

## What Must I Do to Be Saved?

by Tony Warren

- "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."

-Acts 16:30-31

**T**his is the question the Philippian jailer asked Paul when the captives were loosed at the prison at Philippi. "What must I do to be saved?" Here in the simplest form is the question that man has puzzled over for ages. The Apostle Paul responded with the concise assertion that he would be saved if he "believed on the Lord Jesus Christ." But the larger question is, what does the act of true belief involve? For we know that it is more than merely declaring, "I believe there is a Christ," because even the devils believe (*Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34*). Yet obviously their belief is not unto salvation. So what is the belief that Paul speaks about that will lead one to be saved?



The answer to this larger question is best illustrated in chapter eleven of the book of John. It is there that Christ vividly demonstrates that the resurrection of life from the dead can only come through Him. In this historical example of the spiritual resurrection, we can observe that without the miraculous work of "Christ Alone," Martha's brother Lazarus would have remained the rotting lifeless corpse that he was. He had been long dead, and in his helpless condition, he was laid in the grave, unable to do anything about it. He wasn't free to take another breath, he couldn't will himself back to life and he couldn't raise himself up by his own power or belief

system. Because the dead are **unable to do anything** on their own. The lesson God is teaching in the resurrection of Lazarus is that it is strictly by the will of God, and the miraculous power of "Christ Alone," that this stinking, rotting, (*John 11:39*) lifeless corpse would rise up from the grave. It would not be by Christ, plus the will of the corpse. But by Christ alone was Lazarus able to rise from the power of the grave unto new life. This is the pattern for our resurrection from being dead in trespass and sin, unto new life. It is truly by Christ alone.

#### **Ephesians 2:5**

- "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (***by grace ye are saved;***)"

It is by Grace we are saved. Not by our own power or will, but by the unmerited work and favor of God upon us. Even as Lazarus, it was by the divine and wilful action of Christ alone by which anyone is quickened (made alive) from the dead. Not one of us could take credit for having any part whatsoever in our resurrection anymore than Lazarus could claim credit for his. It was a gift of God through Jesus alone, even as He declared this to Martha.

#### **John 11:25-26**

- "Jesus said unto her, ***I Am the resurrection***, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:
- And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

Christ uses this example of the resurrection of Lazarus to emphatically demonstrate that He alone has this power of spiritual resurrection. Through the resurrection of Christ, saints who have previously died in the flesh, are in their souls yet alive and reigning with Him. This through no will or power of their own. It is by Grace. Likewise, the saints who are alive on this earth presently, having been raised up from spiritual death in that same power of Christ, their souls shall never die. This is all because of the faith and work of Christ alone! Because being God, the only promised Savior of all, regardless of nationality, He is the only possible deliverer from the power of death. Note that when Christ declared, *I am the resurrection*, He asked Martha, *do you believe this?* This question goes out to you as well. Will you answer as she does?

#### **John 11:27**

- "She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."

Clearly her witness agrees with His, consenting that He is the prophesied Savior, the power of resurrection and life that those who believe on Him should not see death. In other words, for Martha to believe what Christ had just asserted about Himself, was to give assent that He was the one true prophesied Messiah, the power of God personified in the Savior of Israel. In fact this was articulated in the very context:

#### **John 11:21-22**

- "Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.
- But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee."

Here is her faith. This was a testimony to the power of her belief, which was her saving faith, a gift of God. She believed that He was the deliverer out of Zion, who came with the power of God to give life. She didn't believe in word only, she had faith that He had the power of God in

His hands that could have saved her brother. Yet her understanding of just how, was imperfect. In her is the revelation to us of just what real saving faith is, and what true belief involves. It entails a certain hope, trust and belief that Christ is all that He declares. Namely, our God, and our one and only deliverance from the sting of death that has plagued man.

#### **Psalms 68:20**

- "He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord belong the issues from death."

#### **Isaiah 43:11**

- "I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no Saviour."

