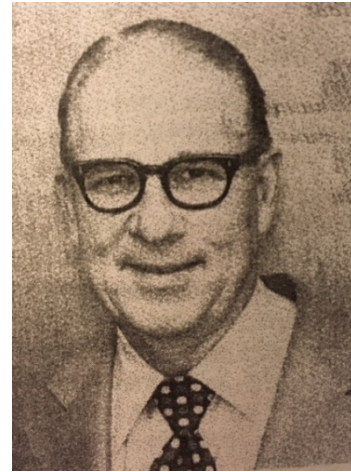


**AM I SAVED  
or  
AM I LOST  
and  
HOW I CAN KNOW**

**By  
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T.E. Williams

## **PREFACE**

This Bible message has been preached across America from the Atlantic to the Pacific, in small country churches, town and city churches, camps, and Bible conferences.

I now submit this message in book form as a result of constant request of preachers and Christians for many years.

It has been my desire to present this in book form as near like I have preached it as possible. If God shall be pleased to use this message to help others to be saved and know that they are, and to stir their hearts to witness to the lost, we shall be forever grateful, wanting only that our blessed Lord be glorified in it all.

*"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (II Corinthians 10:31)*

## INTRODUCTION

Many questions have been asked by everyone of us. The Bible raises many questions important to every human soul. God confronted Adam with the question, "Where are you?" Philosophers have wrestled with these questions: Where did I come from? What am I doing here? Where am I going?

In John's writings, he wrote his gospel to tell us how to be saved. (John 20:30-31) He wrote his first epistle to tell us how we may know that we have eternal life. (I John 5:13) He wrote the Revelation to show us the heavenly home being prepared for His children. (Rev. 21) Jesus said, *"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way you know."* (John 14:2b-4)

Many people, even Christians, have no assurance in these all-important questions of life. A very prominent minister attended a revival meeting in a small Baptist church. His attendance was out of curiosity, at first, but turned into a matter of deep interest. He met one of the good ladies of the church and discussed the revival. Among his comments were: "That young preacher of yours talks like he knows he is saved." The good woman responded with some alarm: "Brother F., don't you know that you are saved?" The minister replied, "I shall have no way of knowing until I get to the judgment." The good lady, his neighbor, promptly replied, "Brother F., won't that be too late, in case you aren't?"

*Jesus said, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out*

*devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*" (Matt. 7:22-23) It is a known fact that many people do not know that they are lost; many do not know if they have been saved; and even more, many professing Christians have no assurance of being saved.

The Bible reveals that man is a lost sinner. God's eternal purpose is that he may be saved, and have him live in the assurance of his salvation. This undeniable certainty that one is a lost sinner brings almost unbearable pain and misery. Having had the experience of repentance toward God and saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ brings peace of mind. Only this assurance of knowing that one is saved with an everlasting salvation can still the human heart.

A young minister was called upon to visit an old grandmother, dying with cancer. She had been a Christian from childhood, but had lost the assurance she needed in the face of death. For lack of words of his own, the minister opened his Bible and began to read from Romans 8:28. When he came to the statement, *"If God be for us, who can be against us,"* the troubled face lightened and lifted. She said, *"That's enough: I know God is on my side."* My dear friends, God's Word brings assurance to the saved. It brings condemnation to the lost. Today you can do something about that condition. In that day you can only hear Him say, *"Depart you who work iniquity, I never knew you."*

Nothing makes one understand more clearly the answers to these questions than the revealing presence of the Lord.

Jesus said, *"And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."* (John 16:8) If you have never been convicted of sin, you have never been saved. Again Jesus said, *"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."* (Luke 13:3) If you have never repented of your sin, you are still led by the same carnal mind and are still in your sin. John tells us, *"But as many as receive Him, to them He gave the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."* (John 1:12) Again Jesus said, *"I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."* (John 14:3b)

There is nothing more comforting to the Christian than the assurance, "I belong to Him." There is nothing more alarming than uncertainty as one faces the end unsaved.

