

FINDING GOD

by

D. L. Moody

Copyright © 1900

CHAPTER TWO

“WHAT MUST I DO?”

“**What must I do to be saved?**” (Acts 16:30).

WE HAVE FOR A TEXT a very solemn and important question, “**What must I do to be saved?**” You will find it in Acts 16:30. The question, “**What must I do?**” is very common.

Undoubtedly, there is not a person but that has said, a thousand times in his life, “What must I do?” A great many merchants have asked that question during these hard times, “What must I do to succeed, to keep from going into bankruptcy?” Lawyers who have difficult cases in court very often ask themselves, over and over, “What must I do?” Doctors who have some patients that baffle all their skill ask the question, “What must I do?” And these questions, we say, are very important. A businessman thinks it is very important that he shouldn’t fail in business. Perhaps many of you are out of work, and your families are actually in want; and you have asked yourself, “What must I do to take care of my family?” Well, that is very important. A man ought to take care of his family.

But take all these questions and put them together; not one of them is to be compared with the importance of the one that we have before us, “**What must I do to be saved?**” For everyone is either lost or saved. Not that we are going to be lost when we die, but that we are already lost, if we have not been saved; and the great question is, “How am I to be saved?”

The Philippian jailer was in trouble when he asked that question; and like a great many others, I suppose he thought he had to do something to save himself.

What was Paul’s answer to his question, “**What must I do to be saved?**”

Was it that he was to weep and pray? Was it that he was to go and work for the Lord for fifteen or twenty years, and if he did pretty well, the Lord would save him? Was it that he was to go out and give money to the poor, and he should be saved? Was he to build churches, or endow colleges and seminaries, and that would save him? Were there any works about it at all? I don’t think any person would dare to give Paul’s and Silas’ answer. There isn’t any portion of Scripture that has been so much copied from, in your day and mine, as the very answer that Paul and Silas gave the Philippian jailer, “**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.**”

But then we very often stop there. The next verse reads like this: **“And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.”** We are told in Acts 11, I think it is, where Peter was giving an account of Cornelius’ conversion, that the Lord sent him to Cornelius, the first Gentile, to tell him whereby he was to be saved. When Paul and Silas told the Philippian jailer that he must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, they didn’t stop there, as we very often do; but they spake unto him the Word of the Lord. And if a man will lay hold of the Word of the living God, he will be saved. Take God at His Word. He has offered salvation to every man who wants it.

Turn to Acts 2, where there were three thousand converted right there on the spot. What was the word that Peter used? I don’t know but that Paul gave the Philippian jailer the same words that Peter preached on the day of Pentecost. It says in verse 21, **“And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”** And it really has come to pass. We have seen many a man, lately, who has been saved by calling on the name of the Lord. They tell us they have tried many physicians, and have not been helped; that they have gone to this institution and that institution and signed the pledge, and have done everything to get victory over their appetites; and at last they cried unto the Lord and He saved them. Thank God we are living in that day.

God is not so far off as some people would have Him. He is here, and at work in this city. **“Ye men of Israel, hear these words”** (that is what Peter said to those men at Jerusalem—**“Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.”**

Then continue with verse 30:

“Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did not see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

That is the kind of Word they preached in those days.

They were terribly in earnest. I wish I could wake up my audiences, so that men would cry right out in the middle of the sermon, **“What must we do to be saved?”** That is what we want. They talk about there being too much excitement in the Tabernacle. I wish we had a little more of it.

I wish we could wake up men today as on the day of Pentecost, to cry out, **“Men and brethren, what shall we do?”** We want salvation. We haven’t got half enough excitement now. And Peter said, **“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”**

And what was the result? Three thousand right then and there were born of God, converted, turned right toward Christ, turned from the world! They laid hold of eternal life through the Word that was preached to them; and so we find the Philippian jailer right there that night, he was not only convicted of his sin but was converted and baptized, he and his whole house that night. Quick work, wasn’t it? Went to bed careless; no doubt he treated Paul and Silas a good deal harder than the law required him to do; he put thirty-nine stripes on their bare backs, made them fast in the stocks, and put them into the inner prison, and laid down and went to sleep. It didn’t trouble his conscience at all, and yet this hardhearted wretch was converted. And men stand right up, with an open Bible, and say: “We don’t believe in sudden conversion. We think it ought to be more gradual. We think if a man tries real hard, and does the best he can, he can be saved in the course of a few years.” And yet every conversion that is recorded in the Bible is as the flashing of a meteor—men believing the Word of God.