She understood Christ was the God of salvation, and besides Him, there is no other Savior (Hosea 13:4). Indeed, God Himself had to be the Deliverer, because no mere man could ever save us from death. Thus, when anyone comes to true belief in Christ, they should recognize that whatever the method or avenue of our coming to Him, it was only by the Grace (unmerited favor) of God that we did. It was not because of any inherent goodness, special morality or resident virtue that we possess in ourselves. On the contrary, it was by the goodness of God, His Holiness and the virtue of Christ alone. It was by *unmerited* favor that He came to grace us by tabernacling within us. Coming to true belief and faith, is indeed coming to this great realization. It is manifested in coming to understand that we are all sinners who are as spiritually dead, even as Lazarus was physically dead. A man who, for all his muscle and will, still lay decaying in the grave with no ability to rise up on his own. Yet ultimately, he did rise up. By power of Christ alone he was given new life and endowed with the power to rise up. In like manner, we have transgressed the laws of God and are spiritually dead. In our spiritual condition we are just as lost and helpless as Lazarus was in his physical condition. We all sin, and not one of our (alleged) righteous works will free us from accountability to God's laws against these sins. We should inherently know that we all deserve God's wrath for all our trespasses. In that knowledge of our sinful nature, we should also understand that it is only merciful God *alone* who can deliver us from ourselves. As a result, we can feel sorry for ourselves, or we can ask that we might receive. When we are truly blessed with His Holy Spirit to be honest with ourselves in coming to understand this, it will bring a true reverence and humility before God. For only when we understand our total unworthiness, will we really begin to understand and appreciate the real Grace of God, versus imagined grace of God. It is in this humility that we find the love and precious treasure of faith in the true salvation in Christ alone.

#### **Proverbs 22:4**

- "By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life."

## **Recognition**

Until we can look at ourselves honestly (*as a sinner*), and our sin as the lawlessness that is keeping us from reconciliation with God, we will not understand the grace of the kingdom of heaven. The fact is, man must be made aware of a problem before he can correct it. You wouldn't call for a doctor unless you were aware that you were sick. You wouldn't cry out for help from a lifeguard unless you were aware that you were drowning. Likewise, you will not call on the name of the Lord in true hope of resurrection, unless you are aware that you are a

stinking spiritual corpse, in danger of judgment and in dire need of deliverance. All men, no matter from what race, nation or moral standing, are sinners in need of a Savior. The first step toward our salvation is recognition.

### **Romans 3:9-10**

- "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!***"

You are not alone in your unrighteousness before God, for all mankind is in the exact same position. Whether they are a Priest, a Pastor, a Monk or a 10 year old child. We have all sinned (transgressed the law), and thus are in need of being redeemed from the consequences of our sins. This isn't something man postulates speculatively, it is what God has plainly declared.

### **Romans 3:23**

- "for All have sinned and come short of the Glory of God."

It doesn't matter whether or not we *feel* like a sinner, God declares that, *in His eyes*, we are all sinners. We may subconsciously think ourselves somewhat better than the next guy, because of inherent pride, but we are vain and egotistical creatures by nature. Thus we deceive ourselves in thinking that we are (down deep) good people. The question is, are we willing to honestly accept God's appraisal of our spiritual condition, or will we continue to deceive ourselves into thinking that we are really good people? Do we continue to assume that God knows that we are really not that bad? Yes, we can lie to ourselves in believing we will not be condemned, but if we look at ourselves honestly we will see that God's appraisal is ***totally accurate*** and we are really no better than anyone else. We are all hypocrites, we all sin, and we all have gone astray so that not one of us is good enough to be worthy of the Kingdom. If we begin to recognize and understand this, it just may be a sign that God is beginning to work His Grace in our lives. It is when we are broken, that we better understand the concept of wholeness. Could it be that God is giving us evidence that He is working within us, softening our obstinate heart to receive the truth.

### **Psalms 34:18**

- "The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a ***contrite spirit.***"

The Lord will save those who are of a broken and contrite (repentant) spirit. For it is written, He resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble (*James 4:6*). If we are truly sorrowful in spirit that we humbly look at ourselves for what we are, we will know that we deserve to be punished for our sins against God. We will know that it is only by His sovereign mercy that we will be delivered from the judgment that we so *rightfully* deserve. The key word there is *rightfully*, which means we have come to recognize our condition, rather than make excuses for it.

## **Confession and Repentance**

Upon recognition of our spiritual condition, by God's grace we are able to confess our sins, and are given repentance for these transgressions. For it is written, our God is a merciful God. If we

seek Him with all our hearts, He will be found.

#### **Acts 5:31**

- "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a `Saviour, for to **give repentance** to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."