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## AM I SAVED OR AM I LOST AND HOW I CAN KNOW

In the Bible in Matthew 7:15-20 we read, *“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”*  
--Not judge them, but know them.

Now as far as I am concerned, the saddest Scriptures in all the Bible are the next three verses. Watch what they say, *“Not everyone that saith unto me ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?’”* Watch what Jesus says. *“And then I will profess unto them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.’”* (Matthew 7:21-23) The Scriptures tell us there are going to be many people that will die thinking they are saved, and when they wake up, they are going to wake up in hell. I cannot think of anything sadder than to leave this world thinking you are going to heaven and go to hell. Jesus said many will be like that. If you have ever been saved, you will go to heaven. Jesus could not say, “I never knew you,” if He ever knew you.

A great Southern Baptist preacher said he felt like twenty-five percent of his membership was lost. Since I have

traveled through America in the field of evangelism, seldom do I hold a revival and preach this message but that lost church members are saved. So I say you are either saved or lost. *“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”* (I John 5:13) The text of the message is Matthew 12:30, *“He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.”*

I was a lost church member for many years. If you had come to me and said, “Are you saved?” my reply would have been, “I think I am, or I hope I am.” After I was saved, if you asked me, I could reply, “I know I am saved. Come go with me and I will take you where I was saved.” I can go closer to where I was born a second time than where I was born the first time. So follow the Scriptures as I try to present my message, Am I Saved or Am I Lost and How I Can Know.

I preach this sermon wherever I go for four reasons: First, there are people who think they are saved, and they are lost. If they died this very minute, they would go to hell thinking they were saved. Second, there are people, as strange as it may sound, who think they are lost, and have already been saved. Third, there are people who are saved and know they are saved, and it brings an added joy to their heart when they relive the experience. The fourth reason is that there are people who are lost. They know they are lost, and when you show them how to be saved; they will accept the Lord, come to know Him, and be saved.

And so, for these four reasons, I present this message. You are either saved or you are lost. You are either in the family of God or you are not. You have either been justified or you are condemned. You either belong to Christ or you belong to satan. You are all the way in the family of God or you are all the way out of the family of God. Your name appears on the Lamb's Book of Life, having been written down by the Lord Jesus Christ, or it does not appear. May I say to you, because you walk down some church aisle and make a profession of faith does not guarantee that you are saved. You can profess without possessing. You must come to know the Lord before you can actually confess Him. And so, just because you make a confession, or have been baptized, or do this, that, or the other, gives no assurance you are **born again**. There are some people who live such a straight life that it is hard to determine whether they are saved or lost.

I was conducting a revival in my church one day, to my amazement, a young woman came down the aisle and started talking to me. What she really wanted to know was how to be saved. She was one of the most faithful people in the church. She came to all the church activities, her life was seemingly straight and clean. The Spirit of God got hold of her heart, and the Lord led the singer to witness to her, and she came to know the Lord Jesus Christ. And when she was saved, she was just as happy about being saved as I was when I was saved. You could not shake her when she had the assurance in her heart she was saved. You cannot shake a person who is saved and knows they are saved. You can take all the infidels in the country, put them all around you, and they cannot shake your faith, if you know you have been born again.

It is sad to see people in this world, from church rolls of all types of churches, live and die, and go to hell without the Lord Jesus Christ. I have seen people come making their profession, who have been members of the church for years.

I was preaching a revival in Kentucky, and when I gave the invitation in the morning service, a 78-year-old deacon came and accepted the Lord. As he came up front, he said, "Just think of it, I have been a deacon in this church for all these years and never knew the Lord until this morning."

*"He that said he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes."* (I John 2:9-11) After I taught this, that if you hate anybody you are not saved, and if you are saved you love everybody, the assistant organist came up to me and said, "Bro. Williams, you would not have hurt me any worse tonight if you had slapped me in the face. I hate somebody. There is no need of lying to you."

