

# GOD'S SALVATION

"...in the truth of thy salvation" Ps. 69:13b

"For mine eyes have seen **thy salvation**," Luke 2:30

"Who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," 1Tim. 2:4

*By Pastor Del Wray*

The most precious gift that God has given to man is the Lord Jesus Christ, His Son, Whom Simeon recognized in Luke 2:30 as **THY SALVATION**, God's salvation for mankind. Men cannot save themselves. Salvation is of the Lord. It is God's salvation! Again **IT IS GOD'S SALVATION**.

So many people today are religious and are not Christians they have Churchianity and not Christianity. They think they are saved because they prayed a prayer or had a religious experience somewhere in the past; but they've never grasped the Biblical truth that we are saved solely by Christ's righteousness, through faith in His redeeming blood Romans 3.

"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;" Rom. 3:25.

Twenty-six times the phrase "**thy salvation**" is used in the Old Testament and once in the New Testament in Luke 2:30. Is it so that the gospel message has been so soft-soaped or watered down that we fail to recognize the gospel truth that the Devil wants to be kept so secretive? May this be a warning to all of us as this is brought to light more clearly?

Perhaps we have been too passive, too loving to our lost friends. Perhaps our approach to apologetically disseminating the gospel has been taken without appropriate consideration, our message has lost its real meaning and the fear of God has been lost, is missing out of our deliveries. We have been drunk with love we have been too nice to our lost friends in trying to "win" them to Christ. It is just possible that unwittingly we have propagated a "cheap grace" in attempting to appeal to people primarily on the basis of their feelings "felt needs" and presenting a "respectable" Gospel rather than simply communicating the Message. We've lost the power of God.

What those outside of Christ need to understand is: God loves them, but they are hopelessly lost. They must repent of their rebellion against a holy God, and receive Christ as their only hope of salvation. Otherwise, they will surely die and burn in hell.

But because we don't want to offend people and because we don't want to be rejected, we often attempt to make the Gospel more savory. Yet Paul spoke of the “offense of the cross” and the fact that the “preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness” Galatians 5:11; 1 Cor. 1:18. We also run the risk of weakening the Gospel in defending it rather than simply declaring it. The Gospel needs no defense. What it needs is a declaration.

For most non-believers, the battle lies not in their intellect, but their will. Many perceive the price tag for faith as simply too high as it might just cost them their family, their career, their friends. Soren Kierkegaard certainly was correct in asserting that the gospel “is hard to believe, not because it is hard to understand, but because it is hard to obey.” So “our task is to make the faith intelligible but not more credible or palatable, for only the Spirit does that.”

Therefore, let's love our lost friends enough to be willing to suffer rejection. Let's love them enough to be willing to offend them, if that is what it takes to get them into the Family.

And then leave the mysterious work of the new birth up to God!

People reject Christ because they love their sin and they hate having it exposed by God's light. The light came into this world in the person of Jesus Christ, and His presence condemned those in darkness. People love darkness rather than the light because their deeds are evil. Those who practice evil hate Jesus, who is light, and do not come to Him for fear that their deeds will be exposed. True believers practice the truth and come to the Light so that their deeds are shown to have God as their source. Eventually, sinners will get what they desired while on earth: they loved darkness; they will be cast into outer darkness. They hated the light; they will be shut out from the light eternally. God will be perfectly just in condemning those who rejected Christ. They saw the Light, but hated it and turned away from it because they loved their sin.

During one of the trials Jesus was subjected to before He was crucified, Pontius Pilate asked Him, “What is truth?” John 18:38. Pilate asked the question mockingly. Pilate did not really care what the truth was and would not have believed it if Jesus had revealed it to him. But Pilate's question is one that we must all wrestle with. **What is the Truth about salvation?** What is the truth about God? What is the truth about Jesus? To ignore these questions is foolish. To be misled on these questions is dangerous. To have the true answers to these questions is crucial.

What we must know to understand salvation is: While there are many other important truths in the Christian faith, **knowing and understanding the truth about salvation** is the most important, as it determines where we will spend eternity. Listed below are truths from various areas of the Christian faith as they relate to salvation.

