run, but it has also go there in five minutes on occasion.

When the email arrives, it will look very much like the one on the left. To complete registration can be as easy as simply clicking on the first highlighted link in the email, and has always proven so for me.

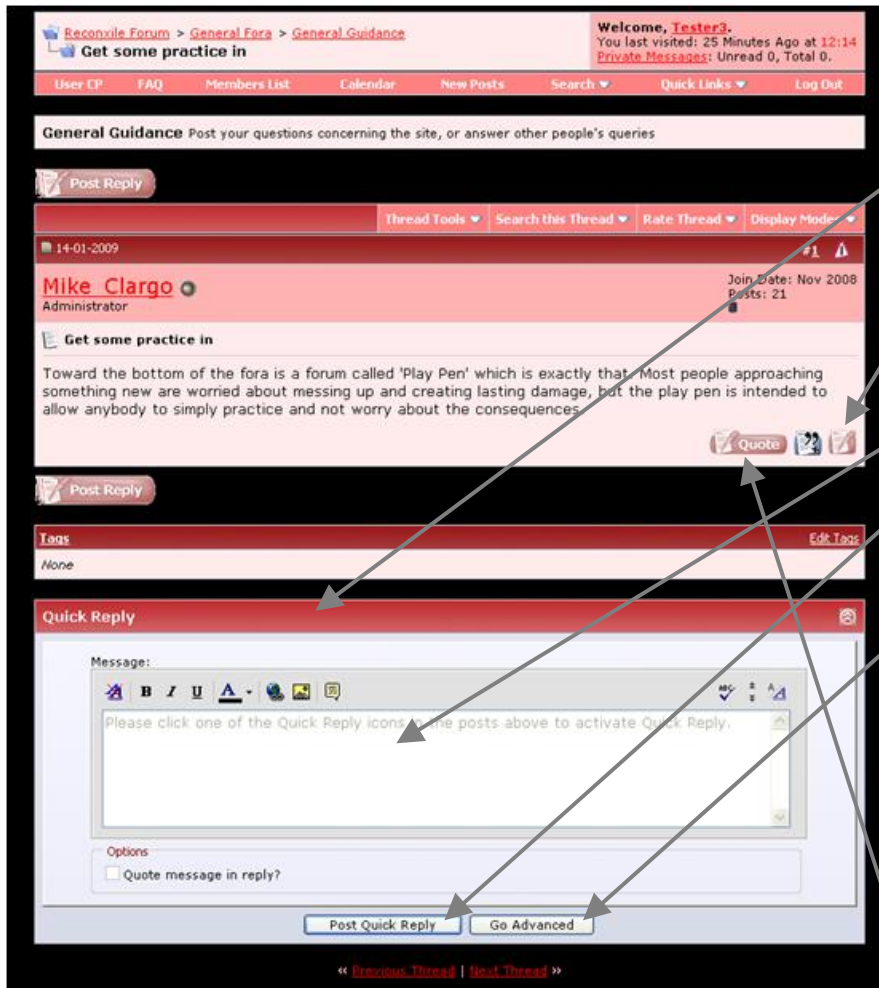
But if for some reason that fails, there are other options explained in the email (as you can see) and one of these should work for you (but please make sure that you use the links and details that are in the email you receive, not the details that are in mine on the left.

Clicking on the link, or pursuing whatever other path you chose, should (if successful) bring you to the screen shown below left.

Here you can see that you are already logged in (notice your username has appeared where the login box used to be). To log in on subsequent visits, simply type in the user-name and password that you used to register (previous page) in the right hand session of the 'header panel' and it will change to this format to reflect your name and any messages that you have received.

As you can see from the screen on the right, you are now a full member and can do what you want (within reason). As a start point, you might like to go to a forum, and click on a thread – and you will already notice a difference in the page you see, as shown overleaf ...





Getting Involved

Now you have joined, you will see below the thread, a 'Quick Reply' panel which enables you to contribute quickly to the debate.

If you wish to do so, simply click the 'quick reply' icon in the post to which you wish to reply (*that is the icon in the bottom right corner of the post*) and then type your reply in the 'Quick Reply' panel, and click on the button at the bottom of the panel 'Post Quick Reply'

If however, you wish to include some attachment with your reply, click on the 'Go Advanced' button, and a new page will open which will give you the opportunity of including attachments, and emoticons (*if you are so inspired!*).

