



# WIN YOUR OWN SOUL

*Save Yourselves from  
This Untoward Generation*

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The call to “win your own soul” and “save yourselves from this untoward generation” is a powerful message found in the Book of Acts, specifically in Acts 2:40. This exhortation follows the foundational teaching of Acts 2:38, where Peter outlines the steps to salvation. Together, these verses emphasize the urgency of personal responsibility in the journey of faith.

The word “untoward” in English generally means unfavorable, adverse, or inappropriate. It can also imply something that is not conducive or advantageous.

## Hebrew Meaning

In Hebrew, the concept of “untoward” can be expressed through several words, depending on the context:

1. **מִיעָן אֵל** (Lo Na'im) - This phrase translates to “not pleasant” or “unpleasant.”
2. **עָר** (Ra) - This means “bad” or “evil,” which can convey an adverse or unfavorable situation.
3. **יֹצֵר אֵל** (Lo Ratzui) - This translates to “undesirable,” which aligns with the idea of something that is untoward.

## Greek Meaning

In Greek, the word “untoward” can also be expressed using various terms, depending on the context:

1. Ακατάλληλος (Akátallilos) - This means “inappropriate” or “unsuitable.”
2. Αρνητικός (Arnitikós) - This translates to “negative” or “adverse.”
3. Δυσάρεστος (Dysárestos) - This means “unpleasant” or “disagreeable.”

## Summary

Hebrew:

- לא מיען (Lo Na'im) - “not pleasant”
- רע (Ra) - “bad” or “evil”
- לא יוצר (Lo Ratzui) - “undesirable”
- Greek:
  - Ακατάλληλος (Akátallilos) - “inappropriate” or “unsuitable”
  - Αρνητικός (Arnitikós) - “negative” or “adverse”
  - Δυσάρεστος (Dysárestos) - “unpleasant” or “disagreeable”

These translations capture the essence of the word “untoward” in both Hebrew and Greek contexts.

## The Context of Acts 2:38-40

1. Acts 2:38:

- Scripture: “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.”
- Meaning: This verse presents the essential steps for salvation: repentance, baptism in Jesus’ name, and the promise of receiving the Holy Ghost. It signifies the beginning of a transformative relationship with God.

## 2. Acts 2:40:

- Scripture: “And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”
- Meaning: After explaining the path to salvation, Peter emphasizes the importance of personal responsibility. He urges the listeners to take action to save themselves from the corrupt influences of their generation.

## The Importance of Personal Responsibility

In a world filled with distractions, temptations, and moral decay, the call to “save yourselves” is more relevant than ever. Here are key points to consider:

### 1. Awareness of the Generation:

- The term “untoward generation” refers to a society that is resistant to God’s truth and filled with sin. Believers are called to be aware of the spiritual

climate around them and to recognize the dangers that accompany it.

## 2. Personal Accountability:

- Each individual is responsible for their spiritual condition. While the church provides guidance, teaching, and community, ultimately, the decision to follow Christ and live according to His teachings rests with each person.

## 3. Active Participation:

- Winning your own soul involves active participation in your faith journey. This includes engaging in prayer, studying scripture, attending church, and seeking the guidance of the Holy Ghost. It's about being proactive in your relationship with God.

## 4. Resisting Negative Influences:

- The call to save yourselves implies a need to resist the negative influences of society. This may involve making difficult choices, setting boundaries, and surrounding oneself with positive influences that encourage spiritual growth.

# Practical Steps to Win Your Own Soul

## 1. Repentance:

- Acknowledge your sins and turn away from them. Repentance is the first step in the journey of salvation

and renewal.

## 2. Baptism in Jesus' Name:

- Follow the command of Acts 2:38 and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. This act symbolizes the washing away of past transgressions and the beginning of a new life in Christ.

## 3. Receiving the Holy Ghost:

- Seek the infilling of the Holy Ghost, evidenced by speaking in tongues. This empowerment equips you for a life of faith and service.

## 4. Daily Commitment:

- Make a daily commitment to grow in your faith. This includes prayer, reading the Bible, and participating in the life of the church.

## 5. Community Engagement:

- Surround yourself with fellow believers who can encourage and support you in your spiritual journey. Engage in fellowship, Bible studies, and church activities.

## Conclusion

The exhortation to “win your own soul” and “save yourselves from this untoward generation” is a

clarion call for personal responsibility in the faith journey. Following the steps outlined in Acts 2:38 and embracing the teachings of Acts 2:40 can lead to profound spiritual renewal and empowerment. As believers navigate the challenges of their generation, they must remain steadfast in their commitment to Christ, actively seeking His presence and guidance in their lives. By doing so, they not only secure their own salvation but also become beacons of hope and light in a world that desperately needs it.

## What Shall It Profit a Man If He Gains the Whole World and Loses His Soul?

The phrase “What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?” originates from the Gospel of Mark, specifically Mark 8:36. This poignant question posed by Jesus underscores the futility of pursuing worldly success and material wealth at the expense of one’s spiritual well-being.

### The Context of the Scripture

#### 1. Scriptural Reference:

- Mark 8:36-37: “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”
- Context: Jesus speaks to His disciples and the crowd, emphasizing the cost of discipleship. He calls

for self-denial and taking up one's cross to follow Him, highlighting that true life is found in following Him, not in earthly gains.

## Key Themes and Insights

### 1. The Value of the Soul:

- The soul is of immeasurable worth, far surpassing any material possession. While the world offers temporary pleasures and riches, the soul's eternal nature makes it the most valuable aspect of a person's existence.
- Eternal Perspective: Understanding the eternal significance of the soul encourages believers to prioritize spiritual matters over temporal ones.

### 2. The Illusion of Worldly Gain:

- Many people chase after wealth, fame, and success, believing that these will bring fulfillment and happiness. However, such pursuits can lead to emptiness and spiritual loss.
- Fleeting Nature of Materialism: The riches of this world are temporary and can be lost or taken away, while the soul is eternal.

### 3. Self-Denial and Discipleship:

- Jesus calls His followers to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Him (Mark 8:34). This entails putting aside personal ambitions and desires

to embrace a life of service and sacrifice for Christ.

- True Fulfillment: Genuine fulfillment and purpose are found in living for God and serving others, rather than in selfish pursuits.

#### 4. The Cost of Discipleship:

- Following Christ may require sacrifices, including giving up worldly ambitions and facing persecution or hardship. However, the reward of eternal life and a relationship with God far outweighs these costs.
- Eternal Rewards: Investing in one's spiritual life leads to eternal rewards, reinforcing the idea that the soul's salvation is the ultimate goal.

#### 5. The Choice of Priorities:

- Each individual faces the choice of what to prioritize in life. The question challenges believers to reflect on their values and what they are willing to sacrifice for worldly gains.
- Life's True Purpose: Understanding what truly matters helps guide decisions and actions in accordance with God's will.

### Conclusion

The question “What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?” is a timeless reminder of the importance of prioritizing spiritual well-being over material success. As believers

navigate the challenges of life, they are called to focus on their relationship with God, recognizing that true fulfillment comes from living in accordance with His purpose.

In a world that often values wealth and status, Christians are encouraged to seek first the Kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33) and invest in their souls, understanding that the eternal significance of their spiritual lives far outweighs any temporal gains. Ultimately, the pursuit of a vibrant faith and a deep relationship with Jesus Christ leads to true life, joy, and fulfillment.

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