

## Baptized Question

### Aaron Vevon

Three times the book of Acts records non-Christians asking a familiar question. The Philippian Jailer asked, “*Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*” ([Acts 16:30](#)). The Jews on Pentecost asked, “*Men and brethren, what shall we do?*” (2:37). Saul of Tarsus asked, “*Lord, what do you want me to do?*” (9:6).

Please notice (first of all) that each of these dear souls assumed they had to DO something in order to receive salvation. Secondly, please notice that they were never told (1) that they were already saved or (2) that “faith only” saves. On each occasion they were told to DO something in order to be saved. The Philippian Jailor was told to “*believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*” (16:31). He and his household believed and they were baptized (vv. 32-34). The Pentecost Jews were instructed to “*repent and be baptized*” (2:38), and they obeyed (vv. 41). Saul was told what to do in the city of Damascus (9:6) when Ananias said, “*Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord*” (22:16), and he did it (9:18).

Though the conclusions were the same, the three instructions were somewhat different. Why? Suppose a man traveling from Mt. Vernon to Cincinnati was told that he was about 156 miles from his destination. A person in Columbus might be told it is about 102 miles. A person in Dayton might be told it is about 49 miles. Is there a contradiction? No. Three different answers would be given, but all three would be correct. The same is true spiritually. The jailor, the Pentecost Jews, and Saul were at different stages of understanding on the road to salvation. The jailor was not initially told to “be baptized” because he had not yet heard and believed the gospel message. (It would be pointless to command baptism to someone who has not first heard and believed in Christ – cf. [Mk. 16:16](#)). After hearing and believing he and his household did what was required of them (they were baptized). At the preaching of Peter the Pentecost Jews were cut to the heart (i.e., their belief was evident); thus he did not command them to believe, but to repent and be baptized. Saul was not told to believe or repent because he was already a penitent believer by the time he came in contact with Ananias; thus he was only told to be baptized. Though three different answers were given, they all came to the same conclusion.

Friends, do you believe? Have you repented and have you been baptized into Christ that your sins may be forgiven? If you haven’t, why not do it today?