



I Got Baptized! Now What?

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20

A huge congratulations to those of you who were baptized at Sunnybrae Bible Camp! It was great to hear how Jesus has saved you and how you have responded to Him in obedience by being baptized. It is through Jesus' forgiveness of your sins that you are welcomed into the Family of God. God has given you a new life, a renewed purpose in living, and He has given His Holy Spirit to dwell in you!

The person of the Holy Spirit is an incredible gift. From the moment you were saved from your sins, He has been at work in you; changing your heart, revealing sin, encouraging you, purifying you, and empowering and gifting you to serve on mission with Jesus.

In reading the bible, we get the sense that baptism is a "first step of obedience" in following Jesus. As you begin this amazing journey with Jesus and His church, we want to give you a few helpful directions to start.

READ YOUR BIBLE

Do you have a bible? If not, we would love to get one in your hands! If you would like to purchase one on your own, we recommend a good study bible with lots of helpful notes and maps that will help put everything into context. The ESV Study Bible is one of the best!

The bible is an amazing collection of 66 books inspired by the Holy Spirit. We believe that all the words in Scripture are God's words, and that the bible is therefore the ultimate standard of truth, and the special revelation of who God is, what He has done through Jesus, who we are, and what we are to do.

We understand that the bible may be something that you have never read before and you may feel a little intimidated by the sheer volume of it. Try thinking of it as a bunch of letters from God, letting you know who He is and what He is up to in this world. Though the books of the bible are separated, think of the entire bible as an incredible story revealing who God is. A great book to begin with would be Mark (feel free to look in the table of contents to find it!). Mark is a great book because it is short, keeps the details to a minimum, shows that Jesus got the job done, that Jesus is the fulfillment of everything God promised, and that He is worth following.

Mark ends with Jesus ascending to heaven as the King of Kings who rules over His Kingdom, and commissioning His disciples to go and make disciples. The books of Acts is a great sequel that shows the Church doing what Jesus commanded them to do, and what the Holy Spirit empowered them to do.

JOIN THE FAMILY

When Jesus commissions His disciples, He commanded them to “make disciples of all nations, baptizing them *into* the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” This is not just something that was said just before you were baptized; rather this is a statement about the new identity you have been given. God is our Father and He loves His kids. He loved us so much that He was willing to send His Son Jesus to purchase our salvation through His death on the cross! Through Jesus, God the **Father** adopts us into His **Family**. We have gone from being children of wrath, to children of God.

The context for a gospel-centered life is never merely individual. The Gospel creates a new community, a unique community. This kind of new community is not an optional thing, an “extra” for the Christian; instead it’s part of the overall purpose of God’s Kingdom. No longer are you able to talk about “going to church”, because to be saved by Jesus means that you are now a member of the Church. Your identity has been changed! As a family, we have rhythms that we live by. Every Sunday we gather as the church to remember who God is, what He has done through Jesus, and who we are. We gather to be reminded of how we are to live under the rule and reign of King Jesus.

In the book of Acts and elsewhere, it is clear that baptism means incorporation into a local worshipping community with a specific mission of glorifying God and making disciples (cf. Acts 2:41-47). You were also baptized into the name of the Son. As a child of God, Jesus is our King who rules and reigns over His people. As His servants, we joyfully serve God, His body (the church), and the people around us. We encourage you to find ways to serve your church and also join a small group so that you could begin discipling people into the image of Jesus. We also recommend that you take the step of becoming a member at FBC.

GET ON MISSION

Jesus’ mission of making disciples applies to all churches in all places. Not only were you baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son; you were also baptized into the name of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the one who fills us and sends us out to show and share the good news of Jesus. When you were born God knew which natural gifts to give you so that you could best serve His purpose and His Kingdom. Prior to Jesus saving us and giving us a new identity, we often used our gifts for our own glory and purpose. When Jesus saves you and you are re-born, the Holy Spirit redeems your natural gifts and gives you spiritual gifts to serve in such a way that most glorifies God, and benefits Jesus’ mission for the church.

So what are your gifts? One of the best ways to find out is to simply start serving...trial and error! As you serve be aware of your fruitfulness, joy, and the response of the people around you. The local church operates in unity and works toward maturity as we recognize and allow room for the gifts God has given to the local church (Ephesians 4:1-16).

BE A WITNESS

A witness is someone who has personally seen something happen and is willing to give evidence to the fact that it actually took place. We are called to be witnesses of what God has done for us through Jesus death and resurrection (Acts 1:8; 22:15). There was nothing we did to merit God's grace or forgiveness, and yet He extended His mercy to us. You have personally witnessed Jesus forgive your sins and welcome you into His kingdom, and He now rules and reigns as Lord and King in your life. As a local body of Jesus' disciples, we are called to be a display people, and witness to the world around us.

So how can you tell the story of what God has done your life? Since you are just beginning your walk with Jesus, don't expect to have all the answers to everyone's questions – just tell your story! You know Jesus and how amazing He is! Let your family and friends know. In an age where you can share your story with the click of a button, consider how you might redeem social media and the Internet to share the story that God has given you.