

Know Your Bible

BY GENE TOPE

LESSON

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

I. WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

Of all the important questions of a lifetime, this one is the most important. My happiness here below and my eternal welfare depend on a correct answer to the question. It seems strange that the vast majority of mankind goes rushing madly through life giving little or no thought to the salvation of their souls. Let us not be like the majority, but let us search the Scriptures for God's answer to our soul's need.

LET US NOTICE SOME BASIC CONSIDERATIONS:

1. Man cannot save himself. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). The sinner cannot dictate to God what he will do to save himself. Neither morality nor good works are sufficient to save the soul (Tit. 3:5). Preachers cannot devise a creed or catechism that will be of any benefit.

2. We must recognize Jesus as the Saviour. "I am the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

3. We must submit ourselves to the will of God. "What wilt Thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). Many come to the Bible, find God's answer, and then refuse to do it! Others hear what they must do, but obey only those requirements that seem reasonable to them, leaving undone divine requirements of equal importance.

THE GREAT COMMISSION

Let us hear the words of our Savior. After his resurrection, and just before his ascension, Jesus commanded the apostles to preach the Good News concerning salvation to the whole world. Here are the three gospel records:

If we summarize these accounts, here is what Jesus requires:

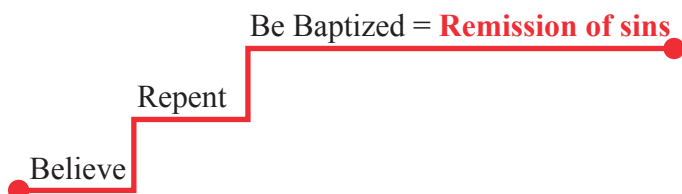
Matthew 28:19: Teaching and Baptism.

Mark 16:15, 16: Preaching, Believing, Baptism

Luke 24:47: Preaching, Repentance, Remission of Sins

Placing these in their logical order, we see that as sinners hear the Gospel preached, they are required to:

- “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 28:19).
- “And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15, 16).
- “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47).



Q U E S T I O N S

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. “It is not in _____ that walketh to direct his _____.”
2. “Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the _____ of _____ and _____ of the Holy Ghost.”
3. _____ is the way, the truth, and the life.
4. “He that _____ and is _____ shall be saved.”
5. “Repentance and _____ of _____ should be preached in His name among all _____.”

UNDERLINE THE CORRECT ANSWER

1. Jesus is (1) The only way, (2) One of the ways, to salvation.
2. Preachers (1) Can, (2) Cannot devise a way of saving man.
3. To be saved man (1) Must obey God’s will, (2) Need not do anything.
4. Repentance (1) Is necessary, (2) Is not necessary to salvation.
5. A man should be baptized (1) Before (2) After hearing and believing the gospel.

II. ACTS—THE BOOK OF CONVERSIONS

At Christ’s ascension, he commanded the apostles to wait in Jerusalem until they received heavenly power. This occurred shortly later when the Holy Spirit came upon them at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). Peter and the eleven were enabled to

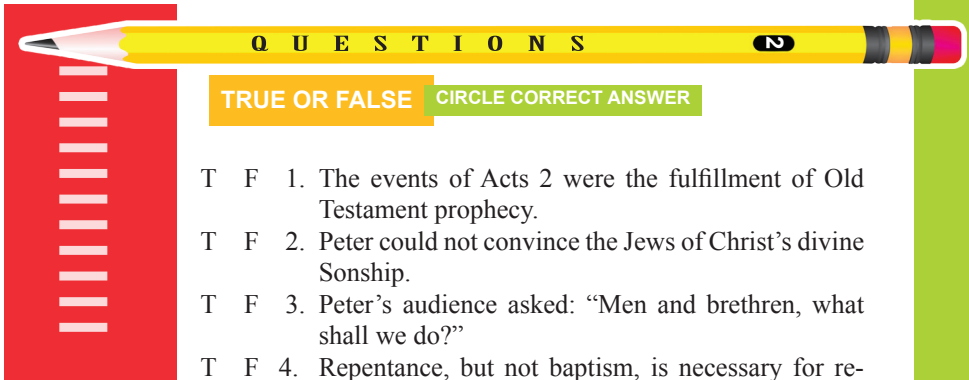
speak in tongues (foreign languages), and amazed a great crowd that had gathered. After showing that the coming of the Holy Spirit was in fulfillment of Joel's ancient prophecy (Joel 2:28-30), Peter then proceeded to speak to the people about their own needs.

