

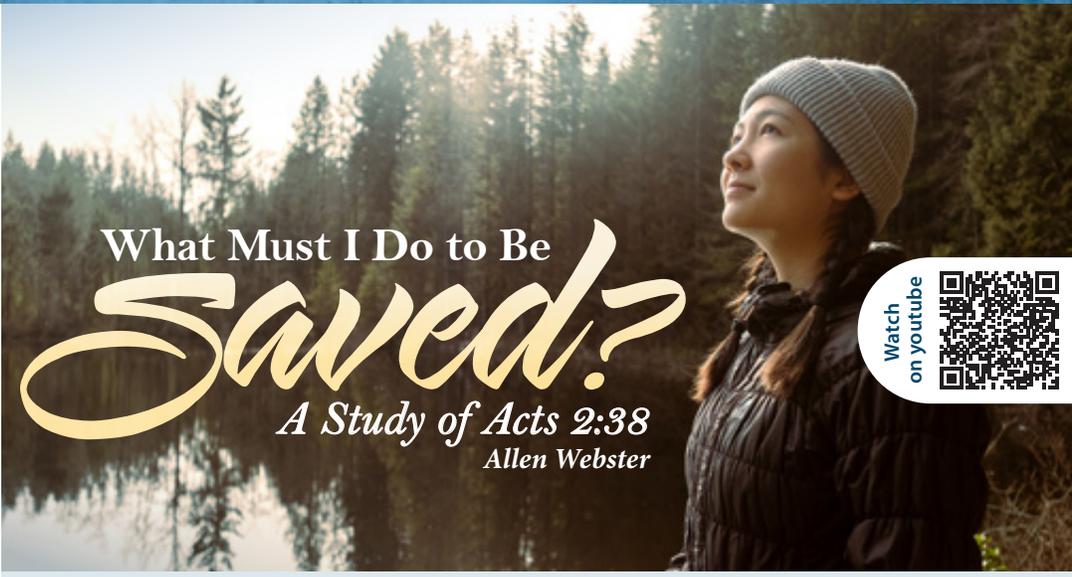


HOUSE to HOUSE
HEART to HEART

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House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 29 NUMBER 7



What Must I Do to Be *Saved?* A Study of Acts 2:38 Allen Webster



On Pentecost Sunday, AD 33, the church began in Jerusalem with about 3,000 members (Acts 2:41).

A GREAT COMMISSION OVERLAY

Just before returning to heaven, Jesus gave the Great Commission. “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16:15–16). This is a preview of Acts 2.

Mark 16:15 gave the disciples their marching orders; Acts 2 began the march. Jerusalem was the first stop on the apostles’ world tour. Mark 16 began the trumpeting of the gospel into the earth. Acts 2 opened the floodgates of God’s grace upon the world. Mark 16:16 offered salvation to every creature. Acts 2:41 recorded 3,000 souls being saved.

Placing an overlay of Mark 16:15–16 upon Acts 2 shows a perfect match.

- Into all the world—Every nation under heaven (Acts 2:5)
- Preach the gospel—Peter raised his voice (Acts 2:14)
- Every creature—Everyone heard (Acts 2:6)

- Believes—Cut to the heart (Acts 2:37)
- Is baptized—were baptized (Acts 2:41)
- Will be saved—the remission of sins (Acts 2:38)
- Does not believe will be condemned—Others mocking (Acts 2:13)

DIVINE INITIATION

Deity initiated salvation in both passages. Mark records Jesus’ command, “Preach.” Luke records the Spirit giving the apostles the message. It was God’s great and awesome day (Acts 2:20). Divine interest in human salvation did not end at Pentecost. The Spirit convicts every sinner saved today, pricking hearts with His sword (Ephesians 6:17). Jesus presently adds people to His church (Acts 2:47). God attends every assembly of His people each Sunday throughout the world (see John 4:24).

