

It is important for every believer to recognize and develop a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit. He is God and our Helper in our Christian journey here on earth. He is the channel through whom the multiple graces of God reach us. And He blesses and guides us in whatever way He wills in accordance with the plan of God for our lives.

7-Consecration: When we give our lives to Christ, it is because we recognize we are filthy sinners and in need of God's cleansing and forgiveness. After haven then been forgiven by God, we are then expected to live our lives in a consecrated or holy manner before Him. Your body now becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit, and you are expected to keep your body free from sexual contaminations in all illicit sexual relationships outside a heterogeneous marriage relationship. You are to keep your body free from wasteful contaminants like drugs, strong drinks, tobacco etc. These are not laws but a simple purity lifestyle. As for your soul and spirit, God wants you to dedicate your heart to Him alone. You are thus to separate from the worship of idols and false gods; and from participating in superstitious traditional and cultural practices that oppose the Bible. Separate from everything that has to do with the occult or any other form of spiritism. Seek the spiritual help of your Christian leaders.

As we live our Christian lives consecrated to God alone, the Bible says we become vessels of honor in the Lord's hand, fit and prepared for noble use. Read 1 Cor 3:16-17; Rom 12:1; 1Thes 4:3-8; 2Tim 2:19-21.

8-Christian Service: We are saved to serve. Every child of God is supposed to be involved in activities that are geared towards the growth of God's kingdom. We do not do good works to be saved but rather as a demonstration of our faith and gratitude to God. Faith without actions is dead (James 2:17). Paramount on our Christian responsibility is our need to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with others in a personal and direct manner. All other activities that we undertake as Christians should be aimed directly or indirectly at seeing souls saved. It is therefore your immediate duty and privilege to begin to know how God can use you in the areas of your talents in conformity with His will for you. As you serve God, know that He alone has the best rating for your works based on your motives and quality of service. On the day of reckoning, He shall reward you openly. Be glad as you get committed in the things of God. Also read: Eph 2:10, John 15:5.

Abide in Christ and eternal life shall remain your portion.

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After Receiving Jesus

(A Post Salvation Counseling Guide)

By A. R. SOH

It is with great joy that I congratulate you for taking the decision of receiving Jesus Christ into your life as your personal Lord and Savior. I would like you to know that this is the most important decision you have ever made because it registers you as a child of God and opens for you the entrance into eternal life.

The Bible describes this as being born again. Just as we are born biologically by earthly parents to get into this world, so we must be born spiritually by the transformation of the word of God to get to heaven. In other words, you have become a true Christian.

Below are a few very important facts you have to immediately consider in your new life in Christ:

1-Assurance: Know for sure that as soon as you asked God to forgive your sins through the blood of Jesus and as you invited Him into your life to be your personal Lord and Savior, He actually forgave all your sins and is actually living in you right now. The promise for a full salvation is numerously stated in the word of God and as we believe in Jesus Christ, this assurance is further confirmed in our hearts. Many people are not sure of their fate were they to meet the end of their physical life on earth. Jesus told the repentant criminal on the cross "this very night you shall be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:42-43). This is the very assurance He is giving to you and to anybody repenting of his or her sins. Know that you are saved and that if you died right away, you will go straight to heaven to be with the Lord for all of eternity. John the apostle says in 1 John 5:13 that he would like all those who have believed in the name of the Son of God (like you just did) to know that they already have eternal life abiding in them. Yes, you are saved. Also read: John 1:10; 11, Rom 10:9; 10, 1John 1:9.

2-Prayers: The second thing a new Christian should take seriously is prayers. Prayer is simply communicating with God. Unlike the non-Christian who either prays to a false god or does not pray at all, the Christian child of God should develop the habit of talking with God His Father. Jesus, teaching us how to pray in the book of Matthew 6:9-13, outlines a simple format which if studied will be very instrumental in our everyday prayers to God. Permit me to take a little space to outline the various components making up this teaching that is commonly referred to as "The Lord's prayer." Firstly, Jesus teaches us to identify God as our "Father." Who is God to you? Your heavenly Father? Are you saved? Then we proceed to Hallow or worship God. We pray for the kingdom and will of God to be

established on earth as in heaven. We also ask for our daily bread, implying our daily physical and spiritual needs. In prayers, we forgive our offenders for God to forgive us. Then we ask for God's protection in all areas of our lives. Finally, we give God the glory in everything He accomplishes for us or through us.

Jesus in teaching this prayer format was not answering to the disciples' request on: "Lord, teach us a prayer" No. But on "Lord, teach us how to pray." Those who only recite these verses in the name of prayers without really praying are actually not doing anything significant. Prayer is the only means we develop a true fellowship with God and is the source of the Christian's strength. Also read: John 15:7, Mat 21:22, 1John5:14-15.

