

harvest fields community church

# Harvest 123

"I gave my life to the Lord, now what?"

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"I gave my life to the Lord, now what?"

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## Harvest 1: "What Happened?"

### Lesson 1: Salvation in Christ

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

#### **Make Over**

I'm sure many of us have seen various talk shows that desired to give certain people a "Make- Over". What makes these shows so interesting to watch is how we are able to witness an average person (With a little help from certain professionals) being transformed into a new and improved version of themselves.

We applaud this new look and often times we can't believe it is the same person. The sad part of this scenario is that no matter how beautiful this person was made over on the outside, the inside will remain the same.

Recently, there may have been a change in your life. If you have accepted Jesus Christ into your life as your personal Lord and Savior, you have experienced a different type of "make-over". On the outside, you may look the same, but on the inside (spiritually), something has happened to you. In our class today we are going to explore what happened to you and why this change was necessary.

**Read Romans 3:23:**  
**"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"**

**Q: What comes to your mind when you read this verse?**

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No one likes to be seen as a sinner, and falling short of someone's expectations is usually not a pleasant experience. Since the fall of Adam and Eve (Genesis 1-3) every offspring born into this world is born in a sinful state. This simply means that no matter how good we think we are we will always fall short of the standard necessary to have a relationship with God.

**Q: How does the Bible describe sin? Read I John 3:4:  
"Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness."**

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The penalty for us being born in our sin is death (eternal separation from God).

**Read Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."**

To better understand the effects of sin, think of death as **SEPARATION:**

- ***Spiritual Death: Your sins have separated you from God***
- ***Physical Death: It separates the spirit and soul from the body***
- ***Eternal death: If you remain lost in your sins, they will separate you from the mercy of God forever (This is the greatest punishment of Hell)***

This could have been the end of the story. Mankind forever separated from the presence of God by sin. But, God wanted to show the universe another side of His nature. He wanted to show that he was a God of *mercy and grace*. God showed us He loved us even in our sinful state.

**Read Romans 5:8: "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."**

**Mercy:** Not giving us what we deserve (It is by mercy He forgave us)

**Grace:** Giving us something we don't deserve.

God's word says sin causes death. Jesus took the penalty upon himself in our place.

**Q: How did Jesus take the penalty of sin for us? Read 1 Corinthians 15:3: "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. "**

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**Q: What must we do to have Him save us from the penalty of sin?**

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This verse brings to mind another famous verse that sums up the whole gospel message; some of you may already know it.

**Read John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."**

**Q: Please provide a definition of "believe".** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q: According to John 3:16, what content of the message must we believe?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Believe means to cling to, to trust in and rely on.**

Through Jesus, God made a way for all mankind to be saved. Now salvation is available to all, but there is one condition, you must have a willing desire to have a relationship with God.

**Read Romans 10:9-10:**

**"If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved."**

## CONFESS

Confess means to admit guilt or acknowledge one's sin.

**Q: According to Romans 10:9-10 what is the result of someone making a confession?** \_\_\_\_\_

God is calling all of us to repentance. This means "a change of mind"; we turn away from sin and turn toward God.

### **Change should include:**

- A genuine sorrow for our sins
- Cleansing from continually sinning
- A desire to submit to God's will

When you call on God, you enter into a new relationship with Him. It is a supernatural rebirth that results from the direct intervention of God through the Holy Spirit into your life. This is how we are able to become "a new creation in Christ."

**Read 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"**

When the Holy Spirit brings us to a new life in Christ, important changes take place in our lives.

### **1) Read Ephesians 1:13-14:**

**"And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of His glory."**

According to this scripture, the Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ us.

The purpose of a seal is to demonstrate ownership and security. Therefore, the Holy Spirit confirms to the believing sinner there is ownership and security in a relationship with Christ.

**Q: Should you as a new believer feel secure in your walk with God?**

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2) **Read 1Peter 2:9-10:**

**“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”**

According to this scripture, we have a \_\_\_\_\_ identity.

**Q: Can you describe some of the changes in your life as a result of the influence of the Holy Spirit?** \_\_\_\_\_

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Having received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior means you've begun a new life. Here at HFCC our prayers are that in our next two weeks together, you will learn more about your new relationship with God. If you have not scheduled yourself for baptism, we encourage you to do so as soon as possible.

