

(Am I Saved?) 2- Am I Saved

by Michael Pearl

Michael Pearl emphasizes the simplicity of salvation through genuine belief in Jesus Christ, warning against complicating the process with religious practices and self-doubt.

Duration: 32:34

Scripture: Matthew 19:16-30, Matthew 22:36-40, Matthew 27:45-54, Mark 10:17-22

Topics: "True Conversion", "Salvation"

Description

In this sermon, Michael Pearl emphasizes the importance of true conversion and being like a little child in the kingdom of God. He shares his observations of people professing to be saved multiple times without truly understanding what it means to be a Christian. Pearl emphasizes that simply knowing about Jesus' death on the cross or asking Him into one's heart is not enough for salvation. He encourages listeners to focus on their relationship with God and to seek Him wholeheartedly.

Transcript

Well, I can see the Lord's already been moving in this direction with a couple of the testimonies we had this morning. Nathan talked about the lady calling him up with the questions, and now he pointed out to her that she was making it way too hard, way too difficult to be saved. Now, I've been around for about 50 years watching people get saved.

I've been around 60 years, but I've been around about 50 years watching people get saved. I've seen many people profess to be saved and not be. I've seen people profess to be saved four times, four different times, get baptized three times, and then finally somebody pins them down that they're not saved.

They understand that and they make another confession of faith and still don't get saved. It's not enough to know that Jesus died on the cross to be a Christian. It's not enough to believe that he died for you.

Anybody can believe that and say it. It's not enough to ask Jesus into your heart. Many people have done that.

It's not enough to repent of your sins. You must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ with all your heart. And that's a simple thing.

But we can make it so complicated. Now, when someone has made it complicated, that is, they've added works or added this thing or added that thing, or depending on their emotions or they refer back to the

answered prayer or how they felt when they had an experience or any number of things that they do, depending on their spirit of God touching them or moving them in some way. Now, when they come to understand that, that they're not saved maybe, and you start explaining to them that they've made it too complicated, you can help them to understand where they've made it complicated.

You can help them to see that it's not in their works and they can admit that. You can help them to see that they must believe what God says in the Bible and they'll admit that then. And you finally work out all of these details about how they've made it complicated so that you make it uncomplicated and they're still not saved and they still don't get saved.

Because they're still casting their hope upon their mental processes or spiritual processes of unweaving all of this, untangling all of this mess in their thinking and getting their thinking straightened out until finally they come to some resolution and still there's no salvation. So I've said it before, salvation is so easy, it's so uncomplicated and yet for many people it's so very, very far away and difficult. They try for years to be saved and never get saved.

And then there are a lot of people who profess to have been saved and go along and live a pretty good Christian life and live it for years and think they're saved and don't doubt it. They too have never been saved. Now sometimes the proof of that is that temptation comes along and they walk off into sin, they go back into drinking or going drinking for the first time and whoremongering and immorality and godliness and some people just drift cold and drift away from the faith and away from Christianity and lose sight of God and just live their own life.

But the really scary thing is those people who live right up till the day they die, right up until judgment, confident they know the Lord and then find out they don't, they never did. I never knew you, he said, depart from me you workers of iniquity. Now you remember the sweet little girl that's been here several times, that was here last week, a fine Christian girl raised in a Christian home, homeschooled, a virgin, moral, righteous in an external way.

No one would ever find fault with her in her Christian life. Well she got saved last week, last weekend when she was here. She'd never been born again.

She was a Christian but she'd never been born again, never had her sins washed away in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. She wrote a letter back and said, I'll just read a part of it, she said I'm sure that this weekend is going to create some problems. I'm not sure what to do, I pray for wisdom.

I'm so happy to be saved and free from bondage. I'm afraid though that the relationship with my parents has turned sour. I still want them to love me and trust me.

I want them to understand, yet I fear my mom will be close-minded and come after me with verse after verse to prove what I now believe is wrong. I have for so many years questioned what I truly believe and now I know the truth and the truth has set me free. So she's anxious about going home and telling her parents that what she now believes about the Lord Jesus Christ and freedom is going to create problems in the family.

