

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THE WORD “SAVED”?

ACTS 16:30-31 • TV-10A

A television broadcast sermon delivered

SUNDAY, MARCH 28TH, 1976

By

HENRY T. MAHAN

Transcribed, edited and published

FEBRUARY 3RD, 2021

HENRY T. MAHAN TAPE LIBRARY

Zebulon Grace Church

6088 Zebulon Highway

Pikeville, KY 41501

PH: 606-631-9053

Acts 16:30-31

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”

My text will be taken from the book of **Acts 16:30-31**; *“Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And Paul replied; “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.”*

Now the question today is: **“WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THE WORD SAVED, (S-A-V-E-D)?”**

Now, in the Word of God, the greatest word is the word God. It has no rival. It contains all things. *“In Him we live and move and have our being.”* God is love, God is light, God is life and God is holy. Let His name be spoken in reverence and fear. The Scripture says, *“Holy and reverend is His name.”*

The greatest word in the Bible is the word God. And the blackest word in the Bible is the word sin. By sin came death. Sin darkened man’s character. Sin brought hate, disease, sorrow, and tears into this world.

Sin condemned our souls. Sin made us the enemy of God. Sin destroyed creation. All that is good is God and all that is evil is because of sin. The blackest word in the Bible is the word sin.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THE WORD "SAVED"?

ACTS 16:30-31 • HENRY T. MAHAN

And then I thought about this; what is the saddest word in the Bible? The greatest word is God; it contains all things. The blackest word is sin and the evil of it, the horror of it, and the blackness of it.

But the saddest words of all words in God's Word are the words, "*Depart from me.*" In your wildest imagination, in your darkest nightmare; can you think of anything more horrible or hopeless than at that great final day to stand before the Lord of glory and hear Him say, "*Depart from me; I never knew you?*"

Those would be the saddest words that you could possibly hear, how final, how horrible, how hopeless; "*Depart from me, I never knew you.*"

The most precious word in the Bible; what is it? It's the sweetest word in the Bible is the word Jesus. Peter said, "*Unto you that believe He is precious.*"

**"Jesus; oh how sweet the name
Jesus, every day the same
Jesus; let all saints proclaim
His worthy name forever."**

The sweetest word, the most precious word in God's Word is Jesus. When Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the great preacher of England, was only 18 years of age; he wrote this poem:

**"What the hand is to the loot
What the breath is to the flute
What is spring to the well?
What is fragrance to the smell?
What is spring to the well?
What is the flower to the bee?
That's Jesus Christ to me.**

**What the mother is to the child
What the compass is in pathless while
What is all to trouble waded?
What is ransom to the slave?
What is water to the seed?
That's Jesus Christ to me."**

The sweetest words in the Bible are Jesus Christ.

What is the happiest word in the Bible? The greatest word God, the blackest word sin, the most horrible words "*Depart from me,*" and the sweetest words are Jesus Christ.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THE WORD “SAVED”?

ACTS 16:30-31 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Now, what is the happiest word in the Bible? I believe the happiest word in the Bible is the word s-a-v-e-d, saved. The Scripture says “*Blessed (or happy) is the man to whom God will not charge sin,*” the man who is saved from sin, from its penalty, from its power, from its practice, and someday by His grace from its presence.

What does it mean to be saved? Well, to be saved is to be forgiven of all sins. The Scripture says, “*In Him we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins.*” What does it mean to be saved? It means to have peace with God, “*Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God.*”

What does it mean to be saved? It means to be free from the curse of the law. “*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us.*”

What does it mean to be saved? It means to have eternal life. The Scripture says, “*This is the record; God hath given us eternal life and this life is in His Son. And he that hath the Son hath life. And he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*”

What does it mean to be saved? It means to have the Holy Spirit. “*If any man hath not the Spirit; he’s none of His.*” All who know Christ, all who are redeemed by His grace, all who are saved by His blood, have the Holy Spirit as their comforter, as their teacher, and as their guide.

