

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- BELIEVE – ACTS 16:31
- REPENT – ACTS 17:30; LUKE 13:3
- CONFESS – ROMANS 10:10; I TIMOTHY 6:12
- BE BAPTIZED – ACTS 2:38; MARK 16:16
- BE FAITHFUL – REVELATION 2:10

PRAYER LIST:

North Ridgeville Church of Christ
 36364 Chestnut Ridge Road
 North Ridgeville, OH 44039

www.nrcoc.net

Times for Meeting

Lord's Day

9:30 AM Bible Study (all ages)
 10:30 AM Worship

Wednesday

7:00 PM Bible Study (all ages)

Elders

Bruce Dean
 Mark Ullman

Evangelist

Steven Wallace

THE NORTH RIDGEVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,
 deceiving your own selves.” James 1:22

April 16, 2023

“How Could I Be Lost?”

Steven J. Wallace

Luke 9:25, “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?”¹

Our Lord shows that one may find *great success* in worldly pursuits and pleasures and yet at the same time be “destroyed” (ruined) and “lost” forfeiting his spiritual welfare. Jesus speaks of “spiritual” loss, not *temporal* loss. Adam Clarke observed,

“...if a man received only *temporal* damage...*gaining* the *whole world* must amply compensate him. But if he should receive spiritual damage...the possession of the universe could not indemnify him. Earthly goods may repair earthly losses, but they cannot repair any breach that may be made in the *peace* or *holiness* of the soul.”²

We should readily see:

1. Worldly success is not a measurement of spiritual strength (see also, Matt. 16:26).
2. The value of a man is not measured by what he *physically* gains through his senses. Higher learning from heaven is dull to the natural man (1 Cor. 2:14).
3. The salvation of a single person from destruction is vastly more significant and valuable than all the riches that can be offered or accumulated in this life.

One should be struck with fear at the thought of being lost and eternally separated from God. "How could I be lost?" is a question for all to consider. How is anyone lost? Isaiah penned:

"But **your iniquities** have separated you from your God; And **your sins** have hidden *His* face from you, So that He will not hear" (Isa. 59:2, emphasis added).

Writing of accountable people, Paul charges that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).

Focusing on the "good" deeds we have done doesn't change the fact that we are lost. Men can become blind to heaven's laws by esteeming their own earthly existence. Being a good neighbor, paying taxes, opening doors for others, being a dependable worker, or even an understanding employer doesn't erase one single sin we have committed against heaven. "How could I be lost" when I am benevolent to the poor? *How could I be lost* when I have a good reputation among men? *How could I be lost* when I treat my fellow neighbor well and strive to be a proper role model to others?

Likewise, focusing on the absence of evil works will not help my case. *How could I be lost* when I haven't stolen from another or when I haven't gone out of my way to hurt my neighbor? *How could I be lost* when I haven't participated in a scandal or crime?

While it is important to be involved in doing good and refraining from evil, we must know what "good" and "evil" are before Almighty God. Although Job strove to live in integrity, to be eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, and a father to the poor, he needed to be saved. Although he would search out a case and break the fangs of the wicked, even Job was in need of a savior (Job 29:15-17). He would eventually learn, "Though I were righteous, my own mouth would condemn me; Though I *were* blameless, it would prove me perverse" (Job 9:20). Having a day in the high court before God recounting all the good he did would not prove beneficial. Where we see *blamelessness*, God sees everything we have ever done. He knows every thought we have ever thought and every desire that we have ever wished. Every lie and half-truth we've ever told is on record. On record are the times when we should have stood up and spoken the

truth but failed. On record are the times we've coveted what was not ours and lusted after things that are sinful. Every hateful thought, every malicious and slanderous word, and even every idle word is registered there. Every idol we have built to every proud thought to every unholy ambition we pursued would utterly glare at us piercing deep into our naked soul in heaven's court!

Although the people that assembled on Pentecost were counted "devout men" from every nation under heaven, they were guilty of lawlessly crucifying God's anointed (Acts 2:5, 23, 36). Their response was not "How could I be lost?" Rather, in humility they asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37).

The case with Gentiles is no different. Cornelius was a devout and generous man, but there was something that he *must* be told that required something he *must* do (see Acts 10:6; 11:14). When he was commanded to be baptized, he didn't say, "How could I be lost?" Rather, he received the blessed command and asked the preacher to stay a few days. God had granted the Gentiles repentance to life (Acts 10:47, 48; 11:18)!

To not be destroyed and forfeit the soul's welfare is one of life's most important tasks. Be diligent to search for eternal life in Jesus (Jn. 14:6). Develop faith, repent of sin (a change of mind leading to a change of action), confess Jesus as Lord, and be baptized with Him into death to rise into newness of life (Rom. 6:3-5; 10:9, 10). In Christ live a sanctified life that fears God and works righteousness, worshiping God in spirit and in truth, and being a service worker for the Lord (Acts 10:34, 35; Jn. 4:23, 24; Rom. 12:1,2). In 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15, Paul exhorted:

"For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again."

¹ Unless noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

² *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible*. A. Clarke. 1826. Electronic edition as found in the Online Bible.