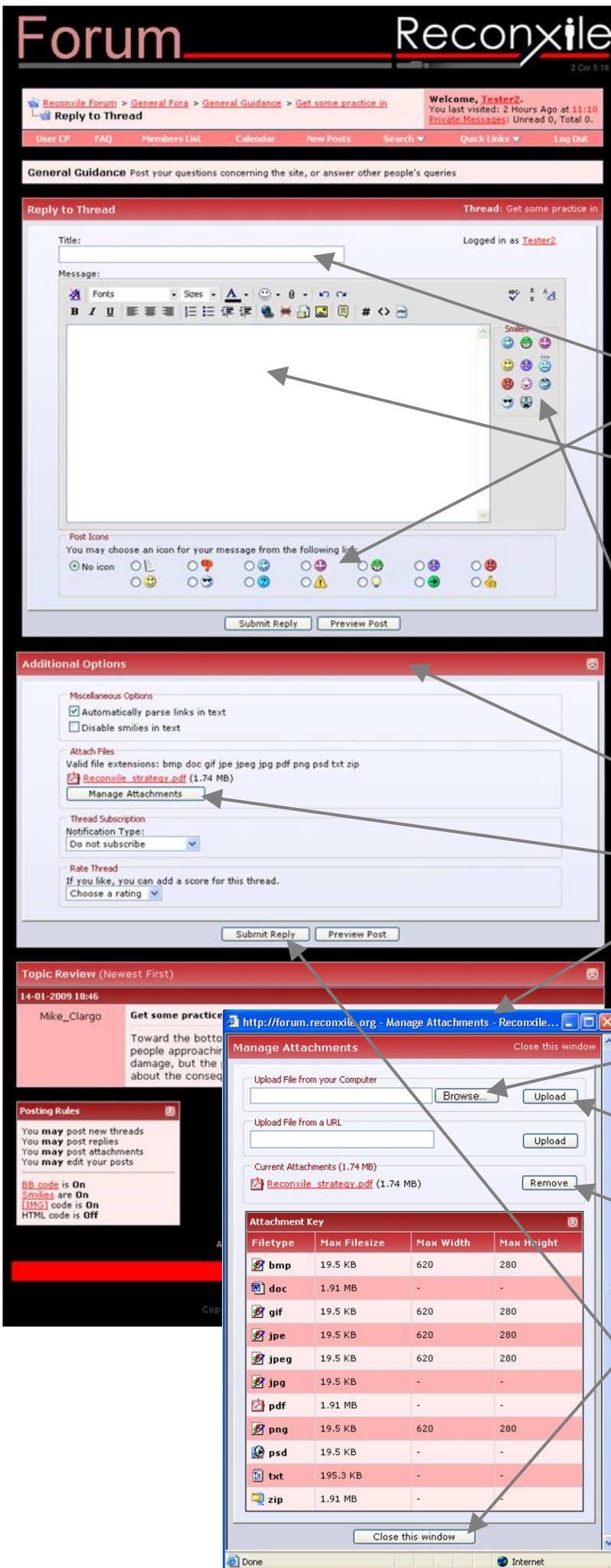
Because threads can get quite long, it is important to remain as succinct as you can, while still making it absolutely clear what you mean.

Sometimes it helps to quote a phrase out of the post you are responding to, and you can do this by means of the 'Quote' icon in the lower right corner of the post, which opens up a 'reply' form with the original post already in it (*a bit like when you reply to an email*).

If your post is in danger of becoming lengthy, please consider whether you can move the bulk of what you want to say to an attachment (*for instance in word*) – this will enable people to skim your post and make a personal choice as to whether to go into more detail on it, and it means that it is much easier to skim through the thread to get the general gist of it before delving down into the detail (*you will only have to see a few threads with long posts in them to see exactly what I mean*).

More explanation on attachments can be found on the next page.

Please also remember in the post the groundrules of the forum, and remain polite at all times – as per Philippians 2:1-4.