**“Saved by His power divine
Saved to new life sublime
Life now is sweet
My joy is complete
For I’m saved.”**

The happiest word in the Bible is the word saved.

Now, through the Scriptures, the Word of God uses four words in describing and defining salvation and I want to give them to you in this message today on the subject: “**WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THE WORD SAVED?**” What’s included in that word s-a-v-e-d?

What does it mean to be saved?

And there are four Bible words and I want to give them to you. And if you will, you take your Bible and turn first of all to the book of **1 Peter chapter 4:18**. I want you to follow with me in the Scripture, **1 Peter 4:18**.

Now listen to the reading of God’s Word: “*And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?*” Now you’ve read that verse and you’ve heard it read. What does the word scarcely mean, saved scarcely?

First of all: It does not mean there is any uncertainty about the salvation of the believer.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THE WORD “SAVED”?

ACTS 16:30-31 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Our salvation is not uncertain. *“We are complete in Christ.”* We have in Him a perfect righteousness. We have in Him a perfect atonement. The Scripture says, *“The blood of Jesus Christ God’s Son cleanseth us from all sin.”*

So, the word scarcely here does not mean with uncertainty. Our salvation is as certain as the throne of God, as certain as the purpose of God, as certain as the finished work of Christ.

Well, it does not mean that the believer will barely get to heaven; it does not mean that. It does not mean that the righteous are barely saved for we shall enter in with a full entrance. We shall sweep into glory in full array, clothed in His righteousness. *“We have an inheritance undefiled, eternal, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven.”* We shall sweep through to glory through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Well, what does it mean, *“If the righteous scarcely be saved?”* Now this is what it means and you check any good translations and any of the Bible commentators and you’ll find this is the word that they use for the word scarcely.

Here’s what it means: *“If the righteous be scarcely saved (with difficulty, that’s what the word means) where shall the ungodly appear?”*

Now, when we hear men speak about the simple plan of salvation; I don’t like that term because there’s nothing simple about this thing of the salvation of a sinner. There’s nothing easy about the redemption of a lost soul. It is not the simple plan of salvation *“If the righteous be saved;”* with what, difficulty?

Now, the difficulty is in two areas, two areas:

First of all: The difficulty is with God. Now Paul asked this question: *“How can God be just and justify the ungodly?”* That’s a difficult question. That’s a difficult endeavor. That’s a difficult venture; *“How can God be just and yet justify the ungodly?”*

Job asked that question; *“How can man be just with God? Behold; the moon shineth not. The stars are not pure in His sight. How much more abominable is man that drinketh iniquity like the water.”*

Job asked this question; *“How can He be clean that’s born of a woman?”* How can God save sinners and still be just? God is holy as well as merciful. God almighty is righteous as well as gracious. God almighty is truth as well as love.

And every attribute of the Godhead must be honored in this matter of salvation. It’s a difficult thing, this thing of saving a sinner. It’s a difficult thing.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THE WORD “SAVED”?

ACTS 16:30-31 • HENRY T. MAHAN

How can God be just? How can He punish you and pardon you? How can God almighty put you to death because of your sins and yet give you life as a justified person, as a redeemed person?

God declares this; *“I will in no wise clear the guilty.”* That’s what He says in the Scripture; *“Who shall stand in His presence, he that hath clean hands and a pure heart?”* The Word of God says, *“The soul that sinneth; it shall surely die.”* How am I going to die and live? How am I going to be punished and be pardoned? How’s God going to sit on a throne of justice and righteousness and at the same time set free the guilty?

That’s the difficulty. Well my friend; that difficulty was met in Jesus Christ. That difficulty was met and satisfied in the person of God’s Son. The Scripture says in **Galatians 4:4**; *“But when the fullness of time was come God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were born under the law, that we might receive redemption, (remission, forgiveness, righteousness) and the adoption of sons.”*

In other words, Jesus Christ came down here as our representative. He came down here as our federal-head, as our Surety, and He did for us what we couldn’t do for ourselves. He met the law of God head on and He honored it completely and totally.

