

# Be Saved from this Perverse Generation

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Part 1

Scripture; Acts 2:40

Scripture reading; Ephesians 4:17-19

INTRO:

There is a saying that;

Bud Robinson, the well-known Holiness preacher, was taken by friends to New York and shown around the city. That night in his prayers he said, "Lord, I thank You for letting me see all the sights of New York. And I thank You most of all that I didn't see a thing that I wanted!"

Blessed is the man who can set loose to the charms of this old world, (and be) independent of them because he doesn't want them.

Well, we are living in a most fascinating time aren't we. When we see all the things around us, we see so much of what we could want. We see the endless, endless things that can entertain us and amuse us for a lifetime or two. Hobbies and crafts, sports and leisure, anything and everything under the sun that can capture our minds and imaginations.

Now not all of them are bad but all of them take some form of our time, which we must be cautious of. However, when we also look at some of the other things that are out there, the bad things in our world, we ask ourselves, is this what is really entertaining people?

Is this what people are really following and enjoying? When you look at the things that are coming out on the social media platforms, shown us in the entertainment world and what's being presented in the news about our world, it is appalling as to what is all going on out there, and I'm sure we only see the tiny tip of the iceberg.

And that brings us to another question, can it really get much worse?

Can the depths of immorality in our land decline even further? Can the nation's rejection of God get even more pronounced? How long can our nation continue in this downward spiraling direction? Because not only are many of these things in our world appalling, but they are also perverse, and that is why the title of today's message says, 'we need to be saved from this perverse generation.'

These words come from Acts chapter 2 verse 40 and is the verse I want us to look at in today's message and the next.

These are the final words of Peter's sermon he gave to the people after the Holy Spirit came down and filled the disciples. Acts chapter 2 verse 40 says;

And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."

Yes, these are the last words of Peter's message, but they are the words that are the most applicable to us once we have become born again. For if we go up two verses, we have Peter telling the people to;

'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'

This is the gospel, this is the salvation message, this is the moment of being saved from our sins and being forgiven by God through the Lord Jesus Christ. This is when we become justified before God in a moment.

But in verse 40 he gives us the sanctification process, that process of becoming like Christ, where, 'the rubber meets the road' between our faith and our life. This is when we conform our lives more and more to that of Jesus and less and less of the world and change the things we need to change in becoming holy and pure for God.

For it is God who tells us in Leviticus 11:44 and then quoted by Peter in 1 Peter 1:16 saying; ‘you shall be holy; for I am holy.’

It is this sanctifying process that will take the rest of our lives, and even though we will never be perfect as long as we are in this mortal corruptible body, we are commanded to strive for it, live for it, conform everything we know that is bad in us, and exchange it for good.

Now there are those who think ‘what’s the point,’ ‘if we can never achieve perfection in this life, why even bother trying.’ Why even try to become holy, or strive to become like Christ, when we know we will never reach or achieve that final state while here on earth. And since we will never be perfect, we will never be able to please God while we are in this flesh.

This is a lie, a hiss of the serpent that many preachers and teachers fall into, and it has done untold damage in the church. Any time you tell people there is no way you can please God, then the only other alternative is ‘live as you want, it doesn't matter.’

I remember Kent Hovind saying something like; ‘you cannot please God with your actions, you are more productive in shoveling your walk than you are in trying to please God.’

Where do you think that kind of teaching puts the average person? It either leaves them wanting to do good but to no real purpose, or it leaves them to doing bad because there are no real consequences.

Peter says, that even after salvation and the receiving of the Holy Spirit we still need to be saved from this perverse generation. And not only is this action of sanctification to follow salvation, we must know why sanctification is necessary for the Christian life.

If we do not receive a reason for Peter's command, it will be of no use to us.

Which brings us to the first point, we must know why.

For you see there are many preachers out there, who preach well the message about salvation, but many of them fail on even mentioning sanctification.

## I. WE MUST KNOW WHY

Just as Peter commanded 'be saved from this perverse generation' he is actually saying; 'YOU', be saved from this perverse generation.' Its not just 'be saved,' but 'YOU' be saved. That it is 'you' who has to make the choice in coming out of the wicked things of this world and live for Christ. Looking at Acts chapter 2 verse 40 the verse starts off by saying;

And with many other words he testified and exhorted them,

According to the Online Bible Greek Lexicon, the word testified means to; ‘charged them religiously’ and the word exhorted which is defined as ‘called them to his side in comfort and instruction.’ Peter therefore with many other words ‘charged them religiously’ and ‘called them to his side in comfort and instruction.’ It says that Peter did this with many other words, words which have not been recorded in this sermon. And so, we must use other scriptures to formulate what these other words may have been.

