

## Have You Been Saved?

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by Bill Crews

There are a number of common and popular misconceptions today about the matter of salvation from sin. You cannot be saved from sin as an infant because you are not born lost; no one is lost until he is capable of committing sin and does so. An infant does not need to be saved. It is not true that you can be saved from sin only if you are one of those fortunate ones unconditionally foreordained unto eternal life; the Bible does not teach the doctrine of unconditional foreordination. It is not true that everyone who sincerely believes that he is saved has been saved; anyone can be mistaken about the matter. It is not true that anyone who is a good moral person, religious, and a worshiper of God has been saved. God loves all men (Jn. 3:16); Christ died for all men (Heb. 2:9; 1 Jn. 2:2); salvation is offered to all men (Titus 2:11); God would have all to be saved and wishes none to perish (1 Tim. 2:3-4; 2 Pet. 3:9); but only those who are convicted of their sins, who want to be saved, and who comply with God's conditions of salvation can be saved.

### What Kind Of People Were Saved In The First Century?

1. **The Jews in Acts 2** on the day of Pentecost were "devout men" (2:5) who, "by the hand of lawless men," had crucified the Son of God (2:23). They were zealous for God (Acts 22:3), but theirs was zeal without knowledge (Rom. 10:1-3). They had acted in ignorance (Acts 3:17), but that ignorance did not excuse them. Please read the conversion of these "about three thousand souls" in Acts 2:22-41.
2. **Simon**, who "used sorcery, and amazed the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one," "amazed them with his sorceries" and convinced them that "this man is that power of God which is called Great." He was a fraud and a deceiver and knew it. Read of his conversion in Acts 8:5-13.
3. **Saul of Tarsus**, who blasphemed the name of Jesus and pressured followers of Jesus to blaspheme (Acts 26:9-11), believing Jesus of Nazareth to be an imposter and His disciples to be apostates, pursued them in Jerusalem and other cities, arresting them, casting them into prisons, bringing them to trial, and voting for the deaths of many (Acts 7:58; 8:1, 3; 9:1-2, 13-14). Even while thus persecuting Christians, he was zealous for God (Acts 22:13-14) and had a clear conscience (Acts 23:1; 24:16). Read about his conversion in Acts 9:1-18; 22:5-16; 26:12-20.
4. **The treasurer of Candace**, queen of the Ethiopians, a man who traveled all the way from Ethiopia to Jerusalem to worship God according to the law of Moses. He was in the process of reading the book of Isaiah and longing to know its meaning when his opportunity to be taught and saved came. Read the story of his conversion in Acts 8:26-39.
5. **Cornelius**, an officer in the Roman army, whom God's word describes as "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always," and whom two of his servants and one of his soldiers described as "a righteous man" and "well reported of by all the nation of the Jews" (Acts 10:1-2, 22). Still, he had sinned, had not been forgiven, and needed to be saved, along with the rest of his house (Acts 11:13-14). Read about his conversion (and that of other Gentiles gathered at his house) in Acts 10:1-48; 11:1-18.
6. **Lydia**, either a Jewess or a proselyte to the Jewish religion, therefore already a worshiper of God (Acts 16:11-14). Her conversion, along with that of her household, is stated in brief language in Acts 16:14-15.
7. **The jailor and his house at Philippi**. His background is not given, but he was in all probability a Gentile reared in idolatry; yet, he knew about Paul and Silas, about sin, and about salvation. Please read Acts 16:22-34.
8. **The Corinthians**, some of whom had been such as "fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate (sodomites), abusers of themselves with men (homosexuals), thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners" (1 Cor. 6:9-11). Others had been devout Jews or proselytes. Read of their conversion in Acts 18:1-8. Read also 1 Cor. 1:18, 21; 4:15; 15:1-2.

But these all had one thing in common -- **THEY WERE LOST!** They needed salvation and wanted salvation. When their faith led them to repent of their sins, confess Christ, and be baptized, all their past sins were forgiven. No matter how "good" the life you are living now, until God forgives you, you are still lost in the sins you have committed. You need to be forgiven and then live as a child of God should live.

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