

What Must I Do To Be Lost ?

Text : **Ephesians 2: 1-10**

INTRODUCTION :

A. Last week we looked at the most profound question ever asked.

1. It was asked by the jailer of a prison in the Roman colony of Philippi.
2. There was a great earthquake which opened the doors of the prison.
3. Thinking the prisoners had escaped he was about to kill himself, but was given assurance from within that they were all there.
4. Upon hearing that, he understood something miraculous had happened and asked, ***“What must I do to be saved.”***

B. In answer to that profound question we observed the scriptures to teach :

1. One must realize that he is spiritually lost and seek salvation, reconciliation.
2. He must seek after and develop faith in the one true God.
 - a. Observing the creation makes one aware there is a creator.
 - b. One powerful enough to create the world has a will for His creation.
 - c. It is the responsibility of man to seek out the will of his creator.
3. In seeking after God one will learn of the salvation God provided in Jesus.
 - a. He must believe in Jesus as the very incarnation of God on earth.
 - b. He must trust in the vicarious death of Jesus as the sacrifice that atones for his sin.
4. Faith in Jesus will motivate the true believer to change his values and his lifestyle.
 - a. He will no longer live to please himself, but to please the one who died for him.
 - b. His new lifestyle will make him observably different from those around about him.
5. Because of his faith, he will not be embarrassed by the difference, but will proudly profess his faith in God and His Christ to all.
6. One who has faith will want to solemnize his relationship with God in baptism.

C. BUT ... let us now consider the opposite scenario.

1. What about those who do not want to be saved ?
 - a. We've all known people who live for themselves without regard for God.
 - b. We've all observed those wicked people who have no regard for what is right.
2. We meet more and more people who do not even believe God exists.

BUT ... We've never heard anyone ask, “What must I do to be lost ?”

I. What must I do to be LOST ? Basically not much at all.

A. The world is lost.

1. **Eph. 2: 1-3** ... Those who live according to the normal course of the world are lost.
2. **Rom. 3: 23** ... All of those in the world fall short of the glory of God.

B. Jesus died to make salvation available to all, but not all are saved.

1. Jesus taught that few would be saved :
 - a. **Matt. 7: 13-14** Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. **14** For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it. (*Must seek and choose it.*)
 - b. Jesus concluded the parable of the wedding feast with :
Matt. 22: 14 – For many are called, but few are chosen. (*PC says most saved.*)
2. This was the lesson of the great flood :
 - a. **II Pet. 2: 5** ... Noah, the preacher proclaimed the message of salvation.
 - b. Salvation was available to all who would enter the ark. (*few = only 8 saved*)
 - c. When the door was closed, the opportunity was over ... **all outside perished.**

C. Sin is a global pandemic.

1. **Rom. 3: 10, 23** ... It infects every person on earth.
2. **Rom. 6: 23** ... It kills everyone it infects.

** Thus, those who follow the crowd are lost eternally. (May fit in on earth, not in Heaven.)*

II. What must I do to be LOST ? Just strive to be a good person.

A. All will agree the very wicked deserve to be lost ... eternally condemned to Hell.

1. Saddam Hussein
2. Murders (e.g., Home invaders who torture, rape, rob and kill their victims.)
3. Some would even add politicians and lawyers to that list. ☺

B. Some have difficulty accepting that “good people” deserve to be eternally lost.

1. We all know nice people who don't do really bad things. (*We want them saved.*)
2. We know of philanthropist who do many good works to help multitudes of people.
3. What about the heroes who give their lives to save others ? (*What about their sin?*)

** How could a just God send someone to Hell who saved thousands of lives ?*

C. No one can be good enough to earn Heaven. It's given as a gift; it can't be earned.

1. To save one sinner on the basis of merit would be so unjust as to discredit God.
2. Imagine God sending Jesus to die to save people who could have saved themselves.
3. **Rom. 3: 23** – for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (*less than perfect*)

D. All sin MUST be punished.

1. **Rom. 6: 23** – For the wages of sin is death, ... (Cf. **Ezek. 18:4** .. sin = death)
2. Some sins are more severely punished than others.
Mark 12: 40 – who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers; these will receive greater condemnation. (Cf. **Lk. 12:47**)
3. **HOWEVER**, all have the option to have their sins forgiven **in** Christ Jesus.

Col. 1: 13-14 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, **14** in whom we have **redemption**, the forgiveness of sins.

** Righteous living is commendable,
but all who seek salvation on their own merit are lost .*

III. What must I do to be LOST ? Seek to approach God in my own way.**A. Some make excuses :**

1. God is all around in nature; one doesn't have to go to church. (*hunting or fishing*)
2. When I want to be close to God I go hiking in the mountains. (*unilateral feeling*)

B. Others will say, "I just obey the 10 commandments." (*Saying, Don't need Jesus*)

1. The Ten Commandments come from God and are good to observe, **BUT** they never were the complete revelation of God or even a plan of salvation.
2. What do you do when you fall short and violate one of the commands ?
 - a. Do you offer sacrifices ? (**Heb. 10:4**)
 - b. There is forgiveness **ONLY** in Jesus the Christ.

C. The opinions of man have no value; only those of the sovereign God have sway.

1. From times of old we have been warned :
Prov 14:12 – There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death
2. Cf. **Matt 7: 21** – Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of ...

D. As was foretold, there are many erring messages being taught. (II Tim. 4: 1-5)

1. They will sound good and will convincingly use a few scriptures. (II Pet. 3: 16)
2. Not everything that is taught in the name of Christ is of Christ. (I John 4: 1)
3. PC aside, there's only one way and Satan will do his best to lure folks away from it.
 - a. **John 14: 6 .. cf .. Eph. 4: 1-6**
 - b. Jesus offers a way to be saved, but many are choosing their own way.
 - c. A pardon is only valid if accepted, e.g., **George Wilson 1829 ...** *see end note*

** Jesus offers pardon to all, but the pardon must be accepted on HIS terms.*

IV. What must I do to be LOST ? Delay obedience to the gospel. (accept pardon)**A. Governor Felix is the classic example :**

Acts 24: 25 – But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, “Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you.”

