

I've asked Jesus into my heart –
Now What?

*Now that you have received Christ Jesus the Lord,
so walk in Him,
rooted and built up in him,
established in the faith as you were taught,
overflowing with thankfulness.
Colossians 2:6-7*

What an exciting event has occurred in your life. God has spoken to your heart and revealed the need for a savior. Even before the world began, God chose you that you would give your life to Him. Think about it! Before the world began! I am continually in awe of this exciting news that God gave His only begotten Son for me, that I might have eternal life. Now, how exciting to see God has touched another soul for His kingdom. Another soul has been redeemed!

Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be “born again.” This means he needed to be recreated into the image of God. In the beginning God made us in His own image, but sin destroyed that image and tainted man forever. Instead of God’s love and peace came doubt, fear, and anger. Jesus died to remove that taint of sin and restore the image of God within us that we become children of God.

Just as each child begins a life as a baby, you have begun your life in Jesus. Your confession of sin and recognition that Jesus died to forgive your sin gives you the hope of new life. This new life needs care and nourishment in order to mature and be used by God. There is much to learn. There are difficulties ahead. There are more decisions to make. At times it may become overwhelming. However, you are not alone. Just as a baby needs the care and nourishment of his parents, you need the care and nourishment of God’s Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is given by the Father to those who ask Him. His Holy Spirit teaches you God’s ways. Just as a child learns to walk, you must learn how to walk in God’s Spirit. This becomes the basis of our relationship with our savior. How precious a gift! Do you understand? The Spirit of God lives within you! You are the temple of God! You express your love to God by your obedience to Him. He is your teacher who guides you in the ways of God and restores your soul into the image of God. Step by step we must learn to follow His Spirit.

Now what? Now let’s examine what it takes for you to walk in Jesus according to His Spirit.

Rooted and Build Up

How did you begin your life in Jesus? You began it by a prayer of faith. So, you must continue!

The purpose of your new life is that you may become one with God. God wants a relationship with His children. A relationship requires communication. Speak to God as a friend. Consider the words of this well-known hymn:

What a friend I have in Jesus, All our sins and grief to bear! What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer.! Oh what peace we often forfeit, oh what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer
(*What a Friend We Have in Jesus, Joseph M. Scriven, 1820-1886*).

Learn to listen as well as ask. Communication requires both. God often speaks to our hearts in the quiet of our spirit while meditating on His word and seeking His fellowship.

The apostle Paul says we are to pray continuously. That is a lot to expect of any Christian, especially a new one. But it is not too much when we think of prayer as simply directing our thoughts toward God and keeping our hearts in harmony with His Spirit. When in harmony with God, He promises He will give us whatever we ask. Prayer then becomes a vital part of walking with God as we focus on Him.

Do not be concerned about what to pray. Remember our relationship with God is through His Spirit. When we do not know how to pray, God's Spirit intercedes for us and pleads on our behalf according to the will of God.

Remember that God answered your first prayer of faith. Prayer and faith are roots of our relationship in Jesus. Just as a plant continually draws its water and food through its roots, you must depend on prayer and faith for every good work of God. Faith becomes the reality of our hope. You accepted your salvation by faith, now you must anticipate your life as a child of God, and live according to your faith.

Established in the faith as you were taught

What were you taught when you gave your heart to Jesus? The truth! Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes unto God except by me." This truth comes from God's word as revealed by the Holy Spirit. God's word is the basis of our faith and hope.

An infant must begin to eat meat before becoming a child. He can not survive forever on milk. Likewise, a new Christian can not depend on the teaching of others. He must get into God's word.

The Bible is the inspired word of God. It was written by Godly men as moved by the Holy Spirit. It is often referred to as the "living word" because it is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. Learn to depend upon the Holy Spirit to teach you God's truths. He speaks to your heart through God's word.

There are numerous translations of the Bible. At Interfaith Bible Fellowship the New King James Version is used in most teaching and preaching. A modern translation such as the New Living Translation is helpful to new Christians. Many Bibles have study aids such as cross references to similar verses that help the serious Bible student. There are Bible dictionaries that help you understand unfamiliar Bible terms, a concordance helps you find scriptures that contain certain words, and commentaries give thoughts on how to interpret certain scriptures. I find that these tools often stimulate further illumination by the Holy Spirit.

There are many ways to study God's word. You may want to simply select a book of the Bible and read a chapter a day. A good book to start with would be the gospel of John. There are also various reading plans that are designed to help you read through the Bible in one year. There are devotional books that combine Bible readings and short inspirational stories or meditations. There are Bible studies on various books of the Bible or Biblical doctrines. There are Bible discussion programs on Christian radio. Another suggestion would be to write down scriptures from sermons or Bible studies and reread them at home.

