We are members of the Oak Ridge church of Christ. We call ourselves Christians ([**Acts 11:26**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Acts%2011:26)) and we hold to the Bible as our one and only Truth. Church of Christ is a biblical description of Christians who work together for the cause of Christ ([**Ro. 16:16**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Romans%2016:16)). We are independent assemblies with no organization beyond our own number as described in [**Phil. 1:1**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Philippians%201:1). There are Christians across the world working with local congregations of God’s people such as described in [**Rev. 2**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Revelation%202)**-3**. Christians are members of Christ’s body, which is also known as His Church ([**Acts 2:47**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Acts%202:47)**,**[**Eph. 5:23**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Ephesians%205:23)). Our mission is to stand for God’s truth (the gospel) and teach it to all people ([**Matt. 28:18-20**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Matthew%2028:18-20)**,**[**Romans 1:16**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Romans%201:16)**,**[**1 Tim. 3:15**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=1%20Timothy%203:15)). We are accountable to our one and only Head Jesus Christ ([**Eph. 1:22-23**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Ephesians%201:22-23)**,**[**Col. 1:18**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Colossians%201:18)).

**When Was Saul Saved? [live call in: (865) 215-4337]**

**I. Introduction**

A. Perhaps, the most important question we can ask in this life is, “What must I do to be saved?”

B. Sadly, this is one of the most misunderstood questions that receives a variety of answers that do not conform to what the New Testament teaches.

C. Because of wrong teaching, there are many who are convinced they are saved when in reality, they are not.

D. Many are told to simply believe in Jesus and ask Him to forgive them of their sins and at that moment they are saved.

E. Others are told to pray for an experience with the Holy Spirit and when they feel they have received such an experience, at that moment they are saved.

F. In this lesson, we do not challenge the sincerity of anyone who believes they are saved.

G. But, we do lovingly challenge you to examine with us the question, ***“when was Saul saved?”***

H. It would be reasonable to believe that when we look at the conversion of Saul, we ought to be able to determine at what point he was forgiven of his sins and that this experience should correspond with our own experience of being saved.

I. But, if we find that we believe we were saved at a different point than when Saul was saved, then we must begin to think whether God requires different things of different people in order to be saved. Or, are we the ones who need to revise our thinking and turn to follow the truth that we find in the New Testament whether it conforms to what we have previously believed was right or not.

J. To help us in this lesson, we will concentrate on what happened to Saul of Tarsus (later renamed Paul) as he was turning to Christ. At each step, we will ask, was he saved at this point? Then, when we do find the point where Saul was clearly forgiven, we will do our best to persuade all that only when we do all that the Lord commands to be saved can we be assured of being forgiven of our sins.

**II. When Was Saul Saved?**

**A. When he was persecuting Jewish Christians (Acts 9:1-2, 23:1)?**

1. Paul believed it was his duty to God to persecute Jewish Christians.

2. Although sincerely engaged in this terror with the highest of motives, none of us here would conclude that Saul was saved while doing these horrible things.

**B. When he saw Jesus, talked with Him, believed in Him and was miraculously blinded (Acts 9:3-8)?**

1. Many people relate how they have had a salvation “experience” as they tell of visions, dreams, voices or so-called miracles that have led them to turn to Christ and immediately at the point of their prayers, they were saved.

2. But although so many preachers have told us that Saul was saved on the road to Damascus, notice carefully that we do not read of anything of this kind. However, what we do read is that he was told by the Lord to go into Damascus and he would be told what he must do.

3. So, we must continue our study to see what Saul did and when he was saved.

**C. When he fasted (Acts 9:9)?**

1. Usually, when we think of fasting, it is associated with either times of spiritual reflection and focus or times of mourning and great distress.

2. Here, Saul is fasting in Damascus and still blind.

3. It does not seem like it would be the behavior of one already newly saved.

4. We must go further to see when Saul was saved.

**D. When he prayed to God (Acts 9:10-11)?**

1. No indication is given as to the content of Saul’s prayer.

2. But as we go further, we will see that even when praying, Saul was not in a saved position. How many times though have we heard people say that we should pray to Jesus to forgive us in order to be saved?

**E. When he saw another vision (Acts 9:12)?**

1. Not only did he see one vision but two. He saw a man coming to him and laying his hands on him so he could see again.

2. However, in spite of seeing these visions, we still have no indication Saul was forgiven.

**F. When he miraculously received his sight (Acts 9:17-18)?**

1. After receiving his second miracle, Saul still was not saved.

2. But how many today associate receiving what they call a miracle with being saved at that moment as they prayed to God.

**G. When he was filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17-18)?**

1. He was filled with the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner.

2. He would be able to speak and write the word of God and perform miracles and speak in tongues.

3. So many look for a direct visit from the Holy Spirit believing with all their hear heart that when this happens, at that point they will be saved.

4. But, we must continue further to know for sure at what point Saul was saved.

**H. When he was baptized (fully immersed) in water (Acts 9:18-20, 22:16)?**

1. Instead of telling Saul to pray to Jesus to forgive him and to come into his heart, Ananias commands him to be baptized (fully immersed) in water.

2. And, instead of saying he was already saved but was being baptized to simply obey Jesus, Ananias said he should be baptized to wash away his sins. What sins? Evidently, he was not saved until he was baptized.

3. There were no arguments regarding how faith could not include baptism because baptism involves faith that God will wash our sins away.

4. Saul after believing and repenting, obeyed and at that point, he was forgiven, began a new life in Christ.

**III. When Were You Saved?**

A. As we look at the conversion of Saul, we should distinguish the record from all the confusing teaching regarding salvation experiences.

B. Excluding the miraculous events in Saul’s conversion, we cannot doubt that baptism was the point when he passed from being unforgiven to forgiven.

C. Although baptism alone will not save, it is clear that excluding baptism from salvation will not save either.

D. Are you willing to follow Saul’s example and have your sins washed away now? **Why do you wait (Acts 2:36-42)?**

E. If you believe you have been saved and yet have not been baptized in the way that we read of in the book of Acts, for the forgiveness of your sins, to have your sins washed away, why not, like Saul and thousands more, abandon your previous beliefs, even the belief that you were saved at the point of praying, repenting or having a “miraculous” experience, and truly be saved in the way the Bible teaches?

We invite all in our audience to our Bible studies on Wednesday at 7pm and Sunday morning at 9am. We would love to study God’s together with you! Please check the scriptures we have covered tonight. We want to help you in any way we can. Contact us for Bible studies by telephone, e-mail, or simply come to one of our assemblies. Contact: We assemble at 225 North Purdue Ave. in Oak Ridge at 9am on Sundays and 7pm on Wednesdays; oakridgechurch.com; david.barry@oakridgechurch.com, murray.wade@oakridgechurch.com; (865) 693-1416.

Our next live program is planned for May 6, 2024 when we plan to study “**Faithful Women of the Bible**” and we hope to see you next time on **"Speaking The Truth In Love".**