

“Save Yourself!”

Acts 2:36-47 (text v. 40)

Peter is preaching to the house of Israel on the Day of Pentecost.

v. 36— What Israel did—Crucified the Lord and their Messiah (cf. v. 23)

v. 37—Holy Ghost conviction—*“What shall we do???”*

vs. 38-39—Offer of a gift!

v. 40— Further exhortation (encouragement).

v. 40—Peter exhorts, **“save yourselves...”** Save yourselves from what???

- Not from hell—only Jesus can save you from going to hell (Acts 4:12; John 3:16-17). This was why He came (Luke 19:10).
- Not from your sins—only Jesus can forgive your sins. His name means to be saved from sin (Mt. 1:21).

While it is impossible to “save yourself” from your sins and going to hell, we are exhorted to “save ourselves” from *“this untoward generation.”*

Peter’s exhortation to **“save yourselves”** made his hearers personally responsible! Paul admonished Timothy, *“Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both **SAVE THYSELF**, and them that hear thee”* (1 Tim. 4:16).

God will do for you what you can’t do—but He will not do what you can do for yourself. God expects you and I to do certain things on our own—

- Examine yourselves (1 Cor. 13:5)...
- Comfort yourselves (1 Thess. 5:11)...
- Humble yourselves (1 Pet. 5:6; James 4:10)...
- Cleanse yourselves (2 Cor. 7:1)...
- Judge yourselves (1 Cor. 11:31)...
- Keep yourselves (1 John 5:21; Jude 1:21; Josh 6:18)...
- Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven (Mt. 5:20).
- **“Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”**

➡ The root word of **“untoward”** is “toward,” (to move in the direction of something). The prefix “un” means “no” / “not.” Hence, **“untoward”** means “not toward, backward, twisted, crooked, winding.” The **“untoward generation”** is a “messed up” generation.

- *Untoward* is anything (or anyone) which will not go *to-ward*—that is straight onwards—but moves from side-to-side (like a snake, drunkard).
- **God’s way is STRAIGHT** (Mt. 7:13). “*Untoward*” is the opposite of “straight” i.e. it is crooked or bent; perverted (cf. Phil. 2:15). Anyway that is contrary to God’s way is “*untoward*.” Sin is *untoward* because sin goes contrary to God’s Word which is straight (homosexuality; abortion; etc.).
- The O.T. word for “*untoward*” is “*froward*” [variation of the Old English “from-ward”—the opposite of toward]. It means (Webster): “turning from; not willing to yield or comply with what is required; unyielding; ungovernable; disobedient.” (see Dt. 32:5, 20; 2 Sam. 22:27; Ps. 101:4; Prov. 2:15; 11:20; 17:20; 22:5; Isa. 57:17).

Characteristics of an “*untoward*” generation: Jesus referred to this “*untoward generation*” in Matthew 11:16-19.

- “*This untoward generation*” is the generation that crucified Jesus Christ.
- It is the generation that would not have Christ reign over them.
- It is the generation that preferred Caesar over Christ. It is the generation that cried out, “*Away with him, away with him, crucify him... We have no king but Caesar*” (John 19:15).
- It is the generation that preferred a thief and murderer over Christ and said, “*Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas*” (Luke 23:18).

“*This untoward generation*” is the generation of the world today! It is against Christ... It wants nothing to do with Christ. Today’s generation would crucify Him just as quick as the generation that crucified Him in the first century.

We must resolve to save ourselves from the influence, opinions, and destiny of this generation. God will not do this for us. We are exhorted to do it for ourselves—“**SAVE YOURSELVES!**”

➤ Here are a few areas where we are responsible to SAVE OURSELVES:

(Col. 2:8). **“Beware”** is a warning—A warning about being “spoiled” by philosophy! When food is “spoiled” it is corrupted and unfit to eat.

➡ The word *“philosophy”* is used TWO times in the Bible—Both in a negative context (Col. 2:8 cf. Acts 17:18).

A. What is “philosophy?” PHILOSOPHY means “love of wisdom / knowledge.”

1. There are **two sources of wisdom** (James 3:15-17; Luke 16:8 cf. 1 Cor. 3:19). Christ is made unto us wisdom (1 Cor. 1:30). In Him *“are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”* (2:3).
2. The basic issue of philosophy is “What can I know?” Philosophy seeks an answer to a question by thinking and rationalizing about it. Philosophers pride themselves in their logic.
 - “A philosopher is someone who thinks more and more about less and less, until he finally know everything about nothing.”
 - Philosophy’s definition of God: “God in essence is the eternal thing hood of the whatness of the unmoved mover.”
3. In philosophy, the human mind is its own guide, measure, and rule. Philosophers believe that there are no absolutes. They reject the absolute authority of the Bible. The Bible believer doesn't go by what a man “thinks,” but by what God has said—*“What saith the Scriptures.”*
4. Philosophy will *“spoil”* a person’s devotion to God. The love of knowledge SPOILED man in the garden (Gen. 3:1-6).

