

Five Steps From Sin to Salvation

by Russell DeLong

The sermon outlines five essential steps from sin to salvation, emphasizing the importance of recognizing one's sinful condition, genuinely sorrowing for sin, making restoration and restitution, believing in Christ's atonement, and exercising active faith in Christ's power to save.

Scripture: John 3:16, Acts 8:37, Acts 16:30, Romans 10:9, Ephesians 2:8, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Salvation Plan", "Repentance Process"

Description

Russell DeLong preaches about the journey from sin to salvation, emphasizing the importance of realizing one's sinful nature, feeling genuine sorrow for transgressions, making restitution for wrongs, believing in Jesus Christ's atonement, and activating that belief through faith. Salvation is found only in Christ and His shed blood, offering hope and forgiveness to all who come humbly before Him. The sermon highlights the steps outlined by St. Paul and the transformative power of accepting Jesus as the ultimate Savior.

Transcript

The jailor asked, "What must I do to be saved?" St. Paul answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:30, 31)

Everyone is lost. All have sinned. Sin has caused us to be deprived of God's presence and, in thus being denied the light and life of God, to have become depraved in nature. Deprivation and depravation are the twin results of man's sin. Man's days have been full of sorrow, suffering, bereavement, and death. His life has been bound by sinful habits, uncontrollable desires, ungovernable tempers, and unbridled instincts. Misery, woe, guilt, and condemnation have caused anguish of soul and distress of spirit.

There has been a persistent search for some means by which to salvage this human wreck. Many solutions have been proposed -- none have succeeded. There is only one remedy for man's sin and that is found in the atonement made by Christ on the cross. This mighty act of Jesus preserved the dignity and force of the moral government of the universe and at the same time revealed the tremendous love of God. Justice and mercy, law and love, government and forgiveness were united in the drama of Calvary.

Education, philosophy, social service, and even religion have been tried and have failed to atone for man's sin. Church membership, baptism, and confirmation are helpless unless preceded by something more vital.

There is only one remedy for sin. There is only one panacea for man's ills. There is only one solvent for the troubles of the race.

Salvation is to be found only in Christ and in the power of His shed blood to atone for man's sin.

There are just five (5) short, but all-important steps from sin to salvation

Step Number One

To realize that you are a sinner, to know in your heart that you have violated the laws of

God, to sense your shortcomings is the first step toward salvation. There is no help for the man who feels no need. But to the man who confesses his sins, admits his transgressions, and keenly senses his dire need of a Saviour, there is glorious hope.

Step Number Two

It is not sufficient to take Step Number One and confess your sins, you must be genuinely

and contritely sorry that you willfully transgressed the laws of God. You must feel the awfulness of sin. You must realize that your actions have hurt the loving, benevolent heart of God. You must have that "woe is me" feeling of total unfitness and lostness. You must feel completely undone and eternally lost. A "godly sorrow for sin" is an old-fashioned expression but absolutely essential as the second step toward salvation. The man who takes the first step will find the Holy Spirit helping to condition him for the second step.

Step Number Three

The genuineness of Step Number Two is evidenced by a willingness not only to confess

and be contritely sorry for sins committed but by a sincere desire to make restoration and

restitution for wrongs done to God and man. If you've stolen you must restore. If you've lied you must correct. As far as it is possible you must rectify the results of your evil acts. What you cannot do is not required. The devil will magnify the difficulties of this step, but remember that God is able to give you power to be victorious.

Step Number Four

The fourth step is of paramount importance. You must believe that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world. St. John 3:16 must become significant to you, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Specifically, your belief must become personal -- that He died for your salvation. Belief in yourself, or your good works, or your church membership, or your baptism, or your confirmation, is of no avail. None of these can save you. Your only hope of salvation lies in Christ. This hope must become personal. That "whosoever" must be focused on you -- you must be included. Your cry must be, "O God, save me." The burden of your prayer must be, "It is my sins, my transgressions that sent you to the cross." The

completion of Step Number Four is taken when you say, "I believe He died for me."

Step Number Five

The final step to victory is that your belief must now become active faith. Belief must be

consummated in personal trust. Not just intellectual faith, not just the result of a dialectical mental exercise but that faith must be active. It must result in the personal testimony, "I believe He died for me and that He saves me now."

Imagine a man drowning. You hurl a life preserver to him from the deck of a ship. It falls

within his reach. He sees you, he observes you throwing the preserver, he believes that it will save him. He believes -- yes -- but he must act -- he must reach out and grasp the lifesaver. He can say, "I believe" until the waves engulf him and he drowns. He must say, "I believe it will save me and therefore I take hold of the preserver," and he is pulled to safety. So with the man in the ocean of sin. Christ offers salvation -- he throws the life preserver. Not enough to believe -- I must accept and act. Belief must become active faith by saying "I believe He saves me now."

St. Paul said to the jailer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." The jailer believed and was saved.

In I John 1:9 the promise is, "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Our initial task is to confess. God's final act is to save.

Philip, after leaving the great Samaria revival, encountered an Ethiopian Eunuch and said

to him as recorded in Acts 8:37, "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest." And the Eunuch answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." He was saved. He climbed the ladder from sin to salvation. There are five rungs -- just five important steps. Will you take them just now?

A soldier in a foxhole took them. He found Christ and salvation and left the following poem behind as a glorious testimony:

A SOLDIER FINDS CHRIST IN A FOXHOLE

[This poem was brought into the Chaplain's office by a patient just in from the fighting

front. His buddy still fighting wrote it and sent it in. It is probable that the author died shortly after but he had found Christ.]

Christ, I thought I knew all the answers,

Until madmen started this war.

I never gave you a second thought --

Nor even talked to you before.

The age-old story of Bethlehem,

And the drama of Calvary
Were nothing more than mere fairy tales --
Yes, Lord, mere fairy tales to me.
But tonight my helmet is heavy,
And so is the pack on my back;
Barbed wire has left me two torn hands,
And my feet leave a bloody track.
My shoulders sag 'neath this heavy gun;
My body is weary with pain;
And my whole tortured being cries out
For rest and release, but in vain.
For the first time in my life I know
Your head hurt from a thorny crown,
And your tired bleeding shoulders ached
When that heavy cross weighed you down.
Those nails cut into your hands and feet;
Every inch of your flesh was torn;
And your bruised body was weary --
My God -- once You, too, were careworn.
But you didn't quit -- you carried on
Until the grim battle was through,
And now I know you did it for me
So I'll go on fighting for you.
I want you to know that I'm sorry;
It was my sins that put you to death;
And I'll keep on saying I'm sorry
Until I draw my last breath.

Christ, I never knew that war could be
The means of saving my soul;
How little I thought that I would find you --
In this muddy foxhole.

Do you recognize your need of a Saviour? Do you believe that He has the power to transform your life? Present yourself humbly. There is nothing you can bring that will buy your salvation. You come to Him as a sinner unworthy of His divine grace. You deserve nothing but the penalty of sin. You must throw yourself on the mercy of God imploring His grace and forgiveness. Jesus paid the debt of sin on Calvary. Will you repent and accept His gift? Charlotte Elllott, a sinful, young society woman, came to Him saying,

Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!

The love of God knows no bounds. No matter who you are, love reaches out for every penitent soul.

Just as I am, Thy love unknown
Hath broken every barrier down;
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!
Do you come? If you do, He will receive you.

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!

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