The truth about God: God exists, Psalm 14:1. God created the universe and everything in it, including humanity Genesis 1:1. God is all-powerful Job 42:2, all-knowing 1 John 3:20, infinite, and eternal Psalm 90:2. God is absolutely holy and free from sin Isaiah

6:3. God is absolutely just and will not allow evil to go unpunished. God is merciful, gracious, and loving 1 John 4:8.

The truth about humanity: God created us to have a personal relationship with Him. God created us with the ability to choose good and evil, and we chose evil. We have all sinned and fall short of God's glory Romans 3:23. Because of our sin, we deserve death, not just physical death, but eternal death, because our sin is ultimately against an eternal God Romans 6:23. There is absolutely nothing we can do to rectify our relationship with God Romans 3:10-18.

The truth about Jesus Christ: Knowing that humanity cannot achieve its own salvation, God took on human form in the person of Jesus Christ John 1:1, 14. God literally became a human being and walked on this planet for approximately 33 years, teaching the truth, performing miracles, and living a sinless life. Just as humanity rejects God, so we also rejected God incarnate. Jesus was mercilessly beaten and then crucified Matthew 27. Jesus willingly sacrificed His life for ours and died on the cross John 19. Since He was God, His death carried an infinite and eternal value, paying the infinite and eternal price our sins demand 2 Corinthians 5:21. Three days after He died, Jesus arose, demonstrating that His death had sufficiently paid the price for sin 1 Corinthians 16.

The truth about salvation: Because of the perfect and complete sacrifice of Jesus Christ, our sins can be forgiven. God offers us salvation, deliverance, redemption, and forgiveness. The only requirement God demands is that we receive the gift of salvation that He offers us through Jesus Christ John 3:16. All we have to do is accept it, by faith, trusting in Jesus' sacrifice alone to cover our sins. When we receive salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, our relationship with God is restored and we are promised an eternal home in heaven Matthew 25:46.

Are you ready and willing to accept these truths? If so, place your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior. Recognize that you have sinned and are worthy of death. Thank God for providing for your salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Trust the perfect and complete sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the means of your salvation. Recognize that nothing can now separate you from God's love Romans 8:38-39 and that He will never leave you or forsake you Hebrews 13:5.

What is the Truth about salvation? There are many truths, and many of them are very important. But, there is only one Truth, and that is Jesus Christ. "...I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me" John 14:6.

Have you, at the calling of God, accepted these truths you have read today? If so, please let us know. [biblerays.com](http://biblerays.com)

The Bible teaches the major doctrine of the depravity or the inability of man to do anything to aid in his own salvation.

God's Word teaches that because of the fall of Adam all of mankind is born in sin so that man by his very nature is born spiritually dead. As Paul states in Ephesians 2:1 man is

“dead in trespasses and sins.” A man who is spiritually dead can do nothing spiritual. He can’t even “will to repent” of sin and trust in Christ. He is dead! Dead! A dead man can’t save himself.

God’s Word teaches that because of their depravity men are helpless to save or help save themselves. This means that there is absolutely nothing a sinner can do to save himself or prepare himself for salvation. Spiritually dead sinners can never come to Christ until God calls them with a special, powerful, effectual call. This is what the Lord Jesus is talking about in John 6:44 when He says, “No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him...” or literally, No man is able or has the power to come to me except the Father draw him.

The Biblical Order of Salvation: The whole question of the “altar call” or “public invitation” can be reduced to God’s order of salvation. When I say the order of salvation I mean the way God planned it out, designed it to be before even the worlds were created. Before God had created this Universe there was a meeting in Heaven called the “Council of the Trinity” between God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit and the outcome of that meeting was that Jesus Christ, God the Son would leave Heaven and come to earth and die instead of sinners for sin. Christ voluntarily chose to stand in the room of sinners. And that it would be His shed blood alone poured out on the mercy seat there in heaven that would sufficiently pay God’s demand for man’s sin debt. Nothing else could do. The Word of God teaches that in the order of God’s salvation, regeneration comes first “the new birth” precedes redemption. What good is baptism to a man who is dead? **“Ye must be born again”** In John 3:3, for example, the Lord Jesus says that only those who are born again can see or comprehend or understand or appreciate the kingdom of God or spiritual things. “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” God’s Word makes it clear that the Holy Spirit in the new birth enables a sinner to trust in Jesus Christ. God never has nor will He ever save a man on his own standard, it must be God’s standard or not at all. It is God’s order or plan of salvation and that is the Truth of God’s Salvation. That is its core!

