

Life's Greatest Question

Acts 16:30-32

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What would you consider to be life's greatest questions? I actually Googled that this week. I'm not a real computer guy, but I actually know enough to be able to Google some questions. Here's the five top answers to "What are life's greatest questions?"

Number one, "Does God exist?" That's a good question. "Is there a God?" People say, "Well, I'm an atheist," or "I'm an agnostic" or "I don't really know." A lot of people wonder if God exists. Number two on the list on Google was, "Where did the universe come from?" We're here, but how did we get here? How do you have something out of nothing? We had to have something that was the great cause of this effect. How was the universe created? Number three was, "How did life begin?" What is the origin of life? Number four was, "What is life's purpose?" That's a great question. I'm here, so why am I here? What's the purpose of life? Is it just to be born, to live, to die and that's the end, or is there life beyond the grave? That brings us to a fifth—and I think a great question—"Is there life after death?"

I believe the Bible has the answer to all of life's great questions. You don't have to go far in the Bible to find an answer. Genesis 1:1 is the first book of the Bible, the first chapter of the Bible and first verse of the Bible. It says, "In the beginning God..." There is the answer to the first great question, "Does God exist?" There is a God. The answer to "Where did the universe come from?" is also found in verse 1: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." So immediately when you open the Bible, you find out that there is a God and that God created all things. We're not here by accident.

The Bible says that the answer to "How did life begin?" is that God created Adam and Eve, Genesis 1:27. "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." I believe they are the first two human beings on planet earth, and they didn't evolve from lower forms of life over billions and billions of years. Rather they were created by God's power. He created man and woman in His image and in His likeness.

Don't you love the story of Adam and Eve? God created Adam from the dirt. Someone said, "You guys are all a bunch of dirt clods." He made Adam go to sleep, He took his rib and made the woman, brought the woman to the man, Adam took a nap, he woke up and found out he was married. But Adam said, "Wow! Man!" so he called her "wo-man." That's not so far off. In the Hebrew, it's actually that she should be called woman; it's actually wow man. She's like, "Wow!" Adam had been hanging out with the animals and God, but "Finally I've got a wife. This is pretty cool!" So God created the husband and wife and brought them together and we have God's design for marriage.

The answer to the question, "What is life's purpose?" is that we might know God, that we might glorify God forever. You were made to know God. We're going to discuss what keeps us from

knowing God and how we can come to know God. Jesus said in the Bible, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who lives and believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.” And Jesus said, “Whoever lives and believes in Me will never die.” So Jesus is the answer to what happens beyond the grave. Jesus died. He was buried. He rose from the dead. The Bible says that Jesus has become the prototype or the first fruits of those who have died.

So, yes, God exists. God created the heaven and the earth and life began, because He created it. He created all life—both animal life and plant life and human life. And the purpose of life is to know God, so that once you die you can go to heaven and spend eternity with God.

But there is another question, and we find it in our text today. I’ve chosen it, because I believe it is one of the greatest questions we could ever ask—or the greatest question we could ever ask. I want you to see it in Acts 16:30. “And he brought them out and said, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’” Why is this one of the greatest questions that could ever be asked? Because Jesus said, “What would it profit you to gain the whole world but you lose your own soul?” What would a man give in exchange for his soul? If you gain the whole world and you die and you are for all eternity separated from God, what profit is there? You’ve lost everything.

So I believe this is life’s greatest question: “What must I do to be saved?” Or to put it another way, “What do I need to do to go to heaven? How can I know that when I die, I’ll go to heaven to spend eternity with God?”

What were the circumstances in this passage that led to this question? Let me give you the background. It’s the second missionary journey of the great Paul the Apostle. He was the great missionary of the early church, and he was traveling on his second missionary journey with Silas and probably Timothy, and Luke was with the group. They were in what today is modern Turkey. In the Bible days, it was known as Asia. They were on the coast of Asia, which is on the west coast, looking west over the Aegean Sea. They were praying and asking God, “Where do You want us to go? Where can we take the Good News?” In bed that night, Paul had a dream, and in that dream, he saw a man from Macedonia, which is across the Aegean Sea to the European continent. It was actually ancient Greece. This man was saying, “Come over and help us.” So they woke up the next morning believing that God, in that dream, was leading them, and they booked a ship that sailed across the Aegean Sea.

