

January 3, 2021

Viewpoint from the **Valley Grove Church Of Christ**

When Lost People Can't Be Saved

By Kyle Campbell

Preachers often say that everyone can be saved. We want people to investigate the claims of scripture, compare it to their lives, and "... rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the Lord your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm" (Joel 2:13). But there are three cases where someone who's lost can't possibly be saved. And knowing these may help you make the correct eternal choices.

First, lost people cannot be saved if they harden their hearts and will not listen to the Bible. Matthew 13:14-15 says, "And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them'" (Matthew 13:14-15). Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused to listen to God's command to let His people go. This ultimately caused his destruction. The number one power you have is the power over your own heart. Don't close it to God's precepts.

Second, lost people cannot be saved if they die lost. At death our deeds are sealed. Paul said, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10). When the body ceases to live, you'll then be responsible for what you've done in it. Furthermore, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Jesus taught that those in torment cannot cross over to Abraham's bosom or Paradise (Luke 16:23-26).

Third, lost people cannot be saved if they are lost when Christ returns. Jesus will come again and "we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17). This verse is

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

speaking of the righteous who are alive when Christ returns. But what will happen to the wicked? Paul again instructs Christ as coming “in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thessalonians 1:8).

A lot of people are going to be lost (Matthew 7:13-14). But there’s no good reason for anyone to be punished for eternity (Mark 9:44, 46, 48). Stop resisting the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51) and listen to the words of Jesus and He will become the author of your eternal salvation (Hebrews 2:14-15).

Why Are You Waiting?

By Joe R. Price

15 So I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 16 But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you.’” (Acts 26:15–16)

Saul was going to Damascus with authority to seize Christians in the synagogues when Jesus appeared to him (Acts 9:1-6, 13-14). What occurs in the following days changes Saul from being faithless to faithful, from being a persecutor to a preacher, and from being an antagonist to an apostle. His conversion is a touchstone of God’s mercy, grace, and longsuffering. It serves as “a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him (Christ, JRP) for everlasting life” (1 Tim. 1:12-16).

It is necessary to expose and reject the assumption that Jesus saved Saul on the road to Damascus. That was not the purpose for which Christ appeared to Saul. Jesus plainly stated why He appeared to Saul. It was to make him “a minister and a witness” of Christ (Acts 26:16; 22:14-15; 9:15). Jesus appeared to Saul to appoint him as an apostle (1 Cor. 15:8-11). Saul was a believer after this miraculous event. And he was repentant toward God, as demonstrated by his praying and fasting (Acts 9:9, 11).

But three days later, in Damascus, his sins still needed to be washed away. Ananias said to Saul, “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). If Jesus saved Saul on the road, what sins needed washing away? Since Saul still needed cleansing from his sins, it is apparent he was not saved on the road.

To follow the pattern of Saul’s conversion includes being baptized to wash away sins (by Christ’s blood, Rom. 6:3). Why are you waiting?

Looking Back, Moving Forward

By Joe R. Price

2020 has been a strange, challenging, and even sorrowful year. Many will look at 2020 with regrets, sorrow, and even despair. But there were also many blessings in 2020. We ought to remember them, too. 2021 holds its own share of promises, problems, aspirations, and anticipations. Every year does.

Looking back on our lives is a good thing when it moves us to improve ourselves. “Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place — unless you repent” (Rev. 2:5). God’s blessing of memory helps us to recall and reform. Memory helps us be better than we were before. To be more cautious and careful, more kindness and compassion, more concern for the things of God and the things of others (Eph. 5:15; Col. 3:12-15; Matt. 22:37-39; 1 Cor. 13:1-7). As you look back over your life in 2020, where was your spiritual life a year ago, and where are you now? Are you farther from or closer to the Lord? If you have fallen, repent and do the first works.

Looking back can be harmful if we do so longing for the sinful deeds of the past. Jesus said to “remember Lot’s wife,” who, rather than escape for her life from God’s impending judgment against Sodom, looked back in disobedience and became a pillar of salt (Lk. 17:32; Gen. 19:17, 26). Each of us has spent enough time in the past in the sinful ways of the world (1 Pet. 4:3). Now we must live for the will of God (1 Pet. 4:2). As you look back at 2020 are you yearning for the things you used to do before you were a Christian? If so, repent of such thinking and “cease from sin” (1 Pet. 4:1).

Looking forward is a bad thing if we forget God. Those who plan for tomorrow without trusting in the will of God are bound to fail; no matter how successful they are in the eyes of men (Jas. 4:13-15). Life is uncertain and brief, so we must keep God in all of our plans. You never know when you will leave this world and meet your God.

Looking forward is good when it propels us onward and upward in our service to Christ. Paul wrote, “...but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13-14). A crown of righteousness is reserved for all who faithfully serve Jesus (2 Tim. 4:7-8; 1 Pet. 1:3-5).

As we look back at 2020 and ahead to 2021, let us examine ourselves (2 Cor. 13:5). May we repent and repair the transgressions we find, live by faith, and keep our eyes fixed on Jesus (2 Cor. 12:20-21; Heb. 12:1-2). Salvation is nearer than when we first believed (Rom. 13:11).

“Easier Said Than Done”

By Greg Gwin

We often use the old expression that something is “easier said than done.” We know that it accurately applies to many different subjects. It is possible, for instance, to talk at length about sports, business, or world politics; but it is an entirely different matter to effectively engage in such activities. Even the things of day-to-day living are many times easier to discuss than to do. It is easy to say that I love my wife, but it is more difficult to prove that love by exhibiting genuine care and concern. I can talk about being a proper father to my children, but I must work hard to be the kind of parent that I ought to be. In all of these things, and a multitude of others, we see that it really is “easier said than done.”

Living as God would have us to live is this same way.

It is simple to claim a faith in Christ, and nearly as easy to say that we really love Him. A majority of folks in our society make such claims. But it is an altogether different matter to prove these statements. The real proof is in our performance as His disciples. Jesus put it most simply when He said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). John added, “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments” (1 John 2:3). Let us do more than claim we are Christ’s, that’s easy. Let’s prove we really love Him by obeying His commands.

Postage
Stamp

Valley Grove Church Of Christ
2110 East Stateline Road
P. O. Box 461
Southaven, MS 38671

This Bulletin is a weekly publication of the
Valley Grove Church Of Christ, Southaven, MS

Sunday

Bible Study . . . 9:30 A.M.

Worship 10:30 A.M.

Worship 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study . . . 7:00 P.M.

Phone: 662-342-1132

www.valleygrovechurchofchrist.com