

The Way of Salvation Made as Plain as Day

by R.A. Torrey

The way of salvation is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and the moment any man or woman or child really believes on the Lord Jesus Christ they are saved.

Scripture: Acts 16:30

Topics: "Faith", "Salvation"

Description

R.A. Torrey emphasizes the simplicity and clarity of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, as illustrated by the Philippian jailer's question, 'What must I do to be saved?' Torrey explains that to believe in Jesus means to put complete trust in Him as our Sin-bearer, Deliverer, Teacher, Master, Light, and Lord. He stresses that true belief will manifest in assurance of forgiveness, reliance on Christ for victory over sin, acceptance of His teachings, and a life surrendered to His control. Torrey urges listeners to act on their faith immediately, assuring them that salvation is available to anyone who believes in Jesus Christ.

Transcript

"Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, 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." -- ACTS xvi. 29-31

The Philippian goaler, by a train of circumstances, which I have read in the Scripture lesson to-night, had been brought to a realization of the fact that he was a lost sinner, and had a deep yearning for salvation, and he put to Paul and Silas this direct question, "What must I do to be saved?" and Paul answered him in the words of the text, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Nothing could be plainer, nothing could be more direct, nothing could be more positive than that. The way of salvation is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and the moment any man or woman or child really believes on the Lord Jesus Christ they are saved. If the most utterly lost man or woman in London should come into this hall to-night, and should here, or in the after-meeting, or after they have gone out, believe on the Lord Jesus, the moment they did it they would be saved. Some one may say, "But this was a word simply spoken to one man; what right have you to say that any man will be saved the same way?" Because the same thing is said over and over again in the Bible. For instance, you read in Acts x. 43: "To Him give all the prophets witness that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." There isn't a man or a woman in this building to-night that needs to go out of it without all their sins being forgiven and blotted out. It is just one act, "Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved."

1. WHAT IT MEANS TO BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS.

What does it mean to believe on the Lord Jesus? We need to be very careful in our answers to that question, for there are many answers to it that are inaccurate and untrue. There are men who say and think that they believe on the Lord Jesus, and yet they do not. What does it mean to believe on the Lord Jesus? I have given a very careful and thorough study to this subject; I have gone all through my Bible looking up the word "believe," and all words related to it, and I have found out what I suspected to be the fact when I began, viz., that "believe" means in the Bible just exactly what it means in modern speech. What is it to believe on a man? To believe on a man means to put confidence in him as what he claims to be. To believe on a physician means to put confidence in him as a physician, resulting in your placing your case in his hands. To believe in a teacher is to put your confidence in him as a teacher and accept what he teaches; to believe in a banker means to put your confidence in him as a banker and to put your money in his bank. And to believe on the Lord Jesus means to put your confidence in Him as what he claims to be.

To put confidence in the Lord Jesus as what? As all that He claims to be, and all that He offers Himself to be. What does the Lord Jesus claim to be, and what does He offer Himself to be?

1. In the first place, the Lord Jesus offers Himself to every one of us as a Sin-bearer. In Matthew xx. 28., He says, "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." He offers Himself as a ransom for all. That thought runs all through the Bible, in the Old Testament as well as in the New. If you want to find it in the Old Testament, turn to Isaiah liii. 6: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him (that is, on the Lord Jesus) the iniquity of us all." If you want to find it in the New Testament turn to I Peter ii. 24: "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." Christ offers Himself to every man as a Sinbearer, and to believe on the Lord Jesus is to put confidence in Him as your Sin-bearer.

2. In the second place, the Lord Jesus offers Himself to us as a Deliverer from the power of sin. He says in John viii. 34, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." And we all know that is true, for we have all committed sin, and become the bondservants of sin, and no man is able to break away from sin in his own strength. He says, in John viii. 36, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." The Lord Jesus offers Himself to each one of us as One who has power to set us free from the power of sin. He says that Satan is the strong man armed, but that Himself is stronger than Satan. To believe on the Lord Jesus is to put confidence in Jesus as One who has power to set you free from sin.

3. In the third place, Christ offers Himself to us as a divinely taught and absolutely infallible Teacher. In John xiv. 10, He says, "Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works' sake. The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me. He doeth the works." He offers Himself to you as the Teacher who speaks to you the words of God, who speaks no words of His own; as the Teacher who dwells in God, and in whom God dwells, a divinely taught and absolutely infallible Teacher; and to believe on Christ is to put confidence in Him as such.

