

## What Must I Do To Be Saved?

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by Bill Crews

Today, in regard to what those lost in sin must do to be saved, we hear answers like these: (1) "Just receive Christ in your heart as your personal Savior, and the gift of salvation will be yours." (2) "There is really nothing that you must do or can do to be saved. Your salvation does not depend upon anything that you do. All that must be done can only be done by God, and He has already done that -- in sending His Son to die on a cross for your sins. You simply must, by faith, accept His gift of salvation." (3) "Realize that you are lost and need to be saved. Believe that Christ as God's Son purchased your salvation when He died as a sacrifice for your sins. Ask Him to come into your heart, to give you salvation, to take control of your life, and He will." Quite frequently a prayer will given for the sinner to pray, with the assurance that will grant "the sinner's prayer."

The book of Acts is the New Testament book in which the lost are told what to do to be saved, and in that book we find no such answers as the above. The lost, aliens, those who are out of Christ and in sin, are never told to pray for anything -- not one time! Nor are they told to "only believe," or "receive Christ in your heart as your personal Savior." Nor are they told that "there is nothing for them to do." What do we find?

**The Jews at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost:** Please read Acts 2:1-41. For the first time salvation is offered to men in the name of Christ. The apostle Peter had become the Lord's spokesman. Addressing the very people who had rejected and crucified Jesus, he charged them with rejecting and crucifying, not a blasphemer and deceiver, but the very Christ, the Son of God. He boldly declared and proved that Jesus had been raised from the dead by the power of God and in fulfillment of prophecy. Many of them listened earnestly, believed what they heard, and were convicted of their sins. Being pricked in their hearts, they cried out, "What shall we do?" (v. 37) They were not told that there was nothing for them to do. Rather, these convicted, inquiring believers were told: "Repent ye, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto (or for) the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (v. 38) Peter continued to speak and exhorted them to respond to the commands he had given. (vv. 39-40) "They then that received his words were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls." (v. 41) Friend, is this what you did to be saved?

**Saul of Tarsus:** Please read all three accounts of his conversion, Acts 9:1-18; 22:3-16 and 26:12-19. Believing that Jesus of Nazareth was an imposter and that his Jewish followers were apostates from the true religion of God, Saul made his way to Damascus to arrest any of those followers he could find. He honestly believed that he was doing what was right. As Saul approached the city, Jesus appeared to him in a blinding light and identified Himself. An unbeliever became a believer, a penitent, inquiring believer. Saul asked the Lord what he must do and was told to arise and go into Damascus with the promise that he would be told what to do (9:6; 22:10). He was not told that there was nothing for him to do. Blinded, he spent three days in prayer and without eating or drinking. Ananias, a disciple, was sent to him and told him, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name" (22:16). Acts 9: 18 tells us that "he arose and was baptized." Friend, is this what you did to be saved?

**The jailor and his house at Philippi:** Please read Acts 16:16-34. Paul and Silas had been seized and dragged before the rulers of the city, beaten with rods, and delivered to the jailor who was charged to keep them safely. In the night God sent an earthquake and miraculously opened bonds and cell doors. Seeing the open cell doors, the jailor was about to take his own life, but was stopped by the apostle Paul. Soon, he was asking these men of God, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (v. 30). Rather than tell him there was nothing for him to do, they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." (v. 31) How do you believe on the Lord? And what is involved in believing on the Lord? To enable this man, and his house, to "believe on the Lord Jesus," "they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house." (v. 32) And how did they respond to this teaching? "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately." (v. 33) After this he "rejoiced greatly with all his house, having believed in God" (v. 34). Friend, is this what you did when you were saved?