Since salvation centers on Him, baptism was “in the name of Jesus” (Acts 2:38; 4:13; Philippians 2:5). He is “Christ,” the anointed of God, sent from heaven to save lost people (Matthew 1:21; Luke 19:10). What does it mean to “save” people? *Save* is an English present tense verb meaning “to rescue from danger.” It is used three times in Acts 2 (2:21, 40, 47),



twelve times in Acts (4:12; 11:14; 15:1, 11; 16:30–31; 27:20, 31, 43), and about three hundred times in Scripture. *Salvation*, a noun, means the “state of being delivered.” Acts uses it five times (4:12; 13:26, 47; 16:17; 28:28). Every sinner not rescued by Jesus will be lost.

Jesus saves souls (Matthew 16:26) from the everlasting fire (Matthew 25:41, 46; 1 Peter 1:3–5; Revelation 21:27). Sin—not God—sends them there (2 Thessalonians 1:8–10). Jesus’ blood redeems (pays the debt for) sinners (Ephesians 1:7; cf. 2:13). Sinners are rescued from sin’s condemnation and contaminations.

The verb *save* (*sōtēria*) is used in three senses: a beginning, process, and conclusion. We were saved (Romans 8:24); are being saved (1 Corinthians 1:18; 15:2); will be saved (Romans 10:9, 13). For Christians, salvation is a present state enjoyed because of a past decision made in anticipation of a better future. Because salvation is not a fixed state (2 Peter 2:20–22), saints must escape Satan’s snares day by day (1 Timothy 3:6; 6:9–10; 2 Timothy 2:26) and remain safely refuged in the ark of the church (Hebrews 6:18; Ephesians 1:3; Colossians 1:13–18).

UNIVERSAL SCOPE

Acts 2 shows a universal need for salvation. The soul that sins, dies (Ezekiel 18:20), and all people sin (Romans 3:23). Nothing dead can go to heaven, where there is no death (John 8:21, 24, 34; Revelation 20:11–15; 21:21–27; 22:14–15).

The threshold of the world began where the disciples were (Acts 1:8). God planned the church’s inauguration well (Galatians 4:4–5). He brought devout Jews and proselytes from every nation under heaven to Jerusalem to hear the first gospel sermon (Acts 2:5). Sixteen nations, from a radius of about 1,400 miles, speaking perhaps twelve languages, were there—Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamians, Judeans, Cappadocians, Pontians, Asians,

Phrygians, Pamphylans, Egyptians, Libyans, Cyrenians, Romans, Cretans, and Arabs (2:6–11). Afterward, they took the gospel, the church, and Christianity home to these places, in their languages.

Later, Paul took the gospel of Jesus even farther—to men and women, slaves and masters, rich and poor, commoners and rulers, friend and foe—all over the empire (Acts 13–28).

HUMAN PROMOTION

At the Ascension, Jesus commanded His apostles to teach people how to be saved (Matthew 28:18–20). At the inauguration, He sent the Comforter to guide them (John 16:13; Romans 1:16; 2 Timothy 3:16). On Pentecost, Peter was the primary spokesman, but all twelve spoke in different languages, and we assume they preached the same sermon.

The first step to salvation is personal recognition of sin. God will one day indict man in His court on charges of sin (Romans 3:9; 5:12). His decisions will be just—no one will be falsely condemned or get away with a crime (Acts 17:31). Until one realizes that he will stand as a rebellious lawbreaker in God’s court, he will not desire or seek salvation.

Who should be concerned about judgment? Only those who sin. What sin? Breaking any command—pride, violence, lying, lust, drinking, hating, gossiping, fornication, envying, coveting, cheating, cursing, not loving God, stealing, skipping worship—makes one a lawbreaker (James 2:10; Matthew 5–7; Romans 1:18–32; 1 Corinthians 6:9–11; Galatians 5:19–21). Sin has been man’s problem since Adam and Eve abused their newly acquired free will (Genesis 3:6). Everyone sins many times (1 John 1:8), so each needs salvation.

One who understands this needs little persuasion to become a Christian (Philippians 2:12). Angelo Patri said, “Education consists of being afraid of the right things”¹ (see Deuteronomy 4:24; Psalm 33:8). A drowning man needs no coaxing to take a rescue rope. When sinners in Acts learned they were lost, they sought rescue.