He met the justice of God, the righteousness of God, the holiness of God, and satisfied it completely. The sword of God’s wrath was plunged into His heart because of our sins; *“He bare our sins in His body on the tree. And by His stripes we are healed.”*

Christ as man, as our representative, met the law, met justice, and satisfied both. The difficulty was met in Christ.

Wait a minute! There’s another area. If the righteous be saved with difficulty; the difficulty lay with God.

Secondly: The difficulty is with man. Now listen to this: *“This is the condemnation; men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.”* That’s what the Word of God says about us. We know that by the Scripture and we know that by experience. Christ said, *“You will not come to me that you might have life.”* We’ve got to be made willing. And the Scripture says *“His people shall be willing in the day of His power.”*

We’ve got to be regenerated. We’ve got to be born from above. *“As many as received Him, to them gave He power, (the right), to become the sons of God who were born, not of the will of the flesh; (the flesh does not will to be regenerated, not of the will of man; man does not will to come to God) but he was born of God.”*

We not only must be made willing, must be regenerated; we must be called, supernaturally called, divinely called. Paul said, *“God who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me by His grace was pleased to reveal His Son in me.”*

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THE WORD “SAVED”?

ACTS 16:30-31 • HENRY T. MAHAN

What is this thing of salvation? It's a new creation. It's regeneration. It's a new birth. It's life from above. It's a vital, living, union, with the Son of God. And this is a difficult thing. It's something that can only be done by God.

The disciples asked the Lord one day; *“Lord, who then can be saved?”* He said, *“With men it's impossible but with God all things are possible.”* Do you see what I'm saying, *“If the righteous scarcely (with difficulty) be saved?”*

Paul said, *“My little children; I travail till Christ be formed in you.”* Now, you may be satisfied with a little easy believism. You may be satisfied with the decision to do better. You may be satisfied with a profession of religion. You may be satisfied with your name alphabetically recorded on a church roll-book; I'm not. I want to know God.

I feel like the apostle Paul who said, *“O that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection. I count all things but dung that I might win Christ and be found in Him,”* saved with difficulty. Only God can do for me what needs to be done. Only God can do it.

All right; here's the second word now. What do we mean by being saved? It's saved with difficulty. God's righteousness and holiness must be honored. God's truth and God's justice must be satisfied.

And I've got to be made to love what I hate and hate what I love by nature. I've got to be made a new creature. I've got to be made to love God and only God can do that for me. Now the second word is found in **Luke 7:50**. You turn over there with me to **Luke 7:50** and Christ said to the woman; *“Thy faith hath saved thee.”* Now we've talked about salvation with difficulty; now we're talking about salvation by faith.

What's the background of this verse of Scripture? Well, the Lord Jesus had been invited to a religious leader's home for dinner. And this Pharisee had little regard for the Master when the Lord Jesus came through the door.

He did not give Him water to wash His feet. That was the custom in those days. They wore sandals and went barefooted. And when they came into a home a common courtesy was to have someone at the door with a basin of water and a towel.

You'd wash the feet of the guest and then you'd give him a kiss of welcome and then you'd give him some soothing cool oil, to anoint his head. But when Christ came into this proud religious man's home he gave Him no water to wash His feet. He gave Him no kiss of welcome. He gave Him no oil with which to anoint His head.

And He came in and they reclined in those days when they would eat a meal. They'd all gather around a table and they'd recline on pillows. Their feet would be out behind them.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THE WORD “SAVED”?

ACTS 16:30-31 • HENRY T. MAHAN

And while the Master was reclining here, eating the meal in this Pharisee’s home; the Scripture says that, a woman of the streets, a harlot, slipped in and she fell at the dusty, tired, feet, of the Lord Jesus and she began to kiss His feet.