Posting to a Forum

The screen shot to the left shows the more advanced reply screen. This screen appears whenever you click: the 'Go advanced' button in the 'Quick Reply' panel; or the 'Quote' button in one of the earlier posts in the thread; or the 'Post Reply' buttons which can be seen at the top and bottom of the 'Thread panel' toward the left hand side.

Here you can enter a title for your post, and even select an icon to appear with the title.

And you can then place the body of what you want to say in the message window, format it how you wish (*please do not go overboard*), and intersperse it with the relevant emoticons so that we can be left in no doubt about how you feel at the time of writing (hmmm?) ☺ - simply click on a relevant emoticon symbol and it will be inserted into the body of your message at the cursor point.

The 'Additional Options panel' below the message window is where you manage any attachments. To begin, click on the 'manage attachments' button, and a new window will open up like the one below left - this explains the maximum attachment sizes (*please do not exceed these*) and enables you to find the file on your computer (*by clicking on the 'browse' button*), and when you have selected the right file, to upload it into your message (*by clicking on the 'upload' button*). By repeating these steps you can include multiple attachments, and remove any loaded in error (*by clicking on 'remove'*)

When you have finished selecting your attachments, clicking on the 'Close this window' button at the bottom of the window will return you to the message window, where you can select to 'submit' your post (*perhaps after previewing it???*)

Posting a 'New Thread' works exactly the same way but you do it from the 'New Thread' button on the 'Forum' page - see page 3



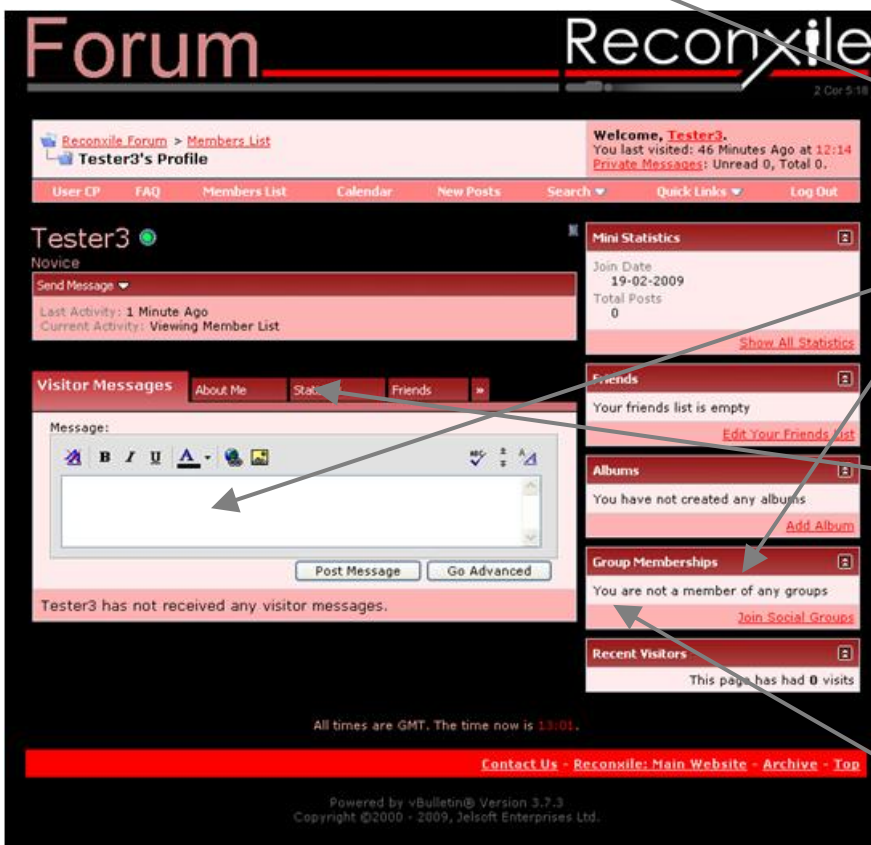
Meeting the Community

Membership of the forum also allows you other privileges too. Probably the most important one is to see who the other members of the forum are, and to build on-line (*and perhaps even off-line*) relationships with them.

The membership list can be accessed by clicking on the 'Members List' link in the header panel – this presents a list like the one on the left.

Clicking on the letters just under the 'header panel' brings up a list of members whose user names begin with that letter, but a better way of searching for a specific member is to use the 'Search Members' tool on the top right hand corner of the list – clicking on this shows you a drop down box where you can put in all or part of their user name.

