

THE SUPREME QUESTION

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Setting Captives Free

TEXT: “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:30).

- A. *“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. (Isa. 42:1).*
 - B. *“That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. (Isa. 49:9).*
 - C. *“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;” (Isa. 61:1).*
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INTRODUCTION

- A. **“What must I do to be saved.”** That question was asked by a startled jailor.
 - 1. He was amidst strange and perplexing happenings.
 - 2. He had just seen wonderful sights.
 - 3. And he was shaken by unfamiliar terrors. For this he sought relief.
 - B. But he was not the only man who has ever asked this question.
 - 1. This is a universal question.
 - 2. The Greeks with their multiplicity of Idols. Then one to “an unknown god”.
 - 3. Those who sacrificed their children to the fire god, Moloch.
 - 4. Causes the Indian mother to cast her baby into the Ganges - and to go home with an empty arm and an empty heart.
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LOOK AT THE PICTURE

- A. Two strange preachers had come to the Roman city of Philippi.
 - 1. Their preaching had brought them in conflict with the authorities.
 - 2. They were beaten and put in prison.
 - 3. Into the inner dungeon and feet made fast in stocks.
 - 4. The place was foul, cold and dark. Their backs lacerated and bleeding.
- B. THEIR ATTITUDE:
 - 1. First they prayed.
 - 2. As their hearts grew warm, prayer gave way to songs of praise.
- C. WHAT DID THEY SING?
 - 1. The 23 Psalm??
 - 2. Or the 37th Psalm???
 - 3. 46th, God is our refuge and strength...”

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- D. GOD TOOK THE JAIL AS IT WERE IN HIS HAND AND SHOOK IT.
1. Now see the jailor as he looks about him in dismay. The doors are open.
 2. He would inflict justice upon himself...Draws sword...
 3. Paul calls out "Do thyself no harm...we are all here.."
- E. All the circumstances come together at once...Preaching...Dying and the QUESTION.
1. Not what must I do be: (1) decent; (2) respectable; (3) rich; etc.
 2. **"What must I do to be saved?"**

WHAT IS IMPLIED BY THIS QUESTION WHEN ASKED INTELLIGENTLY

ABSOLUTE DIFFERENCE

- A. An absolute difference between being saved or lost.
1. Today people would like to find something in the middle.
 2. But just two ways...two gates.
- B. "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life."
(I John 5:12).

LOST OR SAVED.

- A. A CONSCIOUSNESS OF BEING LOST!
1. Many things he could have asked questions about.
 2. He was sure of one thing....He was lost.
 3. And he didn't try to deny it.
 4. This the first step for all....to realize need.
- B. POSSIBILITY OF BEING SAVED!
1. Knew he was lost. Now also knows there was possibility to be saved.
 2. You must believe that you may be saved.
 3. You must believe in the Power of God.

WILLINGNESS TO BE SAVED

- A. Not just curious...No trifier.
- B. He wanted to know the conditions of salvation.
- C. The earnest purpose in his heart was to meet those condition.
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Must Do Something To Obtain It

A. WHAT DID THE APOSTLES SAY?

1. Do nothing...
2. Wait....drift...

B. Everyone of us know we must **do**. Too few act as if it were really true.

C. Not up to us to make the conditions....But to meet them. (Unconditional surrender.)

1. God made them.
 2. We are to obey them.
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An Individual Matter

A. Not what must God do? Nor the preacher or Elders or anyone else.

B. Too many hypocrites in the church. That's not the question.

BELIEVE ON THE LORD

A. BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED.

1. To believe is to obey....
2. Love me...Keep my commandments....

B. "Why Call Ye Me Lord...Lord...and do not...."
