

## I'm Saved... So Now What?

By Wayne Vasilenko

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I remember how I felt the day I gave my heart to Jesus. It felt as though the weight of the world was lifting off my shoulders. I remember I couldn't wait to tell some of the people that helped me get to that decision. At the age of 21, it had been a long spiritual journey getting to this point in my life; it actually started when I was a child as I sat in a Catholic Church with my mother in Passaic, New Jersey. This was at a time when Catholic services were spoken in Latin so obviously I was not getting a whole lot out of being there, especially as young as I was. Nevertheless, being in that setting, as awesome and confusing as it was, (in some cases even a bit scary,) it somehow felt right. It was as if I was being drawn to something... or someone was trying to talk to me. It would take many years before I learned what I was feeling as a child, and it would take many more years before I realized how many people were involved in the events in my life leading up to the point to when I accepted Jesus as my Savior. The feeling I was experiencing, was in fact God, working through people, drawing me to Him! The day I was "Saved" turned out to be just the beginning of another long journey. I had no doubt that I was now ultimately on my way to Heaven, but I had little knowledge as to what I was supposed to do until I got there! Perhaps this is where you find yourself, especially if you have been recently "Born Again." You may now be asking yourself, "Ok, I'm Saved, so now what?"

The true Gospel Message is very simple... "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved!" However, as mentioned above, there is sometimes confusion as to what you should be doing after you, "get saved." Most "Evangelical" Churches preach that salvation is by the Grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ; they teach it is a gift from God that "cannot be earned." (See **Ephesians 2:8 also 4:30**) This teaching is correct; however, after someone accepts Jesus, some of these same churches then proceed to give the new convert a long list of new rules, and an equally long "To-Do List" that sometimes even makes "Old Testament Law" pale in comparison! So on one hand, they teach there is nothing you can do to *earn* salvation, but now that you have it, here is a whole list of things you must do in order to keep it! Many people are taught that they can lose their salvation if they do not live perfectly holy lives after accepting Jesus as their savior. They are taught that they must continuously make things right between themselves and God. If they could not do these things to earn salvation, how can they expect to achieve this goal afterwards? Some even teach that before you can speak to anyone about Jesus, "You have to clean up your act, you have to walk and talk like a "Christian," all this before you can be a witness for Christ. The story of the Samaritan woman at the well (See John 4:7-30) seems to *blow this theory out of the water!* (Pardon the Pun) This woman began to preach the Gospel literally minutes after accepting Jesus as the Messiah without any rebuke from Jesus Himself! Granted, a new convert can easily get in over their head so-to-speak in a theological debate, but the point is, Jesus set no rules for this woman. One's personal testimony, which is what that woman was proclaiming, is just that, "Their personal testimony." No one else has the right to add or subtract from it, or to stifle someone's personal testimony! After the resurrection, just before He ascended back to Heaven, Jesus gave one final command to His disciples, which applies to future disciples as well... **Matthew 28:19 (NKJV)** <sup>19</sup> **Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...** So when is it proper to tell others about your acceptance of Jesus as your Savior... when are you ready to spread the Gospel; the moment you accept Jesus as your Savior... from that point on, you have a testimony... you have a story to tell others as to what God has done in your life!

Some people would argue one should refrain from telling others until your faith has time to take root and grow. This can be good advice concerning some who tend to be what is referred to as, "Over Zealous," nevertheless, referring again to the Woman at the Well, Jesus did not restrict her in the

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slightest. In 1st Timothy 3 You will find details of the qualifications for leadership positions within the church, but these do not pertain to Christians in general but rather to the leadership within a church body. We are **ALL** called to "Make Disciples," but how? The same way you plant a garden... you sow seeds! As a new Christian, there will be a lot you may not understand, and that is to be expected, especially with all the diverse opinions out there. *Trust me... there are a myriad of opinions out there;* but sorting through them is simple, however, it takes some effort on your part; *simply read God's Word!* Yes, it is that simple! As you read various passages, ask yourself, "What does it say - What does it mean- and, what does it mean to me?" Over time, you will start to "connect the dots," and you will gain more and deeper understanding through the Holy Spirit who now resides within you, *if* you are truly saved. This in turn will provide you with an endless supply of seeds in that every aspect of life is at some point, addressed in God's Word! Simply sharing a thought concerning something you read in God's word is in affect planting a seed. Sometimes that seed will sprout immediately if it strikes a chord with the one whom you shared it with, sometimes you will get no reaction at all! The point is – making disciples is a process that is ultimately the result of God, through the Holy Spirit, drawing people to Himself. Our part in it is allowing God to use us in that process. That - my friends, is a Great Privilege! That - my friends is also the answer to the latter part of the title of this article, *"So Now what?"*

There are simple ways to help fulfill the directive to "Go and Make Disciples." Step one: is becoming a Disciple yourself! A disciple, is simply defined, is a "Follower." Are you a follower of Jesus? Do you "Believe" in Jesus? In the Greek, to "Believe in Jesus" means, to trust in – cling to - rely on – have faith in, Jesus? Step two: get over your fear. You may not know a lot about what the Bible says about a particular subject, but it is okay to say, "I don't know!" Also, get over your fear of rejection. Keep in mind that when you encounter rejection of the Gospel it is not you being rejected it is God being rejected (as long as you can back up what you are saying with Scripture.) Step three: Don't be afraid of not knowing what to say. If you are willing to proclaim the Gospel, the Holy Spirit will guide you. I once had led someone to the Lord simply by saying, "Try Jesus!" That is all I said to a person that was going through trials in his life and a week later he told me that over the next few days that followed, he cried out to Jesus and was "Saved!" His name was Pete, a guy I hardly knew that delivered windshields to my Glass Shop many years ago. All it takes is willingness on your part to spread the Gospel and you can have a role in changing people's lives for eternity, with as little as two words.

If you claim to be a Christian, ponder the following question... "How many seeds have you planted since you received your salvation?" How many people have come into your life that you say you care about, yet you never shared your testimony with them as to how they can receive the gift of salvation that you enjoy?" Think of the missed opportunities to share the greatest gift you could ever share with friends, co-workers, even your spouse! Imagine yourself standing in heaven seeking to find them, only to discover out they are not there because they never heard the Gospel, despite countless opportunities you ignored. Jesus gave us one simple assignment... "Go and make Disciples;" you say you are saved... so now what? Time to get busy; you have your assignment and for some there is not much time left for them to hear and heed the Gospel Message. It may be a stranger, your spouse, or your child. I have a close relative that has been saved for over thirty years who told me she never shared the Gospel with anyone, friend, relative or acquaintance. That is so sad; not just for her, but for all the people she has known throughout the years. Remember, I said two simple words to Pete, and now I know I will see him in heaven. Think about that the next time you have the opportunity to carry out the assignment your Savior gave you. **Matthew 28:19 (NKJV)** <sup>19</sup> **Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...**