The first little city that they made their way to was the city or town called Philippi. We have a letter in the New Testament to the Philippians or to the church at Philippi. That was where they led their first convert to Christ. Her name was Lydia. They went down to the riverside. Wherever there were not enough male Jews to build a synagogue, they would worship by the riverside. The group consisted primarily of women. Then the Lord opened Lydia’s heart. She was a businesswoman, a seller of purple cloth. She received Jesus. The first convert to Christianity on the European continent was a woman. She told Paul and the others, “You can stay at my house. You can evangelize the city.” So for several days they went around the city on the streets of Philippi preaching the Gospel.

The Bible then tells us that there was a young girl who was demon possessed. She was the property of some masters who used her for divination and fortune telling. They made profit by her. She began to follow Paul and Silas around the city when they were preaching, and she began to herald, "These men are servants of the most-high God, and they show us the way of salvation." After days of this, Paul realized that he didn't want the devil advertising their ministry. He then turned to the woman and spoke to the demon in her and said, "In the name of Jesus Christ, I command you to come out," and she was delivered from this demon and was saved. So the first two converts to Christianity in Europe were women. One was a wealthy self-employed businesswoman selling purple cloth, and the other one was a low slave girl who had been delivered by the power of Jesus Christ.

What happened was that the men who owned this woman and made profit by her fortune telling lost their business. When you hit someone in their pocketbook, they get quite upset. They couldn't make any money anymore off this woman, so they grabbed Paul and Silas, started a riot and brought them to the magistrates. They said, "These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and they are teaching customs which are not lawful for us to teach." They ripped off Paul and Silas' clothes and began to beat and whip them. They took them to prison, handed them over to the jailer and he threw them into the inner prison stocks. So Paul and Silas had been beaten, whipped, thrown into prison and their hands and feet put into stocks.

And this is where we pick it up in our text in verse 25. This is what they did: "But at midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them." It makes it very clear that the others in the prison heard their praises and their prayer. Verse 26 says, "Suddenly there was a great earthquake..."—not just an earthquake but a "great" earthquake—"...so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. And the keeper of the prison..."—or "the prison guard" or "jailer"—"...awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself..."—or "commit suicide"—"But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, 'Do yourself no harm, for we are all here!' Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and said..."—here's our question—"... 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?'"

Now the prison guard is not asking, "What must I do to be a better person?" He's not asking, "What must I do for a better life?" or "for a better marriage" or "a better job" or "to be happy" or "to be rich" or "how to make more money." No. He asked, "What must I do to be saved?"

What did he mean by that question? He's talking about salvation from sin. I believe in the context he is talking about the saving of his soul; how his sins could be forgiven, how he could have eternal life and know that when he died, he would go to heaven. Saved from sin.

Many people are not asking this question today of, "What must I do to be forgiven? What must I do to be saved?" They don't ask the question, because they don't believe they are sinners. We've lost any concept of sin today. As a matter of fact, we've lost all concept of truth, and we've lost all concept of what is right and wrong. But the Bible teaches that man's greatest

problem is sin. All the problems that we have in the world come from this root problem of sin. The problem is man's sinful heart; that's the heart of the problem. The problem started back in Genesis 3, when God made Adam and Eve, placed them in the Garden and gave them free will, because He wanted real love. God wanted a relationship with man. He didn't want man to just be programmed to love Him. He wanted man to choose.

So God put a tree in the midst of this beautiful garden and said to Adam and Eve, "This is the only tree you can't eat from." What the fruit was, we don't know. Apples have gotten a bad rap over the years. Maybe it was a cumquat or a banana; we don't know. It doesn't really matter. Whatever that fruit was, it was forbidden. That was the one tree they shouldn't eat from, but what did they do? They ate from it. As a result, death, sin and all of the tragedies of the world have resulted from man's sinful disobedience. Sin is the breaking of God's law. The Bible tells us that "We have all..."—that is, all of humanity—"...sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" or "the standards of God." "There is no one righteous; no, not one." All of us have sinned. If we're going to be saved, we're going to have to admit that.

God gave us what we call the Ten Commandments. Theologians call it the "Decalogue." They're not the "ten suggestions," by the way. Right at the top of the list is, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." If anything comes between you and your love for God, it is idolatry. Then you have, "Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not lie. Thou shalt not covet." That's a good one.

