

Keys To Salvation

- *Acts 20:21*

- **God has been so good to us & has given us so much in our lives. He has given us a lot of precious moments to be thankful for throughout our lives.**
 - Graduating High School/College
 - Our wedding day
 - Birth of our children
 - Promotions
- **But the greatest of all these moments is the day we got saved.**
 - The moment we acknowledged our sin & we trusted completely in Jesus Christ to save us from our sins & from the judgment of Hell.
 - The moment we stood before God a guilty, worthless sinner & yet through the blood of Jesus Christ we were made clean & righteous & holy. If you are saved, you have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.
 - The moment we were saved, Jesus Christ, our Savior, began a work in us of changing us & making us more like Him.
 - Oh folks, that is a day that is worth rejoicing over.
- **Today I am going to be preaching on our salvation. Just b/c many of you are saved this morning, should not make this sermon insignificant to you. It should help you reflect & rejoice in what God has done for you.**
 - The reason I take the time to go over this subject this morning is simple. If we never discuss the details of our salvation, how will people have understanding of their salvation?
 - Romans 10:14 – “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”
 - The other reason is this. As we continue to grow & reach out to bring others in, it is imperative that we preach the One & ONLY way to salvation, which is through Jesus Christ.
 - If you turn on the TV, radio, or even visit other churches in our area, many will tell you that there are multiple ways to be saved.
 - But I am not concerned with what others think, I want to know what the Word of God has to say, and my Bible tells me that there is only ONE way to attain salvation & that is through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, Amen?
- **Paul made it a point in his ministry to go about proclaiming the message of the cross as we will read in Acts 20:21.**
- **Many today have the concept of Christianity & being saved confused with mere religion or acts of worship.**
- **I want to be very clear today as we talk about the subject of our salvation. This message has been preached in many different ways over the years, yet the importance of this message cannot be overstated. Our salvation rests completely in what Christ did for us when He gave of His life on the cross for our sins.**
 - People will sometimes say, “I got saved when I joined the church.” No you didn’t. You might have received membership from that body of believers, but you were not born into the family of God!
 - “I lived my own life & made a lot of mistakes but I ask my parents to forgive me, that’s when I got saved.” No, you may have been sorry you got caught & asked your parent’s forgiveness, but unless you have plead the blood of Calvary’s cross, you are not saved.
 - “I got saved when I was baptized as a child.” Let me tell you something today. If you are trusting in water to save you, you are no closer to Heaven than the drunken sinner. God requires the blood of His Only Son, not water, as remission for our sins.

- **The whole point of our conversion this morning is a clear understanding of what is required for men to be saved. It is a turning from one thing & a turning to another. When we are saved, we turn from our sin, our wretchedness, our messed up lives & we turn to Jesus Christ. This is called repentance. And as we place our trust in Christ, that is called faith. Let's look at these 2 Keys to Salvation this morning.**

1. Repentance

- John the Baptist proclaimed, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand."
- Jesus said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
- Peter preached that men should repent & be baptized.
- Paul encouraged his listeners in "repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ."
- One of the sad realities of our world today is that men & women, young people & even the church has forgotten about God and our need for repentance.
 - The church has gotten caught up in the world's idea of life by living for this world.
 - We have put the Bible down & are leaning on the world to bring us happiness instead of our relationship with Jesus Christ.
 - We replaced what the Word of God commands us to do with what we want to do & what makes us comfortable.
 - We have listened to the lie so long that we have begun to believe that we don't have to turn from our sin, and that we can have religion & our sin.
 - Yet the Word of God commands us that we **MUST** repent of our sins in order to attain salvation.
- But what does repentance actually mean? Well there are 2 different definitions of repentance in the Greek language:
 - i. One means, "to have remorse."
 - 1. Judas, after betraying Jesus, had remorse for his sins. He was sorry for what he had done & more specifically that he had been found out, yet there was no change that we see ever took place in his life.
 - ii. The other term means to, "have a change of heart". It is a changing of our mind, a change in our attitude, a change in our aim & the direction we are headed.
- When Jesus called upon men for repentance, He was asking for more than just being sorry. He demanded a change be made in our lives. Repentance in its greatest sense is a turning away from sin & a turning to God.
 - If we truly repent of our sin, then we leave that sin & we view that sin as God views it and we will refuse to turn back to it again.
- "Well Pastor, I have sinned against my friends, my family, and myself." Though you have sinned against them, your greatest offense was when you sinned against God.
 - David sinned with Bathsheba, but more than that, he sinned against God.
 - When he slept with another man's wife and planned his murder to cover up his sin, he sinned against others, but above all he sinned against God.
 - Psalm 51:4 – "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight."
 - If he had just asked for forgiveness from Bathsheba, he would have never found repentance from God. Because his sin was against God it was necessary to repent to God.
 - Story of the ship sinking.
 - This was not true repentance b/c there was no change in their life.
 - One of the greatest indicators in a repent man's life is a change in his life.
 - Now I know this is very simple stuff, but unfortunately it is so simple that we skip over at times & neglect its importance.

- When a person truly repents of his sins, several things take place:
 1. Conviction for sin.
 - a. One of the first things that the Holy Spirit does in a sinner's heart is show them their sin. He shows them their need of a Savior. They must realize their need of God & the sinfulness of their lives before they will ever repent of their wrong.
 - b. Conviction is our spiritual alarm. Repentance is doing something about it.
 2. Sorrow for sin.
 - a. Some people understand that they are sinners, yet there is no remorse for their sin.
 - b. Some are remorseful that they got caught & for the consequences, but they're not sorry that they sinned against God.
 - c. Godly sorrow, being remorseful for breaking God's heart, will lead to repentance & nothing less.
 3. Turning from sin.
 - a. Once we realize our sin & it leads us to sorrow for our sin against God, then it is up to us to turn away from our sin & turn to God.
 - b. This turning from sin does not mean just the "bad ones", it means turning from them ALL.
 - c. As we turn from our sin & turn to God, we should do our best to make restitution if possible for our sin.
 - i. Story of Zaccheus.
- Repentance is the first step, now to the second step ...

2. Faith

- Though repentance is essential, it is incomplete without placing our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ & HIS finished work on Calvary's cross. Our faith rests in none other than what Jesus did for us.
 - Our faith is not in men.
 - Our faith is not in religion.
 - Our faith is not in good works.
 - Our faith is not in pastors or teachers.
 - Our faith is ONLY in Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord.
 - Why? Because men can't get you to Heaven. Religion can't get you to Heaven, good works will never get you to Heaven & this Pastor can't get you to Heaven. If these could have gotten the job done, Jesus would have never come to this earth.
 - But Jesus Christ came b/c no other sacrifice was sufficient to cover our sin.
 - Acts 4:12 – "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - Faith is essential. But faith includes 2 parts:
 1. Belief in who Jesus said He was.
 - a. Not that He was just a good man.
 - b. Not that He did a lot of good deeds.
 - c. But that He was the Son of God & that through His atoning death on the cross, He did something that no one else could do. He bore our sins. He paid the debt that we or no other man could ever pay.
 - d. But as He died for our sins, He had to do something else to fulfill who He said He was. He had to rise again, & thank God on that third

morning when the ladies came to the tomb to anoint Him, He was gone for He had risen as He said He would!

2. But then there is trust.
 - a. We can believe all these things up until this point & find you will still die & go to Hell.
 - b. We must trust in Him.
 - i. You can understand the science behind gasoline & how it can make a car run, but unless you fill the tank up, you are going nowhere, right?
 - ii. That Advil sitting on the counter can make your headache go away, there have been millions of dollars & hundreds of hours put into that little pill. But unless you take it, it will do you no good.
 - c. Well in the same instance, you can know all the stories of the Bible your head can take, but you must trust in Him personally for salvation to take place.
 - i. Romans 10:10 – “For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”
- Has there ever been a time where you repented of your sin?
 - Has the Lord convicted you about the sin in your life?
 - Do you have sorrow for the wrong that you have committed against God?
 - Have you ever turned from your sin & turned towards God?
- Has there ever been a time where you placed your faith wholly & completely in God?
 - Do you believe that Jesus died for your sins & rose again?
 - Have you trusted in Him & confessed His as your Lord & Savior?
- Without Christ this morning, you are lost & headed for judgment in Hell. God loves you today & He wants to save you, but you must realize your need of Him & accept His free gift of salvation.