

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Bible Answers About Salvation

One of the least recognized and yet one of the most serious problems of our day is an incorrect understanding of what is involved in a man's salvation. This is critically important. Misinformation or partial information concerning a business investment may cost a person his money, but it will not cost him his soul. On the other hand, misinformation or partial information concerning salvation will cost a man his eternal destiny in heaven. Therefore, the question, "what must I do to be saved" is undoubtedly the most important of all the questions that a person could ask in relation to his own personal life.

To be "saved," in biblical terminology, means to be saved from sin, spiritual death and hell, and to be saved unto righteousness, spiritual life and heaven. The word "salvation" in New Testament times was a word with three tenses: Past, Present, and Future.

"Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God." (Rom 5:1-2 NAS)

This passage contains all three. Notice Paul says first that they had been justified by faith and had peace with God. This views the Christian at the moment in time past when he/she rendered obedience to God and became a Christian. Then Paul wrote that they were then standing in God's grace (present tense). However, Paul next said, that they "exult in hope of the glory of God" (future tense).

A discussion of the subject of salvation presupposes that all men are sinners: "For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23) Until a person recognizes that he is a sinner and therefore lost, there is no real point in discussing salvation.

The question, "What must I do to be saved," was asked by the Philippian jailer in Acts 16:30, and was forthrightly and simply answered by the Apostle Paul when he said, "And they said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household. And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. And he took them that {very} hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his {household.} And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household'" (Acts 16:31-34 NAS).

In the book of Acts there are seven major conversions, given as models for all people of all time. In every case the gospel of Christ was preached, the people believed in their hearts, repented of their sins, made known their faith in some manner and then were baptized for the remission of sins. It is

very interesting that only one of these elements in salvation is mentioned in every example, baptism. Even faith is not mentioned each time, though, of course, we know that it must have been the foundation out of which obedience came in each case. Repentance is not mentioned every time; confession is not mentioned every time. Only baptism is mentioned in each of the seven cases. They are as follows:

- Pentecost Acts 2:14-41
- Samaria Acts 8:5-13
- Eunuch Acts 8:35-39
- Saul Acts 9:17-18
- Cornelius Acts 10:34-48
- The Jailer Acts 16:32
- Lydia Acts 16:13

The realization that we are lost leads us to listen when the gospel is preached (Romans 10:14). As we hear the story of Jesus, faith builds in our hearts (Hebrews 11:6), and changes the direction of our lives through repentance (Luke 13:3), then makes known our faith by word of mouth as we confess that Jesus is the Christ (Romans 10:10), and finally culminates in what the Bible calls the new birth, baptism (Galatians 3:27). Paul said, that "we are buried with Christ through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3-4).

Have you been saved like the people in the first century? Remember, the Word of God is your authority, not the words of men.

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