From the 'Search Members' drop down box, clicking on the 'Advanced Search' link provides even more options to search for people – here you can put in search terms for their location, their background, their interests, ... practically anything!



Once you have found the member you are looking for, clicking on their name in the list will open up their 'Profile Page' (*see the screen shot to the left*) where you can: read all about them; leave them encouragements or invitations in their 'Visitor Messages' panel; invite them to join a 'working group'; and even 'befriend' them (*although I am not entirely sure what advantages this last option confers*).

The other tabs in the main part of the profile screen provide access to further information on the member, and these are explained in a little more detail on the next page.

(Please note: the screen shot you see on the left is what you see when you look at your own member profile – hence 'you are not a member of ...' – please contrast this with the screen shot at the top of the next page which shows somebody else's profile)

Knowing the Community

Here we see the information which is held under the 'statistics' tab for the member, and from here we can see that 'Tester2' is probably not the most energetic correspondent we are likely to encounter.

But using this tab (if Tester2 had been a little more prolific in his contributions) we would be able to see what his main topics of interest were in terms of the posts he had made and the threads he had started.

There is a slight danger that this may all be seen as a bit 'big brother' but please remember that this is a 'virtual' community, and it is not easy to see a smile, or read the body language, or use all of the normal niceties of 'real' relationships which God blessed us with, and so we need to pick up information about people in different ways – and after all we are coming together under God, to do His work, in the 'brotherhood' He intended for us.

The third tab which I would like to explain is the 'About Me' tab, which can be seen in the screen shot on the left.

This is what you will see for your own 'About Me' tab, in your own profile, which is why each entry has a pencil against it – clicking on the pencil beside any entry will enable you to edit the entry.

You will recognise the entries as those you typed into the form when you registered with the forum, and this page provides you with the opportunity to keep them up to date.

You may be surprised that while you can change what others read about you in your profile page, that you cannot edit any of your preferences, like how you get notified by email – this is because that is done in a whole different section of the forum – an area called the 'User Control Panel' which we will cover on the next page.

Taking Control

The screenshot shows the 'User Control Panel' (User CP) of the Reconxile Forum. The interface is divided into several sections:

- Header:** Includes the forum name 'Reconxile Forum', a welcome message for 'Tester3', and navigation links like 'User CP', 'FAQ', 'Members List', 'Calendar', 'New Posts', 'Search', 'Quick Links', and 'Log Out'.
- Your Control Panel:** A sidebar on the left containing links for 'Your Profile', 'Networking', 'Settings & Options', 'Private Messages', and 'Miscellaneous'.
- Subscribed Threads:** A central area showing a list of subscribed forums with columns for 'Forum', 'Last Post', 'Threads', and 'Posts'. The list includes categories like Africa, Asia, Americas, Australasia, and Europe.

Arrows from the text on the right point to specific elements: 'User CP' in the header, 'Edit Profile Picture' in the sidebar, the 'Subscribed Forums' table, and 'Edit Options' in the sidebar.

The 'User Control Panel' is accessed by clicking on the 'User CP' link in the bottom left corner of the header panel. This opens up a page like the one seen on the left (except that, if this is your first visit, you are likely to be missing the big panel lower right 'subscribed forums' since you may not yet have subscribed to any – this is covered in the box below left).

The full capabilities of the User CP are something which you can pick up as you go along (for instance by looking them up using the FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions – link) but in this basic guide it will be useful to cover some of the more straightforward options. These options can be seen in the column on the left hand side of the screen shot.

Edit Profile Picture – invites you to upload a small photo of yourself.

Edit Email and Password – enables you to change the email you use to receive alerts or to change the password you use to access the forum.

Edit Options – enables you to change a whole range of preferences about what messages you receive and how you receive them. We would suggest that you begin by setting these to receive everything, and then tone it down once you get used to the flow of the site and can see how you will keep in touch with what is going on.

