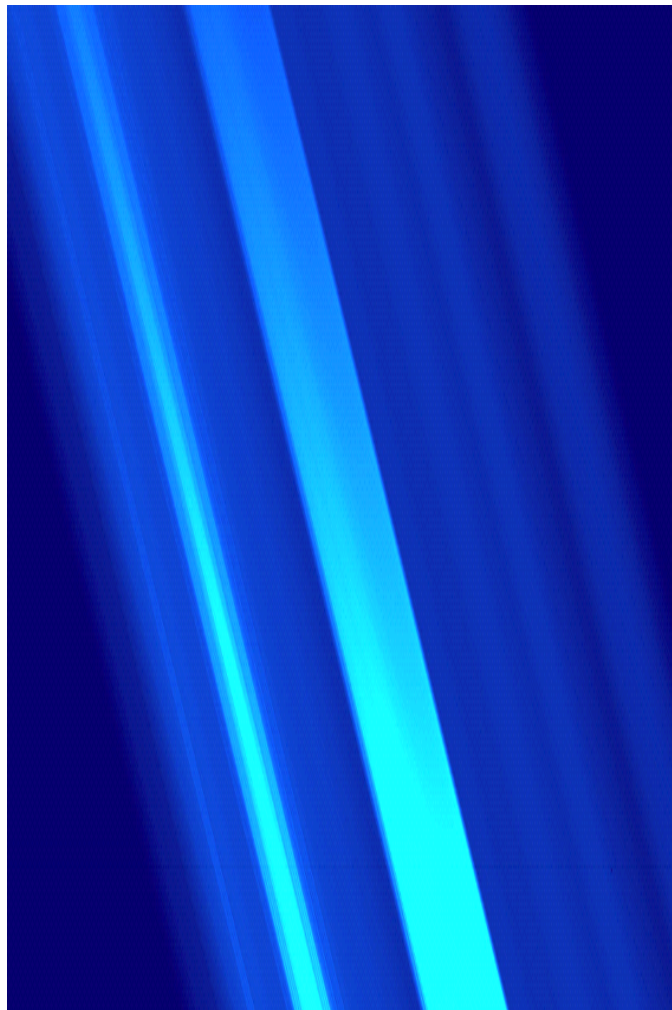


HOW DOES A
PERSON GET
SAVED?



by
Evangelist Norman R. Stevens

HOW DOES A PERSON GET SAVED?

Please open your Bibles to Acts chapter four and verse twelve. I would like to preach a message entitled "How Does a Person Get Saved?"

You ought to believe that salvation exists only in Jesus Christ. Only in the Christian faith is there a salvation that is secure. In Acts 4:12, the Bible says, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

We are going to notice three things: Number one, the work of God; number two, the grace of God; number three, the faith of the believer.

Please notice number one: the work of God. How does a person get saved? How does a person get right with God Almighty? That is the question! Did you know that all religions have some sort of salvation plan to offer you? However, all false religions have some sort of works tied to their salvation plan. They say you must do something in order to get saved, in order to get right with God Almighty. That is not right. Salvation is not by your own works of righteousness.

Listen to the Bible! In Titus 3:5, the Bible says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." In Isaiah 64:6, the Bible says, "...all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags..."

Salvation is not to be found in church membership. You can join every church in the state and it will never earn you a home in heaven. Salvation is not to be found in baptism. You can be baptized three hundred and sixty-five (sixty-six) days in a year (a leap year), and it will never earn you a home in heaven. Salvation is not to be found in morality. There is absolutely nothing in all the world you could ever do to earn your salvation. Forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and a home in heaven only come through personal faith in Jesus Christ. In Ephesians 2:8-9, the Bible says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Salvation finds its basis in the shed blood of Christ apart from any human merit. In I Peter 1:18-19, the Bible says, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, a of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

Do you know the problem with all false religions? They miss the Person of Jesus Christ. In John 14:6, the Bible says, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." And that is why the religions of the world are not going to save mankind—they miss the Person of Jesus Christ.