Jesus said that if you have lust in your heart toward someone, you've actually committed adultery. He said if you have hatred or anger toward somebody in your heart, God sees your heart and you've already committed murder. It's pretty hard to drive the freeways in California and not kill somebody.

I love what a little boy said to his mother. He said, "Mommy, how come only when Daddy drives there are idiots on the highway?" Every time Daddy drives there are idiots everywhere, but not when Mommy drives. What's the deal?

It's so easy to have an attitude that is displeasing to God. Maybe a covetous attitude. Or maybe you lie or you steal or you cheat or maybe it's pride. The Bible says that pride is "an abomination before God."

This question of, "What must I do to be saved?" implies a couple of things. It implies that there are only two classes of people—and this is what the Bible teaches. There are the saved and there are the unsaved; the saved and the lost; those going to heaven and those who are going to hell. If you're saved, you're going to heaven. If you're not saved, you're going to hell. Not because you're a bad person; we're born sinners, and our fruit is sin. It's because we reject Jesus Christ. You don't go to hell because of your sin; you go to hell because you don't trust the Savior, you don't put your faith in the Savior. God has thrown out the lifeline, but you've rejected it. If you're drowning, someone throws you a lifeline, but you say, "No, I don't want that" and you drown, you have no one to blame but yourself. We threw you the lifeline, we threw you

the answer and all you needed to do is receive Christ. But if you reject that, you're lost. You have no one to blame but yourself. So the question implies there are two classes of people.

Jesus said it like this: "There are two roads. There is the broad road that leads to destruction... and there is the narrow road that leads to life." He said that there are two gates: one is a narrow gate that leads to life eternal, and the other one is a broad gate that leads to destruction. He said that there are two destinies: one is heaven and one is hell. Jesus said, "He that has the Son has life, and he that has not the Son of God has not life."

There is a second implication in this question, "What must I do to be saved?" It implies an awareness of being lost. Not only are there two groups, saved and unsaved—it's like you're alive or you're not alive. You notice that there aren't degrees of life? You're either alive or dead. You're either alive or not alive; you're either dead or not dead. So you're either saved or you're not saved.

The question is, "Do you know?" If you don't know, you can know. You can know whether or not you'll go to heaven and have eternal life. You can know that your sins are forgiven.

Now what made this jailer realize he was lost? Number one, it was the testimony of Paul and Silas. Notice it in verse 25. "But at midnight, Paul and Silas..."—Did what?—"...were praying and singing hymns to God."

"Wait a minute. They've been falsely accused, they've been whipped and beaten and thrown into prison. And they sing praises to God?!" When that happens, you know that someone has either lost something, or he's got something; he's either not all there, or he's got something I don't know about.

If I was in the story, it would have said, "John Miller was arrested, beaten, put in prison and he sulked and complained and griped. Then he died and we never saw him again." End of story. If I put myself in the story, I would have been so bummed out. "God, where are you?! Why haven't you taken care of us?! Lord, what's going on?!"

But Paul and Silas are praying and singing praises to God. Maybe they were singing,

"I will bless the Lord at all times.

His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

The humble will hear thereof and be glad."

They're rejoicing in the Lord. God gives us, as Christians, songs in the night. I love that. It's midnight and they're singing. They're in prison and they're singing. It's because we have a wellsprings in our heart. We have this eternal joy in our life. We know that God loves us. We know that God is in control. We know that God has a purpose. We know that God has a plan. We know that we're here to glorify God. We know that even our troubles draw us closer to

God. We know that when we die, we're going to go to heaven. We've got nothing to lose. So we have joy.

Joy can't be bought in a drugstore. Joy can't be found in a bottle. Joy is the fruit of the Holy Spirit and is not dependent on circumstances. Even in the darkest night and in the deepest dungeon, in a prison cell, they found the joy of the Lord, and they were worshipping and praising God.

I think that this spoke to the heart of this Philippian jailer. This is what brought him to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" Maybe the jailer heard about the slave girl who said, "These men show us the way of salvation," and he wanted to know how to be saved.

Secondly, there was the great earthquake. I believe this is miraculous intervention by God. At verse 26, it says, "Suddenly there was a great earthquake..."—It just so happened that right then and there, while they were singing praises, God sent an earthquake—"...so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened..."—which is an amazing happening. You're in jail, there's an earthquake and the doors open—"...and everyone's chains were loosed." This is nothing short of a miracle. It's the kind of miracle you pray for when you're in jail, by the way. Awesome! God sent this miracle.

