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Discovery

Scripture & Science for Kids



JESUS SAVES!



THE JOURNEY TOWARD SALVATION

the road: one way leads to Fort Believe, and the other leads to Rejection River. To get to heaven, we must follow the path of belief: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 4:14). Paul is saying that we must believe in Jesus in order to be with Him in heaven. However,

WHEN GOD CREATED ADAM AND EVE, HE PUT THEM IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN—A BEAUTIFUL PLACE WHERE THEY HAD ALL THE FOOD THEY NEEDED, AND A SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD. GOD TOLD

them they could eat the fruit from any tree—except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and ate fruit from that tree anyway. This sin caused Adam and Eve to lose their special relationship with God. When we disobey God, we "sin," because we do not follow God's instructions (1 John 3:4). Sin always causes our relationship with God to be damaged. In the Old Testament, the prophet Isaiah told God's people that their sin caused them to be separated from God so as to be lost (59:1-2).

One of God's attributes is that He is an absolutely holy Being (Revelation 4:8). Since He is holy, He cannot, and will not, ignore sin. The prophet Habakkuk wrote: "Your eyes are too pure to behold evil, and you cannot look on wrongdoing" (1:13). God also is absolutely just. Righteousness and justice are the very foundation of His throne (Psalm 89:14). The truth that results from the fact that God is both holy and just is this: sin must be punished!

If God were a vengeful Creator, He could have banished mankind from His presence forever. But He is not that kind of God! He is loving (1 John 4:8) and "rich in mercy" (Ephesians 2:4). So, how could God be just, and yet at the same time be merciful to sinners (Romans 3:26)? The answer: God would find someone to "stand in" for us—someone to endure His justice, and to bear our punishment. That "someone" would be Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

God "loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). "Propitiation" (pro-pish-ee-AY-shun) means "a sacrifice that substitutes for another." Since Christ was tempted just like we are, yet never sinned (Hebrews 4:15), He alone could satisfy Heaven's requirement for justice.

Just as the lamb without blemish that was used in Old Testament sacrifices could be the (temporary) propitiation for the Israelites' sins, so the "Lamb of God" (Jesus) could be the (permanent) propitiation for mankind's sins. In spite of the fact that all sinners deserve to be lost, God provided a way to "escape the judgment of hell."

But what does this have to do with us as humans? Jesus was the only One Who was qualified to serve as a sacrifice for our sins, because only His pure blood could wash away our sins, allowing us to stand justified before God on the Day of Judgment (Titus 3:7; Hebrews 10:19). What an amazing thought: Jesus saves!



THEY WERE TRAPPED

IN THE SNOW, AND THEIR FOOD WAS RUNNING LOW. AS THE GROUP OF SETTLERS headed over the mountains toward the untamed West, they had tried to follow what they thought was a shortcut. They found out the hard way: when you are trying to get somewhere, you should stick with the best path, because sometimes the others will lead you where you don't want to go. Out of the 87 members of the Donner Party who were traveling from Illinois to California in 1846, only 46 survived the "shortcut."

We are traveling from Earth to heaven, and God has provided us with the path to get there—the way of salvation. Those who try to take a "shortcut" will never reach the goal of eternity with God. Since no shortcut leads to heaven, we must find the one true path that God has told us to take. At the start of our path is the city of Hearing. In order to **obey** the Gospel, we must first **hear** the Gospel. Paul asked the question in Romans 10:14, "And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" The only way to hear God is to listen to the very words of God that were recorded by the inspired writers in the Bible.

After we have heard and understood, then we come to a fork in



Fort Believe is not the end of our path to salvation and heaven; we must cross the Pass of Confession. To confess something is to **say** that you know it, believe, and admit it. "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9). To continue on our path to salvation, Paul says we must confess Christ.

Some of the Donner Party survived their shortcut, but no one survives a shortcut around God's path to salvation. Our journey toward heaven doesn't end at belief and confession, because there are more places we must reach. Read on.