Listen! I am convinced that, if I were to die today and stand before God, and God were to say, "Norman, what makes you think I should allow you into My heaven?" I would simply say something like this, "God there is absolutely nothing in all the world that I have to offer you that would justify my going to your heaven; but Jesus Christ, your Son, died for me." I am also convinced, without a shadow of a doubt, that God would allow me into His heaven because Jesus Christ, God's Son, did everything that was necessary to provide my salvation. My salvation is secure in Jesus Christ. Jesus paid it all.

Jesus did a wonderful thing for us on the cross at Calvary. Jesus died in our place so that we can have our sins forgiven, eternal life, and a home in heaven when we die.

The love of God is displayed in John 3:16, where the Bible says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The love of God is also displayed in Romans 5:8, where the Bible says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

There is no one in this room today who can plead not guilty of sin. All of us must plead guilty of sin. All of us must plead guilty of sin. All of us must say, "I am guilty! I am guilty! I am guilty! for I am a sinner." I have by my nature and by my choice offended a holy God, and so have you. God looks at the human race and judges us guilty, for all of us have offended God in one way or another. It makes no difference the magnitude, the capacity, or the length of your sin. In Romans 3:23, the Bible says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." In Romans 5:12, the Bible says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

Because you are a sinner, you are condemned to die. The Bible is very clear on this. In Hebrews 9:27, the Bible says, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die...." In Romans 6:23, the Bible says, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Not only are you going to die physically one day, but you are spiritually dead right now. This is man's condition. Every human being in the world is born spiritually dead. He is born that way—spiritually dead, separated from God—because of his sin. He is cut off completely, completely, from a personal relationship with God Almighty. That is man's condition. He is a person who follows his own desire, who walks according to the dictates of the devil, who lives according to the course of this world. He is a person who chooses to sin, who sins willfully. Man is in an awful state without Christ in his life. He is lost and bound for an awful place called hell.

Hell is an awful place, my friends. Hell is described in the Bible as a place of unquenchable fire. In Mark 9:43, the Bible says, "And in thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go

into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched.”

If you are saved, it is your responsibility to tell a lost and dying world, a world that does not know Christ, about Him. In Mark 16:15, Jesus said, “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” That is not just good advice. That is not just a good suggestion. That is a command.

Listen! There are people who have never received Christ as their Personal Saviour and Friend. I am talking about your family and friends, neighbors and co-workers, with whom you live and work. Are you living in the reality that, if they do not get saved before they die, they are going to go to an awful place called hell? The Bible is plain on this! If a person dies without having received Christ as his Personal Saviour and Friend, if a person dies without having accepted the work of Christ done on Calvary’s cross on his behalf, that individual is going to go to hell. There are no exceptions. In II Thessalonians 1:8-9, the Bible says, “In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.”

I don’t know about you; but, if those were the only two verses in all the Word of God on judgment and hell, and if I were lost, I would flee to Christ.

What is the Bible saying? The Bible is simply saying this! If you do not obey the gospel of Christ, if you do not receive Christ as your Saviour, if you do not take heed to the gospel, you are going to go to hell. You are going to go to hell and suffer eternally. You are going to go to hell and be punished with everlasting destruction. You are going to go to hell and be punished with everlasting, eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord, and that simply means out of the presence of the Lord--no God in hell, no friends in hell, no fellowship with family members in hell. You will be in that awful place forever, and ever, and ever, utterly alone. You are not going to be with God. You are not going to be with family and friends that knew Jesus Christ.

The most horrible thing about hell is that some unsaved person is going to go to hell and be separated from his Christian family and friends in heaven.

The most horrible thing about hell is that some unsaved husband is going to go to hell and be separated from his Christian wife in heaven, or some unsaved wife is going to go to hell and be separated from her Christian husband in heaven.

The most horrible thing about hell is that some moms and dads are going to go to heaven and some of their children are going to go to hell, or some moms and dads are going to go to hell and some of their children are going to go to heaven.