#### **2nd Timothy 2:25**

- In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will **give them repentance** to the acknowledging of the truth;"

What should we do to become saved? We should pray to God for repentance because truly, it is a *gift* from God rather than some work that will gain us favor of God. One thing builds upon another. In other words, when Christ is moving in our lives where we begin to recognize our sins, we can acknowledge from the heart that *we cannot do anything to save ourselves*. This is imperative, because we cannot be saved by God's grace *and* our own works of repentance or righteousness. It is one or the other. We pray earnestly that God would, **Have Mercy Upon Us!** Because we understand that we will never get right with God by keeping the law, by our own regret or remorse, by attempting to be just righteous enough, by being baptized in water, by being confirmed, by joining a church, by the doing of good deeds or by living a generally moral life. For even what man may consider a good moral life is tainted by sin in God's eyes. Any sin at all is transgression that will keep us separated from God (James 2:10). As long as man continues to deny these truths, he is still deceived about working his way into heaven. How then can he be in communion with the Grace of God, illustrating true repentance of sins. No one is sinless, and thus no one of his own righteousness will enter the kingdom of heaven. That is the place from where we must start. There is none good, no not one (Mark 10:18).

#### **1st John 1:8-9**

- "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

If we really desire truth, we will start with confession of our sins. If we do humbly and honestly confess that we are sinners before God, realizing that He is our only hope for salvation, God promises that He is faithful to forgive us and save us. That's a faithful promise. Confessing sins to man won't save us, confessing to a Priest won't save us, and even confessing to ourselves is merely a starting point. But honest confession to God about our spiritual bankruptcy and our absolute need for His help will bring His forgiveness. He has made that Covenant (promise), and He is *Faithful* to keep it.

#### **Romans 10:9**

- "that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, and shall **believe in thy heart** that God has raised Him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved."

The greater question of faith is the belief within our heart, not just a cerebral or head belief in the existence of Christ. i.e., having a heart that is changed by the work of Christ wherein it is no longer hardened and obstinate. Again, this is what we saw in the example of the resurrection of Lazarus. It is true belief *from the heart*, in trusting in the resurrection of Christ alone for our salvation. Who gave a corpse the living heart to pump, ears to hear the words, *rise up*? Who gave Martha the faith to believe? It was solely by the power of God that the corpse came to life

and its heart started beating again. Then and only then was Lazarus able to rise up. God says, *I will give you a new heart.* -Ezekiel 36:26," and He will. God is the starter and finisher of faith (Hebrews 12:2). Both Martha's faith as well as our own. He begins our conversion process by moving us to personal confession or acknowledgment of sin. Christians are not ashamed of Christ and will confess Him openly to others, while confessing their sins to God. For they understand that it is not man, but God alone who has the power to forgive them. Sins can only be forgiven by the God, *against whom we have sinned.*

### **Mark 2:7**

- "Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?"

These Scribes and Pharisees, in this point, had it right. But the problem was, they didn't understand that Jesus indeed **was God!** Thus, unbeknownst to them, He truly did have the power and authority to forgive sins. That is why, through His faithful resurrection from the dead, those dead in trespass and sins have that forgiveness through the work of His atonement. In our honest repentance (*sorrow for, and earnest desire to turn away from our sins*), we may find that we are being Spiritually moved of God toward Him.

### **Luke 13:3**

- "I tell you nay; but unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Without recognition there is no acknowledgement of sin, and without acknowledgment of sin there is no repentance, and without repentance there is no forgiveness. On the other hand, with acknowledgement comes the understanding that we are slaves to sin, and only God can set us free (John 8:34-36). We could not free ourselves by our own (alleged) free will, or by our own good works, or by any atonement or charity. The nature of man is to lean toward charity, penance or rationalizing away his own sin (*compared with the sins of others*) so that he appears somehow a better person in his own eyes. But we must never rationalize away sin in any fashion. The fear of the Lord is evidenced in our confessing sin *honestly*" before God. Clearly we are **guilty** daily. To confess this before God, with the trust that He is faithful to cleanse us of it, is faith. Because what is there to forgive if we rationalize and make excuses in claiming that we are good people or that we have not sinned? Then our sins will remain unforgiven. Because asking for forgiveness for sins that you don't think you've committed, makes going to God a hollow ceremony without any real substance. There must be true recognition, confession, and repentance. Not mere words or ceremony.