Change Your MIND

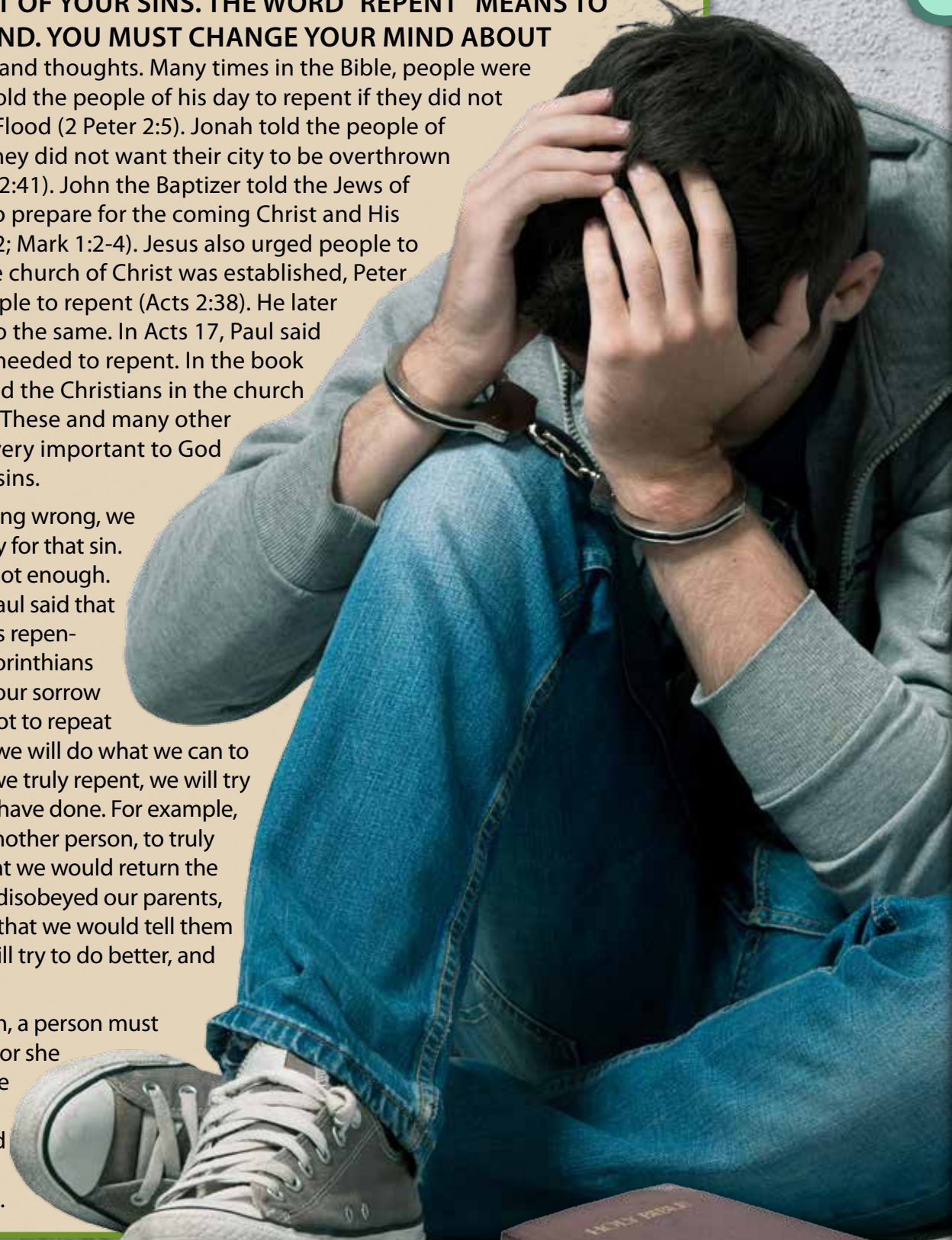
BEFORE YOU CAN BECOME A CHRISTIAN,

YOU MUST REPENT OF YOUR SINS. THE WORD "REPENT" MEANS TO CHANGE YOUR MIND. YOU MUST CHANGE YOUR MIND ABOUT

your past bad actions and thoughts. Many times in the Bible, people were told to repent. Noah told the people of his day to repent if they did not want to drown in the Flood (2 Peter 2:5). Jonah told the people of Nineveh to repent if they did not want their city to be overthrown (Jonah 3:4; Matthew 12:41). John the Baptizer told the Jews of Judea to repent and to prepare for the coming Christ and His kingdom (Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:2-4). Jesus also urged people to repent. On the day the church of Christ was established, Peter told thousands of people to repent (Acts 2:38). He later told many others to do the same. In Acts 17, Paul said the people of Athens needed to repent. In the book of Revelation, John told the Christians in the church at Laodicea to repent. These and many other verses show that it is very important to God that we repent of our sins.