Armenians, on the other hand, say that one must believe or be converted in order to be regenerated. In his great booklet "The Invitation System" Iain Murray quotes Billy Graham as saying that we are “made alive by trust in Christ.” This, of course, is just the opposite of what God’s Word teaches about the order of salvation being regeneration and then faith and conversion. Faith and repentance are gifts that come after the new birth.

In the same booklet, Murray quotes Graham concerning Graham’s own conversion. “They were singing the last verse of the song when I went forward. That first step was the hardest I ever took in my life. But when I took it, God did the rest” and “the rest” in Graham’s thinking is the new birth! In this way of thinking, poor God can’t do anything for a sinner until the sinner takes the first step! What lying deceitful tyranny? The sinner is dead and can’t do anything. It is Christ that does it all. What I’m preaching or writing here will get you killed in this deceived religious world.

If, as God's Word clearly teaches, regeneration must come before the new birth in the order of salvation then the invitation system must be understood to not be in line with the Word of God!

The altar call as we choose to use at the end of our preaching services, as good as it is does not line up with the gospel way of salvation, the Bible way of salvation in the sense how one comes to Christ. Man never makes the first move to Christ it is the Holy Spirit that makes the first move by drawing him John 6:44. Man is dead.

The gospel is not, do something physical and if you will, you will be saved! The gospel is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," Acts 16:31. The duty of sinners is not to come to the front of the building but to believe in Christ! To be saved sinners must come to Christ which means believe in Christ. And I am not nit-picking here either. This is important!

The Lord Jesus Himself says in Matthew 11:28, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Think about it! No one can now come to Christ with his feet because Christ is no longer physically present on this earth. Christ is not down here at the front of this church auditorium anymore than he is back there in the pew or outside in the parking lot or out on your back porch. As someone else has said, the fountain of life is not in front of the pulpit in some church building. The fountain of life is Christ Himself! And He enters the man at will. Even though Christ is very present in all of our meetings spiritually, and within every believer, He is not physically.

We don't have to move a muscle to totally commit ourselves to the safe keeping of Christ the Savior for salvation. The altar call implies at least and it is often specifically stated that by coming to the front of a church building or some other auditorium at some preacher's invitation, the one who comes becomes a Christian. Not so! Don't kid me! It's not one's coming as important as that may seem but it is Christ drawing and indwelling that matters. The devil counterfeits invitations too. It is right here where Satan is most active and does most of his damage.

To those who practice the "altar call," it is equated with getting people to occupy a certain piece of geography at the front of a building. In doing this they effectively limit the sphere of God's saving activity to a few square feet at the front of some building.

At Billy Graham's first London Crusade he said one night in giving the invitation, "Don't let distance keep you from Christ. It's a long way but Christ went all the way to the cross because he loved you. Certainly you can come, these few steps and give your life to Him." God's Word, however, does not teach that one is saved by changing his location but by believing in his heart!

Importantly, the altar call contradicts the Bible doctrine of salvation by grace without works. Biblical salvation is not of works. It is not by doing something, anything at all. Instead, it is by grace through faith according to Ephesians 2:8-9. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest

any man should boast.” Faith itself is the gift of God and not the accomplishment or contribution of man to salvation. Colossians 2:12 calls faith “the operation of God” and Philippians 1:29 calls it a gift given. “For unto you it is given...to believe on him...” This is not a diatribe against our invitation system but simply a clearing of facts.

Under the invitation system, the idea constantly presented by the preacher is that the step forward is of great spiritual importance, and it is. But faith is presented as something a man does in order to be saved and that is not so. Believing in Christ is identified with coming to the front of the church building in response to the preacher’s appeal is fine. But making an outward response the same thing as receiving Christ is not and that in itself adds a condition to salvation that Christ Jesus never appointed. Works are the necessary evidence of salvation! Not the prior condition of it. The altar call satisfies man’s natural desire to do something but it is never a requirement to receive saving faith. Nor by going forward does it aid in man helping to save himself. That would work. It is all the work of God by Christ in and through all of His people.