I said, "Well, maybe you need to come and let's talk about your experience and see if you have been saved." She went home, and the following day she called saying she needed to see me. I asked her to come and we would talk, but she would not, and after hesitating, she hung up the phone. The next day she called again saying she needed to talk with me, but would not come when invited a second time. The third day she called and said, "Bro. Williams, I have not slept and have not eaten anything for the last several days. I must see you." She came immediately and the moment I opened the door and saw

her, I knew she was under conviction. I explained to her how to be saved and prayed for her, but she said she was not saved. I told her the devil was saying, "What are people going to think? You are 61 years of age, the assistant organist, and have been in the church for years. What are people going to think?" (God will let you die and go to hell lost from a church roll like He will if you were out in the world.) I said, "What you need to do, while you can, is put your pride away, repent of your sins, and accept the Lord and let Him save you." I prayed again. I lifted my head and before I could say anything, tears were coming down her cheeks as she reached out and took my hand. She said, "Bro. Williams, I can say for the first time in my life what I always wanted to say; I am saved and I know it."

I say to you, If you don't know you are saved, then you are lost. You may say, "Preacher, I am not quite sure about whether I am saved." I want to say this: when I explain to you how you know you are saved, I do not know how you can miss it. I would hate to think I would die without the assurance in my heart that I was a child of God.

One night, after preaching this message, a Baptist preacher was converted and I had the pleasure of baptizing him. I do not care if you are a preacher, or who you are, just be sure you are saved!

In the third chapter of the Gospel of John we find these words, *"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. The same came to Jesus by night and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest,*

*except God be with him."* Now watch what Jesus said. *"Jesus answered and said unto him, 'Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Nicodemus saith unto him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?'"* Jesus answered, *'Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'*" (John 3:1-5)

Now look at verse 5 again. *"Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."* There are at least three different positions on the interpretation of this verse. Some of our Christian brethren say that it means water baptism. No, no, that is not water baptism. The second position is far more prevalent and accepted by some people and preachers who say that just before a baby is born, the water breaks and the baby is born following that break of that water. The third position is that it means two parts of the birth, not two births. If it meant two births, it would read "born of the water and born of the Spirit," but that is not the way it was written. In the Greek, it is, "born of the water and Spirit." This is talking about the quickening of the Holy Spirit of a person from sin. We see this in Titus 3:5, *"Not of works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."* It is talking about just one birth, the cleansing and the quickening of the Spirit of God in your heart. *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, 'Ye must be born again.'"* (John 3:6-7) Now it does not say you might have to be, it said you must be. *Ye must be born again.*

I want to ask you something—draw an imaginary circle around yourself. You sit inside that circle, and I will ask you four questions from the Word of God and tell you what they mean. If you can answer “yes” to these questions sitting inside that circle, you can be sure you are a child of God. And if you can’t answer them, I would stay with someone, the Lord, the Bible, until I could answer them with assurance in my heart. Notice what the Bible says, *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh.”* That is the way you got into this world, through a birth. There are marks of physical birth. There is something that begins at birth, continues it, and when the baby is delivered, the baby is born into the world. Jesus said in John 3:6, *“That which is born of flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”* As there are marks of a physical birth, so there are marks of the birth in the family of God. There is something that begins it, that continues your birth, that completes your birth, and how you can know when it has been completed. So, it’s a birth! It’s something that happens to an individual. It is just as real as when you were born physically into this world. Remember the words of Jesus in John 3:6-7 *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again.”* What is it that begins the birth of a baby into this world? It’s labor pains! Now labor pain is not the birth, but begins the birth.

## CONVICTION

The first question I want to ask you is this: Have you at any time, any place, under any condition, ever been **convicted** of your sins by the Spirit of God? *“Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove (convict) the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.”* (John 16:7-8) Have you ever had the labor pain of conviction of sin in your life? How can you tell if you have ever been convicted of your sins by the Spirit of God? Here is how the Spirit of God convicts you and how you know you are convicted. When the Spirit of God takes hold of anyone’s heart that is lost, He comes with the expressed purpose of convincing them that they are a sinner by weighing your heart with guilt. He brings the weight of guilt upon your heart. He brings a burden upon your heart with the weight of your sins. At the same time there comes upon you a sense of lostness that the Spirit of God produces in your heart before God and you say, “I am lost.” The Spirit of God condemns you in your sin in the sight of Almighty God, that wherever you turn, you say, “I am a sinner, I am guilty, I am lost, I am without God, and the one thing that I want above anything else is to have the weight of my sins taken off my heart, and that the Lord would save me and forgive my sins.” Without the convicting power of the Spirit of God in your heart, it is impossible for you to ever be saved. You cannot be saved without a conviction of sin. It is as real as any labor pains that comes to a mother’s body before a baby is born.