Now in 2 Peter chapter 1 verse 10 we read this, he said wherefore the rather brethren, he's talking to the Christians, give diligence to make your calling and election sure. He says to professing Christians become diligent to make sure that you are in fact called and elected that you are saved. Make sure of it.

In 2 Corinthians 13 5 he warns the church at Corinth, he says examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith, prove your own selves, know you not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except you be reprobate. So he says, he commands us to examine ourselves. Now in Matthew 18 1, at the same time the disciples came unto Jesus saying, who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Jesus called unto him a little child, set him in the midst of them and said, Verily I say unto you, except you be converted and become as a little child, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as a little child, the same as the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Now he said, but that's applying to the kingdom of heaven. Here's what he says about the kingdom of God.

Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein. Now Matthew said, except you be converted and become as a little child. And Luke, he says, except you receive the kingdom of God as a little child.

Now, how does a little child believe? How does a little child receive? Notice the way he says that, except you be converted and become as a little child, you won't enter the kingdom. So there must be a conversion before you get saved. There must be a conversion of thought.

There must be a conversion of belief. There must be a conversion of perspective before you get saved. You have to come as a little child.

You have to be converted and come as a little child in order to be saved. Now, a little child does not rationalize, does not think through. A little child doesn't analyze.

A little child just comes just like they are in simple, streamlined, straight faith, believing what God says, and it's so easy for them. When an adult gets a hold of these concepts and starts analyzing them, he's no longer like a little child. When the adult starts wondering, well, have I repented? Did I do one? Did I do two? Did I do three? Did I take all of the proper steps? Then he's no longer coming like a little child.

When someone says, did I truly believe this? Or did I believe that? And how did I feel? How did it affect me? And what got changed? Then they're no longer coming like a little child. When someone says, well, am I trusting in my works? Or am I trusting in this? Or am I trusting in that? And they begin to analyze and consider, they're no longer coming like a little child. See, you must be convergent and simply come to God wide open to receive Him, for Him to receive you just like you are.

It's so easy. So many times on the street we've just run into somebody and give them the gospel and bam, they're saved just like that. You tell them what Jesus did for them, how He died and how simple it is.

You don't tell them to stop sinning or start believing this way or believing that way or feeling this way or that way. You just give them the straight gospel. And they believe and they're saved.

But then there's so many religious people that are not coming as little children. They're coming with all kinds of baggage like that girl did last week. They come with the baggage of little head coverings or knowing that it won't save you but feeling guilty if you don't do it.

They come with a little baggage of reading their Bible and praying prayers and not doing this and doing that thing, having long hair on a woman or a man not shaving his beard or shaving his beard or parting his hair in the middle or parting it on the side or the way he dresses or doesn't dress and whether he rides in a

truck or a buggy There's an endless amount of things that people come up with that's supposed to test or prove or demonstrate their salvation and they're no longer coming as children. They're coming very sophisticatedly, very complicatedly. When you have to sit down and talk for hours to work out those differences and your salvation is based on it, you've got problems.

It's so easy to come and yet we put so many things in the way. The rich man came unto Jesus and said, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? This is right after the statement in Luke 18 verse 17 where he says, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God's little child shall in no wise enter therein. That's his statement.

Now here's his illustration. Here's his illustration of someone coming but not like a child. Listen to it.

A certain ruler asked him, say, good master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? Well, a little child wants something. They don't walk up and say, what can I do to get this? That's a bit complex. They just say, give it to me, you know.

But this guy came up with the idea that he could do something, that something would be required of him and he was ready to perform it. At least he wanted to consider what he had to do. And so he said, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said to him, why callest thou me good? There's none good but one.

That's God. And he's trying to point to his deity. That's not our subject today.

Thou knowest the commandment of God. Do not commit adultery, do not kill, do not steal, do not bear false witness, honor your father and mother. He said, all of these have I kept from my youth up.

Now, when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, yet lackest thou one thing. In Matthew, he said, what lack I yet? The man did. So the man recognized, this rich man recognized that with all the things he had done in keeping the commandments, there was still a lack.

There was still a lack. He recognized something was not right. Something was missing.