## **Seek and Believe**

After God has moved us to recognize, to make confession and to repent of our sins, there will come a recognizable faith to believe that Christ has died in order to make us acceptable to God. We understand that becoming acceptable cannot be earned by doing the best that we can, or by being charitable, or by following the Ten Commandments. There is only one way to be holy in God's sight (*according to God*), and that is to trust that the redemptive blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed us from all our sins. He alone can lift us from the depths of despair to the height of the spiritual Kingdom of God. No religion, no minister, no organized sect or Priest, no Pope or system of doctrines, no penitence, ceremonies, pilgrimages or deeds of merit, are able to effectively take away anyone's sins before God. Salvation is found in no other than Christ (*acts 4:12*). He alone is God that He could take our sins in his body, and suffer death to pay the

penalty for those sins. Therefore, He alone holds the key to our salvation. He is the only one who can give man freedom from the debt that he owes.

#### **Acts 10:43**

- "To Him give all the Prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins."

#### **Psalms 68:20**

- "He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord belong the issues from death."

By our Lord's death in the flesh, He has given us relief from the wages (payment) of sin. When He took away our sins, He took away our worry. It was by the sacrifice of Himself that all this is made possible. Thus, we must *believe* that He died as our sin bearer, for there is no other name under heaven whereby men may be Saved (Acts 4:12). When we seek the Lord with all our hearts, He has made the *promise* that He shall be found of us. So we can wallow in self-pity, or we can accept what He promises.

#### **Matthew 7:7-8**

- "Ask and it shall be given unto you; Seek, and ye shall find; Knock, and it shall be opened unto you,
- for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Jesus has made this faithful Covenant commitment. The reason so many seek and do not find, is because they are not seeking the *true Christ*, but are seeking to enter into salvation by an alternative way. A way where they can call themselves by His name (Christ'ian), but where they don't have to live in Him, or walk in Him, or speak His Word. But that is not truly seeking the way, truth and light, that is merely seeking a name. To go our own way, while professing His name, is not truly "seeking" forgiveness in Jesus Christ. When we seek another Christ, it is because we seek to follow what is right in our own eyes, or are listening to the words of men as if they were the words of God. Saving faith is in surrender to God's Word, not in being in an adversarial relationship to it. The fact is, many professing Christians today look at God's law as a burden, and so they don't really want to surrender to it. But to those truly seeking Christ, His Word is like living waters and sweet honey. It is the Rock from which flows their help, and not that burdensome stone that others see it as. This is manifested in our *receiving* the righteousness and truth of it. It most certainly is not found in the falling away from it (*apostasia*), the departing from the faith, or the divorcement from sound doctrine. That is not seeking in faith.

#### **Luke 13:24**

- "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many, I say unto you, will *Seek* to enter in, and shall not be able."

There are many ways to seek, but there is but one way to, "seek and ye shall find." i.e., there are men seeking the glory of being under a name, and then there are men seeking the forgiveness of the Lord, to His glory. The faithful promise that, "*if we seek Him, He shall be found*," is not just idle words, it is the unadulterated truth. Only those with a heart that has been softened and made right by the divine Father, will believe unto salvation, and will seek the

Lord of the Bible. Professing Christians who are yet carnal, will seek a lord of their own creation, rather than the God revealed in scriptures. That is the difference between saving faith unto belief (which is faith with works), and faith without the work of Christ, which is dead. Belief is from the heart, it is not found in merely taking on a namesake.

#### **Romans 10:10**

- "for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto Salvation."

When we confess and believe in our hearts that Jesus Christ is our Lord and personal Savior, we lay all our burdens down at the throne of Grace. When we let Christ carry them, it is a testimony to our faith in understanding that we are unable to. God (*who cannot lie*) is faithful to forgive us all our sins, for these are His faithful promises. When we come to the Lord in humbleness of spirit, casting off the pride of this life, the Lord will abundantly pardon. Pride comes before a fall, but the humble (Proverbs 16:18) of spirit is near unto God.

#### **Psalms 69:32**

- "The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God."

This is the Spirit of those who believe and truly come to seek God. Not built up (Psalms 34:18) with a haughty or arrogant spirit, but lowly and humble (*as Christ our example*) that we have a contrite heart. True salvation is more than confession of faith with our lips, it is confession of faith with our hearts and minds. This is the love of God wherein we demonstrate it by faith and belief in His word. We use God's Word as a foundation stone for our life, to be built upon. It is when His word becomes the central part of us so that we never want to sin again, that we discover what true seeking is.

