

Successful Christian Living

The most important decision that a person can make is accepting Christ as Savior. No other decision is as important. However, when one decides to trust Christ as Savior, he should not stop at that. Being saved opens up a whole new life in Christ. God has many new things for you as a Christian. Your life in Christ has just begun!

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the ends of the world. Amen” Matt 28:18-19

From the verses quoted above we see God wants you not only to be saved, but He also desire you to be Biblically baptized and taught the Word of God. We see these three principles fulfilled in Acts 2:41-42 which says, *“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”* After being saved these new Christians were baptized and continued in the things of God. This is an example given for us. God expects and demands you now follow Him.

Here are seven steps that will help you grow and know the Lord who saved you. The Bible commands us to grow in grace. *“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” I Peter 2:2.* It is vital that as a new Christian you get started right in your walk with God.

STEP ONE: ASSURANCE

The first step in your new walk with God is to know you

are saved and that you are always saved. Satan will attempt to cause doubts and discouragements in your mind. He will try to get

you to question your new found salvation. Here are some verses that teach “The Eternal Security of the Born Again Believer.”

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” I John 5:11-13

According to these verses, when we believe on the Son, we have eternal life. John 3:16 says we have “everlasting” life. Everlasting life means ‘life without end’. This means when I trust Christ I have everlasting life. We are saved by Christ, and we are kept by the power of Christ as well. We can know we have eternal life because Christ is powerful enough to keep us saved.

As a new Christian beware of Satan’s tricks. He will try to misdirect you if at all possible. He will send people to tell you if you don’t live the Christian life, then you’re not saved. Of course to ‘live the Christian life’ to them means to come to their church and do as they say. Some may tell you if you don’t experience some ‘spiritual gift’ like speaking in tongues, then you’re not saved. Others, like the Mormons and Jehovah Witness’, say they are Christians, yet they deny the power and Deity of Jesus Christ. The list could go on, however, just remember the words of Paul to the Colossians, *“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”*

Colossians 2:6-8.

STEP TWO: BAPTISM

Once a person is saved the first act of his or her Christian faith should be baptism. The Bible clearly teaches that all who accept Christ should be baptized. This baptism is done after salvation by immersion (immersion means to be completely dipped under water, not sprinkled). The great disappointment in many churches today is the lack of commitment and the unwillingness of newly saved converts to follow on. This is written to you, new convert, to break that mold and follow on to know Him.

The following verses explain baptism and why we should be obedient in this area.

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Romans 6:3-4

Lesson:

Baptism identifies us with Christ. Notice the words ‘like as’. Baptism is symbolic of our spiritual death to the old life and our newness of life in Christ.

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day were added unto them about three thousand souls.” Acts 2:41

Lesson:

Christians in Bible days were baptized right after they were saved. Baptism always follows salvation.

“But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” Acts 8:12

Lesson:

Christians in Bible days were obedient to baptism.

There are many other verses in the Bible that show the importance of baptism. Baptism shows we are not ashamed to be identified with Christ. Most pastors will agree if a person is not

willing to be baptized, he probably is not willing to live for the Lord either.

Talk to the Pastor this Sunday about baptism, don't put it off!

STEP THREE: CHURCH ATTENDANCE

According to Matthew 28:19-20, after a person is saved and baptized, they are to learn the commandments of Christ. The commandments of Christ are embodied in the Bible. The institution Christ established for the purpose of building up the saints is the church...local independent churches in each community preaching and teaching the commandments of our Lord. The whole purpose of church is to train up new converts in the way of our Lord.

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” Hebrews 10:25

God's plan throughout the ages is to teach and instruct His people through the institution that He started, the Church! Home Bible studies are not a valid substitute for church membership and attendance. Why not start your new life in Christ right and join a Bible believing, Bible practicing church. A Christian needs to be involved in a local church where he cannot only be taught, but where he can serve and grow.

