

Saved from What?

Section 1

In Acts 16 we read of Paul and Silas having been beaten, mistreated, falsely accused, and stripped of their rights. They believed that God wanted them in the jail. There was a miraculous, mighty earthquake causing the doors of every cell to swing wide open and all the bands to fall off of the prisoners. The bigger miracle was that all the prisoners stayed in their cells. Paul and Silas had been praising God and singing and the prisoners had been changed. When the jailer came in and saw the situation, knowing the nature of prisoners, was about to kill himself because he would have had to serve out the sentence of each one who had escaped under his watch. Paul and Silas cried out to him not to harm himself, for they were all still there. Not just Paul and Silas, but all the others had stayed. They had found their liberty in Jesus. This is what led to the jailer asking in verse thirty of the chapter, *“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”* Their answer in verse thirty-one is very simple, *“And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”*

We can see from this verse that you can believe not only for your own personal salvation, but for that of your household as well. God has granted to marvelous faith great power. Parents need to pray and believe God for the salvation of their children, not just leave it up to them. While they are at home, pray them into the kingdom.

James Stewart was a top soccer prospect in Britain where soccer is king. When he was in eighth grade he was playing for a Scottish team during an important match. Throughout the match, each time he took the ball and headed for the goal, he said it was as if he was looking through an open door into hell. As soon as the game was over, he fell down on his knees on the field, poured out his heart, and was saved. When he went home and told his mother that he had been saved she said, “I know! God let me know this morning that He would save you today. I have already arranged for you to give your testimony on Saturday at the gospel open-air meeting on the square.” She knew something about believing for her son's salvation!

A little over fifty years ago I was pastoring in the hills of southern Ohio. I felt a

burden to go and visit an older couple who did not attend the church. I understood there was no great interest there, but I felt I needed to talk to them about Jesus. I drove down the gravel road, stopped at their nearly new mobile home, and was graciously received into their living room. The man did not seem interested in talking and walked away back the hall a bit. When he was gone I turned to the lady and said, "Have you ever been saved?" I was not expecting her answer. She said, "Saved! Saved? Saved? Saved from what?" I knew the verse that says a soft answer turns away wrath, so I told her I was glad she had asked me and proceeded to tell her some of what it means to be saved. Her husband stood in the hallway close by and listened to my answer and seemed to have some understanding. The lady was not converted that day or in the future that I know of; she was very antagonistic toward being saved.

Saved from what? That was her question. She knew people who had been saved, but from what they were saved she did not know. I have had people come to me troubled over whether they were saved or not who I asked, "From what were you saved?" In most cases they do not have a clue. Some say, "I was saved from hell." It is then that I ask them, "Was there any change?" There are some people who say they have been saved that you do not have to be around long before you are asking, "This person is saved? Saved from what?" Some people see being saved as some sort of medicine or pill that you must just take with wonderful thoughts rather than the necessity of being rescued from certain things.

Saved from Self

The first thing we are going to look at that a sinner needs to be saved from is in Matthew 16:24, "*Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*" This verse shows us that if a person wants to follow Jesus he is going to have to deny himself. Any gospel that plays into the selfishness and self-centered nature of man is not the gospel of the Lord Jesus. He said there must be a denial of self. The world must quit revolving around you. You must follow Jesus, not your feelings and desires and goals. Those must be laid aside with all self-righteousness, self-hopes, and self-views. People love mirrors! They love to see themselves. "It's how I see it. How I feel. How I think." Jesus said to forget all that *I*, it is about Him. Has there been a time in your life that you were delivered

from self? Many people do not get saved because they do not want to give up self. They want to live for themselves—their self-image, self-glory, self-determination.

Saved from Being Lost

Matthew 18:11, *“For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”* If a person thinks they are pretty good they cannot be saved. Only someone who realizes they are lost can be saved. Until a person is lost, Jesus does not save them. They must admit that they have failed; that they do not have the direction and goals that they need. Jesus must have control of those areas. Many people do not know where they came from or why they are here, much less where they are headed. They are lost.

Once in a while a hunter becomes lost in the woods, but until they know they are lost you cannot rescue them. As long as they think they know what is going on, some of them resist rescue because they do not understand that they are not where they think they are and not headed where they think they are headed. Rescuers must be skillful in helping lost people know they are lost.

When I studied and worked some as a lifeguard, one of the rules was not to save someone who was not drowning. They may be exhausted or too far out, but until they are helpless and hopeless they cannot be rescued. Were you ever helpless and hopeless? Were you ever lost? Did Jesus ever come to your rescue when you could not make it any farther on your own?