To subscribe to a Forum, click on the link 'Forum Tools' to the right of the forum header (see below)

The screenshot shows the 'Forum Tools' dropdown menu with the following items:

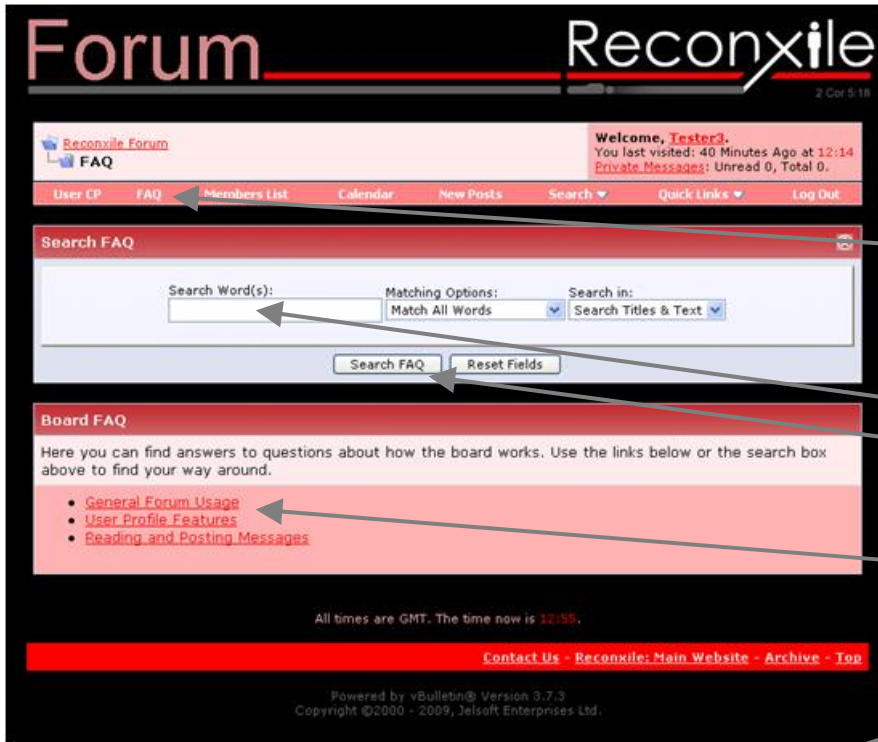
- Threads In Forum : General Guidance
- Forum Tools
- Search this Forum

Then, in the drop down box which appears, click on 'Subscribe to This Forum'. This will open up the following dialogue in your 'User Control Panel' where you can select how you want your subscription to work (see right) and then click the 'Add Subscription' button.

The screenshot shows the 'Subscribe to Thread: Welcome to the Site' dialog box with the following options:

- Notification Type: No email notification
- Folder: Subscriptions (1 Threads)
- Add Subscription button

The other items are less important, but you can discover all about them through the FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) and discover them at your own pace. There are options for emails, and for picture albums, and for a whole range of things – but one request we would make is that the hosting of the forum is of finite size (and not particularly big) and we would therefore ask that you endeavour only to upload things which are of general interest onto the forum itself, and wherever reasonable to keep things small, and maybe elsewhere and simply linked into the forum by hyperlinks.



Finishing Touches

You may have noticed that there are some remaining items on the header panel which we have not yet covered, but we will do so now.

The first of these is the FAQ (*Frequently Asked Questions*) which opens a panel like the one on the left.

Here you can search for answers by putting specific words in to the search box, and looking for these by clicking the 'Search FAQ' button.

Or you can browse the main areas of the FAQs by clicking on the links in the 'Board FAQ' panel which will open up and show you the range of topics which are covered for each area.

The Calendar link shows a Calendar for the forum – this is not much used at the time of writing, but may develop as the forum develops.

Clicking the 'New Posts' link will provide you with a list of new threads posted since your last visit to the forum – a very useful tool for keeping up to date.

Then there are two 'drop down' links:

The 'Search' link, drops down into the left box, enabling you to perform a very quick and easy search for an item within the posts on the forum.

The 'Quick Links' link provides a useful short cut to many of the things we have talked about on the preceding pages.

And finally (*if you are logged in*) the medium pink area to the top right of the header panel may contain a 'Your Notifications' link (*if you have any notifications at the time*) and clicking on this allows you to quickly see what the notifications are, and to click into them if you wish.

This completes the basic explanation, and so we wish you every blessing in your use of the site.

