

Becoming a Christian

Bailey
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A.M.

Scripture Lesson: - Acts 16: 26-35

Text: - Acts 16: 31.

Introduction: - Some time ago one of the great preachers of England was asked this question: - "If you were to put in one sentence a message of counsel to your brother preachers of England and around the world, what would that sentence be? This was his answer: "Make it plain to the people how they are saved".

It was a timely message, and one that all of us ministers need to lay well to our hearts.

This morning I want to point out to you in plain and simple language the four steps to becoming a Christian. These steps come right out of the Scriptures, so it isn't so much what I say but what God says through his Word. I pray that someone may decide to become a Christian today.

I.

The first step is that you recognize your need. If you have not received Jesus as your Savior, then you need Jesus as your Savior. Everyone in the world needs him. Without him we are forever lost. With him we are saved to all eternity.

Do you remember what Jesus said to Nicodemus, the high-up churchman? "Nicodemus, you must be born again or you can never see the kingdom of God." That applies to each and every one of us today. Just as much as it did to Nicodemus in that day. You will never find rest of soul and peace of mind until you accept Christ as your personal Savior and Lord.

Some years ago a bishop went to India. When he came back someone who did not believe in missions very much, said to him, "Bishop, aren't the people of India getting along pretty well without Jesus?" The bishop's reply was, "No, no one anywhere is getting along pretty well without Jesus".

How true. Can the eye get along pretty well without light? Can the heart get along pretty well without love? No, the eye is made for light and the heart is made for love. Just as you and I were made by God and for God and we are restless until we rest in him, as the saint Augustine said about 1600 years ago.

Drummond says, "If you seek first the kingdom of God, you will have trouble; but if you seek something else first, you will have nothing but trouble." *I see so many people having so much trouble, burdens & problems. I know God to the answer. He could help them. Why do people try to get along without God?* You were made for God and if you fight against him you will be fighting against yourself. Some one has said, "You cannot spit against the wind without spitting upon yourself". Neither can you fight against God's will for you without fighting against you own highest interests and happiness. So, the very first thing, the first step to becoming a Christian is to recognize your need of a Savior. As that modern song says, "I need Jesus, My need I now confess, etc."

II.

The second step to becoming a Christian is to recognize that you cannot save yourself. We have a lot of bootstrap religion in this country but it is not getting people anywhere. You can no more save yourself by good works and strenuous effort than a boy can lift himself over the fence by lifting on his own bootstraps, no matter how hard he pulls or how long.

You will never become a Christian until you admit you cannot save yourself, and turn to Jesus. Jesus is the one and only Savior for us poor sinners. There is no salvation in any other name. "There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved." (Acts 4:12)

You must believe that Christ is the world's only Savior and that he wants to be your savior too. He says, so, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ is more than giving assent to his divine Saviorhood. It is heart belief, believing he is your Savior now. *Have you given him your heart? He can be so precious. He will be your friend & brother. He will be your guide. You need him more than anything else.*

III.
The third step is to come to Jesus the Savior. Jesus said sadly, "You will not come to me that you might have life". (John 5:40) Again he said, "If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink". (John 7:37). You must come to Jesus believing that he and he alone can save you. You must come to Jesus confessing your sins and ask his divine forgiveness. You must come surrendering yourself to him just as you do when pain strikes you and you hurry to the doctor. You accept his diagnosis, follow his directions, take his medicine and get well. So it is if you come to Jesus, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness". I John 1:9).

The story of the **scotish** doctor.

The story of King Charles V.

God for Christ sake does better than that. He says, "Their sine and iniquities will I remember no more". Heb. 10: 17) God for Christ sake forgives and forgets. He forgives and forgets all.

IV.

The fourth step is to receive Jesus as your savior. That is the fourth step to becoming a real Christian. Acknowledge your need- Believe- Come - Receive- that is his order and we must make it our order too, if we would become Christians.

"Why that is easy", said someone. Sure it is easy if we are willing and obedient. Our Savior puts his salvation down where all can reach it.

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"But I don't, to go on charity and take something for nothing". I hear someone say, You are already on charity, always: you have been and always will be. Why? Your life is a gift from God. The food you eat, the water you drink, the air you breathe and the sunshine you absorb are all God's gifts to you. I wonder if that is not what Jesus meant when he said, "Unless you become as little children you cannot get into the Kingdom of God". Are you in the kingdom. Have you found a resting place for your soul? Are your sins forgiven?

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
Come unto me and rest;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down,
Thy head upon my breast.

I came to Jesus as I was -
Weary, and worn, and sad;
I found in him a resting-place,
And he has made me glad."

Conclusion

Have you faith in God? What is faith. "Grasping Christ by the hand", said a little boy. Martin Luther said it is "trusting God in the dark". Again he said, "the hand of the soul".

A father was amusing his children with an electric battery. After one or two of them had received a shock, they drew back from the battery with dread.

The father then turned off the battery and said, "Touch it now and you will feel nothing". Who will try. The children drew back with fear. "Don't you believe me, said the father" "Yes sir," they all responded. But they would not hold out their hands. At last, one little girl, had that kind of faith which really led her to trust her father, she reached out and touched the battery terminal. She had real faith. The rest believed, but did not have clear faith.

*Have you believed. Have you accepted Him. He loves you
He is saying Come. Will you hear His voice today.*