

Easter

Written by Rev. Julia Schwert

I get excited when I think about Easter. It is **not** the Easter Bunny, the colored eggs, or the candy that excites me. Although, I must admit, I do enjoy the eggs and candy and watching kiddos run to collect Easter eggs supposedly hidden by the Easter Bunny. **Easter** is special because **it is the reason** I received my **1st Gift** from my Heavenly Father – **Salvation!**

God's gifts **don't stop** at salvation. Salvation is the **FIRST gift** God has given us **with promise!** *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God"* Ephesians 2:8-9. The promise that came with salvation is **eternal life in God's presence**. You will have eternal life after you leave this world; however, **only salvation through Jesus** is the **key** to **being in the presence of God** upon your physical death. Remember in John 14:6 when Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." God does not stop giving us gifts; but **we can stop receiving** them if we so choose. What a sad day that is—when we reject gifts from God!

After salvation when you asked Jesus to forgive you of your sins and be the Lord of your life, the next gift you **should desire** is to **give yourself to Him** in an outward sign of water baptism. **Water baptism won't save you**. Water baptism doesn't make you any more saved than someone else. **Water baptism isn't the way to heaven**; but it is very important in the spirit realm. Water baptism is a **public sign** that says, "Yes, I am going to live for the Lord, and I want others to know that."

Another gift freely given to us after we have received salvation is the **Holy Ghost**. He is so important to receive. He brings comfort, peace, and guidance into our life if we seek Him. He will be our teacher when we want to know the truth of anything. He is the revealer to us. He brings us joy, contentment, and love when we are in need. Neither God nor Jesus left us alone in this world. The **Holy Ghost is always present** to help us in any situation. John 14:26 says, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." To receive Him all you have to do is ask God, just like you did when you accepted salvation by asking Jesus to take away your sins, you ask God to fill you with **His very presence**; the **Holy Ghost** will come in and abide inside of you. He will come in **by faith** just like it was **by faith** that you received salvation.

Everything we receive from God our Father is **by faith!** That is powerful! If you ask Him, according to His will for your life and expect to receive what you ask Him for, He **will grant** your request. In the case of us asking for forgiveness or for the Holy Ghost, God **will always say, "YES!!!!"** He will never deny His children His power in their lives!