And she began to weep. She wept so much that her tears covered the feet, the dusty feet of the Master. And the dust turned to mud and the tears were streaming down His feet. She then unplaited her hair, her long hair, and she began to dry His feet with the hair of her head. And then she anointed His feet with precious ointment.

And while she was doing that the old Pharisee sitting up there in his pious, holier-than-thou position looked down at this woman of the street, weeping over the feet of the Master and kissing His feet and wiping them with the hair of her head, and he turned to someone next to him and he said; “Now, if that man were a prophet He’d know that that woman was a sinner and He wouldn’t let her handle His feet and kiss His feet.”

And the Master knew what he was saying, knew what he was thinking. And He looked at him and He said, “*Simon; I’ve got something to ask you.*” He said, “*Simon; if a man owe another man 500 silver or gold pieces and he forgave him and another man owed him 50 and he forgave him; which of the two would love him the most, the one who owed him the 50 and was forgiven or the one that owed him 500 and was forgiven?*”

Simon said, “Well, I say the one who owed him 500 would love him most.” And the Master said, “*Thou hast well said. When I came into your home you didn’t give me any water in which to wash my feet. Since I came in this woman has not ceased to bathe my feet with tears.*”

“*You gave me no kiss of welcome when I walked into your door. This woman has not ceased to kiss my feet. You gave me no oil with which to anoint my head. This woman has anointed my feet with precious ointment.*”

“*Wherefore, I say unto you; her sins which are many are forgiven her.*” And He turned to the woman and He said, “*Woman; thy faith has saved thee.*” What kind of faith did she have? I think I can sum it up in about five words; listen:

First of all: Her faith was reverent; she fell at His feet, she fell at His feet.

She fell at His feet as a sinner, not worthy to sit in the uppermost seat where the Pharisee was sitting, not worthy to sit even at the table with Him, not worthy to kiss His cheek or hold His hand, but she fell at His feet. It was a reverent faith.

Secondly: And then it was a humble faith.

She unplaited her hair, the glory of her womanhood, and she dared to use that beautiful hair to dry the dusty, tear-stained feet of the Lord Jesus Christ. Her faith was repentant. She wept; she wept over her sins.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THE WORD “SAVED”?

ACTS 16:30-31 • HENRY T. MAHAN

You don't see any tears falling from the eyes of Simon the Pharisee. You don't see any tears falling from the eyes of these people around the table who thought they were equal with the Master. You see the tears of repentance, the grief, the mourning, from the eyes of this fallen woman, this sinful woman.

And then her faith was loving. She kissed His feet. Judas kissed His cheek; she kissed His feet. She was a humble sinner.

And I'll tell you something else, she was a bold sinner. It took a lot of courage for her to come in this man's home, this Pharisee's home. Why, he spoke nothing but evil of her. He had nothing but hatred for her. He looked down upon her as dirt under his feet.

And she dared to even come into his home, right into his presence, right in front of all of his friends, and confess her guilt, her sin, her need and her Saviour. She dared to confess Him publically in front of the Pharisees and the leaders of that community and the religious leaders of that particular synagogue.

Experiences may differ. Yours may differ from this but faith is the same. And faith you'll find is always in Christ and it's always a reverent faith and a humble faith and a loving faith and it's a repentant faith and it's a bold faith. It will confess Christ.

Now here's the third word in **Romans 8:24**, saved with difficulty, saved by faith, and then **Romans 8:24** says "*We're saved by hope.*" Now what does that mean?

Well, saved by hope, means more than to say, "Well I hope I'm saved, I hope I'm saved." That's not it at all. "I hope to get to heaven." Are you a Christian my friend? "Well, I hope so." If you died tonight would you go to heaven? "Well, I hope so."

That's not what we mean at all. This is the way that the world uses that word hope; "I hope it rains." You say, "I hope, I hope that the peach crop is not killed in this cold weather. I hope my business doesn't fail." That's not hope. That's a wish.

