

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

Introduction

1. When the Spirit convicts a person of his sins, he realizes his need to be delivered from the eternal consequences of his sins, and so he cries out, “What must I do to be saved?” There are several examples of people asking this question, though not always in these exact words (**Mark 10:17; Acts 2:37; 16:30**).
2. In our own day the gospel is preached, men are convicted of their sin, and they want to know “What must I do to be saved?” The answer that people receive will depend on the affiliation of the one they are asking. Some will say you are saved by works, some by faith only, and some will even say that all men will be saved (Universalists).
3. How can I know what I must do to be saved? Where will I find the answer to this question? If you ask a Catholic, a Protestant (e.g., Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, etc.), a Cultist (Mormon, Jehovah’s Witness, etc.), and a Universalist, then you are likely to get different answers. A person from each of these groups may jump around from book to book and verse to verse to prove their position, but you never know if they are quoting such verses out of context, and you don’t know what relevant verses they are leaving out (verses that don’t support their position).
4. The only source we can completely trust is God’s word, so it is to God’s word we shall turn to learn what we must do to be saved. Rather than jumping from book to book and verse to verse, we shall focus on one passage for our answer – Acts 2:1-47. This passage records the first gospel sermon and the first converts to the faith. I hope you will agree that this of all places is *the* place to go to receive a definitive answer.

THE FIRST GOSPEL SERMON

- A. After Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, He appeared to His disciples one last time before ascending into heaven in their sight, and He commissioned them to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who **believes** AND is **immersed** will be **saved**; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (**Mark 16:15-16**). We would expect, then, the apostles’ preaching to be in alignment with this commission.
- B. The first gospel sermon (**Acts 2:1-47**):
 1. Here, Luke records the first gospel sermon that was preached by the apostles, after Jesus’ ascension into heaven, which took place on the Day of Pentecost (a Jewish feast day). Hundreds of thousands of Jews had come to Jerusalem to keep the feast, and so this was an ideal time to preach the first gospel sermon.
 - a. **Acts 2:1-4**. The apostles are immersed in the Holy Spirit and began speaking in tongues.
 - b. **Acts 2:5-12**. Jews from every nation had come to Jerusalem, and they were amazed to hear these twelve Galileans speaking to them in their own tongue or language. They wondered what it meant.
 - c. **Acts 2:13-36**. Peter then stood up with the eleven and explained that what was happening was a fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel in which God promised to pour out His Spirit in the last days. Peter then proceeded to preach Jesus: His death, burial, resurrection (**Acts 2:23**) and ascension (**Acts 2:33**). He concluded by saying, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (**Acts 2:36**).
 2. The crowds’ response:
 - a. Those who heard Peter’s sermon were “cut to the heart” and they asked the question that ought to come from everyone who has heard the gospel, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (**Acts 2:37**).
 - b. These people had heard the gospel and were “cut to the heart”. They were “cut to the heart” because they believed the gospel; **they had become believers**.
 - c. Some would argue that being a believer is enough, but these believers did not think so, which is why they asked, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

3. Peter's answer:

- a. What, then, is heaven's answer to these believers? All those who believe that Jesus is the Christ need to pay heed to Peter's answer: "Then Peter said to them, **Repent, and let every one of you BE BAPTIZED in the name of Jesus Christ FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS**; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38-39). What Peter says here is consistent with the commission that Jesus gave to the apostles: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:15-16). Those who first heard the gospel and believed were told to repent and be baptised for the remission of sins, and if that is what those believers had to do, then it is what believers today must do.
- b. That same day 3000 people obeyed the gospel: "Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them" (Acts 2:41). Jesus had said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:16), and it was these saved individuals that the Lord added to His church: "And **the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved**" (Acts 2:47).

If you believe the gospel (cp. Acts 8:35-38) and you desire to be added to Christ's church, then you need to repent and be baptised for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38) and Christ Himself will add you to His church (Acts 2:47).

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