- On Pentecost, people asked, “What shall we do?” (Acts 2:37).
- The Ethiopian said, “See, here is wa-

ter. What hinders me from being baptized?” (8:36).

- Saul wondered what God wanted him to do (9:6).
- The jailer asked, “What must I do to be saved?” (16:30).

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

There were 3,000 individual conversions that day—not one conversion of 3,000 people. The process began with instruction (2:14, 41), proceeded to acceptance of evidence (faith), and ended in submission of will (repentance and baptism) (Acts 2:38; Isaiah 1:18; Romans 10:17; 12:2; John 5:24–25; 6:44–45; 8:32). All conversions follow this pattern (Acts 8:5–6, 12; 9:4, 18; 10:34, 48; 16:13–15, 32–34; 18:8; 19:2–5).

First, Jesus said to believe. Faith in Jesus’ deity is essential to Christianity (Acts 8:12; 9:4, 6; 10:43; 13:12, 48; John 8:21, 24; 12:42–43; Hebrews 11:6). Saving faith involves understanding the facts of Jesus’ birth, sinless character, teachings, miracles, death, burial, and resurrection. For others to know of one’s belief, one must confess Jesus as God’s Son. When Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may,” the Ethiopian answered, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:37). Belief is trust.

Second, the Spirit commanded repentance (Acts 2:38; 11:18; 16:33; 17:30–31; Luke 13:3, 5; 2 Peter 3:9). Appreciating God’s goodness, fearing judgment, and godly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:10) lead to this change of mind that results in life reformation (Matthew 3:8; Romans 2:4). Peter’s sermon pierced listeners’ hearts and convicted them of sin (Acts 2:37). Their obedience demonstrated their faith (2:41).

Third, Jesus said to be baptized. Baptism was how sinners called on the Lord’s name (2:20–21; cf. 22:16). It resulted in receiving the gift of the Spirit (2:38), joy, and life change (2:46–47).

Definition. *Baptize* is a transliterated Greek word meaning “dipping or submerging.” New Testament baptisms were always full body immersions (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12). John practiced immersion (John 3:23) as did inspired preachers (Acts 8:37–39). Baptism’s symbolism requires covering, to match Jesus’ burial and resurrection (Romans 6:4; 1 Peter 3:21).

Purpose. In Acts, when someone asked how to be saved, baptism was always in the answer (Acts 8:12, 38; 10:48; 16:15; 18:8; 19:18). On Pentecost, those asking were told to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins (2:38). Thus, baptism is as essential to salvation as having one's sins forgiven. Acts twice connects "must" to baptism. Jesus told Saul someone would tell him what he must do to be saved (9:6). Ananias said to him, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins" (22:16; cf. 9:18). The jailer asked what he must do to be saved (16:30). The missionaries instructed him to be baptized (16:33).

Logistics. How could three thousand be baptized in one day? Some argue in favor of sprinkling by saying 3,000 immersions were impossible. This reveals a lack of understanding of Jerusalem, Jewish culture, the occasion, and Bible teaching.

As to time, there was enough. Peter's sermon began at 9:00 A.M. Supposing it lasted an hour, eight hours of daylight remained, as Jews reckoned time (John 11:9). Allowing only twelve administrators, this gives two minutes per baptism. A baptism takes less than a minute, especially if all confessed as a group. Three thousand would not have required rushing.

As to locations, there was plenty of water in Jerusalem.

- The pools of Bethesda and Siloam (now the Fountain of the Virgin) were large enough to allow multiple baptisms at once (see John 5:7; 9:7). There was also a pool in the Tower of Antony.
- Private houses had baths for purifications by immersion, for cases of various defilements. This was so common that "digger of cisterns" was a profession.

As to administrators, they were sufficient. Had only the twelve apostles baptized, each would have had a group of 250. Using twelve places, 3,000 could be baptized in a single day. Several could be immersed in a pool at the same time.

However, it is unlikely that only the apostles baptized. The seventy disciples (Luke 10:1) could baptize, reducing the number to thirty-seven baptisms each. The 120 (Acts 1:15) could have helped. Utilizing three pools, baths, cisterns, and

private houses, the task could be completed without fatigue. Further, those who were baptized could then baptize. This would further reduce the number and the time.

