

## Introduction

- ➔ **ACTS 16:23-30**—“...Sirs, **what must I do to be saved?**”
- ➔ There has never been a greater question escape the lips of man than *that* question the Philippian jailer asked Paul & Silas.
  - Little did that jailer know just how far back that question really reaches.
- ➔ All the way back at the Creation, God created the universe, the earth, the birds, aquatic life, beasts, etc...
  - And finally He created *man*, and gave to him something special: a *spirit*, with *the ability to choose* his own way in life.
  - But man used this blessing to *serve himself*, rather than his *Creator*, creating a great **chasm between man and God**.
- ➔ Thus, from **Gen. 3–Rev. 22**, the question that rings throughout is that very one the Philippian jailer asked Paul & Silas.
  - “*What can man do to be reconciled to his Creator—to cross that uncrossable chasm between man and God?*”
- ➔ Because Jehovah is *infinitely holy* (Isa. 6:3), He *cannot have sin in His presence* (Isa. 59:1,2).
  - Likewise, because He is *infinitely just*, He *cannot allow sin to go unpunished* (Hab. 1:13).
- ➔ But another of Jehovah’s attributes made things a little more complicated: His great **love** for man:
  - **ROM. 8:35-39**—*What shall separate us from the love of God/Christ?* —Answer: Absolutely **nothing**.
- ➔ Thus, He had to “figure out” (so to speak) a plan whereby He could *punish the sin, without punishing the sinner*:
  - In other words, to paraphrase Rom. 3:21-26: a plan whereby He could **JUSTLY JUSTIFY the UNJUST**:
    - ▶ **JOHN 3:16** (et al.)—He sent His Son, who lived a **sinless life**, so that He could have the ability to die for **MY** sins.
    - And so Jehovah successfully punished the *sin*, while giving *sinner*s the opportunity to *avoid* the punishment.
- ➔ Think of that jailer again:
  - He received the **worst** news possible: he had fallen asleep on duty, and the cells were open.
    - ▶ Thus, that jailer came to the realization that *he was in a situation, the wages of which was death*.
  - But then Paul gave him the **greatest** news possible: “*Don’t worry—we are all here. You don’t have to die, after all!*”
    - ▶ And so he asked them that monumental question: “*Sirs, what must I do to be saved??*”
- ➔ Let us look to the NT to see what God would have us do to reap the rewards of His plan; but first, we must understand this:
  - It is true that Jesus “*paid it all, “writing a check, as it were, for the entire amount of my debt.*”
  - But that check for my debt was **NOT** written out to *the Father*—instead, God wrote out that check to **ME**.
  - Thus, He is waiting for me to **receive that check** from Him, and “**take it to the bank.**”
    - ▶ So *what must I do to take my check to the bank?*

## Discussion

### I. **HEAR** GOD

- A. **MATT. 11:15** (cf. Lk. 8:8; 14:35; Rev. 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22)—“He that hath ears to hear, let him **HEAR!**”
- B. **ROM. 10:17**—“So then faith comes by *hearing*, and *hearing* by **THE WORD OF GOD.**”

### II. **BELIEVE** GOD

- A. **JOHN 3:16**—“...[God] gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever **BELIEVES on him** should *not perish*...”
- B. **ACTS 16:31**—“**BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ**, and you will be *saved*, you and all your house.”
- C. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “BELIEVE”?
  - ▶ **NUM. 20:12**—“...Because you **DID NOT BELIEVE**, to *uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel*...”
  - ▶ **NUM. 27:13,14**—“...because you **REBELLED AGAINST MY WORD**..., *failing to uphold me as holy*...”

- HEB. 3:19—“So we see that they were unable to enter [the promised land] because of **UNBELIEF**.”
- HEB. 4:6—“...those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of **DISOBEDIENCE**.”
- ✓ JOHN 3:36—“Whoever **BELIEVES ON the Son** has eternal life; whoever **DOES NOT OBEY the Son**...”
  - JAS. 2:26—“You see that a person is justified by *works* and **NOT by faith alone**.”

### III. **REPENT** OF SINS

- A. LUKE 13:3,5—“Unless you **REPENT**, you will all likewise perish.”
- B. ACTS 3:19—“**REPENT** therefore, and **turn again**, that your sins might be blotted out...”
- C. ACTS 17:30—“...in times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to **REPENT**.”

### IV. **CONFESS** JESUS

- A. MATT. 10:32—“...whoever **CONFESSES Me before men**, him will I also confess before My Father...”
- B. ROM. 10:9,10—“...if you **CONFESS with your mouth that Jesus is Lord**...”
- C. 1 JOHN 4:15—“Whoever **CONFESSES that Jesus is the Son of God**, God abides in him, and he in God.”
  - 1. “*I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*” (Acts 8:37).
  - 2. “...you made **the good confession** in the presence of many witnesses” (1 Tim. 1:37).

### V. **BE IMMERSSED IN WATER FOR THE PURPOSE OF WASHING AWAY YET UNFORGIVEN SINS**

- A. MATT. 28:19—“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, **BAPTIZING** them into the name of...”
- B. MARK 16:16—“He who believes and is **BAPTIZED** shall be saved; he who does *not* believe shall be condemned.”
- C. LUKE 24:47—“...repentance and **REMISSION OF SINS** should be preached in His name to all nations...”
- D. ACTS 2:38—“...*be baptized*... in the name of Jesus Christ, **UNTO THE REMISSION OF SINS**...” (cp. MATT. 26:28).
- E. ACTS 22:16—“...arise, *be baptized*, and **WASH AWAY THY SINS**, calling on his name.”
- F. 1 PET. 3:21—“...corresponding to [Noah & the flood], **BAPTISM** now **SAVES YOU**...”
  - 1. In other words, just as God saved Noah & co. from the wicked world through *the waters of the flood* (v. 20); God now saves **us** from the wicked world **through the waters of baptism** (v. 21).

## Conclusion

- ➔ There are many things in Bible which cannot be answered with *one simple verse*—the plan of salvation is no exception.
  - I submit that such is *according to the will of God, Himself*.
- ➔ When the disciples asked Jesus why He spoke in parables (Matt. 10:10), His answer defies our typical explanation:
  - To paraphrase, He said, “I speak to them in parables **so they will not understand what I’m saying**” (11-17).
  - That way, *the honest souls* who *sincerely desired the truth* would **come to Him** and **ask Him to explain** (cp. Mt. 7:7).
    - ▶ Jesus *never* explained parable to multitude; but *only to those few thirsty souls who came to Him, asking for it!*
- ➔ I submit that God has *intentionally* made the NT, and His word as a whole, under precisely the same arrangement:
  - There are some things that may not be as “*simple*” and “*plain*” as we might like (e.g., “Thou *shalt/shalt not*...”).
  - But those who “*ask*” will receive; those who “*seek*” will find; and those who “*knock*” will find the door open (Mt. 7:8).
- ➔ Like that jailer, we have been given *terrifying* news: “**You have sinned**... and **the wages of sin is death**” (Rom. 3:10; 6:23).
  - But as we draw our swords to kill ourselves, the voice of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit cries with a loud voice: “**Don’t worry! For we are all here**. You don’t have to die, after all.”
- ➔ The Father has done His part (Jn. 3:16)—the Son has done His part (Php. 2:5-8)—the Spirit has done His part (Jn. 16:4-15);
  - Now it’s **YOUR** turn—“*Wilt thou be made whole?*” (Jn. 5:6).