I joined the church and was baptized, but I did not experience anything in my heart. I went down into the baptismal pool a dry sinner, and came up a wet sinner.



I did not have a weight of sin. I did not have anything whatsoever. Then about eight years later (I will always believe it was in answer to my mother's prayers) the Spirit of God took hold of my heart. You talk about being convicted, about being guilty, about being burdened, and about a sense of lostness, I knew about it, then. Do you know what I did? With all that was within me, I sought the Lord to forgive my sins and save me and give me peace in my heart.

Being raised on a farm, I remember coming in from plowing one afternoon, and as I opened the old front screen door, it seemed to say to me, "You are a sinner, you are lost," and I tried to say back to the door, "Yes, I know I am." As I walked down the hallway, the echo of my shoes upon the floor seemed to say, "You are a sinner, you are lost, you are condemned." Oh, how burdened I was! I went into the room where I slept and dropped down on both knees. You may not have been on your knees when you were saved, but you would have been willing to get on them. I prayed for one thing, to be forgiven of my sin. I did not know what to do to find the peace of God. I did not know what to do to get saved. I got up, took my bath, ate supper, and went to bed.

The following day I worked with the burden of sin on me, but didn't say anything to anyone. I've always been of such a nature that if there is something bothering me, you will never know it until I have my problem solved. So I would not say anything to any member of the family about my condition. If someone had talked to me, I would have been saved. If someone had just shown me what to do, I would have confessed my sins; but I did not know what to do.

After working the next day, (laboring under the burden of my sin) I remember turning the mule out and hanging his bridle upon the wall. I went into the woods with the express purpose of finding the Lord. When the sun went down, it seemed like my burden got heavier. As darkness fell and the crickets and frog sang their evening songs, the echo in the woods seemed to say, "You are a sinner, you are lost." I tried to say to those creatures, "Yes, I know I am, but I've come to find the Lord." I said, "Lord, I want You to hear me when I call upon You. I am as humble as I know how to be. I want You to hear me when I call this time." I knelt down, then lay down on the ground; and I remember, while lying on the ground, saying, "Lord, I don't know but one other thing to do show You that I am humble. I want You to hear me." I put my face in the dirt and held my hand up by my eyes and lay there crying unto God for Him to save me; but I did not know how to be saved. Finally, I stood, (still lost) wiped the dirt from my face, went into the house, ate supper and went to bed.

The next day I arose early, worked all morning, and when I came in at noon, I was still under conviction. After dinner my Dad said, "Son, catch your mule and go over in the big field and plow some terraces." By this time I was desperate before God. As I stood in the road in front of the barn, adjusting the plow lines from a single stock to an oliver plow (those of you who are old enough, know what I am talking about, if you lived on a farm). I remember looking up into the sun rays, which seemed to come down upon me and say, "You are lost, you are a sinner, you are guilty, you are undone." I said, "Oh yes, I know I am lost. If I only knew where I could find God and have the burden of my sins taken off and peace come into my heart."

That was what I wanted more than anything—to be saved. I can say to you, (God being my witness) I've never wanted anything on this earth as much I wanted to be saved. I know what the Bible means in Jeremiah 29:13 when it says, *"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."* I took "ole Joe" and went to the far side of the big field and started plowing around a terrace. I was so burdened under the weight of my sins, I wasn't conscious of what I was doing. Finally, I had done as far as I felt I could go, for with every step it seemed God let the world down upon my heart. I said, "Whoa! Joe." Then I dropped to my knees under those plow handles, and I want to tell you, praise His holy name, before I came out from under those plow handles, I was born again. I was saved, passed from death unto life. Thank God, you can find Him, if you will seek Him with your whole heart.

