

What Must I Do To Be Saved ?

Text : Acts 16: 22-34

INTRODUCTION :

- A. The Roman jailor in Philippi recognized that something extraordinary had happened, but he did not know what. (Philippi was a Roman colony.)**
1. This was no ordinary earthquake.
 - a. It was possible for a quake to make doors stand ajar.
 - b. It was NOT natural for a quake to open the locks on chains.
 2. Realizing it was a sign, he asked the most profound question of his entire life; *“What must I do to be saved?”*
- B. At some point everyone becomes lost, but most never realize their lost condition.**
1. When one does not realize or accept that he is lost, he will not seek salvation.
 2. A traveler may take a wrong turn and go a great distance before realizing he is lost.
ILL. : *Two years in a row while traveling from Ohio to Tennessee, my father took a wrong turn in Cincinnati and drove half way across Indiana.*
 3. Spiritually, the same thing happens to everyone on our journey through life.

THEREFORE : With this lesson we'll take a few moments to ask the same question asked by the Philippian jailor : “What must I do to be saved ?”
 One seeks salvation because he feels lost.

I. What does it mean to be lost ? How do I know I'm lost ?

- A. Most of the time people know where they are physically, but few in this world know where they are spiritually.**
- B. People of the world live with no thought of anything beyond this world.**
1. Thus, their goals are centered on the earth, pleasure and prosperity.
 2. This is normal for people of the world.
Eph. 2: 1-3 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.
 3. The people of the world give no thought to God; their thinking is totally earthbound.

C. People are lost whether they realize their condition or not. (*don't feel lost*)

1. Sin is a terminal disease. *It is always fatal.*

Ezek. 18: 4 – Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins will die.

2. Sin kills whether we know we have it or not.
 - a. One who does not know he has leukemia or tuberculosis will still die from it.
 - b. One who is told he has leukemia or tuberculosis, but does not believe it, will die.
 - c. Also, one who accepts he has the disease, but refuses treatment will die.

D. Sin affects everyone on the planet.

1. The scriptures are very clear about this fact.
 - a. **Eccl. 7: 20** – Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins.
 - b. **Rom. 3:10** – as it is written, “There is none righteous, not even one; ...”
* *This is a quote from the first three verses of Psalms 14: 1-3.*
 - c. **Rom. 3: 23** – for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
2. The consequence of sin is spiritual death which means : 1)- Separation from God, 2)- A hostile relation with God, 3)- Impending punishment. **Rom. 5:6-8**

E. In a way, being dead in sin is worse than being dead physically.

1. **John 5: 25-29** ... Physical death is a temporary condition.
2. Spiritual death can be eternal. (*One's fate is sealed at physical death ... Heb. 9:27*)
3. The eternal destiny of those who do not know God is horrible.
 - a. **Eph. 2: 12** – remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.
 - b. **II Thes. 1: 7b-8** when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, 8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.
 - c. God does not want for anyone to be lost (**I Tim. 2: 3-4**) but He must deliver justice.
 - d. In Jesus, He paid the ultimate price to provide a cure, **but** the cure only works when it is accepted and applied.

* **Therefore, one must be made aware of his “lost” spiritual condition or he will not ask “What must I do to be saved ?”**

II. In order to be saved, one must know that God exists and that He rules sovereignly.

A. It's illogical to believe that anyone will submit to a God he doesn't know.

1. People can see the creation and know there is a creator, but not who He is.
2. Everyone has the personal responsibility to seek God.
3. Everyone who knows God has the responsibility to share Him with others.

B. God has been revealed to all the earth, but most have chosen to ignore Him.

1. Each generation has the responsibility to share God with the next.
 - a. Children don't inherit the guilt of their parents' sin, but they do suffer the consequences of their sins. ... *Knowledge of God is lost.*
 - b. A generations that have not taught their children about God have doomed nations.
2. In our nation, fewer people each generation are being taught to fear God.

C. The very first step in being saved is to learn enough about God to develop faith.

1. **Heb. 11: 6** – And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.
2. Faith is different from sight. **Faith** cannot be proven by the scientific method.
Heb. 11: 1– Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, (Cf. – **Rom. 8: 24-25**)
 the conviction of things not seen. (hoped for = *await with full confidence*)

“What must I do to be saved ?” One must have faith in God.

D. One who comes to know God understands He rules with absolute sovereignty.

1. God's will carries the force of the highest law in the universe.
2. Those who obey His will are rewarded, but every violation receives just punishment.
3. All violators are doomed to eternal separation from God and all His blessings.

III. As soon as a person develops faith in God he seeks reconciliation with Him.

A. God's greatest desire for man is that He be united with Him in eternal fellowship.

1. God's love and desire for man motivated Him preplan a way for men to be saved.
1 Pet. 1: 20-23 For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you ²¹ who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. (Cf. – **Acts 2: 23**)
2. In God's foreknowledge, He prepared the solution before the problem occurred.