Lastly, the “altar call” can be made by the devil to contradict the Bible doctrine of, “Sola Scriptura.” Sola Scriptura means the Scriptures only and it recognizes that God’s written Word gives us everything we need for all matters of faith and practice. There is nothing God wants us to know or to do that is not found in His written Word. According to, II Timothy 3:16-17, God’s Word is sufficient or completely adequate for all our spiritual needs. The altar call is a way of promoting religious experience by other means than those clearly appointed in God’s Word. As with anything else the “invitation system” can be used for good as well as by the devil. The Holy Scripture is the final authority, though!

So it is with Sanctification, with spiritual growth. It is all of Christ in and through each of us or it is false. Our very lives the way we live, move and have our being, are utterly under the power and control of the WORD OF GOD.

Again there are 27 verses in the Bible where this phrase occurs, the phrase “**thy salvation**” in the Old Testament 26 times and once in the New Testament here listed:

Genesis 49:18, "I have waited for **thy salvation**, O LORD."

1 Samuel 2:1, "And Hannah prayed, and said, my heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in **thy salvation**."

2 Samuel 22:36, "Thou hast also given me the shield of **thy salvation**: and thy gentleness hath made me great."

Psalms 9:14, "That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in **thy salvation**."

Psalms 13:5, "But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in **thy salvation**."

Psalm 18:35, "Thou hast also given me the shield of **thy salvation**: and thy right-hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great."

Psalm 20:5, "We will rejoice in **thy salvation**, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the LORD fulfils all thy petitions."

Psalm 21:1, "The king shall joy in thy strength, O LORD; and in **thy salvation** how greatly shall he rejoice!"

Psalm 21:5, "His glory is great in **thy salvation**: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him."

Psalm 35:3, "Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am **thy salvation**."

Psalm 40:10, "I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and **thy salvation**: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation."

Psalm 40:16, "Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love **thy salvation** say continually, The LORD be magnified."

Psalm 51:12, "Restore unto me the joy of **thy salvation**; and uphold me with thy free spirit."

Psalm 69:13, "But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy, hear me, **in the truth of thy salvation**."

Psalm 69:29, "But I am poor and sorrowful: let **thy salvation**, O God, set me up on high."

Psalm 70:4, "Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love **thy salvation** say continually, Let God be magnified."

Psalm 71:15, "My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and **thy salvation** all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof."

Psalm 85:7, "Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us **thy salvation**."

Psalm 106:4, "Remember me, O LORD, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with **thy salvation**."

Psalm 119:41, "Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, even **thy salvation**, according to thy word."

Psalm 119:81, "My soul fainteth for **thy salvation**: but I hope in thy word."

Psalm 119:123: Mine eyes fail for **thy salvation**, and for the word of thy righteousness."

Psalm 119:166: LORD, I have hoped for **thy salvation**, and done thy commandments."

Psalm 119:174: I have longed for **thy salvation**, O LORD; and thy law is my delight."

Isaiah 17:10, "Because thou hast forgotten the God of **thy salvation**, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength, therefore, shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips."

Isaiah 62:11, "Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, **thy salvation** cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him."

Hence, we learn from the Scriptures over and over that salvation belongs to the Lord. Man's part is simply to BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST Acts 16:31.  
CAN WE SEE NOW WHY IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE NOT ALLOW ANYONE TO TAMPER WITH THE KING JAMES BIBLE?

### **What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

What must I do to be saved? Here in the simplest, shortest form is put the question to which every man must learn the answer, or spend eternity lost, away from God, suffering the torments of the damned!

Thank God, this question is asked and answered in the Word of God so simply that every soul can understand it. There are other questions in God's Word which affect the soul's welfare, and many places in the Bible is the plan of salvation made plain, but only one place is this question given word for word, and there, too, we find the answer.

Paul and Silas were in jail in the city of Philippi, and at midnight they sang and prayed until God broke down all the doors and broke the stocks which held their feet, with a mighty earthquake. The poor jailer, frightened and convicted of his sins, came to these two preachers and asked this question. Read it in Acts 16:29-31:

"Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

"What must I do to be saved?" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved"! There is God's plan of salvation, the only plan He has for every man, woman and child who was ever born into the whole world.

### **What Must I Do?**

Sinner, there is something you *must* do if you would be saved. There was hope for this jailer because he saw himself a lost sinner and came trembling to inquire, "What *must* I do?"

Reader, you are a sinner. The Word of God from beginning to end emphasizes that fact. In Isaiah 53:6 we learn:

"ALL we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned EVERY ONE to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us ALL."