What caused the earthquake? Someone said that God was singing and tapping his foot to the music. This was the first Gospel concert in Europe. They were just praising the Lord, and God sent a little "jailhouse rock" their way. Not Elvis, but they were rockin' the jail, man. And all the doors opened, and their chains were loosed. What a miracle that was that God performed.

Then, thirdly, we see the hopelessness of the Philippian jailer in verse 27. "And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself." Why? Because under Roman law, the jailer would be put to death if the prisoners escaped. That's how they kept the jailer diligent. As a matter of fact, he probably shouldn't have been asleep. He was sleeping on the job, God sent the earthquake, the prison doors were opened, the chains were loosed so he thought everyone had escaped. This jailer pulls out his sword and about to take his own life. He's going to commit suicide, thinking all hope is gone. "There's no future for me."

The tenth leading cause of death in the United States is suicide. That's a tragedy. There is one death by suicide in the United States every 12 minutes. The second leading cause of death for 15-24 year olds is suicide. I can't help but believe that today God may have brought you here to hear this message. I believe with all my heart that God may have brought you here today. Just you. And He knows you by name. The Bible says that He has the very hairs of your head numbered. God brought you here to tell you this message: He loves you, He cares about you, He has a purpose for you, you can be forgiven of your sins and have the hope of heaven in your heart. Life is worth living. Knowing God will bring life worth living into your heart.

If you've been thinking about suicide or maybe you've attempted suicide, God brought you here

to hear this message and to give you an opportunity today to accept Christ; to have the joy of your sins forgiven, to know that you are a child of God. You don't need to take your own life. God wants to give you life, and life more abundantly. You become aware of your sin. God brought you here today.

Maybe it was the testimony of others. Maybe it was your circumstances, like the jailer's. Maybe it was the hopelessness of your own heart. Whatever it was, God brought you to this awareness that "I am a sinner, and I need a Savior. Jesus Christ is the answer to my sin."

"What must I do to be saved?" Notice the words "must I do to be saved." That indicates there is a condition for salvation, and it's not optional. There is something we need to do in order to be saved. God has provided the way; either we accept it or we reject it. What is the answer to this great question, "What must I do to be saved?" Look at verse 31. "So they said..."—And who better to ask this question of than Paul the Apostle and Silas? This is how to be forgiven—"...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." God will save you, and if your family members trust in Jesus, they will be saved, as well.

I want you to notice what Paul and Silas did not say. They didn't say, "Live a good life. Clean up your life and God will take you to heaven." That's a pretty common view. "How do you get to heaven? Just try to be really, really good."

"Can you be more specific? How good do I need to be to get to heaven?"

"Just good."

"How good?"

"Just real good."

"How good is 'real good'?" Did you ever think about that? I hear people all the time say, "Well, I think I'm good enough to go to heaven."

"How do you know what is good enough to go to heaven?" Just because you haven't murdered anybody, you don't shoot heroin in your eyeballs, you don't steal from people, you don't do any wicked, horrible things like your neighbor might do—like they're bad and I'm good. You can always find somebody who is really bad that makes you look really good. "I'm bad but I'm not that bad. They're messed up."

It's interesting that the majority of the people who were polled in the United States thought they were going to heaven, but very few of them thought they were going to hell. Everybody thinks they're going to heaven, but nobody believes they're going to hell, because we all think we're good enough to be saved.

So Paul and Silas didn't say, "Become a good person." And they didn't say, "Join a church. Become religious. If you join a church, you'll get to go to heaven." No; you don't join a church

to get to go to heaven. You don't become religious to get to go to heaven. They didn't say, "Get baptized and you get to go to heaven."

I got saved in 1971. I had long hair and a beard, and we were doing drugs. I was kind of a "semi-" or "quasi-" hippie. I wasn't a full-on hippie. I was just kind of a little hippie. I wasn't a super-hip hippie. I was just a little hippie. We were doing drugs and had long hair, smokin' pot and takin' LSD and we're partyin'. I got saved; full-on, genuine, born-again saved. But I still had long hair and a beard. I remember going to church, and people were freaking out. "Wow! You wanna be a Christian, kid? You gotta cut your hair!" I thought, I look more like Jesus than you do. Back then it was all about "Cut your hair!" Can you imagine asking someone, "What must I do to be saved?" and they say, "Get a haircut! Shave that beard! Put some shoes on. Take a bath, by all means!"

