

THE TRUTH SERIES

We Believe...

In
SALVATION

By Dr. Lester Sumrall

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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scriptures are taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

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Copyright © 2006 by LeSEA Publishing

ISBN No. 1-58568-439-2

This printing July 2018

LeSEA Publishing

530 E. Ireland Rd.

South Bend, Indiana 46614

www.leseapublishing.com

1-888-584-4847

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We Believe in Salvation

The Bible says in John 3:2, “There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.” Here was a man of the strictest sect in Israel. He was one of the fundamentalists of that time. His name was Nicodemus and he was also a ruler. That meant he had a high position, and it was not with Rome, but it was with the Jewish people as a leader in their religion.

John continues: “He [Nicodemus] came to Jesus by night and said unto him, ‘Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God: for no man can do the miracles that you do except God be with him.’ Jesus answered and said, ‘Verily, I say to you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’”

It is very amazing to observe the fact that the Lord Jesus did not respond to the comments made by Nicodemus. Do you see how Jesus changed the subject? Very often heaven will treat you the same way. You will say something in prayer, and God will say something else because something else is what you need. Jesus saw that this man, though he was very religious, had not been born of the Spirit of God. Being religious will not take you to heaven. Being born again will take you to heaven.

In the beginning God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden. At that time, God had communion with Adam on a daily basis. But when Adam intentionally rebelled against God, that communion ceased to be. Sin broke the communion that once existed between God and Adam. When that happened, Adam not only lost his position as the king in the garden, he also lost his relationship with God.

In Romans 5:12 it says this: “Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, death [came as a result of] sin.” This means that Adam was the one who brought sin and brought death upon the human family. So death passed among all men because of that transgression.

There is no person on earth who can say, “I am without sin; I do not need salvation,” because the Word of God specifically says every single human person ever born on the face of the earth with Adam’s blood in his veins must be reborn as Jesus told Nicodemus. You must be born again. Through salvation, God can restore a person to a place of fellowship and give back to him the blessings that were lost when Adam transgressed against God.

God’s Part in Salvation

In your salvation there are several parts. We will deal first with God’s part. In Romans 5:8

it says, “God commended His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” God had a part in salvation. He loved us. Jesus gave the golden text of the Bible in John chapter 3 verse 16, “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.”

In Isaiah 1:18 it says, “Come, let us reason together,” saith Jehovah. “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Here God is calling sinners to come reason with Him, to talk with Him. God wants to explain to you how awful, terrible and dreadful sin is, and how wonderful, glorious and marvelous salvation is. God is calling man to come and talk with Him about this.

In Second Peter 3:9 the Word of God says, “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise

as some men count slackness, but our God is longsuffering to us. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

If I were you I'd mark a couple of words there: “He is not willing that any should perish.” I'd put a circle around that. Think about it. God wants everybody, whether they're in Africa or India or China, to be saved. He does not want one single person to go to hell. Hell was created for the devil and his angels. It was not made for you. It was created for them, and if you end up there, it will be because of your own poor choices.

I'd also put a circle around this: “all should come to repentance.” That'll stop people from saying, “He's destined to be saved; he's destined to go to hell.” That is not true. Nobody in hell will ever say that they were sent there by somebody else. That is not true. You have to personally come against God to go there;

otherwise, you can never get there. God has given us all an opportunity to be forgiven of our sins.

In Romans 10:11 we read, “The Scriptures saith whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” So that means *whosoever*. No person can say, “I can’t be saved, I’ve been destined to hell.” That is not true. “Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed.”

Verse 13 says, “Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved.” There’s another one of those words you should put a circle around: “whosoever.” That means anybody, everybody.

Romans 4:21 says, “And being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able to perform.” In other words, God will perform that which He has promised. If God has made a commitment, He is going to keep it. There is no one so deep in sin he cannot be saved. There is no one so far that he cannot

be reached. So, whomever you may address, God wants you to know that He has made a promise and He has the authority and the power to fulfill it.

In Titus chapter 1 and verse 2 it says, “In hope of eternal life which God who cannot lie promised before the world began.” Imagine, before the world began God already made room for you. He already included you in His love, in His compassion—before there was a world! When you take that in, it will settle you down in peace, won’t it?

Christ’s Part in Salvation

We should go back again to the golden text of the Bible in John chapter 3 in verse 16: “God so loved the world that he gave his Son.” And so we see that the Son has something to do with salvation.

In Hebrews 7:25 it says, “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that

come unto God by him [Jesus], seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” The Lord Jesus is at the right hand of God at this moment, and He is making intercession for all of us. I was telling a friend yesterday that Jesus spoke to Peter in the last moments before His crucifixion and said, “Peter, Satan has desired to sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you.” Peter would make it because Jesus prayed for him. He is your intercessor; He is my intercessor too. He sees the devil sneaking around at your back door. Aren’t you glad you’ve got one that’s helping you?

In Jude verse 24 we read, “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling.” You don’t have to fall down. That’s a lie of the devil. He says it’s hard to serve God, but the Bible says it’s hard to serve the devil. Always remember, “He’s able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory.”

First Timothy 1:15 says, “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.” A faithful saying. Worthy of acceptation. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. That’s all He came for. And I was the chief of them, says Paul.

In Luke 19:10 we read this: “The Son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” That’s a great little sermon right there. He did not come to sit on a throne and say, “Kneel down before Me” or “Kiss My toe.” He did not say anything like that at all. Instead, He says He is seeking the lost so He can save them. Friend, He’s after you. He’ll track you down the byways and the highways. He’ll find you. The Son of man came to seek! He’s looking for you.

