WHAT MUST I DO TO BE LOST? By Andrew Roberts

Dissatisfaction with their lifestyle and heartbreaking guilt over sin prompt many people to seek an answer to the question, *what must I do to be saved*? Conversely, there are many people who are quite content to lead a life where Jesus is a stranger, organized religion (a.k.a. church) is trendy in small doses, and the Bible is a motel-room novelty. For those that are satisfied with a life devoid of God, let us consider the question, *what must I do to be lost*?

Ignore the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Bible tells Humankind that all must **Hear** the gospel to believe it and be saved (Rom. 10:13-14, 17). The easiest thing I can do to be lost is simply ignoring the gospel message. Do not open a Bible. Do not darken the door of the church. Do not listen to the preacher. I will avoid words like "God," "sin," "death," "Jesus," "love," "grace," "cross," "blood," "faith," "obedience," "life."

Also, I won't befriend Christians. Their hope, peace and joy can be contagious. While it is easy to avoid preachers and worship services, it is hard to ignore a Christian in my life. Their actions and attitudes will lead me to the very gospel I must ignore if I would be lost.

Doubt Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The Bible tells Humankind that all must **Believe** that Jesus Christ is the son of God to be saved (John 3:16; 8:24; 14:6). So I will doubt. I will doubt that Jesus was deity in flesh. I am skeptical that He loved me enough to die for my sins on the cross. I distrust that He conquered death and rose from the grave on the third day. I am suspicious of an empty tomb.

I doubt that all things are possible for God. I will question whether He hears prayers, if He exists at all. I will impress my doubts on others by emphasizing evolution, teaching moral relativism and limiting the ability of others to pray and exercise their faith. Then I'll be lost for sure (Matt. 18:6).

Stay the worldly course. The Bible tells Humankind that all must **Repent** [turn away from] of sin in life and follow Christ to be saved (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38). So I will ignore the gospel, I will doubt Jesus and I will continue living my life the way I want to live it! I am in charge. I will pursue money above all else. I will indulge in every fleshly desire that appeals to me. I will trust my own judgment always and I will live independently of all other people. I don't need them and I refuse to help them. Why should I help anyone else? Why should I change for God? What has God ever done for me?

Deny Jesus Christ. The Bible tells Humankind that all must **Confess** Christ to be saved (Rom. 10:10; Matt. 10:32-33). I will deny Jesus with my words. I will scoff as others share about His death and resurrection from the grave. When asked, I will politely respond that I never knew Him. If asked again, I will curse and swear to prove that I never knew Him.

I will deny Jesus with my actions. I will live as if He never existed. I will deny Jesus by my silence. I will not be bothered to come to the aid of one who is hurting, oppressed or defenseless. I can live in complete denial of Jesus Christ and I will be lost.

Spurn the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Bible tells Humankind that all must be **Baptized** to be saved (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:27). If I want no part of the death and resurrection of Christ, by which salvation is offered, I will ignore the command to be immersed into the likeness of His death and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-5). I will argue against immersion and say that those who teach such is necessary for salvation are legalists, denying God's grace and attempting to earn their salvation by the traditions and works of men. And thus I will deny the very words of the Bible that say "baptism now saves you" (1 Pet. 3:21).

But I don't have to actively oppose baptism to be lost. I can just *sleep on it* for a while. I will put baptism off, waiting for a better time. I will procrastinate with the salvation of my eternal soul. I will dare Jesus to return before I am prepared. Surely I will be lost.

Live Hypocritically. The Bible tells Humankind that all must **Live Faithfully** to be saved (Jas. 1:12; 2 Tim. 4:7-8). Even if I come to church once in a while and chose to be baptized, I can be lost.

- I won't confess sins, when I am guilty (1 John 1:8-10).
- I won't forgive others when they ask my forgiveness (Matt. 18:35; Mark 11:25).
- I won't love the church, God or other Christians (1 John 4:19-21).
- I won't control my tongue (Jas. 3:6, 8-10).
- I won't meet with the saints to worship God (Heb. 10:24-25).
- I won't worship God the way He desires to be worshiped (John 4:23-24).
- I won't walk in the light (1 John 1:5-7).

I will eat, drink and be merry because tomorrow I'll die. Truly, I am already lost.

What must I do to be lost? It is easier than people realize. There are plenty of *role models* doing it around you. However, God doesn't want anybody to be lost. He sent His son for your salvation and He is patient, wanting all Humankind to repent and come to Him.

Decide: *Lost or Saved, What Must You Do Today*?