4. In the fourth place, the Lord Jesus offers Himself to us as our Master, who has the right to the entire control of our lives. In John xv. 14, He says, "Ye are my friends if you do whatsoever I command you." To believe on the Lord Jesus is to put confidence in Jesus as a Master who has the right to have the entire and absolute control of your life.

5. Again, the Lord Jesus Christ offers Himself to us as a light and guide. He says in John viii. 12, "I am the Light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of life." To believe on Jesus is to put confidence in Him as the Light of the world, as the One to follow wherever He leads.

6. And lastly, the Lord Jesus offers himself to us as our Divine Lord. He says in John xiii. 13: "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am." And we read in John xx. 28, 29, that when Thomas saw Jesus Christ after His resurrection, and was convinced at last that He really was raised from the dead, he threw up his hands and said to Jesus, "My Lord and my God!" And Jesus commended Thomas for this confession, saying to him, "Thomas, because thou hast seen, thou hast believed: blessed are they who have not seen,, and yet have believed." Jesus offers Himself to us as our divine Lord. To believe on Jesus is to put confidence in Him as our divine Lord.

So, to sum it all up, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is to put confidence in Him as your Sin-bearer, as your Deliverer from the power of sin, as your divinely taught and absolutely infallible Teacher, as your Master, who has the right to the entire control of your life, as your Light and Guide whom you will follow wherever He leads, and as your divine Lord. The moment you thus put your confidence, your absolute confidence in Jesus Christ, that moment you are saved. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

2. HOW FAITH MANIFESTS ITSELF.

But how will we show our faith? In other words, if we really have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and really have been saved, how will we show it?

1. In the first place, we will show it by an assurance that our sins are all forgiven. If I really put my trust in Jesus as my Sin-bearer, put my trust in Him as One who has borne all my sin, past, present, and future, the moment I put confidence in Him as that, I know I don't bear them any longer, and I have assurance that every sin I have ever committed is forgiven. In Luke vii. we read of a woman who was a sinner. She was an outcast. But she came into a house where Jesus was reclining at the table, and men thought Jesus could be no prophet because He allowed her to touch Him. But Jesus, when He saw her faith, said, "Thy sins are forgiven, thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." When that woman went out of that place she knew that her sins were forgiven. If you had met her on the street and had said, "Do you know your sins are forgiven?" she would have said "Yes, I know it; I am sure of it." "Why are you sure?" "Because He told me so, and I therefore know it." "But do you feel it; do you feel as if your sins were forgiven?" Very likely she would reply, "I don't feel it yet; the news is so good I cannot realize it, but I am sure it is so; I know it, for He said so." "Well," you might have said, "you must not be so sure unless you feel it." And she would have replied, "Oh, I am sure." But you will say, "How can you be sure if you don't feel it?" And she would say, "Because He said so."

2. Secondly, if you have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, it will show itself in your looking to Him and trusting Him for victory over sin. If you put confidence in Him as the Deliverer from the power of sin, you will certainly look to Him, and trust Him to set you free from the power of sin. You will not say, "My sins are so great that He cannot deliver me." You will not look at the greatness of your sin at all. You will look at the greatness of your Saviour.

A man came to me one day in Chicago, and said, "Mr. Torrey, I want to speak to you alone"; so I took him up to Mr. Moody's office-Mr. Moody was away at the time. He said, "I want to tell you my story. So I said,

"Very well; sit down,; and he began to tell me his life-story. He said: "Away over in Scotland. when I was but seven years of age, I started to read the Bible through," (a good thing for a boy to do) "and I got as far as Deuteronomy. Reading there I found that if a man kept the whole law for a hundred years, and then broke the law at any point, he was under a curse. Is that right?" I said, "Well, that is not an exact quotation, but it is about the substance of it." He continued, "I was only a boy of seven, but I was overwhelmed with the sense that I was under the curse of God, and that lasted for nearly a year. Then I got to the New Testament, and I read John iii. 16: 'God so loveth the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish. but have everlasting life.' Then I saw that the Lord Jesus had borne all my sin, and my burden rolled away." He said, "Was I converted?" I replied, "That sounds like an evangelical conversion." Then he said, "Wait a moment; let me tell the rest of my story. After some years I came to Chicago, and I am now working down in the stockyards. You know the stockyards neighbourhood; it is a very hard neighbourhood. I have got into drinking habits, and every little while I fall under the power of strong drink. I try to break away, but I cannot. What I have come to ask you is this, is there any way to get victory over sin?" I said "You have come just to the right man; I can tell you that." "I wish you would," he said. I opened my Bible to I Corinthians xv., and I read the first four verses: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and, wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, it ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

