

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

“What Must I Do To Be Saved?”

By Larry Hafley

This question appears three times in the New Testament (Acts 2:37; 9:6; 16:30). What does it imply? What does it suggest?

- 1) **“What”** – There are terms or conditions to be met.
- 2) **“Must”** – These terms cannot be dispensed with, they are essential (i.e. not optional).
- 3) **“I”** – It is an individual matter and personal in nature, not collective.
- 4) **“Do”** – This is a verb, a word of action. The religion of Christ is one of duty and doing.
- 5) **“To Be”** – It indicates that the questioner is not saved, but lost.
- 6) **“Saved”** – Shows the end or aim in view (i.e. salvation or forgiveness of sins).

The question is not: (1) What must God do in order for me to be saved? (2) What did Christ have to do before I could be saved? (3) What part does the Holy Spirit play in an individual’s salvation? (4) Are God’s grace, mercy, love, and the precious blood of the cross important? While these questions are important they are not relevant to the matter of **“What must I do to be saved?”**

Now that we have defined the question, let us discern the answer. The answer we give is not: (1) Determined by what “your church” or “my church” teaches. (2) Decided by what any man or preacher says or thinks. Let us now see the answer the Bible gives.

I. **Acts 2:37-38** – **“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.”** This was the answer of the Spirit of God (Acts 2:4). This is consistent with what Jesus said (Mk. 16:16). Accordingly, those who **“gladly received the word”** were baptized (Acts 2:41). Those who did **not “gladly receive the word”** were not baptized **“for the remission of sins.”** The same is true today.

II. **Acts 9:6; 22:16** – Before the apostle Paul was saved he asked, **“Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?”** The Lord told him to **“go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.”** When God sent Ananias to Paul he told him to, **“Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”**

III. **Acts 16:31-34** – When a jailor in Philippi inquired he was told to, **“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”** Faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17). Since Paul and Silas told the man to believe, it was necessary for them to preach the word so that he might do so. After hearing the word of God, the jailor **“rejoiced, believing in God.”** He demonstrated his repentance by washing the wounds he had helped inflict on the apostles. Finally, he was baptized.

We have learned that there is something one must do to be saved. To one who does not know the Lord, the answer is – **“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved”** (Acts 16:31). To those who have believed, the answer is – **“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins”** (Acts 2:38). To one who has believed on the Lord and repented, the answer is – **“Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord”** (Acts 22:16). Remember, we must take all that the Scripture says in answering the question, **“What must I do to be saved?”** When we do that we find that one must believe, repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. This is how the Holy Spirit answers the question, **“What must I do to be saved?”** ■

“The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 3:21).

How Do We Honor God?

By Chris Simmons

In Matthew chapter 15, we read of Jesus' rebuke of the Pharisees and Scribes for the way in which they elevated their traditions above the commands of God (verse 3). He condemned their hypocrisy (verse 7) and then in verse 8, their lack of honor as He quoted Isaiah 29:13, ***"This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."*** The passage in Isaiah describes their honor of God as merely "lip service." W.E. Vine says of the word ***"lips"*** that ***"besides meaning empty words, may have reference to a Jewish custom of putting to the mouth the tassel of the tallith (the woollen scarf wound round the head and neck during prayer), as a sign of acceptance of the Law from the heart."*** Either way, their honoring of God was both empty and vain. The word ***"honor"*** in the Greek simply means to value or revere in recognition of one's rank and dignity. Many today attempt to honor or praise God in their words but their heart also is far from Him. If it's not possible to honor God through our words alone, what does the Bible teach us about honoring God in spirit and in truth?

By yielding our will to God's and not relying on our own wisdom. Simply through humble obedience we give God the honor He deserves and the authority He carries. After Nadab and Abihu offered ***"strange fire before the Lord"*** (Lev. 10:3) and were consumed by fire from the Lord, Moses quoted the words of the Lord saying, ***"By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, and before all the people I will be honored."*** Nadab and Abihu did what they wanted. We honor God by simply doing what He said to do.

By putting God above all others. Consider Eli who the ***"man of God"*** said ***"honor your sons above Me"*** by serving themselves (first) rather than God (1 Sam. 2:29). In verse 30 God added, ***"for those who honor Me I will honor."*** God must come before all our human relations and family. Jesus said in Matthew 10:37, ***"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me."***

By prioritizing God in our giving. Solomon said in Proverbs 3:9, ***"Honor the Lord from your wealth, and from the first of all your produce."*** We dishonor God when we fail to give back to God of what He has blessed us with (***"as he may prosper"*** – 1 Cor. 16:2) or when we do give but only what is left over of our time, blessings, energy, and talents. God, through Malachi, condemned those who gave to God what was not the best of what they had. Malachi 1:8, ***"But when you present the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you present the lame and sick, is it not evil? Why not offer it to your governor? Would he be pleased with you? Or would he receive you kindly?" says the Lord of hosts."***

By how we treat other people. Solomon wrote in Proverbs 14:31, ***"He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker; but he who is gracious to the needy honors Him."*** When we read in Acts 4:34 of the church in Jerusalem, that ***"there was not a needy person among them"*** and how that ***"all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales"*** which would ***"be distributed to each, as any had need,"*** we read of Christians who are honoring their God and their Savior Jesus Christ.

Through reverent worship. Isaiah 58:13-14, ***"If because of the sabbath, you turn your foot from doing your own pleasure on My holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honorable, and shall honor it, desisting from your own ways, from seeking your own pleasure, and speaking your own word, then you will take delight in the Lord ..."*** When we use our time to worship God rather than seeking to please ourselves, and delight in doing so, we honor God. David said in Psalms 122:1, ***"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'"*** We honor God when we make worship our priority and we don't view it as a burden. John wrote in 1 John 5:3, ***"for this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome."*** Going back to Malachi chapter 1, God condemned their attitude regarding worship when we read in verse 13, ***"You also say, 'My, how tiresome it is!'"*** Worship offered begrudgingly brings no honor to God and He would rather have ***"one among you who would shut the gates, that you might not uselessly kindle fire on My altar!"*** (Mal. 1:10).

By taking our service and worship to God "to heart." We read in Malachi 2:2, ***"If you do not listen, and if you do not take it to heart to give honor to My name," says the Lord of hosts, "then I will send the curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; and indeed, I have cursed them already, because you are not taking it to heart."*** We honor God by taking our religion seriously. This is the idea of being devout.

Our salvation depends on our commitment to truly honor God, not with words only, but with our very lives. Psalms 50:23, ***"He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me; and to him who orders his way aright I shall show the salvation of God."*** As Paul reflected on his salvation and the mercy extended to him, he wrote in 1 Timothy 1:17, ***"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."*** – *Fifth Street East Church of Christ Bulletin*, January 7, 2018. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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