We have all gone astray! The Lord is not content for sinners to be left believing themselves good. In Romans the third chapter, how positive, how certain is the Word of God that every man, woman and child is a sinner!

"What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are ALL under sin; As it is written, There is NONE righteous, NO, NOT ONE: There is NONE that understandeth, there is NONE that seeketh after God. They are ALL gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is NONE that doeth good, NO, NOT ONE."—Romans 3:9-12.

In verses 22 and 23 it is stated again that "there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." That is the reason Jesus said to Nicodemus in the third chapter of John, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN." And a little later in the same chapter, verse 18, He said that the man who has not believed in Jesus is already condemned.

Certainly these Scriptures must make it clear to every man who believes the Word of God that he is a sinner, and until he has believed in Christ and has been saved, he is a lost sinner and needs saving. The heart is wrong, and only God can make that right. Then if you want to be saved, you must admit in your own heart, "*I am a sinner. I am lost and need to be saved.*" No one ever was saved without coming for salvation as a sinner.

### **Christ Died To Save Sinners, Not Good Men**

Oh, I beg you, see it today! You are a poor, lost sinner, a Hell-bound sinner! Your heart is black. You have hardened your heart, you have resisted the call of God, you have rejected Christ. However good you are in man's sight, you are a terrible sinner, and unless you turn to Christ you must spend eternity in Hell. A SINNER! That is what you are. Admit it in your own heart, confess it to God. You are a sinner and you need saving worse than you need anything else in the world.

If you have settled in your heart that matter, then you are ready to learn God's answer to your question, "What must I do to be saved?"

### **Believe On the Lord Jesus Christ**

Here is God's simple way to be saved. You are a sinner, your heart is wrong, you cannot save yourself, and you are already condemned. The thing you are to do then, to be saved, is to simply trust the Lord Jesus with that matter. When you do trust Him, then you have God's promise, "Thou shalt be saved."

I do not mean that you are simply to believe that there is a God or that there is a Saviour. Devils believe that and tremble (James 2:19).

You can believe that a certain physician is a good doctor [without calling him to be your doctor] when you are sick. You can believe that a certain man is a good lawyer without taking him as your lawyer to defend your case. You are not just to believe the truth about Jesus; you are to believe on Him, that is, depend upon Him, risk Him, trust Him; and when you do, you are saved.

### **Not Saved By Good Works**

Of course, you do not deserve salvation. There is nothing you can do that will make you worthy of it. You cannot be saved by keeping the Ten Commandments, for the Scripture clearly shows that you have not kept them. Romans 3:20 says:

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

The same thing is told in Galatians 3:11 which say:

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith."

Many, many Scriptures repeat again and again that there is no salvation through human goodness.

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" Titus 3:5.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" Eph. 2:8-9.

We had as well admit, then, that no man deserves saving and no man can save himself. Salvation must be free or the sinner could never get it. In fact, it takes blood to pay for sin, for the Scripture says:

"Without shedding of blood is no remission" Hebrews 9:22.

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" Romans 5:6.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" Isa. 53:6.

Peter tells us that all of us are bought by the blood of Christ:

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" I Peter 1:18,19.

Every lamb, bullock, heifer, goat, turtle dove and pigeon offered in the Old Testament times on the altar pictured this: that man, a guilty sinner, must have some innocent one to shed his blood to pay for one man's sins. Jesus died for our sins, and, thank God, salvation is bought for every man in the world, if he will have it, as the free gift of God.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the GIFT of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" Rom. 6:23.

Dear sinner, remember that church membership will not save you. If you have been baptized, that cannot save you. Baptism does not save, does not keep anybody saved. It is only an act of duty for those who have already found Christ as their Saviour.

A moral life or lodge membership or good citizenship—these must all fail to bring salvation, for it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Titus 3:5). Don't depend, then, on what you do, but on what Jesus did and promises to do for you.

### **What about Repentance?**

Does not the Bible say that we must repent? Yes, the Bible plainly says that "God ... commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30), and again, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3,5).

This was the preaching of John the Baptist, of Jesus, of Peter and of Paul, that men should repent. And certainly repentance is in God's plan of salvation. The trouble here, however, is that men misunderstand what repentance means, and there has grown up an idea that repentance means a period of weeping and mourning over sin, or sorrow for sins. This idea comes from the Douay Version of the Bible which instead of "repent" says "do penance."

