

## Save Yourself

**W**e find an interesting call to arms in Acts 2. We are told to save ourselves from an untoward generation. What does this mean? That answer will easily be supplied once we understand the intended audience, the context, the existing situation, and the ultimate goal.

*(Acts 2:39-40 KJV) For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. {40} And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.*

### The Intended Audience:

“Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” To whom is this addressed? The answer is given in verse 39 — you, your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Does that include you? Yes, it does. Then, take ‘save yourselves’ to heart. We’ll



spend the necessary time to understand verses 39 and 40. Let’s begin with the word ‘untoward.’

### Crooked vs. Straight:

In the King James Version, the word ‘untoward’ is an Old English word meaning ‘crooked.’ It is translated from the Greek word skolios – meaning warped, winding, perverse, forward, untoward. Skolios was first used in the Book of Luke, chapter 3.

*(Luke 3:5 KJV) Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked [skolios] shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth;*

Jesus Christ makes all the

difference between having a crooked lifestyle and a straight lifestyle.

### The Context:

We can determine the context by reading a few preceding verses:

*(Luke 3:2-4 KJV) Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. {3} And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; {4} As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.*

Verse five is talking about a path, a beaten path. Taking this further, it is talking about the pathway, a beaten pathway to announce Jesus Christ. There had to be a straightening first — what John was doing — and then

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they were going to see God's salvation — who was Jesus Christ. John water baptized people as part of making the path straight. Once people were baptized, they were ready to receive their salvation — Jesus Christ. Water baptism ended on the Day of Pentecost. Old Testament believers needed to be water baptized in order to receive Christ; New Testament believers need to receive Christ in order to be holy spirit baptized.

(Luke 3:5-6 KJV) Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked [skolios] shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; {6} And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

This is talking about what John the Baptist was responsible to do. He was crying in the wilderness; he was straightening the paths, the beaten paths, "Prepare you the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." He was announcing Jesus Christ. No valley, no mountain or hill, no warped path and no rough way could prevent Jesus Christ's coming. Nothing was going to be

able to stop God's plan from complete fulfillment. We can realize that God desires for all flesh, a figure meaning 'all people,' to know about Jesus Christ; God wants every man whole.

## Light vs. Darkness:

(Phil 2:15 KJV) That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke [amometos – unblameable], in the midst of a crooked [skolios] and perverse [diastrepho – distort, misinterpret, turned away [morals] nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

## The Existing Situation:

The world is a crooked and perverse place; it is nearly overcome with darkness. Our 'straightening' in part is made available by being blameless and harmless, the sons of God. Spiritually, we are straight; those without Christ are not blameless and harmless, or the sons of God. They stand to be rebuked, blamable. The word 'rebuke' is the same word as blameless except that it has a negative article 'a' as a prefix. We've learned that a nation without Christ, or people without Christ are what cause it or them to be crooked and perverse. God expects us to shine as lights among them.

Why? Because they are dark beings and are in need of salvation.

## Forward Masters:

Not only is the entire world considered by God to be crooked and perverse, so too are some of those in charge considered to be crooked.

(1 Pet 2:18 KJV) Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward [skolios].

Christian servants were instructed in service to their masters, a situation that generally does not exist today. It did exist back then. They were told to respectfully be subject to their masters no matter if the master was good and gentle, or if he was crooked and twisted.

## The Ultimate Goal:

We've learned that 'untoward' in Acts 2:40 means 'crooked.' We've learned that John the Baptist straightened the existing and crooked paths, making them straight and level as he led people to Christ. We learned that people had to be water baptized first before they could receive Christ. I

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mentioned that New Testament believers receive Christ first, and they are holy spirit baptized.

Peter's Sermon on the Mount.

(Acts 2:38-41 KJV) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. {39} For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. {40} And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. {41} Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

The context of Acts 2:38 and following is Peter preaching to the many Judeans about accepting Jesus Christ as their salvation. The audience was these people, but was extended to include all of us today. The existing situation was the Day of Pentecost and the announcement of God's wonderful gift of holy

spirit and the manifestation of His power, dunamis. The ultimate goal is that all flesh, all people, save themselves from worldly darkness by accepting Christ and being holy spirit baptized.

Much Love in Christ.

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