Result. Jesus used baptism to save these sinners and add them to His church (Acts 2:47; Galatians 3:27). Baptism is the door of the church (Galatians 3:27). It makes sense that one is saved and added to the church at the same time since the church is composed of the saved (Acts 2:47). Only those who obey become citizens of the kingdom.

ETERNAL STAKES

Some began the day mocking the preachers (Acts 2:13) and ended it rejecting the Savior. While 3,000 were baptized, this was likely a minority of the audience. How many were in the "multitude" that came to the scene when these sensational events were made known? (2:6). About 100,000 lived in Jerusalem at that time, and vast crowds—perhaps 50,000 more—from across the Roman Empire came to the temple city for Jewish festivals. With twelve preachers, the assembly must have spread over a large area. It is safe to say that the number rejecting the message was larger than those accepting.

What an opportunity these Jews had! Present on the day that had been anticipated for centuries (Isaiah 2; Daniel 2; Micah 4), they saw the Holy Spirit's power poured out from heaven (manifestation) and heard the most talked about sermon in church history (proclamation). They were on-site when the church began. They were offered forgiveness and fellowship, salvation and security, hope and heaven.

What did they do? They went home unchanged. Back to sins and salaries. Vanity and vexations. Traditions and temptations. And, ultimately, damnation and separation. Jesus said those who do not believe "will be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

The stakes are just as high today—eternity of bliss in heaven with God or eternity of fire in hell with Satan (Luke 16:19–31). God, in patience, lingers. The Spirit, in mercy, intercedes. Jesus, in love, awaits.

Endnote

¹ kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/mastery-fear



Jesus Is the Only Way

When you go on a trip, you must first decide where you want to go and how to you will get there. This is also true when you consider spiritual paths.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). Jesus and His teachings (John 12:48) tell us about the exclusive entrance to the way that leads to heaven (Matthew 7:13–14).

No one is born as a baby into this relationship with Jesus. One must be reborn into it after his understanding matures.

Just as physical birth has an exact moment, so does one's spiritual birth. Just as physical birth makes one a citizen of the country/kingdom one was born in, so one's spiritual birth makes one a citizen in the kingdom of Jesus.

Can you point to the exact moment you became a member of Jesus' kingdom by being born again? If not, why not do it today?

—Matt Wallin

"You must be born again."

JOHN 3:7

God's Plan for Saving Man

Divine Love: John 3:16

God's Grace: Ephesians 2:8

Christ's Blood: Romans 5:9

Holy Spirit's Word: 1 Corinthians 2:12–13

Sinner's Faith: Acts 16:31

Sinner's Repentance: Luke 13:3

Sinner's Confession: Romans 10:10

Sinner's Baptism: Acts 22:16

Christian's Love: Matthew 22:37

Christian's Work: James 2:24

Christian's Hope: Romans 8:24

Christian's Endurance: Revelation 2:10

Watch on youtube



I Can Get You Started . . .

I gave you life, but I cannot live it for you.
I can teach you, but I cannot make you learn.
I can show you, but I cannot force you to follow.
I can allow you freedom, but I cannot account for it.
I can take you to church, but I cannot make you worship or believe.
I can teach you discretion, but I cannot decide for you.
I can offer you advice, but I cannot make you accept it.
I love you, but I cannot force you to love God.
I can teach you friendship, but I cannot make you a friend.
I can teach you to share, but I cannot make you unselfish.
I can advise you about friends, but I cannot choose them for you.
I can teach you about purity, but I cannot keep you pure.
I can warn you about sins, but I cannot make your morals.
I love you as a daughter or son, but without your obedience, I cannot place you in My spiritual family, the church.
I care deeply about you, but I cannot force you to walk with Jesus.
I can help, but I need your help.

"Each one shall bear his own load."

GALATIANS 6:5



To watch videos, read articles, answer Bible questions, and more, go to housetohouse.com.



Alligator Versus Mom

Years ago in South Florida, a little boy went for a swim in the old swimming hole behind his house. He ran out the back door and flew into the water. As he swam toward the middle of the lake, an alligator swam toward him.