Paul told the Corinthians in his second letter about the Christian not being unequally yoked with unbelievers. In 2nd Corinthians chapter 6 starting in verses 14 through 16b he says;

Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

15 And what accord has Christ with Be-li-al? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols?

And then in the middle of verse 16 he gives us part of the reason why and says;

For you are the temple of the living God.

As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."

And then in verse 17 he gives us the how, how to be separated from the world and says;

17 Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you."

It is with these verses that Paul shows us the separation that is to be between what is to be godly and what is worldly. He contrasts righteousness with lawlessness, light with darkness, Christ with Belial, and believers with unbelievers. And then what agreement has the temple of God which is you, the Christian, with the idols of this world? As he concludes with verse 17 saying 'come out from among them and be separate.

John also gives us a picture of why this separation from the world is to be there, speaking about the fallen Babylon from Revelation 17, He says in Revelation 18 verses 4 and 5;

And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.

5 "For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

The purpose of being separated from this world is not only for our sanctification, in becoming like Christ, in becoming holy, but as verse 4 says; lest you share in her sins. Lest you become part of the things you are to be separated from, lest you join those who are doing them, and you receive of her plagues also.

God hears what is happening in this world, He knows all the things that are going on in the lives of the lost, and He is telling us that we are not to be part of the sin they are in.

We often hear of how God will 'make all things right in the end; of how 'God will right all wrongs at the end of this age'; that God will 'deal and take care of all the bad things done in this world.'

Does that not mean that God will be the judge and justifier when this all comes to an end? Yes it does, why else does God say 'vengeance is mine.' Does that mean He will punish all the evil and wicked and unbelieving people of this world for the things they have done?



Yes, and that is why we must separate ourselves from the things they are doing. As Peter says, 'be saved from, this perverse generation.'

We must get ourselves out of the sins this world is doing, in arousing Gods wrath, lest we be caught up in the same things and come under the same condemnation when we die, or when He Judges the nations.

Now that last statement probably blew a fuse with the Calvinist and the once-saved-always-saved people. But mark my words, there will be many people in hell who thought they could play with sin, profess to be a Christian, believe that nothing we do, can please or displease God and still expect or think they are going to heaven.

Jesus said; "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven...

As Jesus also said in Luke chapter 7 starting in verse 46;

"But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?

47 "Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like:

48 "He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the

stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock.

49 "But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

Are you digging deep? Are you laying your foundation on the Rock of Jesus and doing the things he tells you to do? In separating from the world? Or are you building your faith without a foundation, enjoying the pleasures of this world, not taking the time to be rooted and grounded in the truths of God's word?

Listen to Nahum in his burden and vision against Nineveh in chapter 1 verse 2 and part of 3;

God is jealous, and the LORD avenges; The LORD avenges and is furious. The LORD will take vengeance on His adversaries, And He reserves wrath for His enemies;

3 The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, And will not at all acquit the wicked

And so it will also be at the end of this age, this is why Peter says;

...with many other words he testified and exhorted them,  
saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."

Because Peter knew what was coming, Peter knew what the end of this world and its unbelieving inhabitants will come to. For not only do we need to be saved from our sins in salvation. But we need to be saved from the things in this perverse generation through sanctification.

For if we participate in certain things of this world, we not only forfeit the redemption we came to in salvation, but will also suffer the same punishment as the lost.

Why else would Paul give us the list in Ephesians chapter 5; or the list in 1 Corinthians chapter 6; or the descriptions of the flesh in Galatians chapter 5, and tell us that ‘those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.’

Or why would the author of Hebrews, give us Hebrews chapter 10, where he talks about ‘sinning willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth’ and then go on to describe the judgments such a one will face if they do not separate themselves from these willful sins?

For if we are to be a holy people, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people. That we may proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light and not continue to walk in the darkness of this world. Then we need to be saved from this perverse generation.

because that is not only what Peter has commanded us to do, that is what the Lord wants from His people, that we would be a people separated from this world unto Him for His glory.

It is the Holiness of God that we are to portray and put on, not the filth and pleasures of this world.