So the place of inquiry, where people should be taught the plan of salvation from the Bible, in revival meetings, became "the mourner's bench" and thousands of people have been taught that God would not hear their prayer nor forgive their sins until they went through a process of sorrow and mourning over their sins!

Do not misunderstand me. God is anxious for you to have a penitent, broken heart over your sins. You have gone away from God. You have trampled underfoot the blood of Jesus Christ, wasted years of your life which you can never live over again. You have served your father, the Devil.

There is plenty for you to weep over, and I am not surprised if you feel deep shame and sorrow in your heart that you have so mistreated the God who made you and the Saviour who died for you. I am not surprised if you cannot keep back the tears! But what I want you to know is that tears or no tears, however much sorrows you may have in your heart, or not have, those things do not save you.

You ought to be sorry for your sins and ashamed of them. "Godly sorrow worketh repentance" (II Cor. 7:10)—the right kind of sorrow leads to immediate repentance, but mourning is not itself repentance.

"Could my tears forever flow,  
Could my zeal no respite know,  
These for sin could not atone;  
Thou must save, and Thou alone."

To repent literally means to have a change of mind or spirit toward God and toward sin. It means to turn from your sins, earnestly, with all your heart, and trust in Jesus Christ to save you. You can see, then, how the man who believes in Christ repents and the man who repents believes in Christ. The jailer repented when he turned from sin to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Instant Salvation!**

The jailer did not go through a period of mourning. He was told to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; he did just that and was saved, and his whole family was saved the same way, immediately, the same hour of the night.

Everywhere you look through the New Testament you find that people were saved all at once without any process, without any period of mourning.

Zacchaeus, up a tree, trusted Jesus and made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully (Luke 19:6-9). Jesus said, "This day is salvation come to this house." When Peter told Cornelius and his assembled household that they could be saved by believing, immediately "while Peter yet spake these words," the Scripture says, the Holy Spirit came on them and they were happily saved (Acts 10:44-48).

The thief on the cross, wicked sinner that he was, who a few minutes before had been railing at Jesus, was saved immediately when he inquired of Jesus (Luke 23:42,43).

In the first chapter of John, verses 35 to 49, we see where Andrew, Simon Peter, Philip and Nathanael were all converted, one by one, immediately by faith in Christ. There is no record of any person in Bible times who was ever told to wait, or mourn, or weep over his sins before trusting Jesus and being saved! One who believes in Christ has repented. Repentance and faith is the same thing put in different words, and neither requires a long period of time, nor a process of mourning and sorrow.

Salvation is instantaneous. All that keeps you today from being saved is the wickedness of your heart that holds on to sin and will not run to Jesus to trust in Him for salvation. I beg you, turn in shame and sorrow from your sins this minute, and trust in Christ and be saved!

### **Can One Be Saved Without Prayer?**

In the Bible there are many cases of sinners who prayed like the thief on the cross or the publican in the Temple. In fact, Romans 10:13 say:

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Many people believe that a sinner cannot be saved without a period of prayer, without consciously calling on God. However, the Bible does not say that a sinner must pray in order to be saved. In fact, immediately following the verse in Romans 10:13 is an explanation which shows that calling on God is an evidence of faith in the heart and that it is really faith which settles the matter. Read it again.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" Romans 10:13-14.

The Lord encourages the sinner to pray, and the Lord hears and answers the sinner's prayer if that sinner trusts in Jesus Christ for salvation when he prays. He heard the prayer of the thief on the cross, of the publican in the Temple, of blind Bartimaeus. But the Scripture says, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?"

Certainly everyone who is to be saved must believe. Prayer is evidence of faith. No matter how long one prays, if he does not trust in Christ, he can never be saved. If he trusts in Christ without conscious prayer, then he is saved already. There is just one plan of salvation and just one step a sinner must take to secure it. That step is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ!

Some way we preachers have left the impression on this poor world of sinners that God is hardhearted and that it takes many tears and loud cries and long periods of sorrow before He will hear and save the sinner. We have left the impression that God does not care whether sinners are saved or not, and that sinners must some way touch the heart of God and get Him ready to forgive. What a slander on a good and holy God who "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Man's sins are already paid for, God's wrath is already turned away from any sinner who wants to be saved. Both the Father and the Son are a million times more anxious to save every sinner than the sinner can be to get saved! Thank God, I do not have to beg God to forgive my sins. He will do it the minute I am willing to trust it with Him.