NOW READ ACTS 2:22-47

Peter began by proving the divine Sonship of Jesus. His main proof was the resurrection of Christ, and this he showed by quoting the prophecies of David as found in the Psalms. Peter declared that Jesus had now ascended to the right hand of God, having received great authority and was made both Lord and Christ.

The climax was reached when Peter's audience, pricked in their hearts, said to the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Here is the inspired reply: "Then Peter said unto them, 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" (2:38). Note that Peter faithfully required the same things Jesus had commanded in his commission. Those seeking forgiveness must: Repent and be baptized to receive remission of sins.

Some people say that there is nothing man can do to save himself, that God must do everything. But Peter, through the Holy Spirit, exhorted the people: "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." Verse 41 shows how this was accomplished: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized."



QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE **CIRCLE CORRECT ANSWER**

- T F 1. The events of Acts 2 were the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.
- T F 2. Peter could not convince the Jews of Christ's divine Sonship.
- T F 3. Peter's audience asked: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"
- T F 4. Repentance, but not baptism, is necessary for remission of sins.
- T F 5. Peter said: "Save yourselves from this untoward generation."

III. THE EUNUCH (ACTS 8:26-40)

Acts 8 has two examples of conversion. The first, found in verses 1-12, tells how the Samaritans upon hearing Philip preach Christ unto them, believed and were baptized. The latter case is found beginning with verse 26. You are asked to begin with verse 26 and read to the end of the chapter.

In this interesting account we find our subject an unusual man: “An eunuch of great authority” (equivalent to our Secretary of the Treasury) and yet a religious man, he “had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning and sitting in his chariot reading Esaias the prophet.” The eunuch was a great man, a man God wanted to save. An angel called Philip from his labors in Samaria and sent him out to a deserted spot where he saw a chariot coming along. The Holy Spirit told Philip to go join the chariot. The eunuch invited him up and Philip began to explain the Scriptures to this seeking individual.

The eunuch was reading from the prophet Isaiah in the section now designated chapter 53. Though writing more than 700 years before Christ’s birth, Isaiah was inspired to graphically picture the Christ’s suffering and death. As the eunuch read, however, he was puzzled. His question to Philip was, “Of whom speaketh the prophet this? Of himself, or of some other man?” Philip began here “and preached unto him Jesus.”

Though we do not have Philip’s sermon, its results are clearly stated.

As they rode along, they came in sight of water. The eunuch had been sufficiently taught to know what he must do to obtain forgiveness of sins. At his request for baptism, he had first to confess his faith in Christ (see also Rom. 10:9, 10). Then, the chariot was stopped, both the preacher and the eunuch went down into the water, and he was baptized. His work done, Philip was caught away by the Spirit and the eunuch went on his way rejoicing. What a wonderful experience he had to relate when he reached Ethiopia. Perhaps this is the way the gospel first came to be preached in East Africa.

NOTICE THIS BIBLE EXPLANATION OF BAPTISM

The Ethiopian eunuch was baptized. The inspired record leaves no doubt as to what occurred.

New Testament baptism is a complete immersion in water. Both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and came up out of the water.



**“One Lord, one
faith, one
baptism”
(Eph. 4:5).**



QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE CIRCLE CORRECT ANSWER

- T F 1. The eunuch, being a religious man, was saved before Philip preached to him.
- T F 2. Isaiah (Esaias) foretold the sufferings and death of Jesus.

- T F 3. Philip preached Jesus to the eunuch.
- T F 4. The eunuch confessed his faith in Jesus.
- T F 5. The eunuch rejoiced before he was baptized.