Have you ever been convicted of your sins by the Spirit of God? There can be no birth until you are convicted of sin. You can never be found until you are lost, and you are conscious that you are lost. You can never be saved until the Spirit of God draws you. In John 6:44 we find, *"No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me, draw him."* You do not come to the Lord until you are convicted.

## REPENTANCE

Now, my second question to you is this: Did you, when you were convicted of your sins, respond to that conviction? The response in the Bible is **repentance**. Did you repent of your sins? *"I tell you, nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."* (Luke 13:3) Also, Luke 13:5, *"I tell ye, nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."* Read what Jesus said of the rich man who died and went to hell in Luke 16:19-31. He asked the Father to send Lazarus back to his father's house to testify to his brothers and tell them to repent. He went to hell because he did not repent. Jesus said, *"Unless you repent, you will perish."* You can be convicted of sin, even deeply, and know that you are convicted; but unless you repent, you will never be saved. First comes conviction, then repentance. It is an impossibility for you to repent unless the Spirit of God convicts you of your sins.

I was sincere when I joined the church, but I did not repent. I was not convicted of my sins. There isn't anything I would rather see on this earth, since I have been saved, than to see people come to know the Lord. Yes, I believe you can be saved young. I believe the youngest convert I have had in my ministry was five years of age. I led him to the Lord as his daddy held him in his arms. If you are not convicted, it matters not how young or old, you cannot be saved.

Jesus said that if you do not repent, you are going to hell. Jesus said, *"Nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."* He is not going to take you to heaven unless you repent of your sins on this earth. If He will save you without repenting, He will do for you what He would not do for me. He would not save me until I repented.

Preachers! Preach that you must repent before you can be saved. If you water down the gospel, you will have to answer in eternity.

What is repentance? You say, "Preacher, how do you repent and know you have repented?" This is the heart of the new birth.

There are two big points in repentance. God does the first part and then you can do the second part. You can't do the second part until God does the first part. The first part of the repentance in the Greek is **metamélomai**, which deals with emotion. The Holy Spirit makes you sorry for your sins. Hear what the Bible says about **metamélomai** in II Corinthians 7:9, "*Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance. For ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.*" It is different from saying that you did something you regret you did. That is not what it means. It is in it, but not what it means. The sorrow is a godly sorrow that reaches up out of your heart to God. You realize you have sinned against God and are sorry to God over your sins. The Bible says it is that godly sorrow that works repentance. Here is a statement and this statement is exactly the way repentance works. Second Corinthians 7:10 says, "*For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation.*" In other words, that godly sorrow the Spirit of God produces in your heart when He convicts you, enables you to repent. You cannot repent until you have godly sorrow for your sins.

I have heard people say all you have to do to repent is just be sorry for your sins. No, no, no, you can be sorry for your sins to the point of tears and still not repent. You can say, "I will not repent." God's Word says you will repent if you are ever saved. I want to tell you, my dear friend, if the Spirit of God makes you sorry for your sins, do what God requires of you (not what this preacher says, but what God says for you to do) in order to be saved.

God does all of the new birth up to this point. God convicts you of your sins, brings godly sorrow on you, and leaves you in that condition. Man's part of repentance is **metanoéo**. In the Greek, **metanoéo** deals with your mind and with your will concerning your sins. In the 55<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Isaiah, verse 7, the Bible says, "*Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*" The heart of repentance is, with a godly sorrow in your heart over your sins, you **will** to give up all the sins for which God made you sorry, which is repentance toward God. Then you **will** to turn to Jesus in confession of your sins and ask Him to forgive you. "*That if you shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*" (Romans 10:9) You cannot make one reservation and say, "Lord, I want to be saved, but I would like to keep this one known sin." No, no. If you keep one, you keep them all. When you repent, you give them all up and leave them, knowing that you do. You repent knowing you repented, or you refuse to repent knowing you refused to repent. This is why I say you know if you are saved or lost.