#### **Psalms 119:10-11**

- "With ***my whole heart*** have I sought Thee; O let me not wander from thy commandments,
- Thy word have I hid ***in my heart*** that I might not sin against thee."

This is repentance of the Heart. It is a belief in God's Word that is evidenced by a ready love for it. The earnest desire to do God's will and to keep, or guard it from loss. Someone who says they believe in God, and yet they forsake or will not follow or keep His Word, is just kidding themselves about being a Christian.

#### **1st John 2:4**

- "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, ***is a liar, and the truth is not in him.***"

These are strong words! Keeping means to *hold close*, or to *guard against loss*. In other words, to preserve it that it's not adulterated and not compromised. No one can keep the law (not sin) but we can keep His commandments. i.e., belief in His Word and not adulterate them. Those who won't keep God's Word, God says that the truth is not in them. Thus we see that true belief is manifested in our earnest desire to faithfulness and obedience, and unbelief is manifested in unfaithfulness and living in disobedience. The man of law-fulness versus the man of law-lessness.



## Receive your Blessing

Once God has given you grace to recognize your sin and you have repented, sought God, and believed on Him, then you will receive His blessing. An outward sign of the inward cleansing by the Holy Spirit is to be baptized in His name by water. So what does prevent you from receiving the blessing?

### Acts 8:36

- "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?"

### Acts 10:48-49

- "Can any man forbid Water, that these should not be baptized, which **have** received the Holy Ghost as well as we?
- and he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days."

The baptism in water is to illustrate that you have cast your burdens upon Christ. It signifies that positionally, as well as spiritually, you have been buried with Christ in His death, and raised up with Him in his Resurrection to new Life. By being baptized in water we signify that we understand that by this (salvation) we have been **cleansed** of all our transgressions by the Spirit of God. Not by water, but by the Spirit. Thus we are a new creation washed clean from sin in the shedding of His blood in propitiation for our sins. The baptism in water is a token or sign of this true cleansing, which was by the death and resurrection of Christ.

There are two types of receiving that is spoken of in Christian theology. One is Passive, and the other is Participatory. Participatory would be analogous to *someone holding a gift and offering it to you, and you got up from your chair and went over to him to accept it*. That is an example of participatory. Passive would be analogous to *someone walking up to you with gift in hand, reaching down to open your hand, and then placing the gift there, with no effort on your part*. i.e., in *Passive Receiving* you have done absolutely nothing to receive the gift. Note that in both cases, there is the receipt of a gift, but **only one** of these gifts was totally free. The cost of the participatory gift was your *work* in getting up and going over to get it. So it wasn't totally free (unmerited, unconditional), you had to do (work) in order to receive it. By contrast, the *Passive Receipt* was unconditional, where you did absolutely nothing to merit it, and you spent no effort to get it. That is what *True Grace* is. It is the totally unmerited, unconditional favor of God upon us, where we have done nothing to deserve or attain it. This is the only true "Sovereign Grace" salvation plan. Grace, simply defined, is the unmerited favor of God. It is a gift that we didn't merit by any work of our own, but received unconditionally by the work of Christ. Anything *more*" than that, is not true Grace.

Thus when all of these things that we have been discussing begin to happen in someone's life, it is God who is beginning to draw them to Himself. He is depositing His Grace upon them that they *receive the blessing*. Our receiving Him is likewise a work in us, done by God. The fact that we are brought into subjection to His Word is by no merit of ours. We recognize God's working within us because His Spirit "witnesses with our spirit" that we are led of God. But we give God all the credit for our coming, and all the Glory for our doing. As indeed the Apostle Paul, as our example, clearly illustrated:

### 1st Corinthians 15:10

- "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but ***I laboured*** more abundantly than they all: ***yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.***"

In receiving we have surrendered our will to do *His will*. Just as a child would humbly listen and obey the Word of His father, so we will receive the word of our heavenly Father as a child. Not as an arrogant and prideful man who thinks he knows more than the teacher does about what is right and wrong. But in humility, as a child would trust and accept that what his father tells him is right, unconditionally.

### Luke 18:17

- "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not ***Receive*** the Kingdom of God as a little Child, shall in no wise enter therein."

Receiving is an outward sign of the Spirit in us moving us to accepting God's laws as our own. Those not moved of the Spirit may wrest or twist God's Word, or rationalize them away, or deny their importance to us today, but he that receives His Word in humbled by the experience. In rejecting the Word of God men show they have ultimately denied Christ. Those who believe, are the blessed of God. The point is, no one will truly "believe" except God gives them faith that they will believe. The words *faith* and *belief* are practically synonymous.