3-Bible Studies: The Bible is the written word of God and carries the fundamental will of God for our lives as individuals, the church and the world at large. Our knowledge of God can only grow depending on our knowledge of His word. It is therefore imperative to develop the habit of constantly reading your Bible and studying its various themes so as to be grounded in the things of God. In it you will know the mind of God concerning any single subject you wish to be enlightened on. Every moral or spiritual doctrine must be firmly backed by the scriptures because the word of God is the rock on which we stand. Also associate yourself with Christian groups where the Bible is studied so as to get the necessary assistance and basic knowledge you need. By reading our Bibles, we are committing ourselves to doing only what it says and not what man, or human philosophy might imagine. Read: Joshua 1:8, Psalms 119:105, 1Timothy 4:13.

4-Fellowship: Christians constitute a family otherwise referred to as the family of God or the "household of God" (Eph 2:19). Members of every family are expected to be together and have things in common. The Bible in Acts 2:42 speaks of the early disciples as such: "and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers."

Fellowship here is simply your association with other Christian believers for the purpose of worship and growth in the things of God. You need to separate from the wrong fellowship to the right fellowship in Christ. After becoming a true Christian, you need to begin attending a church where the worshippers are equally born again Christians like yourself. A church where the truth is preached and practiced, and where the fruits of salvation can be seen in the lives of those who attend it. This is the spiritual milieu where your spiritual life can be in security. Still, you have to compare many of its practices with the scriptures to be sure you are not mistaken. Also read: Hebrews 10:25, John 10:16.

5-Baptism: The word baptism is derived from the Greek word "*baptizo*" and means "to deep," "to immerse," or "to bury." To baptise thus means to deep, immerse or bury in water. Baptism in the Christian teaching is closely attached to salvation. E.g. Acts 2:38 says: "Then Peter said to them, **repent**, and let every one of you be **baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Mark 16:15, 16 says, "And he (Jesus) said to them, 'Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature. **He who believes and is baptized will be saved**: but he who does not believe will be condemned.'" "

Baptism is intended only for those who have truly repented of their sins or are in the process of repentance. That is why even John the Baptist refused baptising the proud religious Pharisees, demanding them to first of all produce fruits to prove they had repented (Mat 3:7-9). In this case, infants are never to be baptised because they are considered innocent and know nothing about repentance. They just need to be dedicated to God and taught to grow in the ways of God. At maturity when they repent and receive Christ as their personal Saviour, they shall then be baptised. It is also important for me to emphasize here that the sprinkling of water on the head or on any other part of the body is of no spiritual significance before God. It is not baptism. And even the right baptism (immersion in water) of an unrepentant sinner is equally of no spiritual value because as the command comes: repent, be baptised, then you will be saved.

Baptism is an exterior activity that demonstrates an interior spiritual reality. It signifies death, burial and resurrection. When we die to the old and sinful ways of life through repentance, we need to be buried (baptised), and then resurrect unto a new life in Christ. These are the steps our Lord Jesus passed through on the cross to save us from sin. This is what He submitted Himself to in the river Jordan, setting us an example to follow. This is equally what He has demanded us to do in order to be saved. This is clearly explained in the book of Romans 6:1-6 and verse 4 has it explicit: "Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

The new Christian believer who has just given his or her life to Christ should seek with joy for the opportunity to be identified with Him in baptism. This is the sign that seals your salvation. May God bless you as you do so.

6-The Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is God and the third personality in the Godhead. Jesus, teaching on the Holy Spirit said He was the next Comforter who was to come and be with the disciples after He (Jesus) had gone to heaven (John 16: 7). The Holy Spirit began with you by convicting you of sin and leading you to receive Jesus as your personal Lord and Saviour (John 16: 8). As you invited Jesus to come into your life, the Holy Spirit came in to stay inside of you in His indwelling presence (John 14:15-17). The Holy Spirit's work in the life of the believer is multi fold including: teaching you all truths, and reminding you of the truths you already know (John 14:26). He helps you to pray (Romans 8:27). He will help you to resist temptation and overcome persecution. And equally in moments of spiritual weakness He shall stand. for you (Romans 8:26). He shall continually testify to your son ship, that you are a child of God and will enable you to be an effective witness of the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 8:14-16).

As you grow in the Lord, you shall come to know how the Holy Spirit can empower or anoint you for the supernatural. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are listed in 1 Cor 12:4-11 and any believer with faith can and should reach out and receive from God and allow God to use him or her in any way as the Bible describes. Here, spiritual guidance is needed.