

(verse 27). “But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, ‘Do yourself no harm, for we are all here.’” (verse 28) The trembling jailor fell down before Paul and Silas and pleadingly inquired, “Sirs. what must I do to be saved?” (verses 29-30)

He did not desire salvation from the earthquake nor from punishment as the result of allowing the prisoners to escape, for both of these dangers were passed. He desired salvation from eternal condemnation (cf. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

What was he told to do? We have two ways of knowing: by what is recorded that was said to him and by what he did.

Paul and Silas replied, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.” (verse 31) They took him where they found him on the road, a pagan, and told him the first step to take toward salvation. But they did not stop there. They also “spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.” (verse 32) The “word of the Lord,” the Gospel, includes the necessity of repentance and baptism as well as that of faith (cf. Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:45-47).

What did the jailor do? He certainly repented, for a changed life is the evidence of repentance (Matthew 3:8), and his life was changed greatly from the time he willingly helped persecute Paul and Silas (verses 23-24) to the time he cared for their wounds and fed them (verses 33-34). Furthermore, he was baptized (verse 33), and only then was he called a believer (verse 34), because the saved believer is the baptized believer.

Thus, the jailor, a pagan, was told to believe, repent and be baptized.

As we continue our journey, let us ask Peter the distance. When the apostle Peter gave his reply to the inquiry, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?,” he was addressing an assembly of very religious Jews (Acts 2:5-11), who already believed in God. Furthermore, he had already preached a sermon to them in which he proved that Jesus was “both Lord and Christ.” (Acts 2:22-36) Thus, these people did not need to be told to believe, for they had already passed that point on the road to salvation.

As the result of Peter’s piercing message, the Jews on Pentecost “were cut to the heart” (verse 37), i.e., their consciences were deeply hurt. They believed that Jesus was the Christ. They cried out, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Peter replied, “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)

As the result of this command, “those who gladly received his word were baptized” (verses 39-41) and were, as the result, added by the Lord to the church (verse 47).

Therefore, the Jews on Pentecost, who already believed in God and Jesus Christ, were told to “Repent, and ... be baptized.”

As we stop at the final point before we reach our destination, let us ask Ananias how far we have left to go. In Acts 9:1-6 we find Saul of Tarsus, a zealous Jew, journeying from Jerusalem to Damascus to persecute disciples. As he came near Damascus the Lord appeared to him in a bright light from heaven, not for the purpose of saving him, but for the purpose of qualifying him to be “a minister and a witness” (Acts 26:15-18), i.e., an apostle. Saul earnestly asked, “Lord, what do You want me to do?” (Acts 9:6a) If ever there were a wonderful opportunity for the Lord to miraculously save a man, this would have been it. But he refused. He told Saul, “Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.” (verse 6b)

The Lord does not save people directly and miraculously. He requires that they hear the Gospel (Romans 10:14-17).

What was Saul’s condition at the time his question was answered? He was a believer, for when the One who appeared to him identified Himself as Jesus, Saul called Him “Lord.” (Acts 9:5-6) Likewise, Saul’s condition of fasting and pray indicated he had repented (Acts 9:9, 11).

What was this penitent believer told to do? The Lord sent Ananias, a preacher of the Gospel, to Saul, who commanded him, “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” (Acts 22:16). As the result, Saul “was baptized.” (Acts 9:18) Saul of Tarsus was told to be baptized.

Dear friend, the total of the journey to salvation is this: Upon hearing the Gospel, you must believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; you must repent of your sins; and, upon a confession of your faith in Christ, you must be baptized in water for the remission of sins. Have you made that journey? Are you saved?

“And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”

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## Questions for Review

### I. True/False

1. \_\_\_\_ There is nothing we must do to be saved.
2. \_\_\_\_ No question is more important than the inquiry, “What must I do to be saved?”.
3. \_\_\_\_ The Philippian jailor was a pagan unbeliever.
4. \_\_\_\_ All the jailor had to do was believe.

5. \_\_\_\_ The jailor was told to believe, repent and be baptized.
6. \_\_\_\_ On Pentecost Peter's sermon led many Jews to believe in Jesus.
7. \_\_\_\_ Peter just told them to repent.
8. \_\_\_\_ Saul of Tarsus was saved on the road to Damascus when he saw the light.
9. \_\_\_\_ The Lord appeared to Saul to make him a minister and a witness.
10. \_\_\_\_ Saul was saved miraculously.
11. \_\_\_\_ When Ananias came to Saul, Saul had already believed and repented.
12. \_\_\_\_ Ananias told Saul he was already saved.
13. \_\_\_\_ You must believe, repent, and be baptized to be saved.

## II. Matching

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|---------------------------|---|
| 1. ____ Philippian jailor | A. believed and repented before he met Ananias  |
| 2. ____ Jews on Pentecost | B. "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven." |
| 3. ____ Saul of Tarsus    | C. had been led to believe  |
| 4. ____ Matthew 7:21      | D. "... Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord."   |
| 5. ____ Acts 16:31        | E. "...Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...."                      |
| 6. ____ Acts 2:38         | F. unbelieving pagan  |
| 7. ____ Acts 22:16        | G. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved...."  |

## Bible Correspondence Course Lesson Ten What Must I Do to Be Saved?

"Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37b)

"Lord, what do You want me to do?" (Acts 9:6a)

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30b)

Although these quotations are taken from various portions of Scripture, they all have something in common. Although phrased in different ways, each is a posing of the question, "What must I do to be saved?" In fact, these are the only recorded occurrences of this inquiry after Jesus' death.

No more important question has ever been asked, for it involves directly the salvation of the human soul, and one human soul is worth more than all the material wealth of the world (Matthew 16:26-27).

Furthermore, the inquiry demonstrates that something must be done by the sinner if he is to be saved (cf. Matthew 7:21). It is not, "What must be done for me?" but "What must I do?"

The puzzling thing about this question is that each time it is posed it receives a different reply. But I believe I can illustrate why this is so. Just suppose that, as I begin a trip by car from Houston, Texas to Chicago, Illinois, I stop at a service station and ask the distance. Upon consulting a chart, the attendant informs me it is 1087 miles to Chicago. I then drive to Little Rock, Arkansas and ask again, "How far must I drive to reach Chicago?" The question is the same as before, but because I am at a different point on the road, I will receive a different answer, 648 miles. Suppose I drive to St. Louis, stop and ask the same question. This time the answer is 291 miles. I would have posed the same inquiry three times and would have received three entirely different but equally truthful answers, because each time I posed the question I was at a different point on the road to Chicago. The principle is also true on the road to salvation.

Let us begin our journey to salvation by asking, "What must I do to be saved?" and noting the various replies given by the inspired scriptures.

First we'll ask of Paul and Silas. In Acts 16:16-34 we find these men of God in the city of Philippi. Because Paul and Silas healed "a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination," her masters, who were making money from her sad condition, had the two preachers beaten and cast into the dungeon of the prison (verses 16-24). As they, in this seemingly awful situation, "were praying and singing hymns to God" (verse 25), an earthquake opened the prison doors at midnight (verse 26). The jailor, "supposing the prisoners had fled," decided to commit suicide