

What Must I Do to be Saved?

Acts 16: 23-34

Today we have picked up in the midst of a difficult and trying time in the lives of Paul and Silas. They are in Philippi being used of the Lord and during their time there they are tormented by a woman with a spirit of divination. Paul became grieved with her and commanded the spirit to come out of her. This enraged her master because he was receiving much gain by her fortune telling. Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown into the inner prison. It was during the night that the jailor posed the greatest question that has ever been raised: [What must I do to be saved?](#)

Our world is filled with many questions today. Some are valid questions and others are quite trivial. Many desire to know when the economy will get better. How high will gas prices go? Why have we experienced so many storms and tornadoes lately? Will Al Qaeda attack again after the death of bin Laden? These are all valid questions with reasonable concerns, but they pale in comparison to the seriousness of the question in the text.

This Philippian jailor lived thousands of years ago and the question he asked has resounded throughout the ages. It is the most important question anyone will ever consider. I want to look at the text and answer the question posed by this man: [What Must I Do to be Saved?](#)

I. The Conviction of the Jailor (25-30) – The question that the jailor asked was prompted by conviction. One will never consider salvation unless they are experiencing some sort of conviction. Let's consider the elements of his conviction. It involved:

A. An Emotion of Fear (27, 29) – [And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. \[29\] Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,](#) (Illus. the jailor's accountability under Roman law.) He literally feared for his very life.

- Many times the emotion of fear draws people toward the Lord. Fear does not save us, faith does, but many realize their lost condition and the torment of hell that awaits and they come to God in fear. I remember being afraid to go to sleep at night, fearing I might not wake up and find myself in hell.
- I am aware that many of the modern scholars tend to deny the existence of a literal fiery hell, but that does not cause it to cease to exist. Hell will be the home of all who die having rejected Christ.

- One of the greatest reasons that we are no longer experiencing conviction among the church is a lack of fear. God doesn't want us to cower in fear as if we dread His presence, but we do need a holy reverence and fear of God! The fear of God and His judgment is often present in conviction.

B. An Expression of Faith (30) – [And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?](#) This was an expression of faith. This man did not know Paul and Silas. He did not know the God they served, but he came in faith with a desire to be saved. It is likely that he had heard Paul and Silas sing of the Lord. He could have been moved by their faith, continuing to praise the Lord even though they had been beaten.

- Just as it was with the Philippian jailor, all who come to Christ must come to Him by faith. We will not understand it all at the moment of conversion. We may even know little about the Scriptures or the Lord, but we will have a desire to know Him through faith. It is a work of grace and faith that lowly sinners are drawn to God and saved by His marvelous grace!
[Ephes.2:8-9 – For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: \[9\] Not of works, lest any man should boast.](#) [Jn. 6:44 – No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.](#)

C. An Extension of Favor (25) – [And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.](#) Those who were there that night may have desired to have been anywhere but in the prison, but they were all about to encounter the divine favor and grace of God. Paul and Silas were not there simply by circumstance. They were sent there to sing praises to the Lord and God used their singing to bring conviction.

- Isn't that amazing? Here are those whom the world would rather they not even live. There is a Philippian jailor that likely had shown little compassion to those who followed Christ. This seems an unlikely place for grace to be extended, but God chose to reveal Himself to those who were undeserving.
- Would we not have to admit that we too were in much the same condition? Who are we that the Lord would bleed and die for? Who am I that He would offer such grace and glorious salvation? I rejoice for the favor of God that was extended to me even when I was unaware and undeserving!

I. The Conviction of the Jailer (25-30)

II. The Communication with the Jailer (31) – [And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.](#) In response to his question, they reveal the fundamentals of salvation. Notice:

A. It Involved His Awareness – The jailor was immediately pointed to the Lord Jesus Christ. It was revealed that He was the only means of salvation. If the jailor was to be saved, he had to see Jesus as Savior!

- There are many religions in our world today. They all promote a desired end and that is heaven. They all have ideas and philosophies that are generally good and kind. They all promote a means of service and sacrifice for others. Religion tends to make people feel good about themselves.
- Religion alone cannot save. Hell will be filled with devoutly religious people. They may have been sincere, but they were sincerely wrong.
- Jesus came and offered Himself as the sacrifice for sin. He shed His blood. He bore the cross in crucifixion. He is the only way that men can be saved. Apart from Christ there is no salvation. There may be religion, but there can be no salvation in any other than Christ the Lord.