What is hope? Well now, listen to me carefully. "*We're saved by hope.*" Now hope must have two ingredients, first of all there must be a desire. With hope there's always desire. But secondly and this is very important; hope is expectation based on reason.

Now, when a man's lying on the bed and the doctor's already said he's dead, you don't have any hope that he'll get well do you? There's no reason for hope. You may have a desire but it's not based on expectation with some reason.

If your loved one is sick and the doctor says he has a 50/50 chance of living; you've got a reason to hope. The doctor's given you a 50/50 or 90/10 or 70/30 chance of the man living. There's hope where there is expectation with reason.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THE WORD “SAVED”?

ACTS 16:30-31 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Now, when we say we're saved by hope, we mean this, I hope to be saved; this is my desire and I've got a reason to believe I will be. The Scripture says, *“Always be ready to give a reason for your hope”* and I've got three or four reasons.

First of all: I hope to be saved because God's Word says I can be saved.

That's right! The Word of God says; *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.”* The Word of God says *“Though your sins be as scarlet; I'll make them white as snow.”*

The Word of God says; *“Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden; I'll give you rest.”* The Word of God says; *“For God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have eternal life.”* I hope to be saved because I've got God's Word to back me up. That's the reason that I hope to be saved. His Word says I can be.

Secondly: I hope to be saved because Christ Jesus is my righteousness before God; He is my righteousness and that's given to all who will receive it

Paul said that those people he talked about in **Romans 10** went about to work out their own righteousness, to establish for themselves a righteousness. That's not our trust. Our trust is Jesus Christ, God's righteousness, given to all who will believe.

Thirdly: Christ died for our sins.

The Scripture says, *“He bare our sins in His body on the tree.”* The Scripture says, *“He was wounded for our transgressions.”* Now, if Christ died for my sins I won't die for them too. If He bore my sins I don't bear them. If He paid my debt I don't owe it, you see. That's my reason to hope I'll be saved.

Fourthly: He was buried and rose again.

Now Paul said in **1 Corinthians 15**; *“If Christ be not risen then you are of all men most miserable, those who have died in Christ, believing on Him, trusting Him, are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable.”*

But Christ is not in the grave. He's not in the tomb. He's not on the cross; He's risen. He'd been there and He came out. And He said, *“Because I live you'll live.”* So, we are saved by hope but this hope is not just a wish, it's not just a desire; it is a desire based on reason, expectation with reason.

God's Word says that I can be saved. Christ's righteousness is available. His blood has been shed. He's been in the tomb and He's risen. He's come out of the tomb.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THE WORD “SAVED”?

ACTS 16:30-31 • HENRY T. MAHAN

All right, the last one; now listen to this in **Matthew 16:25**; we're saved by losing. Listen to this Scripture; *“Whosoever shall save his life shall lose it. And whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it.”*

Years ago an old missionary returned from Africa; he'd been over there 30, 35, or 40 years. His life was about over. He came home to retire. He was alone having buried his wife and three sons in Africa.

And he came back and someone met him at the ship and asked him about the life he'd lived and his losses and this is what he said; he replied: “If I had my life to live over I'd walk the same path. I'd preach the same Gospel. I'd visit the same open graves. I'd weep the same tears. For what I have lost in time I have gained for eternity.”

Now my friend, listen to me, whosoever shall save his life from the offense of the cross, from the reproach of the Gospel, from the trials and persecutions that come because we believe on Christ, in order to please men, whosoever shall save his life in this way, is going to lose it at the judgment.

But Christ said, *“Whosoever shall lose himself* (in whatever trial God sends him for the glory of God), *whosoever will take up his cross and follow after Jesus Christ*, (whosoever will dare to bear the reproach and the shame and the offense of the cross and the persecution which almighty God sends into his life for the glory of Jesus Christ), *he'll find his life.”* Finding it by losing it, saving it by losing it.

How are we saved, with difficulty? How are we saved, by faith? How are we saved, by hope? How are we saved, by losing?