### **How To Get The Change Of Heart**

This simple way of being saved by faith seems so easy, and it is. Some sinner may say, "But I thought one must have a change of heart." So you must, dear sinner, but that is God's part. Jesus was talking to Nicodemus when He said, "Ye must be born again," and in the same chapter He tells Nicodemus how to get the new birth.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" John 3:16.

The change in your heart, sinner, is God's part and you may be sure He will attend to that. Your part is to simply believe in Him. Whatever else is necessary in your eternal salvation, the Lord attends to when you trust in Him, or believe in Him.

### **How Should I Feel?**

Some people have an idea that the change of heart is a matter of feeling. Some do not want to claim Christ as Saviour until they have the mysterious feeling that they want.

Do not let the Devil deceive you here. I believe in heartfelt religion, and thank God for the joy which He gives to me day by day. But the Bible nowhere tells how one must feel before he is saved, nor does it anywhere say how you feel after you are saved. In fact, people do not feel the same.

Feeling varies with the person saved. Some cry when they are saved, some laugh, and a few shout aloud the praises of God. One is no more saved than the other. What you want, dear sinner is salvation, and you should be satisfied to feel any way that will please the Lord, just so He forgives your sins.

Be sure you notice another fact, too, and that is that you cannot feel right until you get right. Rejoicing does not come before you trust the Lord. One does not feel the result of medicine before he takes it. The Children of Israel in the wilderness, bitten by fiery serpents and at the point of death, were not healed and did not feel healed until they looked to the brass serpent on the pole (Numbers 21:6-9).

People are not saved by feeling; they are saved by trusting in Christ. The prodigal son, away from home in the hog pen, decided to arise and go to his father, but he did not feel good. He was without shoes, clothed in rags, without the ring of son ship, without any evidence of his father's forgiveness, perishing with hunger! Yet he arose and came to his father, not by feeling, but by faith in his father. Thank God, his father received him, like God receives every sinner who will come. And when the prodigal boy sat down at his father's table, with shoes of the Gospel of peace, clothed in the garments of righteousness of Christ, with the ring of son ship on his finger, eating the fatted calf at the right hand of the father, happy in his love, then he has plenty of feeling.

Feeling comes after salvation. Leave the feeling with the Lord and come to the Saviour by faith today.

After you are saved, you will get peace and joy out of following the Lord in baptism, reading His Word, winning souls and otherwise pleasing Him. You need to go to the Lord again and again day by day for the joy of a Christian life. But, thank God, that salvation is settled once and for all when you simply depend upon Christ as your Saviour.

### **What About Public Confession?**

Every person who is saved ought to publicly confess Christ. Matthew 10:32 and Romans 10:9 plainly teach that God will claim as His child any of us who will claim Christ as our

Saviour, but we simply confess with the mouth what we have already trusted in our hearts. Concerning that very matter Romans 10:10 says:

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

To claim Christ as your Saviour simply proves that you trust Him in the heart. Likewise with all other promises in the Bible about how to be saved. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," says John 6:37; and salvation is promised in John 1:12 to as many as receive Jesus. But you could not come to Christ without trusting Him, and John 1:12 shows that receiving Jesus is the same as believing on His name.

Dear sinner, do not make this a difficult matter. There is one simple step between you and Jesus. When you trust Him, everything else is settled, and you have repented, you have come to Christ, you have received Him, you have done everything necessary to be saved. Take the answer in Acts 16:31 at face value: "BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED"!

In dozens of Scriptures all through the Bible salvation is promised to those that believe. Read carefully the following Scriptures and see that again and again, many, many times, God has promised all any poor sinner would ever need when he believes on the Lord Jesus Christ.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that BELIEVE on his name" John 1:12.

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever BELIEVETH in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever BELIEVETH in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" John 3:14-16.

"He that BELIEVETH on him is not condemned: but he that BELIEVETH not is condemned already, because he hath not BELIEVED in the name of the only begotten Son of God" John 3:18.

"He that BELIEVETH on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that BELIEVETH not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" John 3:36.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and BELIEVETH on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" John 5:24.