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. "And the _____ of the Lord spake unto Philip."
2. Isaiah's prophecy concerned the suffering and death of _____.
3. "See, here is _____, what doth hinder me to be _____?"
4. Both Philip and the eunuch _____ into the water.
5. Philip asked, "_____ thou what thou readest?"

IV. THE CONVERSION OF SAUL

One of the most noteworthy accounts of conversion is recorded in three chapters of Acts: chapters 9, 22, 26. All three accounts should be studied. In Acts 22, Paul gives a personal account of how he became a Christian, and it is this chapter we now refer to. Dealing with the chapter by sections, we find:

Verses 3-5. Paul's statement of how he was zealous for Moses' law and persecuted Christians even unto death. With this purpose in mind, he set out for Damascus.

Verses 6-11 tell of the Lord's appearance and its effect on Saul. Just before they reached Damascus, about noon, a great light shone around him and a voice from heaven spoke to him. Saul's questions are two: "Who art Thou, Lord?" and "What shall I do, Lord?" To the latter he is told, "Go into Damascus and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do." Being now blind, and led by the hand, Saul is brought to Damascus, where we are told (Acts 9:9) he spent three days fasting and in prayer (9:11).

Verses 12-15 now tell us of the appearance of Ananias, who is sent by the Lord to tell Saul what he must do. First of all, Ananias restores his sight, then he tells him that he must be a witness of Christ to all men.

Verse 16 contains the command to be baptized: "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Saul did not hesitate to obey (9:18) and thus this great persecutor found the forgiveness of sins.

Since so many say, "I want to be saved just as Paul was," it will be wise to ask

ourselves just what Paul had to do to be saved. There was, first of all, the miraculous over which Paul had no control: the appearing of Christ, his blindness, God's appearing to Ananias. These were "one time only" events and are not found in conversions today. But, let us notice some things over which Paul did have control and see how he reacted.

1. **He turned from unbelief to belief.** Some might say, "Well, he had no choice in the matter," but in reality he did. He could have denied the vision, as many Pharisees before him had denied strong proofs of Christ's Sonship. Instead, he said, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19).
2. **He repented.** This is seen both in his fasting and prayer and also in his change of life after baptism. The primary meaning of repentance is "a change of mind." Truly, no one ever had "a change of mind" more radical than did Paul.
3. **He was baptized.** The words of Ananias are, "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins" (22:16). This he did immediately (9:18).

Q U E S T I O N S

TRUE OR FALSE CIRCLE CORRECT ANSWER

- T F 1. There are three chapters in Acts which record Saul's conversion.
- T F 2. Saul thought he was doing wrong when he persecuted Christians (see also Acts 26:9, 10).
- T F 3. Christ told Saul to go into Damascus in order to learn what he must do to be saved.
- T F 4. Saul was saved outside Damascus, as soon as he saw the heavenly vision.
- T F 5. Saul was saved only after baptism.

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. Saul asked, "what shall I _____, Lord?"
2. "Arise and go into _____."
3. _____ was "a devout man according to the Law."
4. "The God of our fathers hath chosen _____ that thou shouldst know His will, and _____ that _____."
5. "And now why _____ thou? Arise, and be _____ and wash away _____, calling on the name of the Lord."

V. THE CONVERSION OF THE JAILER (ACTS 16)

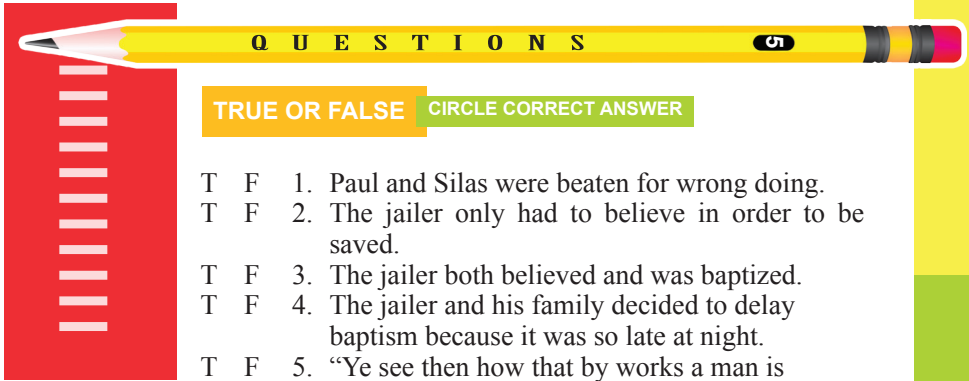
Years after his conversion, Paul found himself persecuted for the cause of Christ. Acts 16 tells how he and Silas were put into prison for doing good (vv. 16-24). Though cruelly beaten, they were not discouraged.