I want to explain to you the difference in the sin of a saved person and the sin of a lost person. The sin of a lost person is like this. I take a blackboard and a piece of crayon and draw a solid line. That represents a present tense durative action verb that says you abide in sin, you practice sin, and you habitually stay in sin, day-in and day-out, week-in and week-out, month-in and month-out. If you abide in sin, you are lost, no matter of what church you are a member. That was exactly what I was doing. I was in the church, abiding in sin, a lost sinner going to hell.

Here is the way the Bible says you can sin as a child of God. I take the same piece of crayon and put a dot on the board, representing an aorist verb, which says at some given point of time you may fall into sin, but you do not habitually abide in sin. When you are saved you still have a weakness. There are some areas in your life that are weaker than others. If you are honest, you know it. Sometimes under temptation and trial you may slip and sin. Peter sinned. Abraham sinned. Even David, a man after God's own heart, sinned. Whenever you sin like that, you become miserable. The Holy Spirit wounds you immediately and takes the joy and peace out of your heart, and the first thing you want to do is go to the Lord and say, "Lord, I'm sorry, and I ask You to forgive my sin." Notice what I John 1:9 says, *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* That was written to Christians—children of God.

There are people who say you don't have to repent to get saved, but Jesus says you do. They say you just believe

on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved. You will never trust the Lord Jesus to save you until you repent. You can't do it! You must repent before you can trust Him. Someone may say, "I don't know if you repent first or trust the Lord first."

**You must repent before you can trust the Lord.**

I was preaching in Kentucky, and after the service was completed, I went to the hotel; in a few minutes a knock came on the door. A young man said, "Bro. Williams, Mrs. Williams asked if you would please come back to the church." When I arrived, she was talking with a young woman, who seemed to meet all the conditions, but was not saved. I went through the plan of salvation with her, and she did it a second time, but she was not saved. I said, "Is it not true that there is something in your heart that God has convicted you of and you are not willing to give it up in your repentance?" She nodded her head and said, "Yes."

I said, "Not on my word, but on God's Word, God will let you die and go to hell unless you repent. You will never be saved until you repent." I have never been able to help anyone into the kingdom until I could get them to repent. You can get into the church, but you cannot get into the kingdom. You cannot get into the family of God or be born again, until you have repented of your sins.

Prior to the closing service of a revival, a young man was waiting in the basement to see me. When I arrived, he said, "Preacher, I thought I was saved until I heard you preach this morning."

I said, "May I ask you a question? If you were here alone, would you be inclined to kneel on your knees and ask God to forgive your sins and save you?"

He looked up at me and said, "That's what I've been doing all afternoon."

I said, "You are under conviction, and the Lord is ready and willing to save you." I explained it to him quickly, repentance, as I have to you. "If you will receive the Lord as your Savior, He will save you." When we started to pray, I said, "I am going to pray and you follow me and then repent of your sins. I cannot repent for you." After we prayed, I lifted my head and looked at him and said, "Did you accept the Lord? Did you repent?"

He replied, "Yes, I did."

I asked, "Did God save you?"

He replied, "Yes, He saved me!" He came and confessed the Lord and was baptized.

## TRUST

My first question to you was: Have you been convicted of your sins? Second, did you repent of your sins with your will and with a godly sorrow for your sins, knowing that you did? That's what the Bible means when it says repentance toward God but faith in the Lord Jesus. Now, the third question is this: Did you **trust** Jesus Christ to save you? In Acts 16:29-31 we read, "*Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, 'Do thyself no harm for we are all here.' Then he (jailer) 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.'*" Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. You repent toward God, but you trust the Lord Jesus Christ. What does that mean? What is saving faith? How do you believe? How do you trust Jesus to save you? John 3:16 says, "*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.*" To believe on Jesus means these three things:

First, it means that you say with your mind, "Lord Jesus, I believe that over nineteen hundred years ago you died on the cross to save me from my sins." This is intellectual assent to the fact that Jesus died for you on the cross.

I went with a group to the Holy Land and stood beneath Calvary. I wish I could have gone up the mountain where Christ was crucified. As I stood and looked at Calvary, where Jesus died for my sins, I believe He died for me. I believed that intellectually. That is not saving faith, but it is the basis of saving faith.