B. It Involved Acceptance (31) – [And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.](#) An awareness of Jesus is a great start, but even that isn't enough. The jailor also had to believe on Him. He had to embrace Christ as His Savior. He had to trust in Him for his salvation. He had to believe that Christ died for him.

- Many are aware of who Jesus is. Most people in America have heard of Him. Many will acknowledge the fact that He lived upon the earth, doing miracles and impacting lives. They may even admit to the cross, but they never accept Him as their Lord and Savior.
- We must come to the same place that the jailor did. We must reach the place that we are willing to accept Christ, by faith, as our Lord and Savior. We must see ourselves lost and undone and accept Christ as the solution to our need! If you have never accepted Him, you are yet in your sin.

C. It Involved Assurance – The jailor wasn't offered a "hope so" salvation. He wasn't offered something that Paul hoped would work but as of yet hadn't been proven. If he would only believe, he would be saved! Faith in Christ alone would guarantee salvation!

- I am glad that we can be assured of our salvation. I am thankful that it isn't something that we have to wonder about or continually work to maintain. I am glad that whosoever can come to Christ in faith believing and know that they have been saved!
- This isn't something that used to work, or something that has the potential to make a difference. Salvation is certain in the Lord. **Jn.6:37 – All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.** **Rom.10:9, 13 – 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. [13] For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**

I. The Conviction of the Jailer (25-30)

II. The Communication with the Jailer (31)

III. The Conversion of the Jailer (33-34) – These final verses reveal the change that took place in the heart of this man. He had heard the gospel and responded to it by faith. Consider his conversion. We see:

A. His Salvation (34) – **And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.** Paul had promised that if he would believe he would receive. **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.** This man, who likely had no idea that he would even be confronted with the opportunity of salvation, had heard and he had accepted Christ, resulting in his salvation.

- We have already considered some of the promises of God regarding salvation. All who come to Him in faith, believing that He is the Christ, can be saved. Salvation is not based on our good works, our merit, or our position in life. Salvation is achieved through faith in the finished work of Christ upon the cross. All who believe can receive!

B. His Sincerity (33-34a) – **And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. [34] And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.** This is the same jailer who hours before had probably been the one who had thrust them into the inner prison. That word thrust has the idea of “*throwing something away without any concern where it falls.*” Now he has taken on a whole new attitude. He has washed and cared for their wounds and even invited them into his home providing a meal for them. His faith had been shown by his sincerity.

- What a difference the Lord makes in a life. Those who come to Christ in salvation are no longer the same. There will be a difference and it will be evident that those who are truly converted are sincere in their faith.

C. His Satisfaction (34) – We find that the jailor [rejoiced](#) after his conversion. He is not worried about being accountable to the Romans for his actions. It doesn't appear that he is concerned whether he will keep his job or not. He is just rejoicing in the salvation of the Lord.

- I have never met anyone who regretted their salvation. I have never heard anyone say that they wished they had never been saved. Salvation brings a peace and fullness of joy that is not experienced any other way.
- If you are seeking peace and joy in your life, it can be found in Jesus. This world offers nothing but despair and misery. There may be happiness in sin for a season, but in the end sin always brings about death. Christ alone can provide the joy and peace that mankind seeks.

D. His Significance (34) – He believed on the Lord [with all his house](#). That isn't to say that his salvation was sufficient for them. Salvation is a personal relationship with Christ. Just because he received the Lord didn't automatically provide salvation for his family. But, his faith in the Lord had a significant impact on them. Because of his faith in Christ, they too saw their need and accepted Him as their Lord and Savior.

- Our faith is noticed by others. We can and do have an impact on those around us. Many have been influenced to receive Christ because a loved one had already made that decision. Christian let your light shine so that others may see Christ revealed in you!

Maybe you are here today and you have questions regarding your eternal destiny. I am not here to sugarcoat the truth. Christ died so that all might be saved and those who choose to reject Him will end up in hell.

If you have never been saved and you feel as if the Lord is dealing with your heart, now is the time to respond to Him. [What must I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved!](#)