

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN ACTIONS

Think about life from God's perspective; that is, from the view of eternity. What matters is the development of your character. You can't take money or possessions with you when you die, but when your spirit leaves your body your character goes with you because that is the real you. What you need is a right attitude and that begins by totally surrendering your heart to the lordship of Jesus Christ.

The world's problems are due to the issue of sin; doing wrong things and going against the will of God. When Adam first sinned he blamed his wife and in return Eve blamed the serpent (the devil), instead of taking responsibility for their own actions (Genesis 3:12-13). People like to blame others instead of dealing thoroughly with their own hearts in the light of God's moral perfection.

Removing sin from your life and developing godly virtues is very, very important. It is the goal that you need to have so that you can partake of God's righteousness and holiness. In ourselves we will fail to be perfect but that is why we need Jesus as our Saviour and Lord. We need to follow Him, pursue Him, love Him, for He truly is the only way to Heaven.

THE CALL TO FOLLOW JESUS WHOLEHEARTEDLY

Let's look at the story of a man who was called to follow the Lord. He was challenged to put Jesus first in his life but he was unwilling. He threw away his salvation because he did not have faith to see the eternal treasures of God's kingdom. Apply this story to your own life and examine yourself to see if you are one of Christ's true followers.

'A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honour your father and mother.'"

"All these I have kept since I was a boy," he said.

When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was a man of great wealth. Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:18-25).

Why do we call Jesus good? It is because Jesus is divine and one with God (John 1:1). He is God the Son, the second person of the Holy Trinity (Matthew 28:19). Jesus is perfectly good and that is why we must follow Him as our Lord and God (John 20:28).

The rich ruler turned away from Jesus because money was his idol. To his own thinking he was a good person, but his righteousness was nothing more than filthy rags. Many religious people will be shocked to find that they were not saved.

How many people go to church and claim to have obeyed God's commandments, but Jesus is not the Lord of their lives? They don't love the Word of God so that it is their daily spiritual food. They don't love prayer so that they are in constant communion with God. The change of life unto salvation hasn't happened.

Are you holding onto the temporary things of this world and losing your soul? The rich man was offered treasures in Heaven. He was offered the high call of God but he turned it down. He walked away from Jesus filled with sadness. He knew that he was doing wrong but he didn't want to change.

How many people respond at a gospel meeting when they are asked to give their lives to Jesus but the cost of discipleship is not explained to them? It is as if they just add Jesus to their own lifestyle instead of having a radical change. They hold onto little compromises here and there and don't walk in God's intimate presence. The cost of following Jesus is not too high. It is worth giving up everything to follow Him.

Jesus is mighty! Jesus is powerful! He is the resurrected Christ who conquered the grave. We will all stand before Him on the Day of Judgment and His eyes are like blazing fire. Feel the eyes of Christ gazing over your entire life right now and choose this day if you are going to follow Him. Are you one of His true followers or will you be like that rich man who turned away when he realized what it would mean if he was to really walk in God's light?

Jesus is real and God is true, but the problem is people who claim to follow Him but live like hypocrites. We will face obstacles and temptations in this world and what do you do if you fail God? You become broken hearted before Him and humble yourself at His feet. You confess your sins and get them washed away by Christ's holy blood. You don't harden your heart and continue in the darkness.

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

The answer to the question of what you must do to inherit salvation depends on the condition

of your heart and the level of your faith. For example, if there are certain sins you are bound by you need to repent of them and get your heart right with God so that you can overcome.

Focus upon the death of Christ on the cross for your sins and His resurrection from the dead so that you can receive the gift of eternal life. Repentance from sin plus faith in Jesus equals salvation. Salvation is really walking with Jesus in a friendship that will last for eternity.

Here are some of the sins you must turn away from and in their place develop the virtues of a godly character:

'The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law' (Galatians 5:19-23).

Take some time to go through that list of sins and make sure that you are not fooling around with any of them. Then contemplate the fruit of the Holy Spirit and how these beautiful virtues must increase and grow in your life so that you can be a godly person.

If you truly understand the guilt and condemnation of sin you will immediately cry out to God for mercy and grace. Always remember that God is holy, righteous and perfect. How will you bear to dwell in God's glorious light if you have ignored the crucifixion of Christ on your behalf?

In many churches people are given an opportunity to give their lives to Jesus. Often people are asked to raise their hands in response at the end of a message or called to come forward for prayer. This is good, but often the process is rushed and the person leaves the meeting the same way they came in.

What I want to see are powerful conversions, where people's lives are transformed. The old sins are broken off and in Christ they become a new person. They are rescued from the dominion of darkness and truly brought into the kingdom of God's precious Son (Colossians 1:13). What an amazing change it is to become a true Christian! Let that change take place in your life today.

"Lord Jesus, I humble myself before You. I confess all my sins and ask You to remove them from my life..... (confess any specific sins now).

Forgive me and have mercy upon me. Pour Your love and peace into my heart as I receive You as my Saviour and Lord.

I put my faith upon the fact that You died upon the cross for me. You shed Your blood to take away my sins and wash my heart clean. Thank You Jesus. I praise You, love You, and I will follow You forever. Amen."

This is just the beginning. You need to study the Bible, pray, and get connected with a strong Christian church of believers who love Jesus.

I have many messages on my website that can help you grow in the Lord. Also have a look there at my booklet for new Christians entitled, "Making Every Believer A Strong Believer." Please check it out.

www.evangelistmatthew.com

RESPONDING TO THE CALL OF SALVATION

Many people acknowledge that there is something missing in their lives. There are hindrances that are stopping them from breaking through. Here is some advice to help you have a life changing encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ.