

Altar Workers Guide

INTRODUCTION

To be known as a good altar worker is a great compliment to be attributed to any Christian. It is tragic for the Church that more of Her members cannot be identified by such a title. But, thank God, there is a revival of interest among many to become effective altar ministers. These people have felt the pains of disappointment as hungry souls responded to the invitation to receive God's provisions, only to find **no one able to assist them at the altar or in the prayer room.**

This material has been prepared to assist these concerned persons in becoming more effective altar ministers. **IT IS NOT INTENDED TO BE TAKEN AS THE ONLY METHOD TO BE USED IN MINISTERING IN THE ALTAR, BUT AS ONLY ONE OF MANY.**

The altar minister should consider the work of counseling with people who desire to become Christians or to learn more about God a high honor. This work takes second place to no phase of the ministry. The preacher may be used of God to get people to an altar or prayer room. However, at this crucial point, the person who responds to the invitation either goes further and strives to obtain the blessing of God that he needs, or, **after a brief stay at the altar, he returns to his seat.** It is the altar minister who will greatly influence the direction the inquirer will take, and the end result of his accepting the invitation of the preacher to come forward.

Since the work of the altar minister greatly determines the destiny of the candidate, he, for Christ's sake, the Church's sake, the petitioner's sake, and his own sake cannot take this ministry lightly. It cannot be a hit or miss situation. It is judgment work. The Scriptures declare, **"He that winneth souls is wise" (Proverbs 11:30).** Therefore, vitally important areas are discussed in this booklet.

Many people have a vague idea of what is involved in becoming a Christian. However, their idea in most cases is far from the scriptural method. Therefore, the same basic approach can be used with the person who has attended Sunday school but is unsaved and the person who has never before attended any church worship services. The altar minister does not deal in experiences, customs, or theological backgrounds. He ministers the Word of God in a situation where he is in control.

The altar minister must learn a system or plan in which he proceeds from point "A" to point "B" to point "C", etc. It is much like the builder who builds the house. He simply follows the blueprint and the work is accomplished. Likewise, the altar minister simply follows the plan, controlling the conversation by asking questions in a manner to receive the proper answers. He asks questions which will draw positive responses.

It is vitally important that the altar minister control the conversation so that unrelated subjects will not be brought into the discussion. The subject's mind is kept on the central issue and the person is led to accept the Lord Jesus Christ into his heart and life.

Several Scripture references and key words from the passages have been listed at the end of each subject. **The altar minister will need to memorize these passages of Scripture and use the key words to explain each passage.** By utilizing this approach, he will find it very easy to help the candidate understand how to receive the desired experience from the Lord.

The altar minister should work with a person of the same sex and approximately the same age as himself (IDEAL). He should be careful not to be offensive in any manner. He should **avoid unnecessary screaming** in the seeker's ear or **slapping** him on the back, as this may have a disconcerting effect.

This material is designed to be used in personal evangelism outside the church building, as well as at the altar. Regardless of the place or circumstance, may it be used, and used for the glory of God to bring people from darkness into His marvelous light.

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SALVATION

When a person responds to the invitation of the preacher to come forward and accept Christ or receive a deeper experience from the Lord, he is normally very sincere. He is doing what the preacher has suggested. Therefore, it is only reasonable that there should be someone to meet him at the altar and explain further how to receive these blessings from the Lord. The altar minister has this privilege. He is the specialist in this particular area of ministry. The more he studies, prays and applies himself to this ministry, the more proficient he becomes.

When approaching a person in the altar, the first thing the altar minister does is ask, "What would you like for the Lord to do for you tonight/today?" Don't assume you know. **ASK THE QUESTION.** He may know the person needs a deeper spiritual walk with the Lord, but on this particular occasion the candidate may be praying for a friend or someone in need; therefore, it is always imperative to ask the above question.

If the person indicates his need of conversion, the altar minister will need to determine the knowledge of the candidate concerning salvation. If he has little knowledge of being born again, he will of necessity be approached differently than if he is a backslider. (*Are they new? Do they know how to pray? Ask them, "Do you know how to pray?"*)

If he has once known Jesus, he should be asked his reason for turning his back on the Lord. The counselor may ascertain that he is interested in returning to Christ or he would not have come forward. Therefore, the altar minister should influence him to make a commitment by saying, "You desire to again enjoy fellowship with Christ, don't you?" His answer will normally be positive. Assure him that Jesus desires to take him back into His fellowship. Explain that he must return the same way in which he first came to Christ To further solidify the fact that Christ will accept him, have him read in your Bible 1 John 2: 1, 2.