When we do something wrong, we should be sad and sorry for that sin. But just being sorry is not enough. We must also repent. Paul said that "godly sorrow produces repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10). That means that our sorrow will lead us to decide not to repeat the mistake. And then we will do what we can to correct our mistake. If we truly repent, we will try to undo the wrong we have done. For example, if we stole a toy from another person, to truly repent would mean that we would return the toy to the owner. If we disobeyed our parents, to repent would mean that we would tell them we are sorry, that we will try to do better, and then obey them.

To become a Christian, a person must repent of sin before he or she can be forgiven of those sins by the blood of Jesus. In fact, Jesus said if we do not repent, we will perish (Luke 13:3,5).



Be Baptized and Live FaithFULLY

WE CANNOT COMPLETE OUR JOURNEY TO SALVATION IN HEAVEN UNLESS WE MAKE ANOTHER STOP. THIS

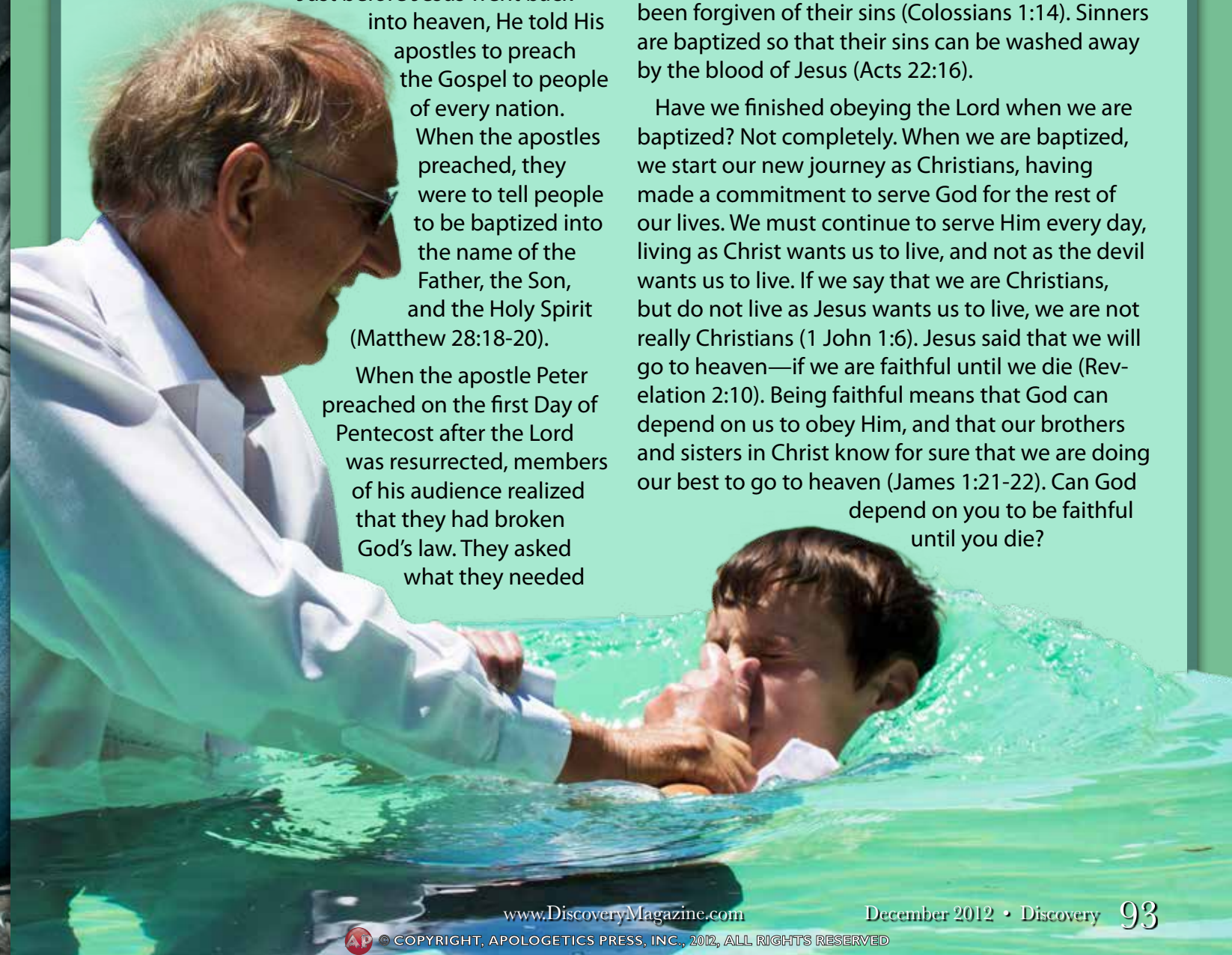
time, we stop at water. Do sinners **have** to be baptized? You probably know people who do not believe that a person must be immersed in order to go to heaven. What does baptism do for someone? Notice what the Bible says.