In the house, his mother looked out the window and saw what was happening. Terrified, she ran toward the water, yelling to her son. Hearing her voice, the little boy became alarmed and made a U-turn to swim to her.

Just as he reached her, the alligator reached him. As the alligator snatched the boy's legs, the mother grabbed his arms. An incredible tug-of-war ensued between the two.

The alligator was much stronger than the mother, but the mother was more passionate. A farmer happened

to drive by, heard her screams, raced with his gun from his truck, took aim, and shot the alligator. After weeks in the hospital, the little boy was scarred but healed.

The reporter who interviewed the boy asked if he could see the scars. The boy lifted his pant legs, and then with obvious pride, he said to the reporter, "Look at my arms, too. I have great scars on my arms because my mom wouldn't let go."

Every mother knows that hopeless feeling when she sees her child in danger. Usually the danger is not from some creature in the woods or the swamp but from life itself. When these alligators grab our children, we hold on. Sometimes it is all we can do. We wrestle and pray.

In the end, with God's help, we win most of those battles. —Lonnie Davis

Just for Fun Armor of God Ephesians 6:10–20



Name the pieces of the whole armor of God

- ① _____
- ② _____
- ③ _____
- ④ _____
- ⑤ _____
- ⑥ _____

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Ephesians 6:10–13).

Preparation of the Gospel of Peace
1. The Helmet of Salvation; 2. The Breastplate of Righteousness; 3. The Shield of Faith; 4. The Belt of Truth; 5. The Sword of the Spirit; 6. Feet Shod with the

Make a Big “Mistake”

In 1867, United States Secretary of State William H. Seward helped the U.S. purchase Alaska for just 7.2 million dollars. With 365 million acres, that comes out to just two cents per acre. Amazingly, what seems like a great deal now was not universally approved at the time. Many people thought the land was unusable. Critics of the deal named it “Seward’s Folly” and thought that Seward made a huge mistake.

When gold was discovered in the northwest part of Canada in 1896, Alaska became a gateway to the ensuing gold rush. In World War II, Alaska became an important military outpost. In appreciation for its importance to the country, Alaska became the United States’ 49th state in 1959. Seward’s “mistake” became a great blessing to his country and one of his best decisions.

In Philippians 3:5–8, Paul lists several things that he had to give up when he became a Christian. He was an important leader in the Jewish religion with an impressive pedigree. In verse seven Paul says, “What things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.” Many of Paul’s fellow Jews, family members, and coworkers must have thought he was making a mistake by giving those things up for Jesus. They may have even laughed when referring to “Paul’s folly.”

Philippians 3:8 says that Paul counted those things as dung (rubbish) compared to what he gained in Jesus. To Paul, his “mistake” was the best decision he ever made. One of the last things Paul wrote was his hopeful promise that “there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day.” Thankfully,

for us, Paul says, “not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2 Timothy 4:8). That can be you and me.

Is there anything in your life that you need to change in order to save your soul—though others might call that change a mistake?

If you leave sin or turn from your denomination, people you love may tell you that you are making a mistake. Jesus promises us that such a decision will be the best “mistake” we ever make. Just like God sent Ananias (Acts 9:10–12) and Titus (2 Corinthians 7:6) to Paul, God will send people to help you. If you are ready to make a “mistake” for Jesus, we are here to help you. —Matt Wallin

*“For to me, to live is Christ,
and to die is gain.”*

PHILIPPIANS 1:21

Cut out this section and mail it to the address on the front.



Bible Quiz

VOLUME 29:7

Send us your answers to receive a free Bible bookmark. We will grade and return your questions and enclose the bookmark “High Priest and Levitical Priest” as a way of saying thanks for spending time in the Word (quantities may be limited).