The summer after I had polio as a child and was in the process of recovering, I went to a camp where I went swimming in the lake. I was out on the lake on a raft when I realized that everyone else had finished swimming and was gone. When I saw that, I headed for the dock, but not being as strong as I thought I was, I was beginning to doubt that I was going to make it there. I decided to head for the shore instead, which looking back on I know was a foolish choice since it was even farther away. When you are struggling you do not always see things clearly. There was a lifeguard working on the dock, but he did not see me as I was heading in the direction of the boats. When I cried out, “Help!” He turned, saw me, and went into action immediately. He pushed a boat out for me to grab hold of and be saved. It is only when we realize that we cannot do it on

our own and call to God for help that we are saved. You must be lost and hopeless before you can be rescued.

Saved from a Wasted Life

Jesus speaks again in Mark 8:35, *“For whosoever will save his life shall lose it;”* If you try to keep your life yourself and enjoy it your way, you will lose it. When you come to the end of your life, all the treasures you built up, all the esteem of people around you, all the accomplishments will be gone the second you die. They will only be memories. If you live the life that you want to live you will lose it all at the end. If you reach for only your goals you will lose them at the end. Live your life for your own enjoyment and you will lose it in the end. The end could be closer than you think. It may be that someone has been to the pot shop and is driving the wrong way in your lane of traffic. It could be that someone is shooting at a target and misses and you are there. You could suddenly die of a heart attack. It happens even occasionally to teenagers. Some dreaded disease could come along suddenly and take your life. The cemetery is full of people of all ages who died. Whatever your age, you will eventually lose your life. You cannot hold onto it perpetually. Even if you live a century and a half, that is nothing to the thousand-year reign of Christ and the untold billions of years thereafter. Hang onto your life and you will lose it.

The verse continues, *“. . .but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it.”* You can waste your life and opportunities and lose it in the end, or you can give up your life now and you will have your life in the end and beyond the end. When a Christian gives up what they could have been and could have had for Jesus' sake and the gospel's, they will find that they have an eternal life to enjoy for time without end. The rich man had no life to benefit from in the end. Lazarus had all his suffering in his earthly life, but he had all the joys of heaven. The Bible says there are mansions waiting for His saints in heaven. I believe a God-built mansion over there will surpass a man-built one here any day! Have you ever lost your life to save it? Jesus wants to save you from yourself, from being lost, and from wasting your life to give you something of real value.

Saved from Satan's Control

In Luke 4:18 Jesus was in His hometown synagogue and read this prophecy about Himself. *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised."* He came to bring deliverance, to set captives free. He came to those that were captives and bruised. Satan owns the souls of everyone that is born unless Jesus comes to the rescue. Jesus said, *"Ye are of your father the devil."* (John 8:44) He was speaking to those who had never been saved. Have you ever been delivered from Satan's control?

Isaiah 14:17 we are told that Satan, *"...opened not the house of his prisoners."* Jesus taught that you have to bind the strong man to free up his goods. He saves from the devil's power.

Ephesians 2 begins, *"And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"* If you have been saved, you have been rescued from the devil. Although he owns all, he loses some.

Maybe you think that the devil is not in control of your life. The Jewish people said that they were not the servants of anybody while the Roman empire controlled them, their courts, and their decisions. The Romans had convinced them that they were not in bondage. The devil is smarter than the Roman empire. He tells you that you are free. He has the course of this world to govern your life. If you are trying to please the world, live as the world, or love the world it shows how bound you are to Satan. He has bound you with the powers of the world, its influence, and its fickle ways to keep you fascinated like a snake waving its head while it coils to strike. He will sink his venom into your veins so you will go where the great serpent is headed.

Saved from Sin

1 John 1:7 tells us, *"And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."* Have you ever been delivered from sin; bought from the devil and his kingdom? Have you ever been brought from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light? Have you ever been given a new nature, made a new creature? Have you been saved from the forces that have the masses going all

the same way? *“Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.”* (Matt.7:13) The majority go, unaware that the music that makes their heart thrill is from those terrible instruments that the devil plays in their heads and in their souls. He has people dancing to his tune, thinking that they are free. They talk about freedom, but they have none, for it takes the Son to make you free. It says in I John 3 that when Jesus saves us, we are no longer obligated to sin, for we are no longer sinners but saints. You are out of the devil’s kingdom, away from his control. He does not dominate your life any longer.