"Now," I said, "you believed that Jesus Christ died for your sins." He said., "I did." "You found peace in believing." "I did." I said, "But you only believed half of the Gospel, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and was buried. Will you now believe the other half of the Gospel? Will you believe that He rose again?" and He said, "I do believe; I believe every thing that is in the Bible." I said again, "Do you really believe that Jesus rose again?" and he said, "I do." I said, "Do you believe what Jesus Christ says in Matthew xxviii. 18, "All power is given unto me in Heaven and on earth?" "Yes." "Then He has got power to set you free from the power of sin. Do you believe it?" He said, "I do." I said, "Will you put your trust in Him right now, to do it?" He said, "I will." "All right," I said, "let us kneel down," and then I prayed, and he followed with a prayer something like this: "Oh God, I believed that Jesus died for my sins on the Cross, and I found peace through believing, and now I believe that Jesus rose again, and that He has all power in Heaven and on earth, and He has got power to set me free to-day. Lord Jesus, set me, free from the power of drink and the power of sin." When he had prayed, I said to him, "Will you trust Him to do it?" He said, "I will," and he did. In a few weeks I received a letter from that man in which he said, "I am so glad I came over to see you. It works!"

Christ not only died, but He rose again, and is a living Saviour to-night. He has all power in Heaven and on earth, and the devil is no match for Him; the risen Christ has power to snap the fetters of strong drink, to snap the fetters of opium, to snap the fetters of lust, and of every sin; and if yon will trust Him to do it for you, He will do it. To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ means to look to Him and trust Him to give you victory over sin.

3. In the third place, it will show itself in your unquestioning acceptance of the infallible and absolute truth and authority of everything Jesus says.- If I put confidence in Jesus as a divinely taught and absolutely infallible Teacher, whatever I find in the Bible that Jesus says, I will believe it. I may not understand it, it may seem impossible, and the scholars may be against me, but I believe in the Lord Jesus, and what He

says I accept absolutely in all its height, depth, length, and breadth. Many people to-day claim to believe in the Lord Jesus, but if they find Jesus teaching one thing, and men tell them that the consensus of the latest scholarship teaches something else, they accept the consensus of the latest scholarship, and throw overboard the teaching of Christ. Gentlemen, I affirm that those men do not believe in the Lord Jesus. They believe in "the consensus of the latest scholarship," and believing in the consensus of the latest scholarship never saved any one. It has ruined many. How can you say you believe in Jesus if you don't believe Him? Belief in the Lord Jesus means to put confidence in Him, to put absolute confidence in Him, as what He claims to be; and He claims to be a divinely taught Teacher, that speaks only the words of God.

It is a critical time in which we live, and the question is, shall we believe German scholarship so called, or the Lord Jesus Christ? Well, in answer to that question, I say the Lord Jesus Christ has stood for nineteen centuries, and German scholarship never stands for fifteen-years consecutively; and I prefer to believe the Lord Jesus.

4. Our belief in Him will be shown by studying His Word.- If I believe in the Lord Jesus, I shall study His word over and over again. Suppose some man should come to London claiming to be a divinely taught and absolutely infallible teacher, and that you believed in him. Would you not read every word that he uttered? We have a man in America who claims not only to be a divinely taught and absolutely infallible teacher, but a messenger sent direct from God. Suppose I believed he really was a teacher sent from God, I would study every word he said, as hundreds do in Chicago. They spend more time reading his words than they do reading their Bibles. Just so, if I believe in Jesus as what He claims to be, a divinely taught and absolutely infallible Teacher, what I shall study above all else will be the words of Jesus Himself.

5. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ will show itself by a surrender of the entire life to His control.- If I put confidence in Jesus as what He claims to be -my Lord, having right to the absolute control of my life- I will put my whole life in His control. Have you done it? You say you are a Christian, you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Are you proving it by putting your entire life in His control.