1 Corinthians 3:16 says;

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

That is you the Christian, you, and your body. Your soul is to be the dwelling place of God, the temple of God. If we take a look at the tabernacle in the Old Testament, of how everything was to be perfect and holy. There was the screen around the tabernacle, to keep animals and people from wandering into the temple court, everything was kept out of the temple area. Only ritually clean Jews could enter into the court through the front gate.

Then there was the tabernacle that kept all the Levites and people out of the holy place. Only the priest offering incense on the altar of incense, preparing the show bread and tending the lamp were allowed into this place. Then there was the holy of holies in the inner tabernacle, where everyone was kept out and only the high priest entered once a year and that with the blood of atonement, and this inner ‘Most Holy Place,’ was the dwelling place of God.

And Paul tells us ‘do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the spirit of God dwells in you?’

If I could give you a quick illustration of your life like this, the screen around the tabernacle could represent your life or your home in keeping out all the wandering and unclean things from entering.

And I may ask, are you keeping unclean things out of your life, and out of your home? Have you set boundaries around you, and your home, to keep your dwelling separated from the things of the world? What things are you keeping out of your home to make it a Christian home?

If you allowed someone into your home, would you allow them to look into all the closets, into the hidden corners of your home? Or what about just looking into your smart phone?

If Jesus were to come to your home today, how much tidying up would you need to do? If Jesus wanted to use your phone for a moment, would you let Him?

And then of the tabernacle, the tabernacle kept out the Levites and ritually pure people from entering the holy place. This holy place could represent your body. As the tabernacle had 5 pillars at the front and was the only way into the Holy Place. It has been portrayed as representing the 5 senses of the body. That through these 5 senses we allow things into our soul through the body, by the things we watch, by the things we hear, by the things we consume, by the things we smell and touch.

And then inside the innermost part of the tabernacle, in which was the ark with the mercy seat, was the resting place of God. this core part of the temple called the Holy of Holies had 4 pillars at its entrance from the holy place. These 4 pillars, which we will not go into today, can be divided into 4 ways the soul is accessed through the spirit. And these 4 are the spirit of God, the spirit of demons, the spirit of animals, and the spirit of man. And it is this area that we must guard as it gives access to the place where the Holy Spirit dwells within us.

And this holy, inner part is only kept holy by what we keep out of it.

That is, what we keep out of the Holy of Holies, is determined by what we keep out of the holy place.

And what we keep out of the holy place is determined what we keep out of the tabernacle.

And what we keep out of the tabernacle is determined by what we keep out of the court which is determined by what we keep out by the screen.

We can only keep this temple within us Holy by limiting what we allow through the spirit, and what we allow into the body, and what we allow into our homes and lives. And we must ask ourselves do we truly guard this temple in us as holy?

Why else would Peter say in 1st Peter 2:11;

Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,

And then 1 Peter 4:2;

2 that he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

The wrath of God is coming to this generation, to this unbelieving population of this world and He does not want you to be part of what is coming, this is why Peter warns us to be saved from this perverse generation.

But with every warning in scripture, we must not only know why, but we must be willing, every command that we receive from God's word, every statute He gives us, we must be willing to heed. If we hear the words of Peter when he tells us to be saved from this perverse generation; each and every one of us must make the decision and choice to do so. Which then brings us to the second point, we must be willing to obey

## II. WE MUST BE WILLING

Listen to Jesus plea for Israel in Luke 13:34;

34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!

It must become our desire, we must be willing to change our all, if we have been changed in the salvation of Jesus.



Look at all those who wanted to be healed by Jesus in the gospels, how often did He not say to the people, ‘your faith has made you well,’ ‘according to your faith let it be done to you,’ ‘your faith has saved you,’ ‘receive your sight for your faith has made you well.’ Over and over again people were healed, made well, and followed Him because they desired the things He gave. And they did all these by faith, which would be another whole message in itself. But these people wanted to be freed from their ailments, from their diseases and from their disabilities, they had a desire to be released from the bondage of their conditions and to be made well by our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is how we are to view this perverse generation, as some disease or some disability that is holding us back from following. We should have a desire to be freed from this generation, just as the lame man desired to walk or of the blind man who wanted to see. We must have a desire to want to live free from the bondage of this world. We must have a want to be unassociated with the perverse things of this generation.