Please read the article: "Why Get Baptized?" located at the end of this booklet.



## Harvest 2: "What Matters Most?"

### Lesson 2: Abiding in Christ

Now that you are 'born again', how do you live in a way that maintains and supports your new relationship with Jesus? As you learned in the previous chapter, every believer in Jesus Christ is a new creation. You are a new creation but you still live in a world that is not surrendered to Jesus. We can do some things that will help us to live in a way that not only pleases Jesus but allows His blessings and promises to flow in our lives. In this section we are going to focus on 'abiding' or remaining with Jesus.

#### **Read John 15:5-6:**

**"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in Me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned."**

**Q: What does Jesus say about how we must live? \_\_\_\_\_**

Three things that will help a new believer abide (remain) with Jesus Christ; prayer, bible reading and fellowship with other believers. Let's look at each of these in more detail.

#### Prayer

Prayer is simply talking with God. Prayer is the act of talking to our unseen Father in heaven and believing that He not only hears us, but will answer us. There are different types of prayer. The prayer of faith (believing God for something you hope for), the prayer of asking, the prayer of repentance (admitting sin and asking for help to turn from sin), and the prayer of forgiveness are just a few.

## Read Matthew 6: 5-13:

**“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. “This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.**

### **Q: How would you put Jesus’ directions about prayer into your own words?**

In his book, **Too Busy Not To Pray**, author Bill Hybells offers us one way to structure our prayer time, ACTS, where each letter stands for a type of prayer. The prayer types are: adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication.

**A**     **Adoration** prayer tells God how much you love Him. It honors Jesus as Lord of our lives and reminds us that He is our first love. During times of adoration praying people often sing worship songs to Jesus. When we start our prayer time with adoration, we settle our hearts and minds as we focus on our amazing Lord Jesus Christ; our problems become smaller as He becomes greater.

**C**     **Confession** prayer acknowledges that we have sinned, but it does not stop there. Through confession we confess (admit) our sins and we accept the forgiveness of Christ. In Romans 3:23-24 we read: **For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous.** He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. As long as we live on this earth we will fight with

our old nature that desires to sin and unfortunately, we will sometimes lose that struggle and sin. The good news is that Jesus knows everything and when He died on the cross, He paid the price for all of our sins, for all time. Once we confess our sins to Jesus and ask for His forgiveness, He freely gives it to us. That is good news!

**T** The prayer of **thanksgiving** gives Jesus thanks for all He has done for us. As we reflect on our life we begin to see that all we have truly is a gift from God. Our families, friends, health, work, possessions and even our life itself, are a few of the things we can thank God for. Life and family may not be perfect, but we can thank Jesus, for who He has given us and what He has provided. As you pray, ask for help from the Holy Spirit to develop a thankful heart.

**S** The final part of the ACTS prayer model is **supplication**, which means to ask. The prayer of supplication asks Jesus for whatever we need. Asking for a new job, a better attitude towards someone, healing in our body, salvation for a beloved family member or wisdom to know how to make a decision are all types of supplication prayers. Hebrews 11:6 tells us **“And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.”** This scripture tells us that whatever we ask of God we must believe that He will answer us.

Many books have been written about prayer and we have listed some in the *Suggested Reading* section that will help you to learn more about the subject of prayer.

## Bible Reading

No greater book exists than the bible. Ministerbook.com states "The Holy Bible has been translated into 2,018 languages, with countless more partial translations, and audio translations (for unwritten languages). (This is an enormous amount of translations. In comparison, Shakespeare, considered by many to be the master writer of the English language, has only been translated into 50 languages.) The bible is more than a great book however; it is the Word of God. God spoke to humans and His Holy Spirit helped those humans to record what God wants us to know, remember, believe and act on.

**Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."**

**Q: Who wrote scripture? Why?** \_\_\_\_\_

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We must read the bible, on a regular basis, for it to have a lasting impact on our lives. When we read the bible, the Holy Spirit causes us to notice or pay special attention to a particular scripture. We respond by thinking about what Jesus has said. Sometimes, we will spend days thinking about the same scripture. Jesus will cause us to understand what He is saying to us. Sometimes it is a promise, other times a command and yet at other times an area in our life that He wants to correct or change. When we pray about an issue or a concern Jesus will sometimes respond through our bible reading. We will read a scripture that answers our question or gives us guidance on what to do.