6. In the next place, you will show your belief in the Lord Jesus Christ by obedience to Him in daily life, in whatever He tells you to do.- In Luke vi. 46, He says, "Why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" I believe He is saying the same thing to the Christians of London, the professing Christians. You call Him "Lord, Lord, " every Sabbath day in your lives and then you go through every day of the week living just as He tells you not to live, and you refuse to do what He plainly tells you to do. Now when the Lord Jesus was here on earth and healed men, He demanded faith as a condition precedent to healing, and He demanded that they should show their faith by their acts. He demands faith to-day as a condition precedent to salvation, and, having been saved, He demands that you show your faith by your acts, that you do what He tells you. That makes some of you look very uncomfortable. I am glad of it; it is a good sign. Some of you professed Christians need to be brought under conviction of sin. You have been praying that outsiders may be convicted of sin, but a whole lot of you need to be convicted of sin yourselves; and when you get convicted of sin more of the outsiders will be convicted of sin.

7. Faith on the Lord Jesus Christ will show itself again in following Him wherever He leads.- If I put confidence in Jesus Christ as the Light of the World, I will follow Him that I may "not walk in darkness, but have the Light of Life." "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself so to walk even as he walked." Are you following in His steps, in your business, in your social life, in your personal life, in your individual life everywhere?

8. Belief on the Lord Jesus Christ will show itself in confessing Him before the world, and in witnessing for Him to men.-We read in Romans x. 9,10: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God 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."

I received a letter to-day from a man who said it was a very hard thing to expect people to stand up to confess Christ in the way I ask them to, and he went on to tell me an easier way to get at it. But I am not looking for an easier way. I abominate these easy ways. I believe in getting people converted. I could pass around cards and get them to sign their names, saying that they hoped to go to heaven; but a month after I had gone the effect would be nothing, or worse than nothing. I do not take any stock in any faith that does not lead to an open confession of Christ before the world, and I do not take any stock in the Christianity of your professed Christians unless it leads you to go out into the world and witness for the One who saved you. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

Now I put to you a question. Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? You thought you did when you came in, but do you? I asked God in my prayer that He would sweep away false hopes to-night. Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? It is one thing to say you believe, and another thing to believe. If you do not, will you believe on Him now, this moment? Will you put confidence in Jesus Christ this moment as your Sin-bearer, as a Deliverer from the power of sin, as a divinely taught and absolutely infallible Teacher, as the Lord who has the right to the absolute control of your life, as the Light of the World, as your Divine Lord? Will you do it? It takes but one instant to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. It can be done in a moment. But it will take a whole lifetime to show that you have believed on Him after you have done it. The act of faith is instantaneous, the fruits of faith are lifelong. Will you put your trust in Him to-night? If you do, the results will follow, and if you never did it before, you can do it now. You can do it before Mr. Alexander sings.

And you men and women who never professed to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, will you put your confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ now? The moment you do it, you will be saved. I will tell any man or woman who is utterly unsaved, that in the next moment you may be saved. I will tell any man or woman who is utterly unsaved, who wishes to flee from underneath the wrath of God and come underneath the full sunlight of God's favour, that you can do it in an instant. How? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; put confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ as what He claims to be. If the vilest outcast in London should be in this room now and should here and now put confidence in Jesus as all He claims to be, the moment he did it God would blot out all his sin, and set to his account all the righteousness of Christ; and set him free from the power of sin, and transform him into a child of God. Old things in a moment would pass away and all things would become new. Oh, the miracle of regeneration! I have seen a man one moment a drunkard, half drunk at the time, get his eyes open enough to see the truth about the Lord Jesus and put his trust in Him, and the next moment I was looking into the eyes of a child of God.

One night in Chicago, in the Pacific Garden Mission, there came in a poor fellow, a complete physical and moral wreck. He had been in a railroad accident and was a total cripple, helpless on both feet, dragging himself along on crutches. For fourteen years he had been a victim of whisky and alcohol in all its forms, and of opium as well. He was an opium fiend and an alcohol fiend. My friend Colonel Clark spoke to him and told him the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but he refused to believe. But on La Salle street, one of our busiest commercial streets, next day, Colonel Clark saw this same man dragging himself along on his crutches, and as he got to the entrance of an alley-way, Colonel Clark drew him into the alley-way and said to him, "My friend, Jesus has power to save you," and after talking to him a while, there and then the

man got down as best he could on his crutches, beside the strong man of God, and put his trust in Jesus Christ. And when that man came out of that alley-way he came out a child of God, and he is to-day a preacher of the Gospel. Thank God for a Gospel that can save anybody. You cannot find me a man in all London that Jesus Christ has not power to save if he will only believe on Him. Put confidence in Him. Will you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to-night?

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