

Now That You Have Received Salvation

Now that you are a Christian and are in fellowship with God, you will want to learn more about how to grow closer to Him. The Bible calls this growing "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18, NIV).

Here are some things that will help you begin growing as a new Christian:

Read the Bible Daily

The Bible is God's inspired Word. Besides revealing the Good News about forgiveness and eternal life, it can also answer the many questions you will have as you try to live a life that pleases God. It will enable you to be "thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:17, NIV).

Here are some suggestions as you begin reading the Bible on a daily basis:

1. Try reading the New Testament books in this order:

- First, read through the Gospel of John, a chapter a day. This will help you understand the basic facts about the Gospel.

- Then read Acts, for the exciting story of how Christ's first disciples spread the Good News of His death and resurrection.

- Next, read some of the letters that Christ's apostles wrote to these first disciples—all of whom were new in their faith, just like you. These letters include Romans through 3 John.

Then, go back and read one of the other three gospels: Matthew, Mark or Luke.

2. Think about what you read; study and analyze it. Ask a mature Christian in the congregation to recommend a good Bible study guide. The Bible not only reveals God to us; it contains greater wisdom than all the other books in the world.

3. Read through the Psalms—the Old Testament book of worship—to enrich your devotion to God.

4. Read Proverbs to gain wisdom and common sense, and to strengthen your relationships with other people.

5. Pray for understanding. The Holy Spirit will help you (Psalm 119:18), and you will begin to see life from

God's perspective.

6. Whenever you can, talk with others about what you are learning.

Pray Daily

Talk with God often. Talk over your problems with Him. Let Him bear the weight of your troubles (See Matthew 11:28; 1 Peter 5:7).

Praise and thank God for who He is and for what He has done for you. Admit your weaknesses. Confess each specific sin that you are aware of. Pray for others that they, too, may receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Suggestions for your daily devotional time:

- Plan a definite time, preferably in the morning when your mind is fresh and rested. Make it a habit.
- Select a quiet place where you can be alone with God.
- Make a list of requests, for others as well as yourself.
- Read and meditate on a portion of Scripture, then spend time in prayer.

As you end your daily time with God, commit the day and yourself to Him.

Learn to Depend on the Holy Spirit

God is actually three persons in one: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ), and God the Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit actually lives within every true believer in Christ (See John 14:16-17).

The Bible says that the Holy Spirit, as He lives inside you, is your counselor, to help you understand the truth revealed in God's Word: "The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you" (John 14:26, NIV).

The Holy Spirit will:

- teach you
- guide you
- strengthen you in your times of need

Attend Church Regularly

When you received Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, you began a relationship not only with Him but also with all other Christians. Whatever it meant to you in the past, going to church can now become a rich and rewarding experience:

- You will grow in understanding by hearing God's Word preached and taught.
- You can ask questions and discuss Scripture with others.
- You will learn to worship God, which means praising Him for all that He is and thanking Him for all that He has done for you.

As you worship, learn and serve with other Christians, you will find individuals with whom you can form lasting friendships (friendships that will last for all eternity!).

Be of Service to Others

You will find that the more you give yourself in service to others, the more you will enjoy your Christian life. Talk to leaders in the church about ways and opportunities to serve Christ and to witness for Him. "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10, NIV).

Learn to Conquer Your Doubts

At times you may doubt that you really are a child of God:

There may be some big failures in your Christian life.

You may find yourself thinking about things that you feel Christians just shouldn't be thinking about.

You may be troubled by some unconfessed sin.

When these things happen, it is important to remember that you are not saved by your goodness but by what Christ has already done for you. Review the first few pages of this text. Reassure yourself with the fact that, if you have received Christ by faith, you are now a child of God.....

Learn to Live One Day at a Time

Too often our lives become filled with anxiety. We wor-

ry ourselves sick about what might happen tomorrow. We try to cross our bridges before ever coming to them!

The Bible says we are not to be anxious about what might happen tomorrow (see Matthew 6:33-34).

The Bible also promises that, "Your strength will equal your days" (Deuteronomy 33:25, NIV). In other words, God's grace will be sufficient to meet the challenges of each new day.

You Can Deal With Adversity Through Faith

Difficulties, ill health and all kinds of suffering have a new perspective when you have Christ in your life. God's Word contains promises to help you in tough times.

Instead of "going to pieces," you can be strengthened.

Instead of being a burden to others, you can be a blessing. As you realize God's power, comfort and strength through life's experiences, you will grow in your faith.....

Learn How to Deal with Temptation

Temptation is a part of life. It was before you received Christ, and it still will be. It is not a sin to have wrong thoughts from time to time. It is, however, a sin to choose to dwell on such thoughts over and over again.

The Bible says, "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak" (Matthew 26:41, NIV). When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, He replied to the devil by quoting Scripture. Three times He said, "It is written ..." (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10). Be prepared for temptation, through prayer and through your knowledge of God's Word.

The Bible says, "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it" (1 Corinthians 10:13, NIV). Be prepared to take advantage of God's "way out" of temptation, whether it means that you "flee" the scene of the temptation (1 Timothy 6:11), or that you stay on the scene and "resist" it (James 4:7).

Tell Others About Christ

Letting others know about your new life in Christ—by word and by action—can be one of the most satisfying and exciting experiences you have ever had. The apostle Peter encourages us to "always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have" (1 Peter 3:15, NIV).