In the Good Friday message, speaking about the rich man who was unwilling to give up his possessions and follow Jesus, I said;

‘it only takes one thing in our lives to chain us to the world and keep us from following Jesus’

One thing. And by the grace of God if He shows us that one thing, we should rejoice and be willing to cleanse our life, mind and our whole heart from that one thing holding us to the world, so that we may be free, clean, not only on the inside but also on the outside.

Listen to Jesus rebuke to the Pharisees in Matthew 23 verse 25 to 28;

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.

26 "Blind Pharisees, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men's* bones and all uncleanness.

28 "Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

The Pharisees had no desire to change, the Pharisees had no intent on cleansing themselves of the pollution they held in their hearts. They were 'unwilling' to bend their will and their ways to that of Christ.

In fact, they were more willing to kill a man instead of exposing their inward uncleanness, but not just kill any man; they were willing to crucify the Son of God instead of exposing their sin in humility. And before we condemn the Jews, in saying what stubbornness and stiff-necked people they were in crucifying our Lord, let us remember Steve Herzig words he gave in a Bible Conference message years ago. As a Jew he spoke about the stubbornness and stiff-necked nature of his people and said this;

God uses (the Jews), God uses us as a corporate people... (and) guess what, when you read about (the stiff-necked and stubbornness of the Jew) whatever we might be corporately, you are individually. You want to know about sin; we wrote the book (speaking as a Jew). But you want to know about who doesn't (sin), we all do, including you, God uses (the Jew) as the example.

We as individuals are responsible for our own heart and it is up to us to be willing to make that change in ourselves as we have often heard the phrase 'if there is a will there is a way' and that holds true in wanting to be freed from the perversion of this world. I am not saying it will always be easy, but by the power of God through the Holy Spirit we can overcome, as Paul says to the Corinthians, that with each temptation we face, God will make the way of escape if we so desire.

Peter says in 1 Peter 4 starting in verse 1;

1 ¶ Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

The idea in this verse is that of a soldier who puts on his equipment and prepares for battle. But this equipment is not physical equipment nor is it physical warfare, it is a psychological warfare, the verse says arm yourselves also with the same mind, the same kind of thinking as Christ. It is a war that is fought in your mind as it battles with the flesh. And once we have conquered it, sin that is, we no longer have a desire to practice it. Verse 2;

2 that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.

We all did the will of the gentiles before our salvation, as Peter says ‘we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the gentiles, and we did that willfully.

But we no longer live for the lusts of men, the things this world desires, but rather we have armed ourselves with the mind of GOD to overcome such things.

Warren Wiersbe writes about sin in his commentary on 1 Peter chapter 4 saying;

Think of what sin did to Jesus (~~v. 1~~). He had to suffer because of sin (~~see 1 Peter 2:21; 3:18~~). How can we enjoy that which made Jesus suffer and die on the cross? If a vicious criminal stabbed your child to death, would you preserve that knife in a glass case on your mantle? I doubt it. You would never want to see that knife again.

Our Lord came to earth to deal with sin and to conquer it forever.

He dealt with the ignorance of sin by teaching the truth and by living it before men's eyes.

He dealt with the consequences of sin by healing and forgiving; and, on the cross, He dealt the final deathblow to sin itself.

He was armed, as it were, with a militant attitude toward sin, even though He had great compassion for lost sinners.

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When it comes to what God has laid out for our lives, and we see the way of righteousness from His word, we must be willing to follow Peter's command, and that is to be saved from this world and its sin, willing to be saved from this perverse generation. No longer are we to be entertained with the ways of the gentiles as he also said.

And that brings us to the final point, We must know how, we must know how to be saved from this perverse generation, but that will be a point we will leave for next time.

#### CONCL:

And so in conclusion. We have begun to look at Peter's words when he said;

And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."

And we covered the first point on why we need to be saved from this generation. That is, if we are true born-again Christians, we are to be separated to God in all that we are, and all that we do. As Peter said that we no longer should live the rest of our time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For Peter also says 'since all these things will be dissolved (meaning the world), what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness...

And second that we would be willing, willing to be saved, willing so that we would no longer be participants in the sinful pleasures of this world, but rather, that we would give them up and live for God, with a pure and holy heart before our Lord.

It is George Herbert who has said:

Where the heart is willing it will find a thousand ways, but  
where it is unwilling it will find a thousand excuses.

May the Lord not find us looking for excuses but looking for life eternal in Jesus.