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State: _____
Phone: _____

Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

Answers to Previous Quizzes

V. 29:5 *The Lost Chapter of the Bible:* 1. Sinners (Luke 15:2); 2. Sheep (15:4); 3. Yes (15:5–6); 4. Sinner, repents (15:7); 5. Silver coins (15:8); 6. Yes (15:9); 7. Two (15:11); 8. Wasted, prodigal (15:13); 9. Feeding swine (15:15); 10. His father’s hired servants (15:17); 11. He came to himself (15:17); 12. Hired servant (15:18–19); 13. The father (15:20); 14. Son (15:19, 21); 15. Fell on his neck and kissed (15:20); 16. The best robe, a ring, sandals, the fatted calf (15:22–23); 17. Dead, lost, found (15:24); 18. In the field (15:25); 19. Angry (15:28); 20. Came out and pleaded with him (15:28).

V. 29:6 *Starts with the Letter “Y”:* 1. Years (2 Peter 3:8); 2. Yoke (Matthew 11:29); 3. Yes, yes (Matthew 5:37).

“Starts with the Letter “E”: 1. Eden (Genesis 2:8); 2. Edom (Psalm 108:9); 3. Eglah (2 Samuel 3:5); 4. Egypt (Exodus 1:8–11); 5. Elders (1 Peter 5:1–2); 6. Eli (1 Samuel 4:15–18); 7. Eliab (1 Samuel 17:13–14); 8. Elizabeth (Luke 1:13); 9. Elijah (2 Kings 2:1, 11); 10. Elisha (2 Kings 6:1–7); 11. Elymas (Acts 13:7–11); 12. Eunice (2 Timothy 1:5); 13. Eagle (Proverbs 30:18–19); 14. Earth (Psalm 24:1).

Soaking up Living Water

Find answers in John 4. Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

1. “_____ made and baptized more disciples than John.”
2. This well in Samaria was associated with which Old Testament character?

3. Wearied, Jesus asked the woman to “_____ Me a _____.”
4. What racial controversy caused the woman’s surprised reaction? “_____ have no dealings with _____.”
5. If the woman knew “the gift of God,” she would have asked Jesus for “_____ water.”
6. The puzzled woman asked Jesus if He were “_____ our father Jacob?”
7. Jesus offers satisfying water producing what kind of life? _____
8. The confused woman asked for water so she would not “thirst, nor come here to _____.”
9. The woman lived with a man to whom she was not married and had been married to how many past husbands?

10. Startled by His knowledge, the woman concluded that Jesus was “a _____.”
11. The woman wanted to know about “the _____ where one ought to worship.”
12. According to Jesus, regardless of location, who receives worship? _____
13. God is seeking what kind of worshippers who “worship . . . in spirit and truth”? _____
14. According to Jesus, God is what kind of being? _____
15. Worship must meet the two requirements of being “in _____ and _____.”
16. What is a synonym for the term “Messiah”? _____
17. In reference to the Messiah, Jesus revealed, “I who speak to you _____.”
18. What object did the woman leave behind when she returned to the city?

19. While “_____ of the Samaritans” believed because of the woman’s report, “many more believed because of His own _____.”
20. Samaritan believers confessed, “this is indeed the _____, the _____ of the world.”

The Four Thieves of the Crucifixion

1 **The thief who regretted (John 12:6).** Oh the advantages Judas had! He had been selected by Jesus to be an apostle, was entrusted by his peers as the treasurer, and observed many of Jesus' sermons and miracles (Matthew 11:5). It was this Judas who betrayed Christ for money. His betrayal turned to regret (Matthew 27:3), but

rather than seek forgiveness, he hanged himself. Repentance means more than feeling sorry for a wrong. It is the desire to change and do better (2 Corinthians 7:10).

2 **The thief who was replaced.** It was customary to release a prisoner at the Passover. Thus Pilate offered the crowd either Jesus or Barabbas. They requested the notorious murderer and robber rather than Jesus (Matthew 27:15-16). Barabbas had someone else (Jesus) take his punishment for him. Barabbas could say that Jesus died in his place. Of course, we can say it, too! (2 Corinthians 5:20-21).