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (You should have this marked in your Bible and also know it from memory.) Have him read the Scripture verses aloud and explain to him that John is writing to Christians, for he called them his "little children". Explain to the person what the word "advocate" means. (An advocate may be defined as a person who pleads for another's cause.) Also, explain to him that propitiation means that the blood-sprinkled body of Christ on the cross became the sacrifice for sinners once and for all. Show the person with whom you are counseling that not only has John promised He will forgive, but Peter received forgiveness after he denied the Lord three times and went out and wept bitterly (repented). "And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly" (Matthew 26:75).

Now that you have learned the person you are dealing with needs salvation, you are ready to begin leading him into a new life in Christ. You need not be timid or backward about directing him toward a decision. The path you are taking him means the difference in his eternal destiny. You are leading him from the fires of hell to the glories of heaven. (*What if you were the last person to speak to them before eternity? Jude 1:23, KJV, And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire... 2 Corinthians 5:11, KJV, Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...*)

Be certain your only motivation is your love for Christ. When a person loves Christ, he automatically loves souls. Because of His death and resurrection, you have life and have been privileged to share it with others who are in the same lost condition as you were before Christ came into your life. Do not stoop to the temptation to be more interested in the number of people you can lead to Christ, rather than the genuineness of their relationship with God.

Your approach is positive. The gospel is a positive message. It brings people from darkness to light, from sin to salvation, from death to life.

(Acts 26:18, KJV, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins...)

Therefore, you cannot afford to be anything but positive. You must be convinced that what you have to say will, through Christ, change the person's life as he follows your instructions. You cannot have any doubts or reservations as to whether the salvation you are advocating through Christ is what the person needs. You also must believe and doubt not that he is going to receive his need while you counsel with him.

(Ask, Believe, Receive - Mark 11:24, KJV, Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.)

(Doubt, Do Without - Matthew 13:58, KJV, And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.)

The Word declares it, you believe it, and the work is done! Jesus said, "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24).

The first step for anyone desiring to become a Christian is to **admit he is a sinner**. Regardless of his position or standing in life, he must realize he is hopelessly lost and there is no way in which he can become a child of God, except through Jesus Christ.

Next, **he must believe**. When Paul and Silas were in jail and began to sing praises at midnight, God sent an earthquake which shook the prison and loosed their bonds. When the keeper of the prison realized these men were free, he assumed they had left and was about to take his own life. When Paul saw this, he cried out to the man, "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." The man, realizing what had taken place, brought Paul and Silas out of the inner prison saying, "**Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**" This statement could have two meanings. One meaning could be that he was interested in saving his physical life. However, Paul and Silas were more interested in spiritual matters and they immediately turned his thoughts to the things of the Spirit saying, "**Believe** on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts 16: 28, 30, 31.)

A person who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6). Therefore, belief in God and in Jesus Christ is absolutely necessary for a man to become a Christian.

Thirdly, **he must confess his sins**. The Bible says, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Proverbs 28:13). The apostle John said, "**If we confess** our sins, **he** is faithful and just to **forgive us** our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

It would be impossible for a person to confess his sins to the Lord one by one, especially if he had lived in sin a number of years. However, he would undoubtedly feel better about his confession if he categorized them in relationship to certain areas of life. He might confess that he

had stolen and that he had committed immoral acts. He might confess that he had used the name of the Lord in vain and that he had been guilty of being a false witness. These are only a few areas of life which can be confessed in sections and the Lord understands.

Not only must he confess, but it is necessary that he repent, which involves being sorrowful with a Godly sorrow. Jesus said, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15). The book of Acts records, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19).

The preceding verse of Scripture which mentions confessing sins also says these sins are to be forsaken if a man is to have mercy. Therefore, to become a child of God a man must repent of his sins. He may believe, he may confess, he may admit that he is a sinner, but he **MUST** repent of these sins and turn from them. For him to repent means that he forsakes his sins (old things are passed away), and he lays aside and rejects all those sins the Bible condemns.

*(2 Corinthians 5:17, KJV, Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is **a new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.)*

*(Galatians 6:15, KJV, For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but **a new creature**.)*

(Babes do not have a past - John 3:3, KJV, Jesus answered and said ... Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.)

The Scriptures record that people repented at the preaching of Jonah. "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here" (Matthew 12:41).

Christ said, "I tell you, Nay: but, **except ye repent**, ye shall all likewise **perish**" (Luke 13:3). From these Scripture passages, there can be no doubt that one of the most important parts of becoming a Christian is true and sincere repentance.

Another vitally important element of a person's becoming a Christian is that he receive Jesus Christ into his life. John said, "As many as received him, to them gave he **power to become the sons of God**" (John 1:12). A person must receive Christ as his Savior and Lord. He must accept the fact that Christ died in his stead; that He suffered the cruel and humiliating death of crucifixion in order that he might have life and that he might have it more abundantly. Though a man repent and follow the other steps mentioned, until **he receives Christ into his heart**, he will not receive life. The Bible says, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. **He that hath the Son hath life**; and he that hath not, the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:11, 12). And the beauty of this is, there is no set or particular time when a man must do this. He may receive Him at home, at work, at play, or at church. Jesus says, "Behold, **I stand at the door, and knock**: if any man **hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in** to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20).

When a man realizes he is a sinner and Jesus Christ is his only hope for the remission of sins (this is sometimes called conviction) he is then in a condition to receive Christ into his life. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. He is searching for man and He is willing and ready at any moment to forgive those who confess and forsake their sins. Godly sorrow worketh repentance, and when Jesus sees that a man is truly sorry for his sins, He begins to knock at his heart's door and will come in the moment that door is opened.

As an altar minister it is your responsibility to lead the person who is hungry for the Lord through the above steps. You do this **by explaining the Word of God in a simple, systematic method**. You may follow a similar conversational outline as this in explaining the plan of salvation. If the person you are working with has doubts and reservations concerning the validity of the Scriptures, do not attempt to convince him of its reliability. The Bible does not need to be defended. Use the **Word—it is powerful and sharp** and God promises that when used, "**It shall not return unto me void**" (Isaiah 55:11).

Lead the conversation in a normal, casual way with his conversion as your goal. Do not be so nonchalant that you appear to be insincere; neither be so "preachy" that you appear over anxious. Just simply be natural.

You are aware that he needs salvation. Therefore, you should ask him to read Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned. and come short of the glory of God." Explain to him that to sin is to break the law of God and name a few of the Ten Commandments—thou shalt not steal, kill, commit adultery, bear false witness, etc. The Holy Ghost will drive into his conscience that he is guilty. Give the Spirit time to work. Make an appropriate statement similar to this. "There is no doubt that we have all sinned, is there?"

Ask him if he knows the consequence of sin. Regardless of his reply, respond appropriately and say, "Let's look at what the Scriptures say", and have him read Romans 6:23: "For **the wages of sin is death** ..." Explain that as breaking the physical law demands a penalty, so does breaking the spiritual law. This wage is death—the absence of real life—and eternal death. Give the Holy Ghost time to work. Don't rush the candidate. The Word will have its effect as the Spirit reproves him.

"The picture isn't too bright for the sinner, is it?" After his response, say, "But there is a bright side. Let's read the rest of verse 23: 'But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord'."

(I like better, Revelation 21:8, KJV, ... all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. Ask the question, how many banks do you have to rob before you are a bank robber? One! How many lies do you need to tell before you are a liar? One!)

"Did you notice that the verse of Scripture said God has something for you? What is it?" His response will be. "A gift." "And that gift is eternal life. You've received gifts before; well, now you may receive the gift of gifts—eternal life. Isn't that wonderful?" (Response.)

(Perhaps put some money in a book/Bible. In order to receive the money, you must accept the book/Bible.)

"The question is, how does a person receive this gift?" Ask him to read Acts 3:19: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."

"What do you need to do to get rid of sin?" His response will be, "Repent."

"Do you know what it means to repent?" Wait for his response, make an appropriate comment and then explain "To repent means that you are sorry for the sins you have committed and you desire to turn from them. You confess your sins to God, promising not to return to sinful practices and you ask Him to forgive you for those sins."

"What did the Bible say God would do when a person repents?" His response will probably be, "He will blot out his sins."

"That's right, when a person truly repents, his sins are blotted out. God forgives and forgets his sins. Isn't that great?" (Response.)

"Now, let's look at the next step to receiving this eternal life." Turn to John 1:12 and have him read, "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."

"How does this verse of Scripture say a person becomes a son (child) of God?" His response will probably be, "By receiving Christ."

"That's exactly right. Now notice there is a tremendous difference in believing and receiving. It is necessary to not only believe that Jesus saves; you must receive Him into your life as Savior and Lord." Hold out your Bible and ask, "You believe this is a Bible, don't you?" (Response.) "But you don't have it. Reach out your hand and take it." (Let him take it.) "Now you have received it."

(Perhaps, offer a "gift Bible" as some keep a supply on hand.)

"Many, many people today believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of the world, but have never received Him into their lives by a personal invitation."

"He must be received as Savior. This means a person confesses his sins and asks God to forgive them. The person puts all his hopes for salvation in Jesus alone for He alone can save. No preacher, priest or church—only Jesus."

Take a brief moment and review, "So all have sinned, the consequences of sin are horrible, but God loves us and desires to make us His children and give us the gift of eternal life."

"Now let us look at this last verse." Turn to **Revelation 3:20**, "**Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.**"

"This is Jesus speaking and He desires to come into the door of your heart right now! You came to the altar because you wanted to become a Christian. Jesus met you here for He wants to come into your heart. Isn't that wonderful? The two of you met here and both desire the same thing—that you become a Christian."

"Now do you know of any reason why you cannot open the door to your heart, invite Christ in and become a Christian right now?" Wait for a response.

"Do you understand the things we've discussed regarding your becoming a Christian?" Wait for his response. If he has a question, answer it and continue.

"Do you believe that God will save you?" (Response.)

"Do you believe that He will forgive you tonight/today?" (Response.)

"Do you believe He will accept you as His child right now?" (Response.)

"All right, let's pray and ask God to forgive you of your sins and allow Him to come into your life."

It may be necessary for you to pray aloud and have the candidate repeat after you. He may not know how to pray. If so, pray a **sinner's prayer** similar to this with him repeating after you:
Almighty God, I thank You for this opportunity to pray to You. I know I am a sinner and I have broken Your laws. Lord, I am sorry for those sins. I ask You to forgive me of my sins. From this time I promise You I will forsake sin and follow Jesus and His teachings. I here and now accept Him as my Savior and receive Him into my life as Lord. I accept Christ as Master and turn my life over to Him. Amen.

"Did you sincerely mean that prayer?" (Response.)

"What happened then? Did you receive Christ? Where?"

Are you sure that He is there in your heart?" (Response.)

"Let us look at one final Scripture passage." Have him read 1 John 5:11, 12: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

"These verses declare that you have eternal life because you have Jesus in your heart. Praise God, isn't that wonderful? Do you know there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels because of your accepting Christ? I think we should rejoice also, don't you? Let us praise and worship

"Do you believe He will accept you as His child right now?" (Response.)

"All right, let's pray and ask God to forgive you of your sins and allow Him to come into your life."

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"These verses declare that you have eternal life because you have Jesus in your heart. Praise God, isn't that wonderful? Do you know there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels because of your accepting Christ? I think we should rejoice also, don't you? Let us praise and worship God together."

You might also encourage him by assuring him that any temptation which comes his way can be overcome through Christ. Have him read 1 Corinthians 10:13: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Below are Scripture references to be used and the key words from each verse:

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE	KEY WORD(S)
Romans 3:23	All; sinned
Romans 6:23	Wages; death
Proverbs 28:13	Confesseth; forsaketh
Acts 3:19	Repent; sins blotted
John 1:12	Received; sons of God
Revelation 3:20	Knock; open; come in

SANCTIFICATION

There is not as much preaching regarding sanctification now as there has been in times past; nevertheless, this does not in any way eliminate or take away from the importance and the power of the doctrine of Bible sanctification. The experience is scriptural and necessary for those who desire to walk close to the Lord.

Because of much unscriptural teaching concerning this subject, many people have concluded that it is not Biblical. Some who have preached this doctrine meant well and were most sincere, but passages of Scripture were taken out of context to prove certain points which the minister himself felt constrained to declare because of personal convictions. This has greatly damaged the acceptance of the truth of sanctification.

It must be realized that as long as a man is in the flesh, he will have his own personality and he will have certain traits which are natural for him. One may be an **extrovert** while his brother may be an **introvert**. One person may be sharp spoken while another is **very quiet and timid**. One may be adventurous while on the other hand his close friend may be right the opposite. None of these are a result of the Adamic nature. It is the personality of the man himself. **Sanctification does not alter every aspect of one's personality**. Of course, it will help to balance a man who is given to extremes. Sanctification as discussed here involves inbred sin or the Adamic nature, as we shall call it. The experience of conversion is the most important step and is the foundation on which other and deeper experiences are to be erected. The new birth erases the guilt of a person's sins and makes him a child of God, but it does not eliminate sin inherited through the disobedience of Adam. It is necessary to lead the new convert into the truth that this sinful nature must be eradicated and that God has provided the way through sanctification.

When a person is converted, his own sins are forgiven him. He has a new life. The slate is clean. However, the root of sin inherited from Adam has not been removed. The desire to be involved in the world and commit things which are not pleasing to God will be reactivated unless the root of these desires is removed. This is accomplished by an instantaneous act of grace known as sanctification.

The first step for the new convert to become **sanctified is to sanctify (set apart) himself**. He does this by presenting himself to the Lord and in essence saying, "Lord, here I am. I reject every aspect of the world and all which is within the world that is unlike You. Take me as I am and sanctify me holy. Take each part of me and set me apart for Your use."

The man then asks the Lord to apply the blood of Jesus Christ through the Holy Ghost to his heart and cleanse him from all desires which are unlike the Lord. He sincerely, reverently and conscientiously asks the Lord to remove the root of sin which was placed in him through Adam.

With the same faith it took for him to be born again, the man accepts the fact that the Holy Ghost has applied the blood of Jesus Christ to his heart and life and that the Adamic nature has been eradicated. When the man believes and accepts that God has accomplished this work, joy will fill his heart and soul. He will be thrilled that the Adamic nature, which is the root of the problems and sins of the world, has been crucified in his life.

It is then necessary that he confess this act of faith to man. The Bible says, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:10). Salvation means more than just being saved. It's literal meaning is deliverance. Of course, we are first delivered from our sins and through **the second work of grace**, we are **delivered from the old man or Adamic nature** inbred in us.

Through this act the individual has been freed from the Adamic nature. As a man continues to walk in this experience, he has victory over the power of the enemy. He has the blood of Christ applied to his heart and through this blood and his testimony, he is made an over-comer.

As an altar minister you are to explain the above to the candidate. Again, proceed in a positive manner and explain briefly the experience of sanctification. You will want to explain that we were all born in sin, using the verse Psalm 51:5, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Explain to the person that since the willful disobedience of Adam in the Garden of Eden, every person who has been born in the world since then, with the exception of Christ, has had this sinful or rebellious nature in him.

You will then need to explain that when a person confesses his sins, he is forgiven of his sins, but the sin of Adam still remains within him. This is removed by sanctification.

The person presents himself to the Lord as commanded by Paul in Romans 12:1: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice." This is necessary for God to sanctify a person. Sanctification is simply consecration on his part, and purification on God's part. His consecration must be complete. He can hold back nothing from God and expect Him to sanctify him. He must place the past, present and future in His hands and give Him an eternal "yes" to His will. The candidate must be willing to consecrate, and actually yield and give all to God.

The **next step** is for the person to **believe** God actually accepts that consecration, and, according to God's promises, **He will now sanctify him**. Many people falter here. They place themselves on the altar, but do not believe God will sanctify them. "Whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?" (Matthew 23:19). When we fully consecrate ourselves to God, He then takes this gift and sanctifies it by the Holy Ghost. "... That the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, **being sanctified by the Holy Ghost**" (Romans 15:16). Consecration is not sanctification, but it is the antecedent and condition for sanctification. Faith is the coupling link between the human consecration and the divine act of sanctification. It is not enough for the candidate to believe that He can, or that He will, but he must believe that God actually does hear, and now sanctifies him.