Paul didn't say any of that stuff. The things that we think people would say: "Be good. Stop doing that. Don't smoke. Don't chew. Don't go with those who do. Don't go to bad movies. Don't dance too much." People ask me, "Can Christians dance?"

"Some can; some can't." The ones I've seen dance should not dance. "In the name of Jesus, don't dance." You need help.

"You need to stop doing this and stop doing that." Paul didn't tell them to stop doing anything. What did he say? In verse 31, he said "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved." Isn't that beautiful? It's beautiful in its simplicity, but it's so profound.

Now what does Paul mean to "believe"? It simply means to "trust" or "put your faith in." We all have faith and trust. You got in a car this morning, most of you, and you had faith that it would start. You drove off from your house, approached an intersection, the light was red and you put your foot on the brake, in faith that your car would stop. Some of the cars I see you drive, it takes a lot of faith to drive those suckers.

You get in an airplane by faith. When you get in an airplane, you don't check the gas to see if there's enough. You don't kick the tires and shake the wings. You don't interview the pilot. You hear about a pilot who took off and was drunk? He'd been drinking before he took off. "I can fly! I can fly!" I'm thinking, I'm going to interview my pilot now before I leave on a flight. Check them out to make sure they haven't been drinking. I remember the first time I ever flew on an airplane. The plane leveled out at about 35,000 feet. We're cruising along, and the pilot walked by me. I'm like, Wow! Who's flyin' this sucker?! What faith we put in other things.

Then someone says, "Have faith in God. Trust Jesus to save you."

"Oh, no; I can't do that. I can't trust Jesus."

"Why not?" Jesus is the object of our faith.

The Bible says in Ephesians 2:8-9, "By grace you have been saved, through faith." It's the arm

that reaches out and trusts in Jesus Christ. Young, old, middle age, rich, poor, strong, weak, smart, good, bad—anyone can believe. The thief on the cross was dying for his sins, out there hanging on a cross for his crimes, but he turned to Jesus and said, “Remember me when You enter Your kingdom.” Jesus didn’t say, “Well, you gotta get down, be a good person, cut your hair, put on a skinny tie and a suit and then you can go to heaven with Me.” Instead, Jesus said, “Today you will be with Me in paradise.”

It’s so simple that people stumble over it. They think they have to be good or work hard or be religious. No. The Bible says, “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him ...”—or “trusts Him” or “puts their faith in Him”—“...shall never perish but have everlasting life.”

Now notice what it is that we put our faith in: “the Lord Jesus Christ.” He is the object of our faith. It’s not my religious deeds, it’s not my good works, it’s not my ethnicity or my being an American, it’s not my baptism or my confirmation or being a good person or my religion that will save me. It’s in Jesus Christ alone. So we are saved by grace, through faith in Christ alone. Jesus is the object of our faith. Faith is only as good as the object it is placed in.

Why do we trust Jesus Christ? Because He’s God, because He came from heaven and was born of a virgin—the only one who has ever done that. He was fully man and fully God. And because He lived a sinless life all of his 33 years. He never, ever sinned. He was the perfect God-man. Then He went to the Cross. When Jesus died on the Cross, He gave Himself voluntarily. He said, “No one takes My life. I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again.” When He died on the Cross, He cried, “It is finished.” That meant “paid in full.” What does that mean? It means that He paid for the sins of the whole world, but you must appropriate what He paid for by receiving Him through faith. Jesus paid for your salvation, but you must reach out and receive it as a free gift. It’s the only way for you to be saved.

So why do we trust Jesus? Because He’s God Who came from heaven, born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died a substitutionary death for my sins on the Cross and He rose from the dead. Jesus Christ was buried, and three days later He rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is coming back. Jesus Christ is coming again to judge the wicked and the dead. Man, do we need the Lord to come back to straighten out this planet! What a mess!

Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life, and no one comes to the Father except by Me.” If you’re lost, He’s the way to heaven. If you’re ignorant, He’s the truth about God. If you’re dead in your sins, He’s the life of God. A Christian is a person who has the life of God in their soul.