It is best to read the bible when we are at our best. Choose a time of the day when you are alert and able to focus on your reading. Additionally, choose a place where you will not be easily distracted. Pray before you read and ask the Holy Spirit to help you read and understand His Word.

**Read James 1:25: "But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it--not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it--they will be blessed in what they do."**

**What directions does James give for reading the Word? \_\_\_\_\_**

**Q: In what ways can you become a 'doer' of the Word?**

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One way to become a doer of the Word is to write down in a notebook or journal the things the Holy Spirit reveals to you as you read the Word. For example, as you read the scriptures listed in this book, the Holy Spirit may bring specific ideas to mind or give you a clear understanding of what Christ means.

### Fellowship With Other Believers

When you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior you became a part of God's family. God's family has many members and they are our brothers and sisters in Christ.

**Read Ephesians 2:19: "Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household"**

**Read Acts: 2:42-44: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common."**

**Read Galatians 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."**

**Q: How would you describe the family of God? \_\_\_\_\_**

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Once you have given your life to Christ, every person, regardless of race, age, color of their skin or background in life is equal in God's family. God does not discriminate nor does He have favorites! That is good news for all of us.

As you attend worship service at HFCC or join us for an HFCC *Café* Friday night, you are participating in fellowship with other believers. Spending time with your brothers and sisters in Christ helps believers to:

- Keep focused on Christ
- Be strengthened in their faith
- Pray for one another
- Develop Christian friendships

As you continue to learn about your new relationship with Jesus, He will bring many wonderful and loving brothers and sisters into your life to help you grow in the knowledge of who He is.

## Harvest 3 "What's Next"

### Lesson 3: Growth in Christ

Your growth in Christ is the process of maturing through the development of specific Christian practices including prayer, fasting, bible study, witnessing and corporate worship. Some of these may not come naturally but fortunately, you are not alone. Because we have the Bible, you are not left groping in the dark for answers. Here's what scripture says about some of these practices.

#### **Prayer**

Like the fundamental element in any relationship, prayer is our vehicle of communication with our God. Prayer is an intimate communication between God and man. It is the wonderful privilege of talking directly to God at any time about anything. We have this opportunity because of what Christ did. The Christian life is about the ongoing, personal relationship you have with God through Jesus. The most basic way to make prayer work in your life is found in three simple steps:

- 1- Pray Frequently: This simple step will help to keep you conscience of God's presence in your life and will encourage you through tough moments.

**Read Ephesians 6:18:** " And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people."

- 2- Pray according to God's will: While God encourages us to "**ask, seek and knock**" (**Matthew 7:7**), scripture never portrays God as a "Genie in a Bottle". We are always aware of what we want or think that we need, but we should always remember that God knows better than we do, what our needs really are. Prayer is not a wish list we present to God but a disposition which centers

us on His will. Jesus taught us to pray **“Your Kingdom come, Your will be done...”(Matthew 6:10)**. God responds to prayers that are centered on His will, not our own.

**Read 1 John 5:14: “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”**

3- Pray Corporately (with other Christians): Prayer requires faith. The Bible teaches in Hebrews 11:6 **“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek Him.”** There are at least two benefits to praying corporately (with other Christians): 1- praying with more seasoned believers teaches us to pray more effectively. 2- praying with other believers encourages our faith.

### **Fasting**

The word “fasting” in its purest form, simply means abstinence. Biblical fasting often entailed abstinence from all food for a period of time in order to dedicate that time for prayer and worship, usually around a specific prayer request. Scripture does not command Christians to fast. God does not require or demand it of Christians. At the same time, the Bible presents fasting as something that is good, profitable, and beneficial. The book of Acts records believers fasting before they made important decisions (Acts 13:2; 14:23). Fasting and prayer are often linked together (Luke 2:37; 5:33). **Too often, the focus of fasting is on the lack of food. Instead, the purpose of fasting should be to take your eyes off the things of this world to focus completely on God. Fasting is a way to demonstrate to God, and to ourselves, that we are serious about our relationship with Him. Fasting helps us gain a new perspective and a renewed reliance upon God.**



## **Bible Study**

Bible study is the method by which we become well-rounded in our faith. Every aspect of our lives as believers finds instruction in God's word. The heart and mind of God for your life and purpose is revealed in scripture and His character unfolds before our eyes in the pages of His Word. It is God's love letter to us and yet, so much more. Through His word we learn to pray, to fast, to worship and obey. Only God's word can solidify our faith.

