

## Now That I Am Saved, What Should I Do Next?

*“When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart, and asked Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brothers, what should we do?’ Then Peter answered, ‘Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” Acts 2:38*

My brothers and sisters, this message is for those of you who have just asked Jesus Christ to be your Lord and Savior. Now that you are saved, you may ask, “What should I do next?” Just as you were saved by faith, all progress in your Christian life is also by faith; that is, by believing and acting on the Word of God. You repented (turned away) from your sins when you were saved. The Bible says your next step of faith is to be water baptized in name of Jesus Christ. Jesus commanded that all new disciples should be water baptized (Matthew 28:19). When you are baptized in water, it signifies that by Christ’s death on the cross, your sins have been forgiven and washed away (Titus 3:5; 1 John 1:9). However, water baptism also signifies much more. The Greek word for baptize means to immerse. When you were born again, the Bible says you were spiritually baptized (immersed) into Christ’s death so that you might enter into His resurrection life (Romans 6:3-5). There are two stages of water baptism which express this truth of the gospel. First there is a burial and then there is a resurrection. Whenever anyone was baptized in the early church, they were immersed under water, which represented the burial of their old sin nature. The Bible says, “We have been buried with Him through baptism into death (Romans 6:4; see also Colossians 2:11-12).” The burial stage of water baptism demonstrates that when you were born again, your sin nature died and was removed from you. The Bible says, “For we know our old man was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin (*our sin nature*) might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin (Romans 6:6).” This is not just conceptual or symbolic: your sinful nature, which was at the very core of

your inner being and the root of your self-identity and rebellion toward God, actually died when you received Jesus Christ as Lord into your heart.

In this way, water baptism reveals the heart of the New Covenant. God knew we needed forgiveness for our sins; He also knew we needed deliverance from our sin nature. Otherwise, we would remain captives to sin. Therefore, when Jesus Christ died, He bore not only our sins on the cross; He also bore our sin nature on the cross with Him. The Bible says, “God made Christ who had no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21).” Since our bondage to sin came when we were born sinners; our deliverance from sin came when God spiritually included us in Christ’s death. “Because anyone who has died has been freed from sin (Romans 6:7).” In the next phase of water baptism, we are raised in new resurrection life out of the watery grave. This demonstrates that Jesus Christ now lives in us by His Spirit (Romans 6:4-5; 2 Corinthians 13:5). Therefore, water baptism is God’s way for new disciples to be taught that their old sinful nature has died and they are now a new spiritual creation in Christ. The Bible says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new person; his old being has perished, a new life has begun (2 Corinthians 5:17).” Thus water baptism outwardly expresses the divine transformation that occurred within you when you were born again of the Spirit. This is the important spiritual lesson that God wants every new Christian to learn from water baptism.

After you are water baptized, your next step of faith is to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. For Jesus not only commanded His disciples to be baptized in water, He also commanded them to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. Just before His ascension, Jesus gathered His disciples together and “commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the gift My Father had promised, which you have heard Me speak about. For John baptized in water, but in a few days you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit ... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be My

witnesses... (Acts 1:4-8).” When you were born again, you received the Holy Spirit into your heart; however, after you are saved, Jesus wants to baptize (spiritually immerse) you in the Holy Spirit in order to supernaturally empower you, which you will need to be His effective witness in this sinful world. You can receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit the same way you received Christ when you were saved – by faith. Jesus said, “How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him (Luke 11:13)?” Our heavenly Father has promised to give you the gift of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and His Son is the One who will baptize you in the Spirit. When you ask Jesus to baptize you in the Holy Spirit, you can count on His Word that He will! When Jesus baptizes you in the Holy Spirit, He will also give you the supernatural ability to speak directly to God in the spirit through a new language (Mark 16:17; Acts 2:4; 10:44-48; 19:5-6).

After you are baptized in water and in the Holy Spirit, you may wonder why you still continue to sin. The reason is this: although you no longer have an old sinful nature, you still have an old sinful way of thinking that needs to be transformed by reading, believing and acting on the Word of God (Romans 12:2). Although God does not expect you to be sinless, He does expect you to stop practicing chronic sin; otherwise you cannot fellowship with Him (1 John 1:6; 3:6). The key to overcoming sin is to continually remind yourself of the Biblical truth that you are dead to sin because you no longer have a sinful nature and are now a new spiritual person in Christ. As you continue to stand firm by faith in this truth of the cross, you will find that you sin less and less, and increasingly know Jesus Christ more and more.

Finally, try to find real believers to fellowship with, who can encourage you in your new found faith. And if you cannot find another Christian of true faith, it would be better for you to fellowship alone with the Lord than to get mixed up with unbelieving, fake Christians. Jesus Christ will always be with you and will reveal Himself to you.