Regardless of how you choose to study the Bible, it is imperative to study God's word faithfully every day if you desire to grow spiritually. How can you become a child of God without knowing what He wants? We can not bear the image of God without knowing God. The word of God has been given to us that we might be complete in God and fulfill His will in our lives. It's a must!

Our faith is also established by our fellowship with one another. God ordained church leaders such as elders and teachers to help us mature in the Lord and become more like Jesus. Each member encourages and admonishes the other using the gifts that God has given until we all become one in Christ. Our fellowship with one another completes our relationship with God.

We depend upon our family for moral support, especially when being harassed. Similarly, the church provides the necessary support we all need to survive as Christians in a hostile world. Jesus warns us that Christians live in the world, but are not understood by it. Therefore, we often are harassed and blamed for things not our doing.

Being active in a church that teaches God's word and encourages each believer to develop a relationship with God in Christ is paramount to our survival, growth, and provides opportunity for God to use and bless our God-given gifts.

Overflowing with thankfulness

As a new Christian you are grateful for God's gift of salvation. You feel the weight of sin removed and acknowledge the hope of eternal life. Where there was doubt, now faith. Where there was no purpose, now you are a child of God. Your heart rejoices in the truth. Now there is joy and thanksgiving with God's gift of peace.

What is the basis of your joy and thanksgiving? Hope! What is the basis of your hope? Faith! What is the basis of your faith? The Word of God! Why do you believe the word of God? It was revealed by His Spirit. You have all this because God chose you before the foundation of the world. That is something to shout about!

You will need to remind yourself of this when you fail God. You will need to remind yourself of this when you hurt someone. You will need to remind yourself of this when you feel all alone and that God has abandoned you. You need to stay focused on the basis of your faith. You need to remember your first love for Jesus. Jesus warns us that narrow is the way that leads to life and broad is the way that leads to destruction.

Yes, there is a devil who desires to mislead you. He comes as an "angel of light" that quickly disguises his intent to cause you to doubt your relationship with God. However, God inhabits the

praise of His people. When you praise God you express your faith and dependence upon Him. Exalt God!. Against this, Satan can not stand.

You must discipline your mind. Do not listen to doubtful thoughts since all doubt is sin. Rather, think of things of good report such as your salvation by faith and the forgiveness of your sin.

Be overflowing with thankfulness. Paul says to rejoice in the Lord. This is the proof of your calling by God. It is the test of your faith. It is the testimony of your hope. It is the sealing of God in your heart.

Conclusion

I hope you realize that your commitment to God has only begun. It is a life-long relationship with great everlasting rewards. Hold fast the confession of your faith without wavering. As long as you remain steadfast in your faith and relationship with Jesus, He will keep all that you have committed unto Him until that Day when you will see him face to face in all His glory.

Scripture References

Introduction

Ephesians 1:3-6	God chose us before the world began
John 3:1-21	Jesus teaches Nicodemus about being born again
Genesis 1:27	Created in God's image
Colossians 3:5-10	New person recreated in God's image
I Timothy 6:12	Hold on to your confession of faith
Luke 11:13	Holy Spirit given to those who ask
John 14:15-18, 26	Gift of the Holy Spirit
I Corinthians 6:19	You are the temple of God
Romans 8:5-11	Life in the Spirit of God

Rooted and Built Up in Jesus

John 17:20-23	One with God
John 10:3,16	Sheep hear voice of the Shepherd
I Thessalonians 5:17	Pray without ceasing
Psalms 37:4	God gives desires of our hearts
Romans 8:26-27	Intercession of the Holy Spirit
Ephesians 2:8-9	Good works of God by grace
Hebrews 11:1	Faith is the reality of hope

Established in Faith

John 14:6	Jesus way, truth, and life.
Hebrews 5:12-14	God's word needed for spiritual growth.
2 Timothy 3:16-17	Inspired word of God
2 Peter 1:20-21	Scriptures written by men moved by the Holy Spirit
Ephesians 4:11-16	Our relationship with God depends upon our relationship with other believers
John 15:18-21	World hates Christians

Overflowing with Thankfulness

Romans 15:13	Overflow with hope
Romans 10:11	God's word basis of our faith
Matthew 7:13-14	Narrow is the gate
2 Corinthians 11:14	Satan an angel of light
James 4:7	Resist Satan and he will leave
Romans 14:23	Doubt is sin
Philippians 4:8	Meditate on the Good things of God
Philippians 4:4	Always rejoice in the Lord

Conclusion

Hebrews 10:23	Hold onto faith without wavering
2 Timothy 1:12	Our relationship with Jesus never fails

Study Guide

1. In your own words, what does it mean to be born again?
2. What does it mean to walk in God's Spirit?
3. How are prayer and faith roots of our relationship with Jesus.
4. How is studying the Bible imperative to your relationship with Jesus?
5. How does our fellowship with each other complete our fellowship with God?
6. Why is it important to remember you salvation experience with God?
7. How does thankfulness prove your relationship with God?

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