(Think of cleaning up a home or apartment before moving in.)

Many people falter and stumble on the brink of receiving this experience. They are seeking to feel the experience rather than to accept it. It is not possible to feel or witness something you do not possess. You cannot possess or feel sanctification until by faith you accept the blessing promised. "... That **they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me**" (Acts 26:18). We are not sanctified because we feel; rather, we feel because we are sanctified. Too many people want to feel this before they believe, but this is contrary to Scripture.

As an altar minister, it is your privilege to explain this to people in your own words using the Scriptures as a foundation.

As with leading people to Christ, it may be necessary for the altar minister to lead the person in prayer having him to repeat after him. You may use a prayer similar to this:

Lord God, I thank You for saving me. There is no doubt in my mind that I am a child of God because of my acceptance of Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord. Now, Lord, I desire to follow You further and to be sanctified. I sanctify myself by laying my motives, my attitudes, my desires, and everything that is unlike You on the altar. I sacrifice it to You and ask You to accept this sacrifice and cleanse me and sanctify me through the precious blood of Jesus Christ. I know You heard me when I asked You to save me. And now I believe You hear me again. Through faith, I accept the cleansing blood of Christ for my sanctification in the name of Jesus. Thank You, Lord, for sanctifying me. I accept the experience of sanctification. Thank You, Lord. Thank You, Lord. Amen.

You may then ask the person to praise the Lord audibly. As he praises and worships the Lord his faith will be increased and he will experience the feeling of joy that accompanies sanctification.

(Illustrations: Weeds can be cut but the roots must be removed. With a spider's web, the web can be removed but the spider must be destroyed. Cups.)

Below are Scripture references to be used and the key words from each verse:

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE	KEY WORD(S)
Romans 5:12	One man; sin entered
Psalms 51:5	In sin; conceive
2 Timothy 2:21	Purge; sanctified
Hebrews 13:12	Sanctify; blood
Hebrews 10:10	Sanctified; offering; body
1 John 1:7-9	Blood; sin; cleanse; unrighteousness
1 Thes. 4:3	Will: God: Sanctification
Rom.15:16	Sanctified by: Holy Ghost

HOLY GHOST

The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the capstone and seal of the believer's new life, as well as his empowering for service. Many people have been taught that when they receive Christ into their life they also have the Holy Ghost. When a person is converted, his life is under the influence of the Holy Ghost. Speaking of the Holy Ghost, Jesus said to his disciples, "**He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you**" (John 14:17). *(It's the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.)*

Jesus promised the disciples He would send a comforter when He had ascended to the Father.

John 14:16 (KJV) And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; After His resurrection and just prior to His ascension, He told His Disciples to "be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence (Acts 1:5).

These verses of Scripture show mainly though they were followers of Christ they had not yet been filled with the Holy Ghost.

The book of Acts records four occasions of people receiving the Holy Ghost. In each case these people were already followers of the Lord prior to their baptism in the Spirit.

These events are:

1. At Pentecost (**Acts 2**). These were the apostles, the Mother of Jesus, and other followers of the Lord.
2. At Samaria (**Acts 8**). These people had believed as a result of the preaching of Philip and had seen many miracles performed; yet **they had not received the Holy Ghost**.
3. At the home of Cornelius (**Acts 10**). Cornelius was acquainted with God and an angel had visited him before Peter came and preached. **While Peter preached to them the Holy Ghost fell and they were filled**.

4. At Ephesus (**Acts 19**). These **people had repented** of their sins, were disciples of John, accepted Christ **and then were baptized in the Spirit**.

It is easily seen that in each case these persons were followers of the Lord prior to their baptism in the Holy Ghost.

Many people today believe this filling or baptism was just for the days of the apostles. However, Peter declared, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off (Acts 2:39). **History verifies** that people have received the baptism of the Spirit and have spoken with tongues in every era of time since Pentecost. The Church leaders in the book of Acts were concerned about people receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost. "Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:15). "And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou earnest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 9:17). The Scriptures declare Christ to be the same yesterday, today and forever. Therefore, we can be certain that it is His desire for His followers to be filled with the Holy Ghost in this Twentieth Century.