3 **The thief who rebelled.** At first, both thieves crucified spoke against Christ (Matthew 27:41-44), but only one kept on doing it (Luke 23:39). This thief remained impenitent because he forgot God, ig-

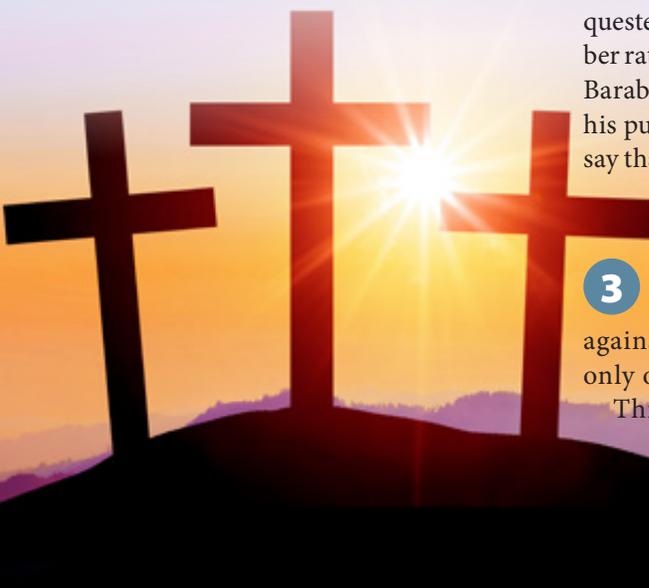
nored death at hand, and justly deserved what he was receiving (Luke 23:40-41). He died in a state of rebellion in spite of the rebuke and repentance of the other thief and a Savior close at hand.

4 **The thief who repented.** This thief had a change of heart (Luke 23:40-43). In his agony he looked to the Savior and admitted his sinfulness and Jesus' innocence (Luke 23:41-42). His repentance did not bring escape from death, but it did bring relief and fellowship with Jesus in the next life (Luke 23:43). He did what the Lord asked him to do, and in that sense he is an example to us.

All of us are represented by one of these thieves. Have you let Jesus down? Have you allowed Jesus to take your place? Are you rebellious? Have you repented? Which are you? —Gary Puryear

"Where are you?"

GENESIS 3:9



Cut out this section and mail it to the address on the front.

Recommended Resource



Why should we believe the Bible? Who is God? How do I become a Christian? Get answers to life's biggest questions. Listen to a new podcast about faith that is engaging, challenging, and fun to listen to. New episodes every Wednesday. More details at Housetohouse.com/AC

I want to learn more about the Bible!

If you knew for sure that the religious path you are on would not get you to heaven, would you change? If there was the possibility of a doubt, would you investigate? Why not request a personal Bible study today?

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Phone: _____ Email: _____

Prayer requests or comments: _____

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New Tracts!

- Why Do Good Things Happen to Bad People?
- Are Written Study Materials Adding to the Bible?
- Truth: A Study of John 8:32
- Keeping the Backbone in the Body of Christ



More subjects:



What Does the Church Have to Offer Me?



What Must I Do to Be Saved?



I Have This Nagging Fear That I Am Not Saved



Is the Church Jesus Built on Earth Today?



I've Got Friends in Low Places



I Want to Be Saved Like They Were in Acts



Does God Require Us to Do Anything to Be Saved?



A Father's Homemade Religion



3,000 Converted



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tinyurl.com/H2HTracts

VOLUME 29:7



Quick Scriptures

GOD'S EMERGENCY NUMBERS

(no cell service necessary)



We all face times of trial and suffering (John 16:1–2, 33). Be assured that difficulties are not proof of sin or guilt (Luke 13:1–5; 2 Timothy 3:12). One may even suffer for doing good (1 Peter 3:13–17). These difficulties can produce some benefits (Philippians 4:11–12; Hebrews 5:8–9; 2 Corinthians 12:9–10). They can be overcome (Isaiah 48:10; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Peter 1:7; 4:15–16). This world's afflictions are temporary (2 Corinthians 4:16–18) and do not compare with the glory of heaven (Romans 8:18) and the hope we have in our eventual triumph (2 Timothy 4:6–8). You can find solace and guidance in the timeless wisdom of the Bible, where every trial finds resonance, and every affliction finds comfort.