### Hebrews 12:2

- "Looking unto Jesus the ***author and finisher of our faith***; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

God both is the author or creator of the faith we have, but also will see it through to the finish (Philippians 1:6). But we should be careful to note that God's moving us to do good does not in any way take away man's responsibility for his sins or his refusal to be obedient. It's just that when we are obedient, it is because God has stepped in and become our help. We must strive to humbly surrender our will to the will of God, and that means accepting what the Word of God says, despite what we might believe is right in our own eyes. True salvation is born of this humble Spirit of surrender, where our will is changed to receive His Word as authoritative and binding.

### James 1:21

- "Wherefore, lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and *receive* with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls!"

Those who hear and truly receive are true Christians, born from above, who are secured or *sealed* with the Holy Spirit of God. And they will bring forth the works of true salvation as an evidence of that regeneration. As the Bereans (*Acts 17:11*) who *received* the Word with joy and brought forth much fruit, evidenced in their diligently searching out truth.

### Mark 4:20

- "And these are they which are sown on good ground, such as hear the Word, and *receive* it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred."

How much fruit one brings forth is a variable, but we will bring forth fruit. The fact that we *receive* God's Word is one of the evidences that we are truly saved. Those not truly born from above will not have the softened heart to receive the love in truth (2nd Thessalonians 2:10), but will twist, distort and ignore it, to their own peril. Carnal man, of the flesh, of sin or lawlessness, doesn't have the Spirit or will to abide by God's law. He wants justification of himself in disobeying God's laws. But to all who truly receive it, to them He gives power to become the true children of God.

### **John 1:12**

- "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."

## **Conclusion: Know God and be Known of Him**

So, what must we do to become saved? As Paul said to the Philippian jailer, "***Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.***" The children of Israel died in the wilderness because of unbelief, all the time professing they were of God. Likewise, the Children of Israel 2000 years ago rejected Christ because of unbelief, while all the time professing they looked for a Messiah. They died in unbelief because their faith was not the product of God working within them. It wasn't belief unto receiving and unto obedience. It was dead faith, not saving faith that can only come from the *work* of the living Christ. For if we truly believe, we will know God, and be known of Him.

What must I do to be saved? In summary, simple confession of the lips is not the evidence of true salvation, just as simply professing to be a Christian doesn't make one a true Christian. For even the Devils confess that Christ is the Holy one of God (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34), but this doesn't mean that they are saved. Most false gospels will make confession of Christ, and yet they are no closer to salvation than the spirit of evil that they serve. Anyone can say the sinners' prayer, be baptized in water and profess many works for Christ. But true salvation consists of being dead to sin, being baptized in the Spirit, and being regenerated unto new life. True salvation is becoming a new creation wherein we love God because He *first* loved us (1st John 4:19). It is when our worldly desires have been changed to an earnest desire to do God's will. All men sin, but of the Spirit having an "earnest desire" to do the will of God is the key phrase that evidences true salvation. If we don't have that true Spirit to keep His law faithfully and to do His will, then we are deceiving ourselves. Then we need to examine ourselves, try ourselves, prove ourselves, that we make our calling and election sure (2nd Peter 1:10).

### **2nd Corinthians 13:5**

- "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, ***prove*** your own selves, know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates."

We should always examine or test ourselves by God's Word to make sure that the evidence is there that we are truly sons of God. Everyone has some sin in their lives, whether in thought or in deed, because no one is perfect except God. But our earnest desire has to be to keep God's Word faithfully, that we are not ignoring or casting aside His laws. Do we receive them, or do we turn to the right hand and to the left hand in order to avoid them? Do we make them our authority, or do we make the words of our teachers or church leaders the authority? Are we the man of God, the man of lawfulness, or the man of Satan, the man of lawlessness? This is the

test of true salvation. This is how **we know** that we are truly in Christ, are not lying to ourselves, because His Spirit will witness with ours. The 'evidence' of this witnessing is that we keep his Word, rather than it suffer loss as we forsake it. We will hide it in our hearts and bring it to remembrance (Psalms 119) that we remain faithful in times of trial. This is how we know that we truly know him, and are truly known of Him. The evidence (*not the reason*) is in our keeping (guarding from loss) the Word of truth.

