

THE NATURE OF SALVATION

Acts 16:25-31

Introduction: The situation of Paul and Silas in jail has been retold countless times because it is God's plan of salvation in its simplest terms. Remember the situation, Paul and Silas had been beaten and thrown into jail but at midnight the two of them were singing praises to God instead of complaining and whining of their situation. God sent an earthquake, their chains fell off and in the darkness the jailer thought that all the prisoners had escaped. Up to this point in the jailer's life he probably had never thought about God or God's attitude toward his sinful way of life but suddenly realizing that his life was in danger, he began to have fear for his life. The ensuing conversation between the jailer and Paul is the classic conversation in witnessing and bringing one to Jesus Christ.

I. THE JAILER CRIED OUT - "WHAT MUST "I " DO TO BE SAVED?"

1. One might want to take a good look at "who" the word "I" represents and why the question was asked.
 - There came a realization for the first time that not all was well between the jailer and God.
 - The jailer wasn't asking about anybody else, but only himself, thus the "I."
 - The same thought applies to every human being, not what must YOU do to be saved, or what must THEY do to be saved, but what must I do to be saved.

II. WHAT MUST I DO TO BE "SAVED?"

1. Being "saved" was the area of interest of the jailer, but saved from what? What does it mean to be "saved?"
 - One can have improvements, reformation, repairs, changes by efforts of him/herself or by others, but being "reborn," being "saved" requires divine intervention.
 - Being "saved" as Paul and Silas had preached and the jailer was asking about was that of having one's life "delivered" by the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. WHAT MUST I "DO" TO BE SAVED?

1. Doing something requires action on one's part, so what kind of action on one's part causes one to be saved?
2. What did Paul tell the jailer? What was/is the only thing anybody can do to be "saved?"
3. What did anyone do to receive his sight, walk again, live again when Jesus was there?
4. People can add nothing, people can do nothing themselves EXCEPT believe in Jesus.

IV. SALVATION THAT SAVES MUST SATISFY GOD

1. God is the one who has been offended by sin.
2. Disobedience to God is what has separated people from God - their sins.
3. It is God, alone, who can say by what means He will save and restore people.

4. People have no grounds upon which they can approach God.

V. SALVATION THAT SAVES MUST DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

1. God says that salvation must do away with sin and give people a new nature. It must blot out sin and its guilt.
2. Sorrow or promise not to do it again is not enough. (Resolutions, a new leaf, etc..)

VI. SALVATION THAT SAVES MUST CARRY OUT THE PENALTY OF DEATH ON THE SINNER

1. God has said, "*...the soul that sinneth, it shall die...*"
2. The penalty must be paid, judgment must be executed.
3. God's law is holy and cannot be changed.

VII. SALVATION THAT SAVES MUST DEFEAT, DETHRONE AND DESTROY SATAN

1. **Genesis 3** - states that the head of Satan must be bruised, therefore destroyed.
2. God stated that the seed of the woman will bring about Satan's fall.
3. Satan must be put away and never be seen or heard of again, freeing man from Satan's evil influence and deeds.

CONCLUSION:

1. God has declared that mankind is separated from Him.
2. God has declared His love for mankind visually at the cross.
3. Mankind has worshipped all sorts of gods through the ages in an attempt to satisfy that emptiness that can be filled only the one true God.
4. What is YOUR relationship with God? Are you attempting to work out your own salvation, cross that gap between you and God all by yourself?
5. Remember what it takes to have a salvation that works - God's way, God's Salvation.
6. The jailer came to know the Lord Jesus Christ by trusting him, that simple!