Now, I think half of those of you who are here this morning, at least half are not saved. I think half of you have never been saved, half the people in this room. I don't know for sure, can't prove that, but I think at least half of you.

And I think the one thing that marks most of you, not all of you, is a sense of lack. A sense of lack, that I'm missing something. You haven't quite got a hold of fellowship with God.

You haven't quite gotten a hold of the idea that Jesus Christ made peace for you and that you have peace with God. There is a struggle within you to do something, feel something, or believe something to make things right. And it just won't get right.

And so this man had a lack, he knew he did. What lack I yet? Jesus said, you lack one thing, sell all that you have, distribute to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. Come, follow me.

Now, that's pretty heavy. This guy's really rich, got a lot of money, a lot of property. And he lacked something.

And Jesus said, the thing you lack is me. You lack me. But there's something standing in your way of coming to me, and that's your riches.

So sell everything you've got, give it to the poor, and then come follow me. That will take care of your lack. Now you say, well, that's not very childlike, that's sort of adult-like, that's kind of complex.

And isn't Jesus challenging him to do some works? Not at all. God requires no condition to our coming except coming. But if we put something in the way ourselves, then that thing must go for us to come.

Let me give you a very simple illustration. Now, I don't give invitations for people to walk down aisles and make professions of faith, you know that. Haven't done that for 30 years.

Because I've got too many false converts doing that. But a friend of mine was preaching one time, and he witnessed this fellow, and the fellow came to a meeting, and he sat there and wrung his hands, and he twisted his hands. And after the meeting, he went back and he asked him, he said, how come you won't come forward to be saved? He said, I'll get saved, but I won't come forward and stand up in front of all those people.

I will not come in public and do that. Now, this preacher friend of mine knew that that's not required to be saved, he knew that. He knew that this fellow could be saved right there in his living room, he could just call upon the Lord Jesus Christ, he could trust him and be saved.

But he also knew something about this fellow that the man was very proud, very proud and very concerned about how he looked before the people, one of those old-fashioned southern rednecks. And so the preacher, I think, wisely said to him, until you're willing to come publicly and confess Jesus Christ, you're not going to be saved. In other words, that man had erected this barrier himself.

He had decided that he was not going to humble himself in this public way to come to Christ. Now, it's a shame that religion had erected that barrier right there. But you know, anytime you put something between you and Christ, if you say, I'd like to be a Christian, but I like wearing earrings.

No problem, you're wearing earrings, okay? But if you were in a church where it was outlawed, and you said, I'd like to be a Christian, but I just don't, I like wearing earrings. Do you know you're not going to get saved until you're willing to give up your earrings? Because you're the one that put it there, and that may be a false premise, but you put it there. In other words, you're loving your earrings more than you love God, right? And if you say, well, I'd like to be a Christian, but I just don't want to quit smoking.

Well, I'm not going to come to you and explain to you that you can become a Christian and keep on smoking. Although if I were preaching you on the street and you were smoking, I would never mention you're smoking, and I would not tell you you had to give it up. And when I gave you the gospel and you got saved with a cigarette in your hand, bow and rings, I would not say you'd fail to be saved because you were still smoking after you got saved.

I wouldn't make it an issue. The issue would be the Lord Jesus Christ. But once you hold up your cigarette and say, this cigarette means more to me than coming to God, then you're not going to get saved.

You're going to have to do what Jesus said to the rich man. You're going to have to give it up and come to Him. And that's true of anything that you put between you and God, even if someone else helped you put it there.

If you say, I would like to come to God, but you see, I love my pornography, and I know if I did, I'd have to give it up. I've had many a queer say to me, I'd like to come to God, but I have this love for the same sex. And so I just, I can't stop being who I am.

Now, I would never dare say to that queer that all you've got to do is call upon Jesus and ask Him to save you. You don't have to give up being a queer. I would not say that to him.

I'd say to him, if being a queer means more to you than the Lord Jesus Christ, then you'll never be saved. Because you must come as a little child, just come, free and open to receive all that God has got. So, what is it that maybe someone here has created in their own mind, or religion has created, that you put between you and God? If you have made a choice between a false religion, or a false conviction, or a false concept, and God, until you choose God over everything else, over all, then you'll never be saved.