Luke7:48, *“And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.”* Closely related to being under the control of Satan is being under the control of sin. I was once speaking to a lady who said she was saved. When I asked her from what she was saved, she finally came up with having been saved from hell. I asked her if she had not been saved from sin. She answered, *“Oh yes, we are all sinners.”* When I asked her to name a few she said, *“Oh, well, it wasn't anything that I did!”* (I wished her husband and children could have been brought in to testify.) She did not think she had any sins to be saved from. When she told me she had never sinned I said, *“Not only are you not saved, but you can't be saved because Jesus came to save the lost and you don't think you are lost.”*

What sins have you been saved from or what sins do you want to be saved from? You cannot hold your sin in one arm and Jesus and His saving power in the other. The sins must go! *“Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”* (Luke 13:3) The sin must be faced and dealt with. Deliverance must be had. His blood cleanses all sin. The angel told Joseph to, *“call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins.”* His blood washes away the sins, not just the guilt.

There is no sinless perfection, but I believe there is a desire that God puts in the heart of those who are saved. The problem is that we are living in a human body that has a fleshly nature. There will be the desire to live a pure and holy life as a Christian. Those who live in sin as an ongoing way of life, are still lost. They may have made a profession of being saved, but saved from what?

The jailer understood that he was lost and his life was wrong. He wanted a change of life and nature. He no longer wanted to live for self. He was willing to identify with the Christians and have them in his home. He believed on the Lord

Jesus Christ and was saved.

If you are bound in sin there is hope for you. He saves sinners from their sins. He has the power to break the bondage, cleanse the sinner, deliver them from the power of their sin, and help them to live holy. Do you desire such a work in your life? The church cannot save you. There are no seven rules to follow. You must follow Jesus.

Have you ever said, "I'm a sinner, and I want out of my sins. I don't want them anymore. Please deliver me from my sins! I trust Jesus to save me from my sins."?

If you trust Him, He will lead you, guide you, and give your life genuine purpose that will have an effect for all eternity.

Saved from What?

Section 2

Saved from what? That is the question I have in my mind when some people tell me that they are saved. There is no evidence in their life that they were ever saved *from* anything. The Bible has much to say about being saved and what you are to be saved from.

Saved from Condemnation

John 3:15-18, "That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the

name of the only begotten Son of God.”

You do not die to find out if you will be condemned. You were born condemned as a member of the condemned race under the judgment of God for sin. You show yourself to be a citizen of this world by going ahead and doing as everyone else in the world is doing—sinning. You were born condemned, you live condemned, and if you do not have the condemnation removed you will be condemned for all eternity. Jesus came to save us from condemnation. Those who enter into a life of faith, believing, are not condemned. Those who do not believe on Jesus stay condemned because they are condemned already. When we are saved, we are saved *from* the condemnation that all those around us are under.

Saved from the Untoward Generation

Acts 2:40, “And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourself from this untoward generation.”

There was a generation that people needed to be saved from. The word used to describe this generation, untoward, is one that takes some thought—or a dictionary. They are headed toward hell; the Bible is clear about that. They do not believe that or think about it, but it happens to them anyway. It is a generation without clear direction and thought. They are not really living toward anything other than themselves and their sin. They do not want to be toward anything that God is for. They do not want to live toward holiness, eternity, virtue, blessings, promises, closeness with God. They are stubborn, willful, perverse, perverted, and deceived. The untoward generation does not want to worship; they want to use God's worship time for themselves and their own interests. They are living in circles. They may be as progressive as the communist socialists were with the five or ten year program who reevaluated every year to see if they needed that much time or more. They always keep the vision short. We are human beings who were created to last for ever and ever. Death is simply an event in the time that God has for us that continues into all eternity. The generation spoken of in this verse lives for the moment. It is all about self. They do not want to be saved from self or sin. They want to fit in and be comfortable. They do not get saved because being saved will take you out of the kingdom of this world and place you in the family of God. The untoward

generation is only interested in living for here and now and hoping for the best. As Christians we have a hope that is solid and sure! Christ Jesus has opened the door for eternity. We might suffer now, but that is so we may reign with Him later. We are going to rule planet earth in the first and only righteous government it has ever known.

Saved from Wrath

Romans 5:8 and 9 tells us, "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him."

You cannot clean yourself up. He died for you as a sinner. He took your sins so that you could have His righteousness. Our justification is through the blood of Jesus. Through His blood you can be saved from wrath. We are appointed unto wrath and we are headed for it. We deserve God's wrath for breaking His laws and abusing His property, our bodies. But Jesus, by His blood, will save you from the wrath to come. We are told to flee from the wrath to come just as we are told to flee from idolatry and fornication. It requires an active desire to be on the run—no sitting comfortably and letting happen what will. We are not fatalists. We are to be obedient, useful servants. There is wrath coming, but by salvation we are saved from that wrath.

Saved from Satan

II Thessalonians 2:9, "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders."