The second thing is to receive Jesus. *“He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them he gave the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”* (John 1:11-12) When you receive Jesus, He becomes your Savior. He has the power and gives you the power to be born in the family of God, to become a child of God and joint heir with Christ.

The third thing, which is the heart of saving faith, mean to lean upon, to rest upon, to cast your all upon. If I were to take my body and rest it entirely upon a chair, I would trust that chair to hold me up. Whenever you completely surrender to Jesus, to make Him the Lord of your life, and say, “Lord, I give my all to You in complete surrender and trust,” Jesus will save you. This is saving faith.

I, by no means, feel that you must have the following experience, but the conditions I have explained to you must be met. I will be thankful through eternity for what the Lord did for me that afternoon. I will never forget it, and the Lord knew immediately when I repented, and He knows immediately when you repent. The moment I repented of my sins, not a second before nor a second after, but the moment I repented, the Holy Spirit revealed to me Jesus on the cross, about twenty feet behind me. I looked at Him hanging there. I had repented toward God. *“Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”* (Acts 20:21) Though I did not turn around physically, the Holy Spirit turned me around. I said, “Lord Jesus, I believe upon that cross You died for my sins.” I looked only to Jesus.

I said, “Lord Jesus, I ask You right now if You will come into my heart and save me, I will give you my heart and do anything You want me to do.” and when I did, He saved me. Instantly, He saved me.

You say, “Preacher, how do you know He saved you?” Because of Romans 5:1, *“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* The moment Jesus saved me, He left me as it were on the cross and came into my heart and quickened me to life. The burden of sin rolled off my heart and my heart was filled with peace. This is how you know you are saved. The burden rolled off my heart and the peace of God came within me. I had never known peace in my life, never had peace in my heart. I had been miserable all my days from the day I had reached the age of accountability. When the burden of sin rolled off my heart, there came within me a flood of joy and the peace of God filled my soul. As I stood up, the sun rays seemed to come down upon me saying, “You are saved! You are saved!” As I walked behind the plow, the echo of the birds upon my ears was so sweet. I realized what Isaiah 55:12 meant, *“For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.”* I was in tune with God’s creation and the joybells were ringing in my heart, for I was born into the family of God.

When a little baby is born, labor pains come, the condition of birth is met, the baby is delivered, and the mother gets relief from labor pains in her body. Whenever the Holy Spirit convicts you and brings labor pain upon your heart for your

sins, you repent, you trust the Lord, and the Lord Jesus Christ take the labor pain of conviction off your heart and brings peace within you. You know you are born again. You are in God's family. You are saved. You are saved forever, quickened by the Spirit of God. My dear friend, that is God's way of putting you in his family.

Did the burden of your sin roll away? Did the peace of God flood your soul? If you are saved and you know you are, He will put a song in your heart and a spring in your step; and you will praise the Lord for what He has done for you.

This little chorus means so much to me:

*All of my burdens went rolling away,  
Rolling away, rolling away.*

*All of my burdens went rolling away,  
Down at the Savior's cross.*

*Peace like a river came into my heart,  
Into my heart, into my heart.*

*Peace like a river came into my heart,  
Down at the Savior's cross.*

*Joy like a fountain sprang up in my heart,  
Up in my heart, up in my heart.*

*Joy like a fountain sprang up in my heart,  
Down at the Savior's cross.*

The first known fruit of being saved is peace. You have the peace of God, and you are at peace with God, where before you had been at enmity with God. You have the Holy Spirit within you that quickens you to life, to direct your footsteps to walk with the Lord, and to live as a born again child of God.