(See COGOP tract, History of Tongues)

There are some questions as to how long an interval there should be between a man being saved, sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost. There are no precedents set in Scripture, therefore, when a person is completely yielded to the Lord, he may be converted, sanctified, and filled with the Spirit in a short while, as were the people at the house of Cornelius. In the case of Saul, it was three days. In the case of the Samaritans and the Ephesians, there was apparently a few weeks span between the time of their first walk with the Lord and the time they were filled with the Holy Ghost. With the apostles, it was some three to three and a half years.

As an altar minister, not only do you need to be able to show the candidate that the Holy Ghost baptism is for our day, but, you also need to explain to him how to receive this experience. Your conversation might follow this line:

"You do believe that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is for you, don't you?" (Response.)

"You do believe that the Lord will baptize you with the Holy Ghost, don't you?" (Response.)

"Do you believe that He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost now?" (Response.)

(Or perhaps lead rather than ask.)

After receiving a positive commitment on each of these questions, you are then ready to explain the Scripture passages regarding receiving the Holy Ghost. There is no set pattern as to how a person should receive this third Person of the Godhead. Some have received Him while singing a

song, others while praising and worshiping God at the altar, still others as hands were laid on them. The methodology is not so important as is the receiving of the Spirit. Continue with this line of conversation:

"Since you know the Holy Ghost is for you and you believe you will receive Him tonight, let me assist you in knowing how to yield to the Spirit."

"The Holy Ghost is a gift from God for His children. **In a few moments you are going to receive this gift** and accept the third Person of the Godhead into your life. This will give you greater power to serve the Lord in your life. You will become a more effective Christian in your witness and will be able to testify with boldness. You would like that, wouldn't you?"
(Response.)

(Or, at the moment of your obedience, you will receive - Acts 5:32, KJV, ...the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.)

For you to receive the Holy Ghost, you must desire Him. A verse of Scripture says, 'Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled' (Matthew 5:6). It is evident that you desire to be filled since you have come to the altar." (Response.)

"The next step is for you to ask for the Holy Ghost. Jesus said, 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall **your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?**' (Luke 11:13).

Notice He said shall, not maybe or perhaps—He gave a definite promise." (Response.)

"Now, **you must believe** that the Holy Ghost is for you. The Bible says, 'What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them' (**Mark 11:24**). You have already stated that you believe the Lord is going to fill you with the Holy Ghost tonight, and rightly so. We have just discussed two promises our Savior made, stating emphatically that you may have the desires of your heart. And you desire the Holy Ghost." (Response.)

"Now, you must obey the Spirit of the Lord and yield to it. Peter, speaking in regard to the Holy Ghost, said, '. . . Whom God hath given to them that obey him' (Acts 5:32). You are willing to obey Him, aren't you?" (Response.)

(Consider: Ask - Luke 11:13; Believe - Mark 11:24; Receive - John 20:22; Obey - Acts 5:32. Say PTL.)

It is sometimes very difficult for people to know how to yield or to obey the Spirit. Because of unscriptural teachings, they are afraid to yield themselves to the Spirit for fear they will be in the flesh rather than in the Spirit. One reason for this is that many people feel when the Holy

Ghost baptism comes they will be completely knocked out and will have no idea what is taking place. Perhaps this has happened in some cases, but it is the exception rather than the rule. The person who desires to be filled with the Holy Ghost must yield his entire being to the Lord for the Lord's use. He must realize the Holy Ghost is a Spirit and therefore He does not have a body; He does not have a human voice; He does not have vocal chords; He does not have a tongue, and therefore, the candidate must yield all of these faculties to the Spirit for Him to use as He sees fit.

"Wouldn't you like to speak with tongues as the Spirit gives you utterance? Do you believe that you can? Do you believe you will?" (Response.)

(How will you know? They spoke with tongues. Acts 2:4; Acts 10:45-46; Acts 19:6.)

"Are you ready now to receive this great gift of the Holy Ghost from the Lord as they did in Bible days?" (Response.)

You must be careful that the candidate is not led to desire to receive tongues rather than the Holy Ghost. Help him understand that a person speaks with tongues as the Spirit gives the utterance after he receives the Holy Ghost. **He does not receive the Holy Ghost because he speaks with tongues.**

Acts 2:4—"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

Acts 10:44-46—"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God."