That is an awful thing. That is a horrible thing. You say, Preacher! I don’t want to go to an awful place called hell. Is there a way out? Yes! There is a way out.

God in His love, mercy, and grace came up with a plan to save man. Now in order for God to save man, God would have to die Himself upon the cross of Calvary. And so God the Eternal One, God the Holy One, God the High and Lifted up One, that Almighty God, became man in the person of Jesus Christ. And He who knew no sin went to Calvary's cross and became the substitute for man's sin. In II Corinthians 5:21, the Bible says, "For he hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Don't you see! Jesus Christ, God's Son, took my sins upon Himself on the cross. God said that my sins and your sins were laid upon Christ and He died in our place. He became our substitute. Then God the Father turned upon His only begotten Son and raised His hand of judgment upon Him. Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Now, when Jesus gave up the ghost on the cross, He paid the penalty for my sin. Today I can say, "My sins are paid for. Jesus paid it all."

We have noticed number one, the work of God. But notice number two, the grace of God.

Salvation is by grace. Do you know what grace is? Grace is the unmerited favor of God. Salvation is something God does for the believing sinner, and there is absolutely nothing in that believing sinner that commends him unto the grace of God. Absolutely nothing! We all deserve to go to hell. However, God in His grace has chosen to save those that believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Listen to the Bible! In Romans 3:24, it says, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." In Ephesians 2:5, the Bible says, "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved."

Jesus Christ, God's Son, died upon Calvary's cross some 2,000 years ago; and, if I will accept what He did for me, God will save me, and He will save me by His grace.

We have noticed number one, the work of God; and number two, the grace of God; but notice number three, the faith of the believer.

You say, Preacher! What must I do to be saved? You need to exercise faith in the gospel message. In I Corinthians 15:3-4, the Apostle Paul said, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scripture."

When a man hears the gospel (and that is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ) and with a repentant heart receives that gospel as the only hope of his salvation, that man is saved. Acts 3:19 says, "Repent ye therefore, and be

converted, that your sins may be blotted out..." In Acts 17:30, the Bible says, "...God commandeth all men every where to repent." This repentance is a change of mind that agrees with God that one is a sinner and also agrees with what Christ did for us on Calvary's cross.

There is only one way to be saved from an awful place called hell and that is by way of the cross. There is only one way—repent of your sins and turn to Christ who is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Believing is the Key! Salvation is as simple as believing on Christ. In Acts chapter sixteen, the Philippian jailor came in trembling and fell down before Paul and Silas, and said, "Sirs what must I do to be saved?"

Listen! I am convinced that the keeper of that prison would have done anything, anything at all to get saved. In Acts 16:31, the Apostle Paul said, "...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ..."

It is true my friend. In John 6:47, Jesus said it this way, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."

In Romans 10:9-10, the Bible says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." In Romans 10:13, the Bible says, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Jesus Christ, God's Son, did a wonderful thing for you. Jesus took your place on the cross. Jesus took my place on the cross. He said, I will take Norman's sins on me. I will pay the price of Norman's sins. All Norman has to do is receive that which I have done. In John 1:12, the Bible says, "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." Simply believe on Christ as the one who bore your sin, who died in your place, who was buried, and whom God resurrected from the dead.

Now, there is a faith that is real and there is a faith that is not real. There is a difference between real faith, and unreal faith. I have met people who said, "we believe," but they were not even attempting to live for God. They were not even interested in living for God.

Mark it down! Men are saved by faith. And when you exercise saving faith, it will always manifest itself in the lifestyle of the believer. In II Corinthians 5:17, the Bible says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." That simply means this: There will be a change in the lifestyle of the believer. That does not mean that every true believer will live a godly life. We have too many biblical testimonies to the contrary. However, there is something inside every true believer that responds to the will of God. You let me look at a born-again Christian. You let me confront him with the will of God. There is something that goes on inside of that person that he senses in

his mind, at least that what I am saying is the truth. However, I have preached on living for God in the presence of some professing Christians, and they have no interest in the will of God; they have no interest in serving God; they have no interest in being pleasing to God; and the will of God is the last thing on their agenda and the least of their concerns. I question whether or not that person has ever been truly born of God.