## CONFESSION BEFORE MEN

My first question to you was: Have you been convicted of your sins by the Spirit of God? Second, did you respond to that conviction by repenting of your sins with a godly sorrow that God put on your heart? Third, did you trust Jesus to be your Lord and Savior? Now the fourth question: After you were saved, did you confess Jesus before men? *"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."* (Matthew 10:31-32) In Romans 10:10-11 we also find, *"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, 'Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.'" After you were saved, did you go forward and confess Jesus before men?*

I did not know anything about the Bible when God saved me and called me to preach. Though I responded immediately, willing to trust Him in complete faith, I did not realize that my baptism (before I was saved) did not mean anything. I finished Clark College and Mississippi College, went to Southern Seminary and received my degree, and pastored several churches before the Lord began to deal with me about my baptism and confession. Then I went back to my home church, and when the invitation was given after the morning service, I went forward and confessed Jesus as my Savior and was baptized. I had not been obedient. Baptism won't save you, but is necessary for new testament church membership. That Sunday afternoon I followed the command of our Lord Jesus Christ when He said in Matthew 16:24, *"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."*

Thinking only of what the Lord had done for me and trying to be obedient to what He had commanded, I said, "Lord, I am going to follow you today." Bro. Stennis said, "Upon a profession of your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and in obedience to His command, I baptize you, my brother, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen." He put me under the water, and when he brought me up, I had the assurance I had been obedient to Jesus' command and was a member of His church.

I find, in many of our churches, people who have been saved after they joined the church, but they have never confessed the Lord or been baptized. You may be in that condition. If you are, you should confess the Lord and be baptized.

The following illustration shows you how to trust Jesus to save you. On one occasion, a man, his wife, and little boy were going on vacation up in the mountains. On top of a high mountain, they decided to stop and eat lunch. The little boy went out to play while the daddy helped the mother spread the lunch. When lunch was ready, they looked around for the little boy but could not find him. They called, but he did not answer. They called again, but he did not answer. They became alarmed, and the daddy went across the mountain. He listened. In the distance he heard the boy crying and ran to him. There was a cleft in the mountain that went down hundreds of feet. The daddy found the boy, holding tightly onto a bush, on a ledge on one side of the cleft. The daddy, realizing it was very dangerous, being very careful, stepped down on the ledge and with one foot on the ledge, he made a long stride and put the other foot against the other side

of the cleft. The boy represents the lost sinner, the bush represents the devil and your sins trying to hold you, and the daddy represents Jesus and the Holy Spirit trying to save you. The daddy reached over and caught the boy under his arms and said, "Son, daddy has got you, turn loose, and I will pick you up and put you on the mountain and you can go back to mother." But instead of turning loose, he gripped the bush with all of his might, and looked up at his daddy and said, "Daddy, I'm afraid. I'm afraid you will drop me."

Many a lost person comes under conviction and the devil says to them, "You can't repent." Let me tell you, lost sinner friend, you can or you would not be convicted.

The daddy kept patting the boy and said, "Daddy will not drop you. I promise you, son, daddy will not drop you." The son, holding the bush with a death grip, looked up at his daddy and said, "Daddy, you promise me, you will not drop me if I turn loose?" He said, "Daddy promises he will not drop you if you turn loose." With his eyes on his daddy, he began to open his hands, and **as he opened them wide, he had trusted his daddy completely.** His daddy picked him up, set him on the mountain, and the boy ran back to his mother. My dear friend, if you will just repent and trust Jesus, He will save you.

My prayer for you is that you might find this book helpful. I hope that, if you are lost, it will help you know how you can be saved. Realize that being a church member, being baptized, being good, or doing good works will not get you to heaven. Don't be deceived, you must be saved. I hope that, if you are saved, it has given you assurance of your salvation and you know for sure that you are saved and have a home in heaven. I shall be grateful to God who inspired this book to my own heart.



## **SEVEN STEPS to HEAVEN**

- 1. Communication of the Savior (Acts 4:12).**
- 2. Conviction of the Spirit (John 16:8).**
- 3. Comprehension of the mind (Acts 8:26-40).**
- 4. Contrition of the heart (Psalm 34:18).**
- 5. Confession of the mouth (Romans 10:9,10).**
- 6. Change of the life (II Corinthians 5:17).**
- 7. Continuation of the faith (John 8:31).**

If this book has helped you come to know the Lord, or has given you the assurance that you are a child of God, it would bring joy to me for you to share the good news with me.

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