B. God paid a much higher price to reclaim men than He asks in response.

1. He sent Jesus to die on the cross for those who are still in rebellion. (**Rom. 5: 8-11**)
2. **I Pet. 3: 18** – For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;
3. God has proven His love by providing a cure for terminal sin.
John 3: 16 – For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

C. Jesus is the only cure for sin.

1. No one will be with God eternally unless he places his faith in Jesus.
John 8: 24 – Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.
2. One is not separated from God because he doesn't know the gospel.
 - a. **Rom 6: 23** ... He is separated (dies) because he has sins.
 - b. Everyone sins and Jesus is the **only** cure for sin. **John 14: 6**

D. God offers reconciliation, but only on HIS terms, i.e., through faith in Jesus.

Col. 1: 21-23 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, **22** yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach— **23** **if** indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, ...

1. Reconciliation is possible through faith in the gospel of Jesus.
2. Continued reconciliation is dependent upon continued faith in that gospel. (**if**)

“What must I do to be saved ?” One must have faith in Jesus as God's Son.

IV. The one who seeks reconciliation with God must surrender to God's rule.**A. All sin is rebellion against the rule of God in one's life ... being self-willed.**

1. To violate God's law = Doing what one wants (**I John 3: 4**)
2. To violate man's law = Doing what one wants (**Rom. 13: 1-7**)
3. To violate one's own law = Doing what one wants (**Rom. 14: 23**)
4. To fail to do what is good = Doing what one wants (**James 4: 17**)
5. To harbor evil thoughts = Desiring to be free of the restrains of God (**Mat. 5: 27-28**)

B. The Apostle described the life of the lost person as one of self gratification.

1. **Eph. 2: 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.
2. The battle for our soul is waged in our flesh.

C. Faith in God will cause one to surrender his life to Him.

1. *Even in the biggest truck, there is only one steering wheel.*
2. Abraham was called “**the friend of God**” because he obeyed Him. (**Heb. 11: 8**)
3. One must humble himself before God **before** God will lift him up.
 - a. **James 4: 10** – Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.
 - b. cf – **I Pet. 5: 6**

D. Faith in Jesus as the Son of God will cause one to surrender his life to Him.

1. Jesus said that relationship with Him hinged upon obedience to Him.
 - a. **John 14: 15** – If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.
 - b. **John 15: 14** – You are My friends if you do what I command you.
2. Jesus said only those who obey will be saved.
 - a. **Mat 7: 21** – Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in Heaven will enter.
 - b. **Heb. 5: 9** – And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

E. Surrender to God involves a change of heart resulting in a change of lifestyle.

1. This change is called “*repentance.*” (*Desire to please God more than to please self*)
2. Repentance is prerequisite to the forgiveness of sins.
 - a. **Acts 3: 19** – Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;
 - b. **So that =** If repentance does not occur first, the remission of sins will not occur.

“What must I do to be saved ?” One must have a change of heart and lifestyle

1. Jesus and Peter referred to drastic change of heart and life as being “**born again.**”

John 3: 3 – Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”
3. The Apostle Paul referred to it as be “**transformed.**”
 - a. **Rom. 12: 2** – And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, ...

b. *Metamorphoo* = to change into another form (*Metamorphosis, transfiguration*)

V. One whose faith leads him to truly humble himself before God will make a public commitment to God.

A. Jesus makes relationship with Him contingent upon public declarations.

Luke 12: 8-9 And I say to you, everyone who confesses Me before men, the Son of Man will confess him also before the angels of God; ⁹ but he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

B. N.T. evangelists required verbal confessions of faith.

1. Philip ... **Acts 8: 37** "... If you believe with all your heart you may ..." (*He confessed*)
2. Timothy .. **I Tim. 6: 10** .. you made the good confession in the presence of many

C. Confessions are made with the lips, but denials can be made with actions.

1. **Rom. 10: 10** – for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.
2. **Titus 1: 16** – They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.

“What must I do to be saved ?” **One must have enough faith to make it public.**

VI. One must who seeks reconciliation with God will want his sins washed away.

A. Everyone in the N.T. who had his sins forgiven was baptized as a faith response.

1. **Acts 2: 38** ... 3000 who responded to Peter’s sermon. (*For remission of sins*)
2. **Acts 8: 35-38** ... The treasurer to whom Jesus was preached (*To preach Jesus incl.*)
3. **Acts 10: 1-48** ... Cornelius, the righteous gentile (*Baptism is for everyone*)
4. **Acts 16: 1-34** ... Lydia Jewish the merchant and the Philippian jailer. (*immediate*)
5. **Acts 22: 16** ... After seeing Jesus, Saul was baptized to wash away sins and call on

“What must I do to be saved ?” **One must be baptized in water.**

B. Jesus said that baptism was essential to salvation.

Mark 16:16 – He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved;

C. Peter said baptism saves. (*Only when it is a faith response to the gospel.*)

I Pet. 3: 23 – Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—...

“What must I do?” *Faith in God & Jesus, convicted, surrendered, confess, baptize*

Lesson Text :**Acts 16: 22-34**

22 The crowd rose up together against them, and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order *them* to be beaten with rods.

23 When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely; **24** and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

25 But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them; **26** and suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. **27** When the jailer awoke and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. **28** But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!" **29** And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, **30** and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

31 They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." **32** And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. **33** And he took them that *very* hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his *household*. **34** And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household.