### 1st John 2:3-5

- "And **hereby** we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.
- He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, **is a liar, and the truth is not in Him.**
- But whoso keepeth his Word, in him verily is the Love of God perfected: **Hereby** know we that we are in Him."

The emphasis I make here particularly is on the word, *hereby*! In other words, God is demonstrating that *this is how* we know that we are really in Christ. This is how we know that we are really saved. It's not by evidence of a Holy feeling, it's not by the evidence of water baptism, and it's not by the evidence of following church leaders, or speaking in tongues. It's by the evidence of our new hearts, manifested in our desire to keep God's Word *faithfully*. It is the evidence seen in our love of God that we will seek to do his will, and not our own. Again, keeping God's Word that we might not sin against Him is not the reason for our salvation, for that would be legalism. But keeping God's Word is the *evidence* of salvation. When we become truly saved, this sign is seen in our lives. Indeed, as Christ declared, *a tree is known by its fruits*. If you are in a serious state of mind to faithfully follow God's Word and keep his commandments, then you are the lawful man and have *evidence* of truly knowing Christ. God declares in 1st John chapter 2 that without this evidence of reliance and guarding from loss *His Word*, man professing to know Christ is a liar! Those are strong words by God, for all to consider wisely.

What then must we do to be saved? We have to believe and **know Christ** as we are known of Him. The only way we can find Christ is by being born of God, whereby we risen with Him and known of Him. The evidence of this is that as a new creation, we will receive His Word as the ultimate authority for our lives. We will have a new found understanding of the phrase, *Thy will be done*. Because having Christ come to dwell with us, He works within us to will and to do (Philippians 2:13). This is the evidence we are saved and our salvation is secure. It is because we keep God's Word and believe with all our hearts that this is true.

What must I do to be saved? Recognize, Acknowledge, Confess, Repent, Believe, Seek, Receive, and Know. We don't grope along in darkness wondering about our salvation, nor do we take a wait and see attitude about our eternal destiny. God's sovereignty does not negate our responsibility. If we wait and do nothing, then we will someday have to stand before God and answer in paying the wages for our sins. If we surmise that there is plenty of time to get saved, we neglect that *tomorrow is promised to no one*. If we don't believe in Hell, then we can't righteously call ourselves Christian, because that makes Christ a liar. Now is the Day of Salvation, and now is the acceptable time of the Lord. When Christ comes again, or if you should die before His return, it will be too late to do anything about your fate. God declared, *on the day of your salvation, I helped you*. In this truth we understand that this day is our present reality. Confess your sins, surrender, and make your commitment to Jesus Christ, and you will be made alive with Him both now, and in eternity. Through the witness of His Spirit with yours, it is revealed that it wasn't because of your goodness that you believed and became saved, but

because of His goodness to call you to believe, unto salvation.

### **1st John 5:13**

- "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may *know*

that ye have Eternal Life, and that ye may believe on the Son of God." Make your calling and election sure, seek God, and you will know that it is ultimately God who was seeking you. Draw near to Him and understand that it is ultimately God who was drawing you near to Him. Seek to have new life and know that it was ultimately His life that was calling you to new life in Him. Only then will you know that God initiated the love in you.

### **1st John 4:19**

- "We love him, because he first loved us."

The testimony of the Spirit is in humbly receiving that you didn't choose God, you were in fact, Chosen of God. God's Sovereign Grace will overwhelm you, a great Blessing that in wisdom you understand that it is what God did in you that caused you to hear. Just as Paul's cry of his labor, that it was, *not I, but the Lord which dwelleth within me*. So we will come to understand these truths of his calling and authoring our faith. What must you do to become saved? Trust in the lord and seek Him while He may be found, and then you will realize that He sought you, He called you and He Chose you. He worked within you for everything that is good.

### **Philippians 2:13**

- "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

No need for you to carry heavy burdens, lay all those burdens down at the feet of the cross, and let Christ lift them for you. When you stumble and fall, let Christ carry you, as this is the only way to finish such a spiritual race. For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight (Galatians 2:16). We can only be justified by the faith of Christ, through His work. And all things converge ultimately for good for those who have the love of God in them. For God has proposed it.

### **Romans 8:28**

- "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

May the Lord, who is Gracious and merciful above all, guide you into the truth of His Most Holy Word, and draw you to understand that, in all things, "His will be done."

Amen!

Peace,

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The Mountain Retreat / twarren10@aol.com

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