

Tower of Strength

**“The name of the Lord is a strong tower
The righteous runs into it and is safe.”**

—Proverbs 18:10

A Response to the Gospel

Many people understand salvation as something that must be felt. They are waiting, saying, “I want to know I am going to heaven! I want to know that God loves me! I want to know that my sins are forgiven and that I am saved!”

Compare that to what we see in the conversion accounts in the book of Acts. I cannot think of a single example where an evangelist told a person to wait and see what feelings God would send to him.

But I do see many examples where evangelists told people what they needed to do.

In Acts 9:6, Jesus appeared and said to Saul, “get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do.” Subsequently, Paul found a man named Ananias who preached the gospel to him. What did Ananias tell Paul to do? “Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name” (Acts 22:16).

In Acts 2, Peter preached the gospel of Jesus to a large throng of Jewish listeners. When they were cut to the heart and realized the truth of Peter’s words, they said, “Brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37). And Peter replied, “Repent, and each of you be



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VOL. XXX
NO. 42
October 18, 2015

baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins” (Acts 2:38).

In Acts 16:30, the Philippian jailer witnessed the power of God at work in the lives of Paul and Silas. He approached the two evangelists and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” Before the night was over, He believed the gospel and was baptized, with his whole household.

And so forth, by implication, for all the other accounts of conversion in the book of Acts. The phrase “what you must do” may not appear. But when people hear the gospel, they respond by doing something. The Samaritans, “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” (8:12). The Ethiopian eunuch heard the gospel and cried out, “Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?” (Acts 8:36). There is always a human response.

When the good news of salvation reaches our ears, the primary question is not “Let’s wait and see what God will do,” but rather, “What will I do with what I have heard?” God has already acted. He has already secured our salvation. Jesus declared, “It is finished.” God will do nothing more to secure redemption, which has already been secured by the sacrifice of Jesus. God’s action now focuses on broadcasting to individuals in the world the good news of the salvation, and preparing hearts to receive it (Acts 16:14). The gospel call is not to hear and wait to see what God will do next. The gospel call is to hear what God has done, and now respond to it in faith. God has acted; when we hear the gospel, the ball is in our court.

If we do what God tells us to do, there will be no doubt: we are saved! This fact is as sure as any other promise that God has made. “He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved,” declares Jesus (Mark 16:16). We will know our sins are forgiven. We will know that we abide in God, and He with us. We will know that our destiny is heaven. And with the assurance of salvation, will come the feelings of joy and exultation that we were looking for in the first place!

—John Guzzetta

Quotations on Controlling Anger

The quicker the boil, the emptier the pot. —*proverb*

If you ever speak while you are angry, and you'll make the best speech you'll ever regret. —*Ambrose Bierce*

Anger is momentary madness, so control your passion, or it will control you. —*Horace*

Those who control their anger have great understanding; Those with a hasty temper will make mistakes (Prov. 14:29).

The best vaccine against anger is to watch others struggling in its throes. —*Marcel Proust*

Anger is just one letter short of danger. —*author unknown*

Anger is a superior weapon given by God ... but with a catch. The more you use it, the less effective it becomes. —*Ketan Shah*

A voice in the mountains is enough to let loose an avalanche. A word too much may be followed by devastation. If the word had not been spoken, it would not have happened. —*Victor Hugo*

Life is too short to be mad for too long. —*Judith Harper*

You have heard that the ancients were told, "You shall not commit murder" ... But I say to you, that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court... (Matt. 5:21-22).

I don't preach religion to my players, but I won't tolerate profanity. This isn't for moral reasons. Profanity to me symbolizes loss of self-control; and self-discipline is absolutely necessary to winning basketball. —*Coach John Wooden*