

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

Jesus' Mission

Jesus left the glories of Heaven with God, the Father, and God, the Holy Spirit, and came to earth with a specific mission. He came to be the only way man could be redeemed and reconciled to their Creator. He was to become the perfect and sinless sacrifice for our sins. He often stated "I must be about my Fathers work". This should also be our ambition. He had been teaching His message while performing many miracles including bringing back to life some who had not only died but had been buried and had begun to decay.

Everyone who truly has the desire to please God wants to know and understand God's word and how it applies to them. Therefore, they often ask "What shall I do" sometimes adding "to be saved". The Bible answers this important question or other similarly worded questions in many different passages or examples. They also encourage you to take the action the individuals in the examples did when you hear and understand like they did. These passages and examples provide the answers to those yearning to know and do whatever is necessary.

First asked on Pentecost

"As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem." (Luke 9:51) The Passover was near. As Jesus and His disciples neared the Mount of Olives outside Jerusalem near Bethany and Bethpage, great crowds followed because of his miracles and their desire to make him king thinking He would overthrow the hated Roman occupiers. They welcomed Him as a king by placing palm branches on the road shouting "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" (Luke 19:38) He did not arrive with grandeur, or with a great army of soldiers, horsemen and chariots. Instead, He came riding on a peasant's beast of burden.

The leaders of the Jews arrested Jesus, conducted a mockery of a trial and turned Him over to the Roman authorities requesting He be crucified. They created a mob atmosphere among the very people who a short time before wanted to make Jesus their king.

Pilate, the Roman governor, examined Jesus founding Him innocent of anything deserving death. After several attempts to release Him, he yielded to the mob and ordered Jesus to be crucified. The religious Jewish leaders and the mob witnessed this cruel death. On the third day following His death Jesus came forth from the grave. He walked, talked and ate with His disciples for forty days being seen by many followers.

Jesus led His disciples out to the vicinity of Bethany where He was taken up into heaven. The disciples returned to Jerusalem and waited according to Jesus' command. Pentecost was at hand and Jews from all over the Roman Empire assembled in Jerusalem for this solemn occasion. When Pentecost came and while the disciples were assembled together, the sound of an enormous violent wind was heard by thousands. People came from everywhere; no doubt they were as curious as you and I and wanted to see what was happening. What they witnessed astonished them. Unschooled men from Galilee were speaking and everyone heard in their own language or tongue. But what they heard terrified them. They realized they had contributed to the death of Jesus who had performed miracles and recognized he was from God. They heard reliable witnesses testify that He was raised from the grave and had ascended to Heaven to be with God. They had killed the Messiah, the Christ. So, in fear they asked "What shall we do?"

Peter and the other apostles answered their question in such a clear way that over 3,000 understood that Jesus was God and obeyed the apostles' message They were told:

God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.
Repent and be baptized {immersed} for the remission of sins.

Those who accepted the message were baptized and they continued, devoting themselves to the apostles teaching.

Saul of Tarsus

Saul had been a student of Gamaliel, a teacher of the law and honored by the people. Later in life he referred to himself as a Pharisee of Pharisees as he was very zealous of the law and in his belief that he was doing the will of God. On a trip to Damascus to arrest those who belonged to the Way, he suddenly became aware that he was fighting God rather than serving Him. He was told to go into the city where he

would be told what he must do. Following a visit by Ananias he was baptized.

Cornelius

Cornelius was a Gentile centurion, a God-fearing man who gave generously to those in need, and prayed often to God. Peter was a Jew and an apostle but still believed the custom of the Jews that they should not enter in a Gentile's house. God revised Peter's thinking by means of a vision while he was in Joppa at Simon the Tanner's house. Cornelius sent for Peter and upon arriving with other Christian Jews he spoke to Cornelius and his household about the good news, the gospel, of Jesus. He concluded with "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water?" (Acts 10:47)

Philippian Jailer

Paul had gone from Troas to Philippi, a Roman colony in Macedonia. At the river he taught Lydia and her household and they were baptized. While in the city teaching and performing miracles he was arrested, beaten and put into prison in stocks without a trial even though he was a Roman citizen. God opened the prison gates freeing all from their chains. Seeing this, the jailer drew his sword to kill himself but Paul stopped him. Paul taught him about Jesus when asked "What must I do to be saved?", after which the jailer and his family were baptized.

Summary

There are other examples in the Bible of people responding to Jesus' gospel. All of them conclude with them putting their trust in God and doing whatever He wants them to do. By examining these recordings one can conclude the following is necessary to obey:

1. Hear - Listen to the Word of God explained to them
2. Understand
 - a. All men are sinful having disobeyed God's righteous commands
 - b. Acknowledge they had sinned in not living according to God's commands
 - c. Sin results in eternal death
 - d. One must be forgiven to have eternal life with God
 - e. Christ is the only sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins

3. Believe Jesus

- a. He was and is God
- b. He came to earth in the flesh as Jesus of Nazareth
- c. He lived among men
- d. He willingly gave His life as the perfect sacrifice for sins, being crucified.
- e. He was buried
- f. He arose from the grave on the third day
- g. He appeared to hundreds of his disciples following His resurrection
- h. He ascended back to heaven to be with the Father

4. Repent - Change their life from sin and disobedience to trust and obedience

5. Confess - Acknowledge publicly their belief and faith that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

6. Die - Put to death their old sinful, worldly, life.

7. Seek - Call upon God to forgive them of their sins.

8. Be Buried - Put to death their sinful life by being buried in the grave of baptism by water immersion into the death, burial and resurrection of Christ and allowing God to raise them from the grave, following their death and burial, as a new creation.

9. Receive - The Holy Spirit as a deposit guaranteeing what is to come.

10. Become - God added these new Christians to His church, as His adopted children.

11. Live - Continue to live steadfastly and obediently to Christ and the apostles' teachings. Paul emphasized this to the Ephesian Christians: "I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:1-3)

Questions

1. The question “what shall we do” was first ask on Pentecost. One response was since you killed the Messiah there can be no forgiveness.
True ___ False ___
2. Peter and the apostles replied that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ: repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.
True ___ False ___
3. Saul of Tarsus, Cornelius and the Philippian jailer were told that prayer was all that was needed.
True ___ False ___
4. Immersion in water baptism was not necessary to be forgiven as God will save everyone as He does not want anyone to be lost.
True ___ False ___
5. How does one get added to Christ church?
 - a. ___ Members of a church
 - b. ___ A pastor, priest or preacher
 - c. ___ God