## **Witnessing**

To "Witness" is to share the gospel (good news) with the unsaved. Jesus gave His disciples a mandate **"He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:15-16).** This verse makes clear the priority of sharing our faith with unbelievers. We have received an amazing hope, an amazing gift (eternal life). Why wouldn't we want to share it with others? It's as if 50 people were drowning and you received a lifesaver. Once aboard the ship, would you not throw the lifesaver to another person?

## **Corporate Worship**

Worship is the act of acknowledging and giving praise to God for who He is. The ability to do this in a corporate setting with other Christians is a lifeline to you and those around you. **Read Hebrews 10:25: "not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching."**

## Article:

### Why Get Baptized?

#### **Believer's Baptism**

*The ordinances of baptism and communion are significant acts which are at the center of the church's expression of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is important for believers in the Lord Jesus Christ to understand that baptism reflects the meaning of the Gospel because it involves both a relationship with Jesus Christ and with fellow believers in the local church.*

#### **Why Baptize?**

- *The Lord Jesus Christ commanded baptism: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." (Mathew 28:19). The Word of the Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient warrant for baptism of believers.*
- **The early church practiced baptism.** *In the book of Acts, believers expressed publicly, through the act of baptism, their inward decision and intent to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ as King (Acts 2:28, 41; 8:12-13, 36-38; 9:18; 10:44-48; 16:14-15; 32-33; 19:5; 22:13-16).*

#### **Who should be baptized?**

- **Disciples** – *The Apostles were commanded to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them..." (Matthew 28:19). One must be a follower of Jesus Christ.*
- **Believers** – *Individuals who trusted Jesus Christ as their own personal savior. "Those who had received His word were baptized..." (Acts 2:42). "But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike" (Acts 8:12).*

1. Anyone who has **not been baptized** since becoming a Christian.
2. Any Christian who **has never clearly understood** the meaning of baptism, even though they may have been baptized previously.

*From the Scripture we conclude that baptism is limited to those who have personally trusted Jesus Christ as Saviour, and are willing to obey Him as Lord.*

### **What Does Baptism Mean?**

*Baptism is a public declaration of the believer's identification with Jesus Christ in His death, burial and resurrection". "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death? Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too, might walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:3-4).*

*Baptism is a public declaration of the believer's identification with the church. Baptism signifies the inward reality of a believer to participate in the fellowship of other believers in the context of a local church. The participation of the believer in baptism results in the believer being held accountable for his lifestyle and commitment by the local church.*

*Baptism is a symbolic proclamation of the spiritual reality of a believer's identification with Jesus Christ in His death, burial and resurrection.*

1. Death - Placed in water. "Baptized into His death" (Romans 6:3).

2. *Burial - Submerged.* "Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism into death..." (Romans 6:4a).
3. *Resurrection – brought up out of the water.* "In order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4a; Colossians 3:1a)

**So, we can see that baptism is important to the believer for the following reasons:**

1. *Baptism proclaims the believer's unity with Jesus Christ.*
2. *Baptism proclaims the believer's identification and accountability to the local church.*
3. *Baptism is a symbolic proclamation of the believer's saving experience with Jesus Christ.*
4. *Baptism proclaims the believer's commitment to be obedient to Jesus Christ.*

***Baptism is a Testimony to the New Life***

- *New Direction and purpose for living.*
- *Complete trust in God to direct your life.*
- *Courage and excitement to share Jesus Christ with others.*
- *Controlled and directed by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-24; Ephesians 4:17 – 6:20).*
- *Abandoning sinful habits and adopting godly habits (Colossians 3:1 – 4:6).*

## Suggested Reading

- *Too Busy Not To Pray*, Bill Hybells
- *The New How to Study Your Bible*, Kay Arthur, et.al
- *Boundaries*, Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend
- *The Pursuit of God*, A.W. Tozer