"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and BELIEVETH on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" John 6:40.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that BELIEVETH on me hath everlasting life" John 6:47.

"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever BELIEVETH in him shall receive remission of sins."—Acts 10:43.

"And by him all that BELIEVE are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses" Acts 13:39.

### **Read again the Scripture we started with:**

#### **"What must I do to be saved?"**

"BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" Acts 16:30-31.

#### **Trust Jesus, the Great Physician**

If you were sick and about to die, and there was some good doctor whom you could trust, would you not risk him to take your case, give you the necessary treatment and, with God's help, get you well? Then just like that, trust in Christ, depend on Him for your salvation, and turn it over to Him today.

With the same kind of faith that will call in a doctor and risk him for your body, you can call in the Lord Jesus Christ and risk Him to forgive your sins and save your poor lost soul! He said, "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick" (Luke 5:31). He is the Great Physician and will heal your soul instantly if you will trust Him. As you would trust a doctor, submit to his treatment, depend on him for results, so trust Jesus today about your soul.

To be sure, human doctors fail many times. Their results at best are gradual, and so no doctor is a perfect picture of Jesus. The doctor can work no miracles, but Jesus can, and the change that is needed in that poor, wicked heart, He will make immediately, instantly, without any further effort on your part, when you trust Him!

#### **Jesus Is Our Lawyer**

If you had committed a crime and were thrown in jail, probably the first thing you would do would be to send for some lawyer in whom you had confidence and trust him with the entire matter of your defense. In God's sight you are a criminal, condemned already and with the wrath of God upon you day by day. But God has provided somebody to take the part of us poor sinners, criminals before the bar of God's justice, and Jesus is that lawyer, for the Scripture says:

"If any man sin, we have an advocate [or lawyer] 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" I John 2:1-2.

Jesus will not only be your lawyer to defend your case; He has already paid the penalty and you may safely trust Him to have you immediately pardoned and justified! Why not simply risk Jesus as you would risk a good lawyer? Jesus is better than any lawyer, of course, and you do not have to pay Him a fee, and He never fails.

#### **A Wedding**

A young man and young woman stand together, side by side, before the preacher. The preacher says, "You will join right hands." Then to the young man he says, "Do you take this young woman to be your lawfully wedded wife, to love her and cherish her until death do you part?" He answers, "I do." To the young woman the preacher says: "Do you take this man to be your lawfully wedded husband until death do you part?" She answers, "I do." Then the preacher says: "I pronounce you man and wife," and they are married in the sight of God and man.

What a simple picture of salvation! Jesus is the Bridegroom and we who trust Him are to be His bride. Already Jesus has loved you and has long urged you to accept His love. Jesus invites you to accept His love. Jesus invites you to believe in Him right now and be saved and so become a part of His bride.

Will you not right now with the same simple faith of that young woman who takes a husband, accept Jesus as your Saviour and say to Him, "I do."?

### **Make It Sure, Claim Him Today!**

The way is plain and you can be saved this moment if you will.

Surely it has become plain, dear lost sinner, that it is your own fault if you are lost! Do you hate Jesus Christ? Will you hold on to your sins and go to Hell for your stubbornness? Nothing in the world could show your wickedness like postponing this matter. You can be saved right now, this minute. I beg you, do it now. Turn your whole heart from sin to trust in Christ. Choose for Heaven against Hell, choose for Christ against Satan. Do not let Satan deceive you any longer. If you delay, it may result in a hardened heart, a wasted life and a tortured soul in Hell! And if you are not saved, when God has made the way so plain and paid the price for your sins, then you have no one to blame but yourself. Will you trust Jesus Christ today and be saved?

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth"

Proverbs 27:1.

"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" II Cor. 6:2.

"To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts" Hebrews 3:7-8.

God has given you this heartbeat, this breath, this moment in order to trust Christ, but there is no promise of another. I beg you do it right now, and then claim Him as your Saviour. You are saved when you trust Christ.

One who trusts Christ should then publicly claim Christ before men. It is God's plan that after trusting Him you should be baptized and join in with His people. I hope you will join a good Bible-believing Baptist church and let yourself be known publicly from this time forth as a child of God.

(Copied, one of Dr. Harold B. Sightler' messages preached at Tabernacle Baptist Church, Greenville, South Carolina.)