

PART 2

Living Out God's Amazing Grace

As a new creation in God, there are new responsibilities you have. You are to be obedient to God and continue developing your spiritual life so God can use you for the purpose He originally intended. "... *All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.*" (Psalm 139:16)

Partly out of obedience to God and partly out of the need to continue growing closer to God, there are some things you need to do. One of the first is to be baptized. Acts 2:38: *Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

Another critical need is to get a Bible and read God's Word daily. I would strongly suggest a study Bible because it will explain what you are reading with footnotes listed on each page. As you read God's Word He will reveal to you things He believes you are ready for so your growth and understanding will continue. You **MUST, MUST, MUST** continue reading your Bible everyday. It's too easy to become influenced by the world around you, rather than God, when you stop reading.

Prayer is another important practice you must begin developing. It's as simple as talking with God. You can begin by thanking Him for your blessings, asking Him to share the knowledge in His Word with you, asking for help for yourself and others and spending quiet times listening for Him to speak to you through your thoughts and inner promptings. Just remember, God will never provide destructive thoughts or guidance contrary to what He says in His Word. Jesus gave us a prayer model in Matthew 6:9-13:

"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.

Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

The best way to continue growing and benefiting from the knowledge of others is to join a Bible-believing, Bible-teaching church. By joining with other believers you are strengthened, you will grow and you will begin to develop the gifts God gave you. God created us for community; to help each other in our own unique ways. *"Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us"* (Romans 12:4-6).

Each day you need to make the choice to follow and serve God. The world will try to convince you to live for yourself and tell you that you don't need God. Most of us tried life that way and it didn't work. Don't let the things of the world draw you back to the way things used to be. God has bigger things in mind for you. *"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do"* (Ephesians 2:10).

Who Is This Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. *"The next day John (the Baptist) saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"* (John 1:29). *"Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me (God) to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God"* (John 1:32-34).

“When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased” (Luke 3:21-22).

Jesus is God. *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us” (John 1:14).*

“In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven” (Hebrews 1:1-3).

Jesus chose to come to earth through a miraculous birth and live among us. *“I came from the Father and entered the world” (John 16:28).*

“In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary” (Luke 1:26-27). “Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High” (Luke 1:30-32). “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?” The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:34-35).

Jesus' life and public ministry: teaching God's Word, forgiving sins, performing miracles and healing the sick are detailed and witnessed in the

four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. *“Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry” (Luke 3:23).*

“From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near” (Matt 4:17). “Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people” (Matt 4:23).

After feeding 5,000 men (plus women and children) with five loaves of bread and two fish (Mark 6:30-44), Jesus performed another miracle. *“Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd” (Mark 6:45). “He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. About the fourth watch of the night he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, because they all saw him and were terrified. Immediately he spoke to them and said, “Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.” Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down” (Mark 6:48-51).*

Jesus offered Himself as the perfect, sinless Son of God to pay for our sins past, present and future. *“Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, “We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again” (Luke 18:31-33).*

“As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day” (John 12:47-48).

“Come now, let us reason together,” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they

shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool” (Isaiah 1:18). The cleansing blood of Jesus as the spotless Lamb of God washes away our sins once and for all.

Jesus defeated Satan and eternal death when He rose from the dead to sit at the right hand of the Father and reign over heaven and earth forever. *“Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance” (John 20:1). “Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. ... They have taken my Lord away,” she said, “and I don't know where they have put him.” At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there ...” (John 20:11-14).*

Jesus promised that He will come again for all those who believe and we will live with Him in

eternity. *“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am” (John 14:1-3).*

Our new home in heaven will include new bodies without sickness and without the struggles and sin of this life. *“But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body” (Phillipians 3:20-21).*

This wonderful citizenship we have in heaven has come as the result of being born again.