You can be saved right now if you will, while you are reading. Let everything else go, and lay hold of God’s strong arm, and His Word. He has promised to save all that put their trust in Him.

Sinner, you cannot save yourself; your help must come from above; and if you will lay hold of God, you can be saved now. If you will turn to Hebrews 6, you will find it is written:

“Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.”

Now we are saved by just laying hold of that sure hope. No one ever yet laid hold of Christ who has been disappointed. I have yet to find the first man or the first woman, who laid hold of the Word of God and built their hopes of Heaven upon that Word, who was ever disappointed. They find light, peace, comfort, joy, and rest to their weary souls; and if every man and woman who wants to be saved will just take Christ at His Word, lay hold of the Word, and say, “I believe it; I will trust the Word,” there will be light and peace.

If you don’t get hold of that, let me give you another illustration. You certainly know what it is to look. A child will have learned to look before it is a year old; and there is a passage in which we are told, **“Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.”**

If a man wants to be miserable, let him look within; if he wants to be troubled, let him look around him; if he wants true peace, let him look to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. If you want to get saved, quit looking at that church or that man, for all the churches and ministers in Christendom cannot save you. If you look unto Jesus, He will save you. Will you look now? You certainly can get hold of that illustration—saved by just looking.

A man said in one of our meetings that he had been forty-three years learning three things.

First, *he couldn't do anything toward his own salvation*. You all have that lesson to learn before you can be saved.

The next thing was that *God didn't require him to do anything*. That was worth learning, wasn't it, even if it did take him forty- three years to learn it?

And the third was that *Christ had done it all Himself*. A little child can learn those things if it will. God doesn't require you to save yourself. If it is a new birth, it must be the work of God and not the work of man; if it is a new birth, it must be created by God.

We cannot give life to a little insect; all the philosophers in the world cannot give life to a little fly. But God is the Author of life; and it is a new life given when we are saved and born of God. It is the work of God; and we get that by letting God save us.

If you want to be saved just stop trying; get done with your works and let the Lord save you; He will save you. That was my experience. I tried hard to save myself. I have talked with a great many Christians, and I find that they all tell the same story— that they worked and tried and waited very earnestly; and after all, they could not save themselves and had to let the Lord save them.

Someone asked the Indian who saved him; he made a circle of dead leaves, and placed a worm in the center and set fire to the leaves; the worm endeavored to escape, and finally curled up in the center and made up its mind to die. Then the Indian reached down his hand and saved the worm. "That was the way," he said, "the Lord saved me." And He will save you now if you will let Him. What must I do to be saved? Give up trying to save yourself, and let God save you now.

I had a dear friend in Chicago who was drowned in Lake Michigan, because he would not stop trying to save himself, but would make frantic efforts to hold on to his would-be rescuer, although urged not to do so. If ever you get into the kingdom of God, you have to be brought there by Christ Himself, and stop trying to save yourself, letting the Lord save you in His own way. It says in Isaiah 43:25: "**I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.**" And again in 41:10: "**Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will up hold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.**" It takes the same grace to keep us as it does to save us; but, "**My grace is sufficient for thee.**" Go boldly to the throne of grace and get help in the time of need.

God cannot only save every man and woman, but He can keep us until He presents us before the throne of grace faultless, and with exceeding joy.

I can imagine some men saying, "If Mr. Moody knew my life, he would not stand there and say God can save so easily. I have some habits that are fastened upon me so that I cannot get rid of them; I am a slave to some habit; I would like to be set free."

What did Christ come to do? To open the prison doors and set the captives free. Are you a slave to some habit, to some sin that is taking you Hell-ward, and making your home as dark as Hell, and your life as miserable as Satan wants to make it? I can tell you that Jesus will save you if you will let Him. That is what Jesus left the throne for, to come down into this world to seek and save that which is lost; and you can be saved if you will let Him into your heart. **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."** Believe that He will save you from your sins now.

If you want to know what you must do to be saved, just believe, just pray, just lay hold, just take Christ; and you are saved. Oh, may God bless everyone who reads this message is the prayer of my heart! If you have not accepted Christ, do it now. Do not put this book down until you have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

~ end of chapter 2 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