Baptism in Water

Now that you are saved you will want to learn about Baptism in water.

The Bible does not present water baptism as optional. Jesus gave the command of baptism in the great commission: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). At the least, this command of Jesus requires the church to make disciples by baptizing believers in the name of God. Thus water baptism here and throughout the New Testament is associated with Christian initiation. This commission from the Lord leaves us no option or alternative. We must baptize believers or disobey God's plan of salvation

The scriptural foundation of the gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). In our regeneration, we are to identify with Christ in each of these aspects. Repentance and water baptism identify with Christ's death and burial, and the infilling of the Spirit identifies with His resurrection (See Romans 6:4.) Thus water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ is one way we identify with Jesus and His work of our redemption.

In the New Testament, Jesus told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). If "born of water" refers to water baptism, there is no mistake about its necessity. But some people attempt to evade the necessity of baptism by interpreting "born of water" as "born of the Word." The Word is important in the salvation experience, for it is the source of our faith (Romans 10:17). However, to be born of the Word a person must believe and obey the Word. Since the Word points us to the cross, to repentance, to water baptism, and the infilling of the Spirit, the only way to be born of the Word is to believe, repent, be baptized, and receive the Spirit. It is significant that the apostles interpreted Jesus' teaching of being born again to mean water baptism and Spirit reception. (See Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:44-48; 19:1-6.)

Hill Country Cowboy Church's baptismal is available to you at scheduled services. We have all the amenities

you may require to assist you in your baptism. Just ask any Altar Minister for assistance and we will be sure that you may experience this live changing event, your baptism in water.

Baptism In The Holy Spirit

Now that you are saved and born again and baptized in water, you have the Holy Spirit already (Romans 8:9). The Holy Spirit is freely available to those who will trust and obey (Acts 5:32). We as true believers know that God has something more for us and that is the Baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

It is not essential to have hands laid on you to receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, but it is helpful provided the believer who lays hands on you is spirit-filled and of good character. There is a spiritual impartation that comes with the laying on of hands. We see the laying on of hands mentioned in connection with receiving the Holy Spirit in Acts 8:17, Acts 9:12 and Acts 19:6. Its important to realize that we receive the Holy Spirit by faith, and not merely by the laying on of hands. This is what needs to happen for you to be mightily filled with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus explains in John 7:37,38 "If any man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water'". The next verse tells us that this refers to the Holy Spirit

We must have a desire to experience more in God in order to be filled with the Spirit. The more intense our desire is, the more powerfully we will be baptized in the Holy Spirit. We should never give up seeking God. Faith is born out of desire.

Jesus said, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him" (Luke 11:13). "Ask and you will receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:24) We can have faith because we know from God's word the promises such as these. See also Acts 2:17,38-39. It is obviously God's will to keep his promises.

We receive the Holy Spirit as a gift, not on the basis of works, but by "hearing with faith" (Galatians 3:5). We don't receive by doing outward things, we must simply believe that we receive.

As the expression of our faith in God's word, we yield control of our tongue to God. This yielding is an ACTIVE thing - WE do the speaking, and the Holy give the language

Paul says "For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful" (1 Corinthians 14:14). Acts 2:4 says "And they ... began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance (which means the "ability to speak out").

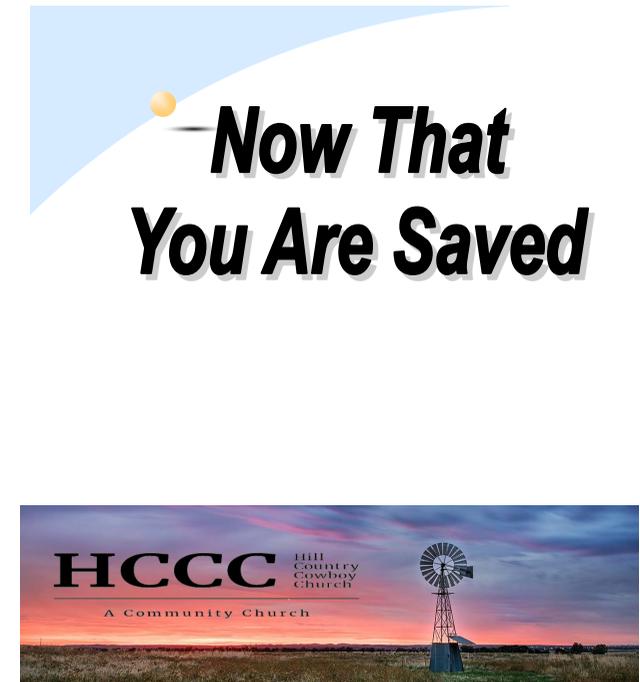
You must begin speaking, trusting God to give the language. Do not worry about whether you understand the sounds you make - you will make the sounds according to the language that the Holy Spirit gives you.

You will probably want to know more about the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Ask any Altar Minister and they will be pleased to answer your questions and assist you in receiving this precious gift from God.

Become A Member Of A Bible Believing Church

Find a church that preaches the Word of God in truth and in love as the Bible teaches. The Holy Spirit will guide you to the right church if you ask. The Bible tells you that if you ask then you will receive. Selecting the right church for you and your family is one of the most important decisions one will ever make. The most important thing is to go to church and experience the fellowship with Christ and the that of fellow believers. May God be with you on this your most important journey.

May God Richly Bless You



**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!
2 Corinthians 5:17**

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