People do not want to be saved from a Satanically run world; they would rather be comfortable. When Satan's human leader, the Anti-Christ, is sent, he will be part of the signs and wonders campaign. People will see his works and say, "This must be of God because of all the wonders and miracle! Look at the power he has!" They would not look at Jesus, but they will look at the devil's substitute, his false christ that he will send in the future. People will be ripe and ready because they have rejected the right and will end up with what is wrong.

This passage continues in the next verse, *"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the*

truth, that they might be saved.”

This campaign of the Anti-Christ will deceive people about what is righteous and what is unrighteous, until they are confused and carried away in that false doctrine. They did not want to be saved. They did not love the truth. They may have known it, but they did not like it. They think they can live without the truth. This one with all the power of Satan behind him will come with full deception for all these people who do not want the love of the truth. Jesus said, *“I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.”* (John 14:6) But they did not want to love and serve Him. They were not willing to honor and sacrifice for Him. One day there will be a terrible deception. We see bits of it now as people are blinded in their thinking and confused in their values. It is because of them rejecting what God offered.

Verse eleven and twelve continue, *“And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”*

Because of their response to the truth God allows them to be deceived. Since they made their decision against the truth, just as Pharaoh hardened his heart, their hearts will be hardened. They enjoyed sin and went on in it, but God said enough was enough. When God saves you, you are saved from the terrible increase of error that is in the future. Those who walk in that way say all is well, old-time religion was a fake, and you do not have to walk in the old paths—the new path is better. There are many who offer such today. People are glad to believe this lie because they love to stay away from the truth.

Saved from the Fear of Death

Hebrews 2:15, *“And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”*

When God saves us He does not give us the spirit of fear, *“but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”* (II Timothy 1:7) But those who do not want Jesus do not have access to the love, the power, or the sound mind. They are in bondage and afraid to die. It is always a benefit when people start thinking about dying. When people start to realize that they could die at any time it should increase

their interest in being saved. They know that they will lose everything they have when they die. *"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."* (Hebrews 9:27) They are not ready or prepared to meet God so they have a fear of death. When you are saved, you do not have a fear of death. What is there to be afraid of when you are going to be with Jesus? When you are absent from the body, you are present with the Lord. When you are present with the Lord you do not have the wretched environment we are living in down here. You are saved from the penalty and power of sin when you are converted, but one day you will be saved from the presence of sin. We do not have to fear death! Are afraid to die? Or have you been saved from that? Those who have not been saved from the fear of death are in bondage to that fear. It effects all kinds of the choices in their lives. Why should a Christian be afraid to die? That is a mark of a lost person. Some people are so afraid to die that they buy the safest car, travel at the safest times, up the safest roads that they can. I am not saying that is an unwise thing to do, but these people are panic-stricken at the thought of death. A person who is saved should be like the man who went to the doctor and heard the verdict, "I have bad news. You have cancer and only months to live." The man responded, "Thank you, doctor. I've wondered all my life how I would go to heaven and now I know." That is not how most people respond, is it? If you love your life you cannot beat the devil because he will threaten you with death. That is a tool he (and other people) have used to control people.

I once was to go and preach in a dangerous place. It became *very* dangerous before I left—they were shooting Christians and foreigners and I was both. One of the other preachers backed out of going because he was afraid. Later, he was found guilty of such sins as would declare him as never being in the Kingdom of God. He was lost and afraid to die. He was in bondage to his fear of death. Are you afraid to die? Or have you made peace with God through the blood of Jesus?

Saved from Dead Works

Hebrews 4:9 through 11 tells us, *"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."*

God created everything in six days and then he rested. It was a picture of how work ends and rest begins. Spiritually there is a rest, but it is only when we stop our own labors. We labor, we come to a place of rest, and our own works and efforts are laid aside because we have been saved from trying to make our own way. Hebrews chapter six tells us about the first principles of the oracles of God. The first of the six mentioned is repentance from dead works. Jesus paid it all. He did not make a down payment. He did not make a majority payment for you to finish the rest. You must get to the place where you trust Him and Him alone. He is worthy of all your trust. He did not say He would get you started and you work for the rest of it. We do not earn our salvation, and we do not keep ourselves saved. Jesus does all of that. Believers are trusting Jesus plus nothing. Not only at the moment they were saved were they trusting Him, but the next day, the next week, and the rest of their life. It is all about Jesus. It is by faith that we please God. Rest in the Lord. Find peace in Him. Be saved from trying to *earn* favor with God, saved from yourself, saved from wasting your life, saved from sin, and saved from deception. When Jesus saves us, we are saved on all fronts—from the world, the flesh, and the devil. We are saved now, we are saved tomorrow, we are saved for all eternity because of Jesus.