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5 MINUTE LESSONS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Save Yourself!

In what sense do we save ourselves? Isn't Jesus the Savior? Then in what sense do the Scriptures admonish us to save ourselves? Surprisingly there are many Scriptures that convey this thought. Today we will be looking at just a few of these passages.

In 1 Timothy 4:13, 16 (NIV) the Apostle Paul tells Timothy, “¹³Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching... ¹⁶Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, **you will save both yourself and your hearers.**”

First of all, Paul tells Timothy to devote himself to the public reading of the Scripture. Why? “³For the time will come when men **will not put up with sound doctrine**. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. ⁴They will turn their ears away from the truth...” (2 Timothy 4:3-4). The Living Bible says, They “will go around looking for teachers who will tell them just what they want to hear.” (2 Timothy 4:3).

Notice, the time is coming, and I believe it is here, when men will not tolerate sound teaching. It is Scripture in its fullness that will keep us sound in doctrine and free from the error of false teaching (2 Timothy 3:16; Jude 1:3-4 NIV).

Secondly, Paul told Timothy to devote himself to the preaching and teaching of sound doctrine. The word “sound” means a Christian whose opinions are free from any mixture of error (Strong's, Greek number 5198). Sound doctrine is the teaching that comes from the Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles (Acts 2:42). “³If any man... consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; ⁴He is proud, knowing nothing...” (1 Timothy 6:3-4 KJV). Notice that sound doctrine is “the words of our Lord Jesus and is according to godliness.” Paul says that sound doctrine instructs us in godly living. So, “watch your life and doctrine closely” (1 Timothy 4:16 NIV).

“Persevere in them” (1 Timothy 4:16 NIV), that is, persist, continue and persevere in the Scriptures, the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, and His Apostles, with godly and holy living. If you do these things, you will stay on track, keep yourself from error (James 5:19-20 NIV), and will save yourself and those who hear you. In other words, you will never fall (2 Peter 1:10-11 NIV).

We will never save ourselves, and not need the Savior. But we can save ourselves in the sense that we cooperate with and continue in God's saving plan (Colossians 1:23; Luke 8:13). We will look at some more "save yourself" Scriptures in our future lessons.

Questions

1 Read Matthew 1:21 (KJV).

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." - Matthew 1:21 (KJV)

Read Acts 4:12 (KJV).

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." - Acts 4:12 (KJV)

Only Jesus can save people from their sins.

True or False

2 Read 2 Timothy 3:14-17 (NLT).

¹⁴But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. ¹⁵You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. ¹⁷God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work." - 2 Timothy 3:14-17 (New Living Translation)

When we read the Scriptures:

- A. it helps us remain in sound doctrine.
- B. it helps us persevere in the Christian faith.
- C. it protects us from false teaching.
- D. it gives us the foundation to live a godly life.

3 Read 2 Timothy 2:25 (LB) & 2 Timothy 2:26 (NLT).

“²⁵Be humble when you are trying to teach those who are mixed up concerning the truth. For if you talk meekly and courteously to them, they are more likely, with God’s help, to turn away from their wrong ideas and believe what is true. ²⁶Then they will come to their senses and escape from the devil’s trap. For they have been held captive by him to do whatever he wants.” - 2 Timothy 2:25 (LB) & 2 Timothy 2:26 (NLT)

Vine’s Greek Dictionary states concerning sound doctrine and error, “In Scripture, doctrine and morals are never divided by any sharp line. Errors in doctrine are not infrequently the effect of relaxed morality, and vice versa.”

Doctrine and morals:

- A. have nothing to do with each other.
- B. are never divided by any sharp line.
- C. God doesn’t care what we do, He loves us.

4 Read Jude 1:4, 8 (The Living Bible).

*“Some godless teachers have wormed their way in among you, saying that after we become Christians we can do just as we like...
These false teachers carelessly go right on living their evil, immoral lives...”
- Jude 1:4, 8 (The Living Bible)*

God’s Grace teaches us:

- A. I can do just as I like.
- B. “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,” - Titus 2:11-12 (NIV)
- C. to enjoy life and have a good time while you can.

5 Read Revelation 2:20 (Living Bible).

“...You are permitting that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach my servants that sex sin is not a serious matter; she urges them to practice immorality...” - Revelation 2:20 (Living Bible)

The Apostle Paul told Timothy to “watch your life and doctrine closely” (1 Timothy 4:16 NIV).

“Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.” - 1 Timothy 4:16 (NIV)

The doctrine he is speaking about is Sound doctrine “which is according to godliness” (1 Timothy 6:3 KJV).

“If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;” - 1 Timothy 6:3 (KJV)

The doctrine that Jezebel proclaimed to God’s servants produced:

- A. a godly lifestyle.
- B. immorality and fornication.

6 Read 2 Peter 3:11, 17 (NIV).

*“Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives. Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.”
- 2 Peter 3:11, 17 (NIV)*

A great part of Scripture involves God calling His people to faithfulness and holy living before Him. That has not changed from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. But we now serve God:

- A. in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.
(Romans 7:6 NIV)

“But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.” - Romans 7:6 (NIV)

- B. in dependence on the Holy Spirit for His power and grace. (Romans 8:12-14 NLT)

“¹²Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. ¹³For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.” - Romans 8:12-14 (NLT)

- C. by faith in the Son of God. (Galatians 2:20 NIV)

“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” - Galatians 2:20 (NIV)

We want to hear from you!

We would love to hear your feedback on these lessons and how you use them in your own study or in discipling others. If you have any thoughts, stories, testimonies, comments, or questions we would love to hear them!

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Answer Key

- 1** Read Matthew 1:21 (KJV).
Read Acts 4:12 (KJV).

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True

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