Just before Jesus went back into heaven, He told His apostles to preach the Gospel to people of every nation. When the apostles preached, they were to tell people to be baptized into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:18-20).

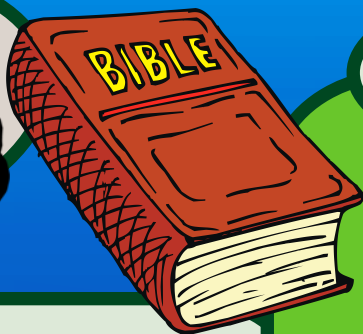
When the apostle Peter preached on the first Day of Pentecost after the Lord was resurrected, members of his audience realized that they had broken God's law. They asked what they needed

to do, and Peter did exactly what Jesus told him to do. Peter told them to repent and be baptized for the **remission**—the forgiveness—of their sins (Acts 2:38). People cannot go to heaven unless they have been forgiven of their sins (Colossians 1:14). Sinners are baptized so that their sins can be washed away by the blood of Jesus (Acts 22:16).

Have we finished obeying the Lord when we are baptized? Not completely. When we are baptized, we start our new journey as Christians, having made a commitment to serve God for the rest of our lives. We must continue to serve Him every day, living as Christ wants us to live, and not as the devil wants us to live. If we say that we are Christians, but do not live as Jesus wants us to live, we are not really Christians (1 John 1:6). Jesus said that we will go to heaven—if we are faithful until we die (Revelation 2:10). Being faithful means that God can depend on us to obey Him, and that our brothers and sisters in Christ know for sure that we are doing our best to go to heaven (James 1:21-22). Can God depend on you to be faithful until you die?



ACTIVITY PAGES



G H V Q J E S U S S Z N
 Z S S E N E V I G R O F
 A R E Z I T P A B I N S
 T U K Y N O T L T X I H
 Q X R L B J Q A K N K E
 I Q C H O V I W S V L A
 Y R P I G T R B W V J V
 R R J K I O T L C V W E
 T N E P E R D T D Q X N
 G C O I L B W L I B D H
 G R R Q H O D Z Y C Z Y
 P H Z M D W O K B K K J

SOLVE, FIND, AND CIRCLE

1. Remission is another word for _____.
2. _____ means "a sacrifice that substitutes for another."
3. _____ was the only One Who was qualified to serve as a sacrifice for our sins.
4. A person must _____ of his sin to become a faithful Christian.
5. "_____ sorrow produces repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10).
6. John the _____ told the Jews to repent.
7. John also told the Jews that the kingdom of _____ was at hand.
8. Sinners cannot go to heaven unless they have been forgiven of their _____.

TRUE OR FALSE

1. _____ There is nothing that a non-Christian needs to do in order to become a Christian.
2. _____ You do not have to repent to become a Christian.
3. _____ You must be immersed in water to be a Christian.
4. _____ Babies can be scripturally baptized.
5. _____ We cannot complete the journey of salvation if we leave out something God commands.
6. _____ After being baptized, we must be faithful until death.
7. _____ The only thing a person must do to go to heaven is believe that God exists.
8. _____ Some of the people in Peter's audience (in Acts 2) were pricked in their hearts.

Dear Digger Doug,
 Why do some people baptize babies?



Dear Reader,

Different parents have different reasons for why they "baptize" their babies. [Most actually do not really baptize (immerse) their babies in water; they only sprinkle water on them.] Probably the biggest reason that parents baptize babies is that they want their children to go to heaven. But do children have to be baptized (as infants) in order to be saved?

