

Acts 2:37-38 (NLT)

*Peter's words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins, turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ to show that you have received forgiveness for your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

If you read this story in chapter 2 of Acts, you read of how Peter shared the gospel and about 3000 were saved.

† Acts 2:41 *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.*

But did you notice what Peter and the disciples answer was when they were asked, "*Men and brethren, what shall we do?*"

They said, "*Each of you must repent of your sins, turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ to show that you have received forgiveness for your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*"

Now notice what Peter didn't say when they were asked this question.

*"Just repeat after me and say this prayer and you will be saved."*

No, Peter didn't even mention a prayer, instead, Peter used that hated "R" word; Repent!

Just say a prayer and you will be saved, and we wonder why so many go back to their old lifestyle. Being saved is not like Burger King, you can't have or do it your way. You must do it the Lord's way, or there is no way you will get to heaven.

So, what is the Lord's way? I think Peter just told us, first you must **Repent** (Note it's not optional, like, I don't want onions on my burger). If you have no intentions of repenting, which means to turn from, your sins. Then you will not be saved, no matter how much you repeat a prayer. Heck, a parrot can repeat something if you tell it the same thing over and over enough times.

Next is to, **turn to God**. As you repent (turn from your old sinful ways) you are leaving the devil and joining God as part of the family of God. Now how cool is that! Also remember in order to **turn to God**, you must **repent**. There is no turning to God without repentance.

Also know that even though you repent of your sins (old lifestyle) it doesn't mean that you still won't mess up, because we all do.

† 1 John 2:1 (NLT) *My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate who pleads our case before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous.*

Finally, you need to **be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ**.

Now baptism is not a requirement to be saved. If it were, then it means that Jesus' death on the cross was not enough, and that you have to do a work (being baptized) in order to get saved.

† **Ephesians 2:8-9** *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

Being baptized is the outward confession that you have chosen to **repent** from your sins and **turn to God**.

*“Ok Steve, I repeated a pray that someone told me to and I meant every word of it, does that mean I am not saved because it didn't happen the same way it did with Peter and 3000 getting saved?”*

No, not at all. If you said the prayer from your heart, understanding and living the words you said, then I think it's safe to say that you are saved. Also you should have seen a change in your life from that time forward, because you are no longer doing the things you used to do (You chose to **repent** and **turn to God**), and even when you do mess up (we all do) you hate it and turn from it, even if it's 50 times a day.

I'm talking about those who repeat a prayer and their life does not change one bit, they don't go to church or read their bible or pray (Except at meal time or when they really, really want something from God)

† **Matthew 7:20 (NLT)** *Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.*

What have your actions since you said the prayer tell about you? Have you changed to be more like Christ, or have become just as much, if not more, like the world?

When you share the gospel, make sure you are giving them the whole story. Go ahead and say a prayer with them, making sure that they understand that they are deciding to **Repent, turn to God** and get **baptized in the name of Jesus Christ**.