B. Many today have a similar attitude.

1. They don't want to face the reality or the consequences of their sin.
2. “I will enjoy my sinful life now, but I will repent before I die.” (*Have NO faith*)

C. Being faithless, they do not realize their peril.

1. There is no guarantee of tomorrow, but no one plans to die.
 - a. In Oak Grove, Alabama, at November 30, 1954 at 2:46 p.m., 31 yr. old Ann Hodges had laid down on her couch to take a nap when a meteorite the size of a grapefruit crashed through the roof and struck while she slept.
 - b. Latrell Dunbar, a junior fullback for D'Iberville High School in Miss., collapsed on the football field during a game and died of a heart attack.
2. God warns us of the peril of being caught unprepared to meet Him.
 - a. A prosperous farmer had everything going for him but died. **Luke 12: 13-21**
 - b. He made his plans for a great future, but spent it in torment.

D. The day is set (Act 17), but there will be no warning before judgment arrives.

1. Judgment is spoken of as coming “like a thief in the night.” **I Thes. 5: 2 , II Pet 3: 10**
2. Even Jesus Himself does not know the day of His return.

Mark 13: 32 – But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in Heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. One must live ready !

** Those who delay their obedience to the gospel are risking being lost eternally.*

V. What must I do to be LOST ? Respond to the gospel, but not serve God.

A. Many go through the forms of obeying the gospel and then just go their way.

1. To become a Christian is to become a servant of God.

Rom. 6: 17-18 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, **18** and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

2. Slaves or servants **DO** things. (*Not just believe things*)

- a. **Eph. 2: 10** – For we are His workmanship, **created** in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

- b. **James 1: 22-24** ... We deceive ourselves if our religion is just an academic pursuit.

B. Christians are called out of the world to perform the duties of a holy priest.

1. **I Pet. 2: 9** – But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, **so that you may proclaim** the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

2. Beyond staying holy, the duties of a priest include :

- a. Teaching (**Mal. 2: 7**)

- b. Proclaiming (**Rom. 1: 8**)

- c. Interceding (**I Tim. 2: 1-2**)

C. Jesus told parables to illustrate our servanthood.

1. The parable of the talents (**Matt. 25: 15-28**) judge by our performance.
2. The parable of the two brothers (**Matt. 21: 28-32**) judged on keep commitment.
3. The parable of the 10 virgins (**Matt. 25: 1-13**) judged on maintaining readiness.

** Those who want to be lost stop serving before reaching the finish line.(cf.– **II Tim. 4: 7**)*

VI. What must I do to be LOST ? Reject God.

A. Today, more and more people are rejecting the very idea of God. (*Popular trend*)

1. Increasingly, those who worship God are ridiculed as ignorant, as superstitious, etc.
2. Science has become a religion.
 - a. Men place their faith in their own minds and the knowledge they acquire.
 - b. It is God who gave man his mind and his ability to learn and to develop.

B. Science is supposed to be about the quest for truth and understanding, but it has become biased to the point of intellectual dishonesty.

1. Scientists now start off with presuppositions.
 - a. There is no God or spiritual realm.
(* *Some will entertain the idea that God may be spacemen who visited earth.*)
 - b. They presuppose that man can know and can understand everything.
 2. They accept as fact “theories” that cannot be proven by the scientific method.
 - a. Evolution ... *Accepted by faith*
 - b. Big Bang ... *Accepted by faith*
- (* *They will not accept God because He cannot be observed, but accept these by faith.*)

C. Universal acceptance or rejection neither proves nor disproves. GOD IS !!

1. The world universally accepted that the earth was flat.
2. It was formerly believed that sickness could be cured by draining polluted blood.
3. In our youth we were told we were going into an ice age, now we’re going to bake.

*** *Those who reject God for any reason have answered the question “What must I do to be lost ?”***

CONCLUSION :

A. To be lost one must only :

1. Follow the crowd and lead a satisfying life. (*Be like everyone else.*)
2. Just do one’s best to be a good person.
3. Seek to approach God in one’s own way.
4. Believe the gospel, but delay obeying it.
5. Accept the gospel, but fail to surrender and serve God.
6. Reject God.

B. On the other hand, to be saved :

1. One must acknowledge his lost condition and seek reconciliation with God.
2. He must believe that God is and that He rules sovereignly over His creation.
3. He must put his trust in Jesus the risen Christ and His sacrifice for man’s sins.
4. Because of His faith he must commit his life to serving God and living a holy life.
5. His faith must be strong enough to cause him to confess Christ before others.
6. His faith will motivate him to obey that form of teaching (*baptism*) about the gospel.

Lesson Text :**Eph. 2: 1-10**

1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, **2** in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. **3** Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. **4** But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, **5** even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), **6** and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **7** so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **8** For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is the gift of God*; **9** not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Pardon Refused

In Pennsylvania, during 1829, George Wilson was convicted of mail robbery and murder. He was sentenced to death. Later pardoned by President Andrew Jackson, Wilson refused the pardon. Confusion reigned among all who were concerned about the case. Nothing like this had happened before. What were they to do with a man who refused a pardon and chose to die on the gallows instead? Finally, the Chief Supreme Court Justice, John Marshall, ruled: *"A pardon is a paper, the value of which depends upon its acceptance by the parties implicated. It is hardly to be supposed that one under the sentence of death would refuse to accept a pardon. But if it is refused, it is no pardon. George Wilson must hang."*