Acts 19:6—"And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."

The speaking with tongues as the Spirit gives the utterance is the initial evidence of a person receiving the Holy Ghost.

"I want us to pray together and I want you to thank the Lord for saving you and sanctifying you and in faith thank Him for the Holy Ghost that you are going to receive. I want you to tell the Lord you are convinced the gift is for you and that you are expecting to receive Him. Jesus said, 'If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.' In a few moments, as I lay my hands on you, let us believe and agree together for God to fill you with the Holy Ghost. You can receive this gift now!"

When you feel the person is genuinely worshiping the Lord, lay your hands on him, as an aid to his faith, as you exercise your faith in God's Word. If you have led him properly he should receive the baptism of the Spirit in an instant. Do not be surprised if he does, but rather be surprised if he does not.

Do not allow the candidate to beg or get in a frame of tarrying. This destroys faith and should not be. There is no record in the New Testament that anyone tarried or waited for the Holy Ghost after Pentecost. *(They worshiped and praised!)*

Below are Scripture references to be used and the key words from each verse:

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE	KEY WORD(S)
Jn. 20:22	Receive: Holy Ghost
Acts 2:1-4	Filled; speak; tongues
Acts 10:44-46	Fell on; speak; tongues
Acts 19:1-6	Hands; came on; spake; tongues
Acts 5:32	Obey

TO BE RECLAIMED SCRIPTURE REFERENCE	KEY WORD(S)
1 Jn. 2:1	Sin Not: If Sin: Advocate (Lawyer)
Is. 1:18	Sins — Scarlet: White — Snow

PERSONAL PROBLEMS

Occasionally people come to the altar to pray about personal problems. Here the altar minister will have opportunity to counsel with the candidate and point him to the Scriptures. Below are listed some of the most common problems with helpful Scripture references and key words to assist the altar minister.

CONFIDENCE	
Proverbs 14:26	Fear; refuge
Galatians 6:9	Reap; faint not
Philippians 4:13	Can do all things

DEPRESSION	
1 John 5:14, 15	Ask; heareth
Ephesians 5:18-21	Filled; singing; thanks; submitting
Matthew 7:11	Good things; ask

DISCOURAGEMENT

Joshua 1:9 Be strong; God is with thee
Psalm 27:14 Wait; strengthen
John 16:33 Be of good cheer

FEAR

Psalm 27:1 Whom shall I fear
Romans 8:31 God be for us
2 Timothy 1:7 Power; love; sound mind

FORGIVING OTHERS

Matthew 6:12 As we forgive
Ephesians 4:32 Forgiving; forgiven
Colossians 3:13 Forgiving; forgave

GUIDANCE

Psalm 32:8 Teach; eye
Isaiah 30:21 Hear; way
Luke 1:79 Feet; way

GUILT

Psalm 86:5 Ready; plenteous; mercy
Romans 8:1 No condemnation; spirit
1 John 1:9 Faithful; cleanse

PEACE OF MIND

John 14:27 I leave; I give
Romans 5:1 Justified; peace
Colossians 3:15 Rule

PROTECTION

Psalm 34:7 Angel; encampeth
Psalm 34:17 Righteous; heareth; delivereth
Romans 14:8 Live; die; the Lord's

TEMPTATION

1 Cor. 10:12, 13 Way of escape
Hebrews 2:18 Succour
James 1:14 Own lust

THOUGHTS

Psalm 119:11	Word; hid; not sin
Proverbs 15:26	Abomination; pleasant
Proverbs 23:7	Thinketh

VICTORY

Romans 8:37	Conqueror
1 Corinthians 15:57	Giveth
2 Thessalonians 3:3	Keep

WORRY

Philippians 4:6, 7	Peace; keep
Philippians 4:19	Shall supply
1 Peter 5:7	Care upon Him

CONCLUSION

This is but an introduction to the vital work of altar ministry. The method presented here is only one of many and in no way is to be taken as the only way. Neither is this material meant to give the idea that if a person has not studied it they are not to minister at the altar. Thousands of very effective altar workers have been instrumental in helping many, many people to receive the desired spiritual help long before this material was written.

We are individuals and God so deals with us. Therefore, let us labor together with God for His glory and the edification of the Body of Christ.

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