Church can be like a planter box of fertile soil where the new Christian may be placed for growth. Notice the following ingredients of a good 'planter-box' church:

- Fertile soil of fellowship
- The nutrients of growth provided by preaching and teaching
- Protection from the weeds of false doctrine by a pastor who does the gardening
- Water from the Word of God
- Sunshine of opportunity for Christian service

Once again, most Pastors will agree a new Christian who is planted in the ‘planter-box’ of the local church always has a greater chance for Christian growth than the one who neglects church.

As members of Temple Baptist Church we need to be faithful to support it. There are many benefits to being a member of a church, but along with the benefits comes responsibility.

STEP FOUR: PERSONAL DEVOTIONS

The goal of every new Christian should be to become established in the faith.

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him: Rooted and built up in him and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” Colossians 2:6-8

These verses summarize the desired goals for the life of every Christian:

- We receive Christ.
- We begin to walk in Christ.
- We are “rooted” in him.
- We are “grounded” in Him.
- We are established in the faith (through the teaching of

men of God).

- We are thankful for instruction.
- We now have discernment to beware of the philosophy of men.

The ultimate goal of the new Christian is to reach the point where he can spiritually feed himself from the Word of God. Here are some things that can help you get started:

1. Set aside a specific time each day for Bible reading. (Start with the Book of John.) Read about four chapters a day. This will take about 10 to 15 minutes.
2. Spend time in prayer either before or after reading the Bible.
 - A) Before reading, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you.
 - B) Ask God to help you apply what you read to your life.
 - C) Pray for other needs in your life. (Unsaved loved ones, finances, spiritual growth, job, etc.)

STEP FIVE: FELLOWSHIP

Another vital ingredient for growth is balanced fellowship. An important need for new Christians is having some good Christian friends. These friends can be found in church. You reveal yourself by your friends for a ‘man is known by his friends’.

In Acts 2 we see that fellowship was an integral part of the church. It is important that you soon develop spiritual relationships with godly people who will be an encouragement to you. Replace the ‘party crowd’ with God’s crowd. Find someone whose friendship will draw you closer to Christ.

STEP SIX: BE AN EXAMPLE

As you begin to grow in the Lord, you must remember others will begin to look to you. Lost loved ones will notice a

difference in you. Other Christians will begin to notice a difference in you too. Our goal is to direct others to follow the example of Jesus Christ. To further explain the importance of setting a proper example, let's observe the Apostle Paul's relationship with the Christians at Thessalonica.

"For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia." I Thess. 1:5-7

1. Step One: Paul was the right example (vs. 5) *"ye know what manner of men we were among you..."*
2. Step Two: The Thessalonians followed Paul's example (vs. 6) *"And ye became followers of us and of the Lord."*
3. Step Three: The Thessalonians became examples to others (vs.7) *"so that ye were ensamples..."*

The Thessalonians were saved and became examples to others. That, dear Christian, is what God would have for you. Anything short of that and you are a failure for our Lord.

STEP SEVEN: SOUL WINNING

Jesus commanded us to learn 'all things' concerning Him. Part of that 'all things' is telling others how to be saved. The dearest thing to the heart of God is when someone accepts Christ as Saviour, thus escaping the fire and torments of Hell. Many churches teach 'all things' except soul winning. We believe that once you're saved, you should begin telling others what happened to you.

New Christians who begin telling others how to be saved usually grow faster than those who don't. Why? First of all, they are being obedient to the Lord. Remember, God blesses those who are obedient to Him. Secondly, the new Christian is

growing in knowledge as he is confronted with the challenges and questions that arise when they are actively winning souls.

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." II Timothy 2:2

God's plan for reaching the world with the Gospel of Christ is through men. You, as a new convert, should have a desire to tell those you love how to be saved and escape Hell. Fellowship and soul winning with us will help you one day be the Christian God knows He can count on to faithfully proclaim the Gospel. That, oh Christian, ought to be one of your desires.

The Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 closes with the words *"Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world"*. Jesus gave us this promise because he knew to be the Christian He wants you to be means rejection by the world and scorn and ridicule from others. When problems and discouragements come your way remember Jesus promised to remain a faithful Savior and friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

Dear Christian, won't you take this challenge upon yourself and become all that God would have you to be. By following these seven simple steps you can be on the road to successful Christian living.