Jesus said in Matthew 18:3, "[U]nless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." This statement indicates that people are baptized and become Christians in order to be **like** little children! If little children are lost sinners, why would the Lord tell us all to be like children (read Matthew 19:14)? The truth is, little children (including infants) are **not** lost. They are not old enough to understand sin and its spiritual consequences.

As little children grow up, they are able to learn the difference between right and wrong. Eventually, they reach an age when they have the ability to choose to sin. It is at that time that we need to have our sins washed away by Christ's blood. It is then that we need to be baptized, not when we are innocent babies.

COMPLETE THE BIBLE VERSES (NKJV)

1. "God is _____" (1 John 4:8).
2. "Repent, and let every one of you be _____ in the name of Jesus Christ for the _____ of sins" (Acts 2:38).
3. "And how shall they believe in whom they have not _____?" (Romans 10:14).
4. "He who _____ and is baptized will be _____; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16).





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TWO Accurate ANSWERS

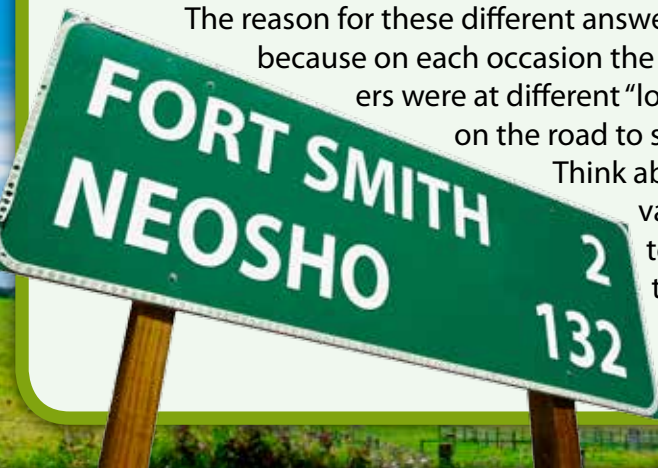
HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED

WHY SOMETIMES THE PREACHERS IN THE FIRST CENTURY TOLD SINNERS ONE THING

to do to be saved, and at other times they told them to do something different? On one occasion, Paul answered a non-Christian's question about salvation by saying, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). At another time, however, Peter told a crowd of non-Christians to "repent and... be baptized... for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). Why did Paul and Peter give different responses to non-Christians about the question of salvation?

The reason for these different answers is because on each occasion the questioners were at different "locations" on the road to salvation.

Think about salvation in terms of a trip someone is taking to



a certain city. If a friend calls to ask how far it is from his house in Jackson, Tennessee, to a friend's house in Neosho, Missouri, you would inform him that he is **475 miles** from Neosho. If he calls you back the next day, informing you that he is now in Fort Smith, Arkansas, and asks about the distance to Neosho, you would give him a **different** answer. He now would be **130 miles** from Neosho. Why did you give him two different answers? Because he was closer to his destination the second time he called. You gave him two **different** answers, yet **both** answers were **correct**.

The New Testament records different answers given to the question, "What must I do to be saved," because **the sinners who asked these questions were at different stages of understanding on the road to salvation**. The non-Christian jailor from Philippi who asked Paul about salvation had not even heard about Christ when Paul informed him that he needed to believe in Jesus to be saved. Paul thus told him about Jesus, and what it meant to truly believe in Him, and then baptized the man and his household. The non-Christian Jews to whom Peter preached had already heard Peter's sermon about Jesus when they asked their question about salvation (Acts 2:37). Peter knew that the Jews already had passed the point of belief (being "pricked in their heart"), and so they were told to "repent and be baptized" in order to obtain salvation (read Mark 16:16). Where a person is on his or her salvation "journey" determines what that person should do next.

ANSWERS

COMPLETE THE BIBLE VERSES: 1. love; 2. baptized, remission; 3. heard; 4. believes, saved.

TRUE OR FALSE: 1-F; 2-F; 3-T; 4-F; 5-T; 6-T; 7-F; 8-T.

SOLVE, FIND, AND CIRCLE: 1. forgiveness; 2. Propitiation; 3. Jesus; 4. repent; 5. Godly; 6. Baptizer; 7. Heaven; 8. sins.

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