B. There are **seven basic fields / branches of philosophy**:

1. Naturalism. The belief that whatever cannot be perceived by the five physical senses is not real.
2. Idealism (Only ideas are real). Webster says idealism is “a system or theory that makes every thing to consist in ideas, and denies the existence of material bodies.” “Ideas are the stuff of which reality is made... and the things which are seen

are only manifestations of a hidden or underlying IDEA that brought the thing into being.”¹

3. Realism (materialism). Joins together naturalism and Idealism. Reality is independent of the mind’s perception of it.
 4. Pragmatism (situation ethics). All moral issues must be decided independently and on the principle of love, not the Bible. If it works it must be right.
 5. Hedonism (pleasure is the ultimate goal). Do as you please. If it feels good, do it. This was the philosophy of a man “*under the sun*”— “*Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry...*” (Eccl. 8:15).
 6. Utilitarianism (Do whatever brings the greatest good to the greatest number.)
 7. Fatalism. Man is simply a mechanical robot. Everything he does is pre-determined.
- C. No philosophy of this world would defend any Bible fundamental (Hell, Heaven, 2nd coming, total depravity, etc.).
- None of the world’s philosophers was a champion of the. The world’s most well-known philosophers were failures in life— Socrates was a sodomite who committed suicide. Plato was an evolutionist, a polytheist. Aristotle committed suicide.

(Eph.

2:1-3).

Each generation should learn from the previous generation. But today’s generation is worse than the last generation. And the last generation is worse than the generation before it. Each generation is becoming more perverse than the previous generation! Degeneration!

A. **Disobedience** (v. 2).

¹ Peter S. Ruckman, *The Christian’s Handbook of Science and Philosophy*, Bible Baptist Bookstore, Pensacola, FL, 1985, p. 13.

- B. **Degradation.** Fulfilling the lust of the flesh and mind (v. 3). Animal motivations/instincts:
1. Self-gratification—Comfort
 2. Self-preservation—Eat, shelter, defense, stay alive
 3. Self-propagation—Reproduce, raise a family
 - Jesus was never motivated by these. He was motivated by “self-denial”—He pleased not Himself, but sought to please God at the expense of pleasing self.
- C. **Damnation.** That is where this world’s system is heading (Prov. 14:12; Mt. 7:13-14).

- A. Politics is the way and means by which a government operates. Politics is about power—who gets to run who.
1. Our government is corrupt because most of the politicians are corrupt.
 2. The politics of this generation is anti-God... anti-Bible... anti-Christian (Luke 23:12; Acts 12:1-3). No politician would ever be elected who is an outspoken pre-millennialist!
 3. I refuse to allow myself to be influenced by the political views of today. My political views are shaped by what I read in this Bible—Not the corrupt liberal news media!
- B. There is a government coming that will be free of politics. It is a government that will rest on the shoulders of Jesus Christ, and *“the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.”* It will be a government that is of God... by God... and for God.
- (Ezra
- 10:11; Luke 8:14; 1 Tim 3:4; 2 Thess. 2:12).

Pleasure, itself is not sinful. The problem is where a person seeks to find pleasure. The pleasures sought by the majority of today’s generation involve pleasing the desires of the flesh. Carnal pleasures never satisfy.

The pleasures the world offers are deceitful... they promise more than they can deliver... and bring more pain when you lose them.

Advertisers are very adept at making this generation feel discontent, as if they need more: A bigger TV... The latest model car... A fancier house... the latest fashions... the newest gadget... fleshly entertainment (casinos), etc. Hence, this generation seeks after temporal pleasures like chasing an elusive butterfly from flower to flower (Heb. 11:25).

Christians must save themselves from the pleasures of this generation (2 Cor. 6:17). Things like drugs... liquor... strong drink... pornography... illicit sex... gambling casinos... etc.

The Christian seeks lasting pleasure from pleasing the One who saved him (Rev. 4:11; Ps. 16:11—“...*at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*”).

- A. **Crossless / comfortable.** (Luke 9:23; Acts 5:10-13). Beware of sinners feeling comfortable in church. “I just feel like one of y’all.”
- B. **Compromise.**
 1. We are to **CONTEND** (Jude 3).
 2. We are to have **STANDARDS**. Raise the flag high. It identifies (Num. 2:2-3).

SUMMATION: Save yourself from...

- ...the Philosophy of this generation—It will **SPOIL** you.
- ...the Practices of this generation—They will **HURT** you.
- ...the Politics of this generation—They will **DISTURB** you.
- ...the Pleasures of this generation—They will **DECEIVE** you.
- ...the Religion of this generation—It will **DAMN** you.

SAVE YOURSELF from this untoward, backward, twisted, perverted, messed-up generation! Don’t be fooled! Start moving in the right direction. Like Paul, we need to “*press TOWARD the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*” (Phil. 3:14).

Set your eyes on the Lord Jesus Christ and follow Him.

In what direction are YOU moving **TOWARD**?