I want you to know the certainty of this answer. Verse 31 says, “You will be saved.” “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.” Not “might” be saved or “hope” to be saved or “if you’re lucky.” You can know beyond any doubt that when you die, you’ll go to heaven. You can know that your sins are forgiven. You can have God’s peace and joy in your heart. You can

experience the love of God today, if you will trust in Jesus Christ. You'll be free from sin's penalty, from sin's power and from the presence of sin altogether one day when Jesus takes you home to heaven.

Guess what else happens when you trust in Jesus Christ? Your life changes forever. Jesus Christ is all about changing us from the inside out. The Bible says, "If anyone be in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things pass away and all things become new." All things become brand new. You can be born again and have a fresh start. Have you ever wished that you could start life all over again? That everything in your past could be cleaned and forgiven? It can be. Jesus can forgive you and give you new life.

Look what happened to this Philippian jailer? First of all, he had a new love. In verse 33 it says, "And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes." He washed their stripes or their wounds. In other words, he had a new love. Then he was baptized, which means he publically confessed his faith in Christ. He had new life. In verse 34 it says, "And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." He had a new joy. He had a new love, he had a new life and he had a new joy.

I believe with all my heart that Jesus Christ can do the same for you today. Why would you wait? Why would you put it off?

Did you notice, once again, what Paul did not say to the Philippian jailer when the jailer asked, "What must I do to be saved?" Paul didn't say, "Think about it. Come back next Sunday. Wait awhile." Paul knew this man was ready and that was the opportunity.

I believe we should take advantage of opportunities when they arise. Guess what opportunity you have right here, right now? God brought you here to hear this message, because I'm going to give you an opportunity to trust Jesus Christ. You're not here to just hear a sermon but to trust in the Savior. Not just to go to church to make you feel better—"Okay, I did something good, so maybe God will let me into heaven"—but to really come to know God in a personal, intimate way through Jesus Christ. You can be saved.

There is no reason anyone needs to leave this service without knowing that if you died, you'd go to heaven. There is no reason anyone needs to leave this service without knowing that you have eternal life. You know, none of us have a guarantee that we'll be here tomorrow. You might die tonight—I just thought I'd encourage you.

When you leave here, someone might ask you, "What did the preacher say?"

"He said I might kick the bucket tonight! He said, 'There's no guarantee I'll be here tomorrow.'" You say, "I'm young. I'm healthy." I don't care how young you are, it could happen. You don't know what the future holds. You don't know what tomorrow holds.

Have you ever thought about that? You actually do not have tomorrow promised to you; it's not

guaranteed. I believe in a group this size, someone may die tonight. Someone may die tomorrow. Someone may die this month. Out of the numbers I'm preaching to in this service, someone is soon to die. I promise you that. You know, the statistics on death are really impressive; 10 out of every 10 people living are going to die. The Bible says in Psalm 89:48 that "No one can escape the power of the grave."

The only way to have assurance that you'll live beyond the grave is to take the hand of Jesus Christ. He is "the way, the truth and the life," the resurrection and the life. He is the Bread of God Who came down from heaven. He can give you hope, if you will trust in Him. I want to give you that opportunity today.

You say, "What do I need to do?" You need to realize that you are a sinner, as the jailer did. "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. No one is righteous; no, not one." You then need to repent, as the jailer did. I believe that when he came in trembling and asked the question, he was repentant.

You ask, "What do you mean by 'repentant'?" It means you change your mind about the way you are going. You're going one way in your rebellion and sin, so you have to turn around and follow God. You have to trust in Jesus today.

Then the last thing you need to do is receive Him. That means to believe on Him or to trust Him by faith. The Bible says in John 1:12, "Whoever receives Him, God gives him the right..."—or "the authority"—"...to become the children of God, even to those who believe on His name."

I can't do it for you. Your friends can't do it for you. Your wife, your husband, your parents can't do it for you. Only you can do it. Jesus says, "I stand at the door of your heart and knock. If you hear My voice and open the door, I will come in and forgive your sins." He will give you the hope of heaven.

Don't procrastinate, don't put it off, don't say, "I'm not ready." When you say that, you're rejecting salvation. It's like a drowning man being thrown a lifeline, he rejects it and he dies. We're throwing you a lifeline today and that's Jesus Christ. He's here to save you, but you need to reach out by faith and receive Him into your heart.