

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

Have you ever wondered what sin is? By His word, God tells us that sin is a "transgression of the law," doing that which God has said not to do (1 John 3:4); "unrighteousness" (1 John 5:14); knowing to do good, and doing it not (James 4:17); and a failure to act by "faith" or violating one's conscience (Romans 14:23). With such clear definitions of sin and the obviously broad extent of sin, it is no wonder that we read in the Bible that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). That includes you and me. This is frightening when we realize that sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:1-2) and that the "wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). For literally thousands of years when men and women have realized the sin in their own lives, they have cried out to God asking, "What must I do to be saved?" This is the most important question any person upon this earth will ever ask. It is obviously a question you and I need to ask. There are two responses each of us should have when we are given an answer to our question of "What must I do to be saved?"

**First . . .**

### **We Must Examine The Answer To See If It Is God's Answer.**

In Acts 17, Paul came and preached to the Bereans in the Synagogue. Notice

their response to Paul's message about Jesus the Savior. Verse eleven says that "they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." In this verse we are also told that God considered the Bereans "noble" (or of high ambition) because when they heard these things, they verified Paul's testimony by checking it with the scriptures. They did not just blindly accept Paul's word on this matter of "being saved." If we want to be noble in the sight of God, we should look to His word to see if what we are being told is true.

There are many people trying to teach men how to be saved. Have you ever wondered why there are so many different answers to the question "What must I do to be saved?" One person tells you that you can be saved by "faith only." Another tells you that "infant baptism" is necessary. Even another tells you that you must be "baptized in the Holy Spirit." Some tell you to simply "pray for Jesus to come into your heart." Surely we can see that all of these answers cannot be right. If we were to attend a church in which a man got up and from night to night taught these various answers from the pulpit, we would go away feeling like we had listened to either a hypocrite or a lunatic. No man in his right mind would hold to all of these teachings nor would any of us as hearers accept such. How

then, can we claim that God teaches all of these in His Word or that He would accept all of them?

When we are seeking to find the truth then, how do we know what is right? It is obvious that just as in the first century, there are many people who "have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge" (Romans 10:4). We must look to the Bible—we must search the scriptures "whether these things were so" just as the noble Bereans did. God's Son tells us that there is but one "strait" and "narrow" way that leads unto life (Matthew 7:14). He further said in the same passage that "few there be that find it." God does not imply here that he has made the "strait and narrow" too difficult to find but that some will see "other ways" that are more appealing to them—ways that are not found in His Word. Even when we look to God's Word and are assured the answer we have gotten is His, there is still more we must consider. . .

**Second . . .**

### **We Must Do What Jesus Commands.**

Many feel that if they are asked to "do" something, they are trying to merit salvation or "work" their way to heaven. Jesus tells us such an idea is wrong when He says, "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are

unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10). When God speaks in His Word of "obedience," He talks of several things—love (John 14:15), submission to His Lordship (Luke 6:46)—but He never describes obedience to His will as an attempt to "merit" or "earn" salvation. The plain and simple teaching of God's Word is that Jesus is the "author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Hebrews 5:9).

With these thoughts in mind, look at the following passages:

#### Faith

"Without faith it is impossible to please Him . . ." (Hebrews 11:6).

#### Repentance

"God . . . commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30).

#### Confession

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus . . . thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:9).

#### Baptism

"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

#### Faithful Living

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:10).

With these passages before us, let us apply the two reactions we spoke of earlier.

First, are these commands in God's Word? We encourage you to look in your Bible at the passages listed above. You will find that these statements are taken directly from the Word of God. They are not doctrines which man made up nor are they some man's "interpretation" of what the passages say. They are simple inspired statements from the Word of God.

Second, if these teachings are from God (and they are), how are you going to respond to them? By what manner of love or submission to Jesus can you disregard any of these and still expect to be considered obedient to Christ and, thus, to be saved?

It is our prayer that you will look to God's Word for His answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" and that you will love Him enough to obey His will. ■

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