Now, some people would call that repenting of sin. That's not repenting of sin, that's repenting toward God. God does not ask you to stop any of your sins.

He just asks you to come with all your heart. That's what He said. Come with all your heart.

Believe with all your heart. And if your heart is divided, part of it wants God, but part of it wants something else. You can't be saved.

Now, there is this wondrous thing, wondrous state, that you have to have to be saved. It's elusive, I have a hard time defining it. But, it is, we talked about repentance toward God, you've got to have a hunger and a thirst after righteousness.

You've got to have a desire for purity to be saved. You've got to want truth in your inward parts in order to be saved. See, there's lots of people who are scared of hell, they want to be saved because they don't want to go to hell.

But their heart is closed up to God. They don't want Him in there. They don't want God inside challenging their bad attitudes, challenging their bitterness, their prejudices, their biases.

They don't want God in the secret parts rebuking them. They don't want Him challenging their lying, maybe smoking, drinking, fornicating, any number of things. But it doesn't have to be great evil sins, it can just be little sins of greediness, or laziness, or pettiness, or un-re-ness, anything.

When your heart is closed, and you don't want God inside, you just want Him saving you from hell. You won't get saved. You can be so scared you're trembling because you saw a movie about hell, or you read a sermon about hell, or saw a book, you can be so scared that you fall down and beg God to save you.

All you're wanting is to get out of hell. You don't really want Jesus Christ in your life. You'll not get saved.

There must be a repentance toward God. A turn of the self to receive, to believe, to possess, to be possessed by the Lord Jesus Christ. If you don't have that, you won't ever be saved.

That's why I don't waste time convincing someone that they're saved, or trying to help them through Scripture see the errors of their fallacies and their beliefs. What I do when someone is uncertain and doubts, is I preach Jesus to them again. I just give them the old-fashioned gospel again.

You see, what I'm trying to do, listen to me, I'm trying to make them love Jesus. I'm introducing them to the man, Christ Jesus. And when they see the man, know the man, and love the man, then they'll be saved.

Until they do, they won't. When your focus is salvation, you won't get saved. When your focus is repentance, you won't get saved.

When your focus is faith, you won't get saved. When your focus is getting saved, you won't get saved. Your focus must be God, Jesus.

Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The Ethiopian eunuch said, see here's water, what doth hinder me from being baptized? He said, you can if you believe with all your heart. Do you believe with all your heart? You know, I'm not going to search my heart to see if every corner of it is, you know, like surrendered to God.

That's not what he's asking. He's not asking you to be righteous with all your heart. He's asking you to believe with all your heart.

That means that everything that's in you, right down to the depth of your soul, believes Jesus Christ, believes God. And you know, when you believe that way, and you experience God's forgiveness, when you get saved, you become a new person. You become a happy person, a joyful person.

You become a person who despises sin, who is deeply hurt when you sin. When you lie, when you're angry, when you're bitter, when you're cruel, when you're selfish. You're deeply hurt because you've hurt your Savior.

And your thoughts are not, well, maybe I'm proven I'm not saved, I need to start doing right so I'll know I'm saved. No, your thoughts are, I've wounded my Savior. I've sinned against Him.

And you go back and you correct that actions and you do the right thing. You see, I don't want this morning to just scare some of you into thinking you're not saved, and I know that's a danger. Just get you kind of panicky.

Think, well, if that girl wasn't saved, then maybe I'm not saved. Because that won't get you saved, just getting scared and panicky over it. You've got to come to love God.

So give diligence to make your calling and your election sure. Make sure that you're in the faith, that Christ is in you. So how do I do that? Go back and read the Word of God till you know Jesus, till you love Him, till like a child you just give up and trust Him.

And I remember one time when I was about 16 or 17, we went to a camp meeting, and one of the principal speakers that week was a pastor of a local Baptist church. And he preached on the cross, on Christ dying, that week. There was 40 people got saved the night he preached on Christ dying.

Did a great job of it. One of the best sermons you'll ever hear on Christ dying, a man about 35 years old. And about a year later, that preacher got saved, about a year later.