ANGER

Ephesians 4:26–27; Proverbs 15:1; 29:11; James 1:19–20; Psalm 37:8; Romans 12:1

ANXIETY

1 Peter 5:7; Philippians 4:6–7; John 14:27; Psalm 94:19

BEREAVEMENT

Psalm 34:18; 147:3; Matthew 5:4; Romans 8:38–39; John 16:22

BETRAYAL

Matthew 26:47–50; 1 Peter 2:21–23; Psalm 27:10

BITTERNESS

2 Corinthians 1:3–4; Luke 6:28; Matthew 5:44

DEPRESSION

Psalm 27:5; 42:11; Lamentations 3:22–23

DISAPPOINTMENT

Romans 8:28; Psalm 34:18; Jeremiah 29:11

DISCOURAGEMENT

Philippians 4:13; Isaiah 40:31; Matthew 11:28–30

DOUBT

Psalm 14; 46:1–3; Proverbs 3:5–6; Romans 10:17; Isaiah 26:3

FINANCES

Proverbs 11:28; 13:11; Ecclesiastes 5:10; Matthew 6:31–33

HURT

Matthew 11:28–29; Isaiah 40:29–31; John 15:9

LONELINESS

Hebrews 4:15–16; 1 Chronicles 28:20; Matthew 28:20

SADNESS

James 1:2–4; Psalm 18:2; 42:11

FEAR

John 14:27; Psalm 23:4; 27:1; Isaiah 41:13; 2 Timothy 1:7

SICKNESS

Psalm 41:3; 73:26; 3 John 1:2

SIN

Psalm 103:2–3; Acts 2:38; 22:16

STRESS

Psalm 23:1–4; 55:22; 94:19

WEAKNESS

Philippians 4:13; Joshua 1:9; Nehemiah 8:10; Isaiah 12:2

WORRY

Matthew 6:34; Isaiah 26:3; Psalm 46:10

If you belong to God and are in Christ, you have access to the Father 24/7 (Matthew 7:7–8). If not, you first need to become a Christian (John 9:31). We would love to study the Bible with you.



You Need to Believe This

Unless we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, we cannot be saved (John 8:24; cf. 1:14, 18; 3:16; Genesis 3:15; Matthew 1:18–25; Galatians 4:4–5).

Jesus repeatedly confessed Himself to be the Son of God (John 4:14, 26; 5:22, 25; 8:58; 11:25–26; Matthew 9:6; 10:32; 11:27–28; 16:18; Mark 2:28; 10:45; Luke 9:24; 18:8; 21:33).

God Himself declared from heaven, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!" (Mark 9:7).

John wrote his book so "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31).

When John the Baptist saw Jesus, he said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). When Nicodemus met Jesus he said, "We know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him" (John 3:2). After the Samaritan woman at the well talked with Jesus, she said, "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" (John 4:29). When Thomas saw Jesus after the resurrection, he said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28).

When Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:15–16).

What about you? What do you say about Jesus? —Matt Wallin





The Puzzling Platypus Demands a Designer

Scientists classify the platypus as a mammal, but it's unlike any other mammal you've ever seen. It's about the size of a house cat with fur thicker than that of a polar bear. It can store food in its mouth like a chipmunk and lay eggs like a turtle. It has a beaver-like tail, a duck-like bill, and rooster-like spurs. What's more, it produces venom like a snake.

This unique animal has a perfectly designed tail, which it uses both to store fat and to maneuver easily in water. Its fur is so dense that it can trap a layer of air next to its skin, which works as insulation to keep the platypus warm in cold waters. Platypuses also have wonderfully designed otter-like webbed feet.

Surely most impressive is the fact that the platypus completely closes its eyes and ears underwater when searching for food, yet it finds its prey very effectively. Rather than clumsily tumbling bill-first into the bottoms of rivers and streams in hopes of stumbling upon lunch, this curious creature has an extremely sensitive snout. Scientists have learned that the platypus's leathery bill has a complex electro-receptor system in it, which allows the platypus to sense even the very weak electric impulses in the muscles of its prey, including earthworms and tadpoles, which often are hiding under the mud and rocks.

Although evolutionists would have us believe that this unique, anatomically and physiologically diverse animal is the product of millions of years of evolution, why not ask yourself if the design and diversity of the platypus actually declares the existence of a Grand Designer? —Eric Lyons



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