About midnight as they were praying and singing hymns to God, a great earthquake shook the prison and they were set free. The jailer, supposing his prisoners

had escaped, drew a sword to kill himself. But, Paul called out, “Do thyself no harm; for we are all here.” The jailer, trembling with fear, went in to them and brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” Verses 31-34 record his conversion:

1. He is told to believe in the Lord Jesus (v. 31).
2. The word of the Lord is preached to him and his family that they might know what to believe (v. 32).
3. He and his family were baptized immediately (v. 33).
4. They rejoiced (v. 34).

The jailer was not saved by faith alone. He had to obey all the commands of the Great Commission. When Paul told him to believe (v. 31), he was pointing out that faith is essential to salvation. But faith alone will not save anyone (Jas. 2:20, 24.) It must be a faith that will obey, as the jailer and his family obeyed.



QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE **CIRCLE CORRECT ANSWER**

T F 1. Paul and Silas were beaten for wrong doing.
T F 2. The jailer only had to believe in order to be saved.
T F 3. The jailer both believed and was baptized.
T F 4. The jailer and his family decided to delay baptism because it was so late at night.
T F 5. “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.”

SUMMARY

The book of Acts was written to show how people became Christians. It is the Great Commission in action. As we study these sermons of inspired preachers we find exactly what they told sinners to do:

1. Believe in Christ (Acts 16:31).
2. Repent of sins (Acts 2:38).
3. Confess faith in Christ (Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:10).
4. Be baptized to wash away sins (Acts 22:16).

QUESTIONS ON SUMMARY

1. List the four things necessary to salvation.
 - a. _____ Acts 16:31.
 - b. _____ Acts 2:38.
 - c. _____ Acts 8:37; Romans 10:10.
 - d. _____ Acts 22:16.
 2. Do you think a person can be saved by just believing? Yes _____ No _____
 3. Do you think baptism is necessary to salvation? Yes _____ No _____
 4. How long should a person delay in obeying the Lord’s commands?
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PLAN OF SALVATION AS GIVEN IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

Heard Gospel	Believed	Repented	Confessed	Were Baptized	Blessings
3000 2:1-47		Repented 2:38		Baptized 2:38, 41	Sins forgiven, Holy Ghost 2:38
Samaritans, 8:5-12	Believed 8:12			Baptized 8:12	
Simon 8:13	Believed 8:13		Confessed 8:13	Baptized 8:13	Therefore, saved Mark 16:15-16
Ethiopian Eunuch 8:26-40	Believed 8:37		Confessed 8:37	Baptized 8:38	"Went on his way rejoicing" 8:39
Saul, 9:1-18; 22:1-16				Baptized 22:16	Sins washed away, 22:16
Cornelius, 10:1- 48; 11:1-17	Believed 15:7			Baptized 10:48	Was saved 11:14
Lydia 16:14, 15				Baptized 16:15	
Jailer 16:25-40	Believed 16:31, 32			Baptized 16:33	"Rejoiced" 16:34
Corinthians 18:8	Believed 18:8			Baptized 18:8	Washed, saved 1 Cor. 6:11; 15:2
Ephesians 19:1-7				Baptized 19:5	
Hearing + Belief + Repentance + Confession + Baptism = Salvation From Sin					

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THIS LESSON

- Only Jesus can save us.
- Man must obey Christ to be saved.
- Christ commands all men to believe, repent, confess him, be baptized.

Student's Name _____

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Grade _____

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