

SCRIPTURE READING: Exodus 20 & Acts 16:1-3; 14-34

SINGING: 10:1-3 – 435:9 – 362:1-3 – 160:1-3 – 312:1-4

Intro. Acts 16 records three different conversions!

A. All three learned the 'comfort in life and death' though in different ways

B. To know the comfort of salvation in Christ includes a triple conviction

1. the trio (misery, deliverance, gratitude) is not stages of spiritual life

2. the trio isn't strictly always in the same chronological way

3. yet each aspect of the trio is known by every saved soul

THE ONLY ROAD TO REAL COMFORT

I. To be convinced you are a lost and doomed sinner

II. To be convinced how to be delivered by Jesus Christ

III. To be convinced that holiness is the appropriate gratitude

I. One essential aspect to find *real comfort* is to be convinced you are lost

A. We (church people) all know this 'doctrinally'

1. But is it a *living or dead knowledge*?

2. Head knowledge is good but doesn't *change* except when it fits us

3. This is why God *needs to open* our eyes for our misery

a. What is our misery?

b. What does seeing it in truth do to a man?

B. Be clear that each experience this discovery in unique ways but with the same end result: Matthew 5:3-8

C. How deep does this discovery & conviction of sin need to be?

II. The second essential is to be convinced *how* to be delivered by Jesus

A. Real comfort is *not hearing about* or *knowing about* Jesus

1. How often haven't you heard the message of the Gospel?

2. God needs to lay His hand upon us *personally* to open our eyes

3. How precious when *God's Spirit reveals Jesus Christ!*

a. what is meant with a revelation of Jesus Christ? Gal. 1:16

B. Real comfort is also not *delivering yourself*

1. Many 'deliver' themselves with 'deciding to believe'

a. faith is the 'gift of God' (Eph. 2:8) – 'operation of God' (Col. 1:12) – is fruit of 'being born of God' (John 1:12-13)

C. Real Comfort is when God enables you to *put your trust in Him*'

1. How is a man delivered?

a. Believe in the Lord Jesus and be ye saved – 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.' Romans 10:9-10

D. Yet there is more *deliverance* needed than the deliverance from guilt

1. How will a man be delivered from *his/her sinfulness* (Rom. 7:24)

III. To be convinced that only holiness is the appropriate gratitude

A. God's great purpose in salvation is *restoration of Paradise conditions*

1. Clearest mark of saving grace is *not misery – not confession of faith* but the *renewal or holiness of the life*

- Prov. 4:18 *But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*

- 2 Cor. 3:18 *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

B. Knowing where/what we were – what God's grace did/does, how natural to be busy with the question: *what shall I render unto the LORD for all His benefits?*

Closing Question: What do you experientially know of these three aspects?