In John 10:9 Jesus said, “I am the door. If any man enter in he shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture.” Notice, He

leaves it up to you. The door's open. If you want to enter in you can, anyone can.

In that same book, chapter 14 verse 6, Jesus said, "Now I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life. No man cometh to the Father but by Me." That excludes all pagan religions. Don't let anybody say, "Pagan religions are going to the same ultimate destination to which we're going." No, they're not. They're going the opposite way from where you're going. They're in direct rebellion against everything God has ever said. In fact, the devil has deceived them and prompted them to resist the knowledge of God that would bring them to salvation.

In Colossians 1:14 it says this about Christ: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin." There is no other thing that can bring redemption for our sins except the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Galatians 3:13 it says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being

made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree.” This means that Christ received your curse and my curse. Our sins are a curse against us. He accepted that curse, and He took it all away. Jesus died like a sinner so you won’t have to die as a sinner. So He has redeemed us from the curse of our transgressions, because He became a curse for us.

The Holy Spirit’s Part in Salvation

In Revelation 22:17 it says, “The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let him that heareth say, ‘Come.’ And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” The word Spirit there is with a capital “S,” meaning the Holy Spirit Himself. And so the Holy Spirit is saying to people everywhere, “Come! Come, Come.” That’s His part in our salvation. The blood of Jesus saves us. The Holy Spirit says, “Come and get it.”

In Hebrews 3:7 we read, “Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, “Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation in the day of temptation in the wilderness.” And so the Holy Spirit is urging us to hear God’s voice and not to harden our hearts.

I want to tell you something. If you hear the gospel fifty times in a row, then at the end of the fiftieth time you still haven’t accepted God’s message, you can be sure you’ve got a heart of stone inside of you. Your heart is moving one way or the other all the time. It’s either getting sweeter and more tender, or it’s getting harder and more calloused toward God. I am determined never to be calloused. Don’t let the devil harden your heart.

In Romans 5:5 it says this: “And hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.” The Holy Spirit can take the love of God and inject it into your heart! Get an injection!

John 16:8 says, “And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, righteousness and judgment: Of sin, because they believed not on Me.” This means the Holy Spirit is a reprover—He confronts us and our sins.

In Titus 3:5 we read this: “Not by the works of righteousness which we have done but according to His mercy, He has saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. So that not by works of any goodness of yours or mine can we be saved, but by mercy and by the renewing of the Holy Spirit!” Don’t you like that? This “renewing” is not for just the past, but the present as well.

In Zachariah 4:6 it says, “It is not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” Our victory comes by the Holy Spirit.

In First Corinthians 12:3 we are informed, “Wherefore I give you to understand that no man speaking by the Spirit of God [that’s the

Holy Spirit] calleth Jesus accursed and that no man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost.” You cannot say that Jesus is Lord unless the Holy Spirit has taught you that He is Lord. And by the way, the word “Lord” means more than Savior. The Lordship of Christ is beyond salvation.

First Thessalonians 1:5 says, “Our gospel came unto you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost.” Now that’s the way to preach—in the power of the Holy Ghost.

And in First John 3:24 the Bible says, “He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him and he in him, and hereby we know that he abideth in us by the Spirit which He hath given us.” We know that God is abiding in us through the functioning of the Holy Ghost within us! Hey, He’s busy in us, isn’t He?

Romans 8:16 says, “The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children

of God.” It’s the Holy Ghost that makes you know you’re saved! So, you can see, He does have a lot to do with our salvation.

Our Part in Salvation

The Bible is quite clear as to our part in salvation: we must repent. Luke 13:5 says, “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” Second Corinthians 7:10 states, “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”

We must be humble. Matthew 18:3 states, “Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” First Peter 5:5-6 says, “Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore

under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.”

We must have faith in Christ. Ephesians 2:8 says, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” Hebrews 11:6 reads, “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” James 1:6 says, “But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.”

We must confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Bible in Romans 10:9-10 reads, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

We must obey Him. First Thessalonians 1:7-8 says this: “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Hebrews 5:9 states, “And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”

In summation, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost function in your salvation; then you function in it as well. Hebrews 2:3 states, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*.”

Prayer of Salvation

Lord Jesus I confess I am a sinner and I repent of my sins (stop sinning and turn away from my sins). Please forgive me. I accept you as my Lord, Master and Savior. I thank you for taking my judgment of death for my sin debt, by being nailed to the cross and shedding your blood for the forgiveness of my sins. I thank you for giving me your righteousness.

With your help I will obey you all the days of my life. I will confess you before mankind and will not be ashamed of you. Please change me by the power of the Holy Spirit and give me your grace and love for all people. Show me the plan you have for my life and help me to fulfill it. Amen.

Sign your name

Be sure to (1) read your Bible daily, (2) Pray daily, and (3) Attend a Bible-believing church consistently.

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Dr. Lester Sumrall

1913~1996

The voice of Dr. Lester Sumrall remains prominent in the Christian world today. More than 65 years of ministry in over 100 nations made Dr. Sumrall a respected source of wisdom and understanding. He was an author, teacher, missionary, evangelist, and the pastor and founder of Christian Center Church in South Bend, Indiana.

Throughout his lifetime, Dr. Sumrall worked tirelessly to fulfill the Great Commission by carrying the Gospel to the ends of the earth. In 1957 he founded LeSEA, a multi-faceted global outreach. Today, with the help of our faithful partners and friends, the ministry continues to blanket the world through television, satellite, FM and shortwave radio, LeSEA Publications, and LeSEA Global Feed the Hungry®.

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