I am not preaching a salvation by works. I am simply saying this. If you say you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you are indifferent to the will of God, and there is absolutely no appeal in your heart to walk with God, to talk with God, or to do the will of God, then you have never experienced saving faith because saving faith will always manifest itself in the lifestyle of the believer.

Now, you may not be willing to pay the price. You may not be willing to live the clean life. You may not be willing to live the crucified life. You may not be willing to live the separated life. You may not be willing to live the godly life. You might be rebelling against the authority of Christ in your life; but, if there is in your heart today absolutely no interest in the compelling will of God, you have never experienced saving faith because saving faith will always manifest itself in the lifestyle of the believer.

We have noticed the work of God, the grace of God, and the faith of the believer. In closing let me say this! Salvation is all of God. God does the saving. Just take God at His Word and claim His salvation by faith. You will never be able to work your way into heaven. God does not have a scale in heaven whereby He weighs your good and bad works. That is a lie of the devil.

Salvation is as simple as believing on Christ as the one who bore your sin, who died in your place, who was buried, and whom God resurrected from the dead.

Admit that you are a sinner and believe on Christ as your crucified, buried, and risen Saviour. You will receive forgiveness for all of your sins. You will receive His free gift of eternal life by faith.

My friend! Jesus did a wonderful thing for you. He died for you. He was buried for you. He rose again the third day for you, and nothing would thrill Him any more than to save you today so that you can have your sins forgiven, eternal life, and a home in heaven when you die.

If you are saved, it is your responsibility to tell a lost and dying world, a world that does not know Christ, about Him.

Listen! There are people who have never received Christ as their Personal Saviour and Friend. I am talking about your family and friends, neighbors and co-workers, with whom you live and work. Are you living in the reality that, if they do not get saved before they die, they are going to go to an awful place called hell?

If you are saved and not telling others about Christ, if you are saved and not

living for the Lord, what a shame that is to possess eternal life, a home in heaven, and your sins forgiven, and not tell others about Christ and not live for the Lord! What an insult that is!

If you are saved and not telling others about Christ, if you are saved and not living for the Lord, you ought to be at the altar saying, "God please forgive me for my sin of ingratitude. God, please forgive me for my sin of rebellion. You have saved me from my sin. You have saved me from an awful place called hell. You have promised me eternal life and a home in heaven, and I have not been telling others about Christ. I have not been living for the Lord. So, God, that is going to change starting today."

How is a Person Saved?

Salvation is all of God. God does the saving. Just take God at His Word and claim His salvation by faith. You will never be able to work your way into heaven. God does not have a scale in heaven whereby He weighs your good and bad works. That is a lie of the Devil – Romans 3:24; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; I Peter 1:18; Romans 5:8.

Salvation is as simple as believing on Christ as the one who bore your sin, who died in your place, who was buried, and whom God resurrected from the dead – John 1:12, 3:16, 6:47; Acts 16:31; II Corinthians 5:21; Romans 10:9-10; Romans 10:13.

Simply admit that you are a sinner and believe on Christ as your crucified, buried, and risen Saviour. You will receive forgiveness for all of your sins. You will receive His free gift of eternal life by faith – Romans 3:10, 23; I Corinthians 15:3-4.

Jesus did a wonderful thing for you some 2,000 years ago on Calvary's cross. He died for you. He was buried for you. He rose again the third day for you, and nothing would thrill Him more than to save you today.

Won't you go to Him right now in prayer and tell Him in your own words that you will trust Him as your Saviour? Or pray this simple prayer: Dear Lord, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died for me and that He arose from the grave. Here and now I ask You to forgive me of my sin and save me. In Jesus's name. Amen.

If you prayed that simple prayer, I would like to hear from you. Please contact me by e-mail or phone (813) 760-4028.

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