You say, why wasn't he saved? Well, he told us his experience. He said, you know, he said, I realized that when I was about 15 years old, he said, I was a good boy in the church, went to a Baptist church. He said, I'd made a profession of faith, I forgot when he was 8 or 9 or something, and somebody came up to him and said, son, do you believe Jesus died for you? Yes, sir, I do.

Do you believe He paid for your sins? Yes, I do. Do you want to ask Jesus in your heart? Yes, sir, I do. And he prayed and asked Jesus in his heart.

And they said, well, according to the Bible, you're saved. And they baptized him. He started going to Sunday school.

And he learned all the Bible verses. And then when he was about 16, he said they had youth meeting. And they chose him to preach on one of the messages of the youth meeting.

He said he prepared, and he was a pretty smart fellow, you know. He got all together and he preached. And his grandma came up and said, son, you are called to preach.

I've been praying that God would call you to preach. Son, you are called to preach the Word of God. And he said, I liked it.

So he said, I went to Bible college a couple of years later and went on, got my master's degree in theology. And he said, I got called to one church. I got called to another one.

And finally, I got to pastor this one. And he said, I have books full of sermons. And I have a Bible that I read.

And I prepared sermons and I preached them. He said, all the while, I was wondering what it would be like to really know God. All the while, I was wondering what it was like to really know for sure you were saved.

He said, but I kept plugging on and serving God. I didn't want to call God a liar. And he realized on about a Tuesday night that he wasn't saved.

One of his deacons got saved. Some leader got saved in a meeting in a church. And so he went home and retired and prayed for about 36 hours.

He agonized over it, struggled over it like an adult, trying to figure it out and work it out like an adult does, you know, trying to get his thoughts straight on it. And he just couldn't. And finally, he realized, he said that he committed the unpardonable sin that he had been a fake.

He'd lied. He'd been a hypocrite so long that he was just too far gone. He couldn't be saved.

He said he realized that. He realized there's no hope for him that he was lost. So he said he just gave up.

So, OK, God, I'm lost. There's nothing I can do. He said, immediately, God saved me.

Immediately, I got saved. Immediately, Jesus came in. I knew I was born again.

When I finally came to a place where I realized that there was no hope for me, he said, then I got saved. And so about three years later, he called me to preach a revival meeting in a bigger church that he was pastoring up in Martin, Tennessee. I went up there and preached a week of revival meetings to about 600 people up there in his church he was pastoring.

And he continued to give his testimony throughout his ministry of how he had preached for years, but never been saved. Now, I know that scares some of you. It may scare somebody who's saved.

It may scare somebody who's saved and been letting their heart wander towards the world and uncertain. But if that's the case, you get assurance the same way you got saved. You go right back to the same cross.

You go right back to the same shed blood. You go right back to the Savior who died. And you say, Lord Jesus, I have no hope.

All that I plead, all that I need is Jesus. Throw yourself upon him. And if you're not saved, then that's where you get saved.

Now, don't worry about figuring out if you got saved back there. You get saved now. You see, what I'm already saying, don't worry about it.

You get saved now. Four or five years from now, you would look back and know, yeah, I was saved five years ago, ten years ago, or I wasn't. I got saved that day.

You just need to get saved. You're not sure. You just need the same Jesus, same salvation, same faith.

Make sure, give diligence to make your calling and election. But you have to do it for the right reasons, of course. You have to want God.

You have to love him. You have to want to know him. All right.

He said it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than a rich man during the kingdom of God, because a rich man lets his riches become his love. And you can't love God. The disciples said unto Jesus, who then can be saved? In other words, if it's easier to put a big camel through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to get saved, then what chance do we have? And Jesus' answer was, with men it's impossible.

With men, it's impossible to be saved. But with God, all things are possible. So his answer is, salvation is an impossibility, even for rich man.

Rich man can be saved. A rich man can be saved and stay rich. But it's impossible without a miracle.

Because his heart must be taken completely away from his riches and focused on Lord Jesus Christ only. You realize the same is true for a ballplayer, or a dancer, or a country singer, or a fisherman, or anything else. If anything stands between you and Lord Jesus Christ, if anything you don't want to give up, anything you won't do, you've got to be converted and become a little child.

Into the kingdom.

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