

THE SINNER'S PRAYER
Romans 10:8-13

Introduction:

- 1. Leonard Barham was an elder in the Plymouth Brethren Church.**
 - a. He had grown up in Africa and lived there all his life.**
 - b. He was a retired missionary to the Bemba tribe of Zambia.**
 - c. He translated the Bible into the Bemba language.**
 - d. He translated many hymns and published a songbook.**
 - e. He taught Bemba classes for missionaries of all religions.**

- 2. The Plymouth Brethren is a sect much like the Baptists.**
 - a. They immerse, but not for the remission of sins.**
 - b. They teach salvation by faith alone.**
 - c. They are the original dispensational premillennialists.**
 - d. They differ from the Baptists by observing the Lord's supper weekly, and having elders over each congregation.**

- 3. Mr. Barham invited me to attend a Plymouth Brethren revival.**
 - a. The evangelist was eloquent and well versed in the Bible.**
 - b. He preached a moving sermon on Christ, our sin offering.**
 - c. It reminded me of Peter's sermon in Acts 2.**
 - d. However, he ended by making an appeal to "receive the Lord Jesus into your heart by praying the sinner's prayer."**

"Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, If I died today, I would not go to Heaven. Forgive my sins. Come into my heart and be my personal Savior. Help me live for You from this day forward. Amen."

- 4. The "sinner's prayer" is commonly taught by evangelical churches as the way to receive salvation in Christ.**

- 5. The "sinner's prayer" is not the way of salvation in the Bible!**

Discussion:

I. THE “SINNER’S PRAYER” IS NOT “THE FORM OF DOCTRINE.”

A. There is a “form of doctrine” that must be obeyed.

**“Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness”
(Romans 6:16-18).**

B. The “form of doctrine” includes baptism (Romans 6:3-6), but the “sinner’s prayer” consistently leaves baptism out.

II. THE “SINNER’S PRAYER” IS NOT IN THE GREAT COMMISSION.

A. In Matthew 28:19, 20, Jesus commanded:

- 1. “Go, and teach all nations.”**
- 2. “Baptize them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”**
- 3. “Teach them to observe all that I have commanded.”**

B. In Mark 16:15,16, Jesus commanded:

- 1. “Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.”**
- 2. “He who believes and is baptized will be saved.”**
- 3. “He who does not believe will be condemned.”**

III. THE “SINNER’S PRAYER” WILL NOT BE HEARD BY GOD.

A. God does not hear the prayers of sinners.

1. Jesus healed a man blind from birth (John 9).
2. It was on the Sabbath day.
3. The Pharisees accused Jesus of breaking the sabbath and therefore being a sinner.
4. The blind man whose sight was restored by Jesus defended Him, saying:

“Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him” (v. 31).

- B. The Old Testament consistently teaches this principle.**

“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear” (Psalm 66:18).

“One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination” (Proverbs 28:9).

- C. The New Testament teaches the same principle.**

“For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil” (1 Peter 3:12).

- D. It is a matter of common sense reasoning.**

**Every spiritual blessings is in Christ (Ephesians 1:3);
Prayer is a spiritual blessing;
Therefore, prayer is only for those in Christ.**

**To get into Christ, one must believe and be baptized.
(Galatians 3:26,27; Mark 16:15,16).**

One who has not believed and been baptized is not in Christ.

One who is not in Christ does not have spiritual blessings including having his prayers heard.

E. What about Cornelius? Did not God hear his prayer?

- 1. Cornelius was a Gentile who worshiped God.**
- 2. As a Gentile he was still under the Patriarchal law.**

IV. THE “SINNER’S PRAYER” IS NOT FOUND IN ANY ACCOUNT OF CONVERSION.

A. Saul is used an example of one saved by “the sinner’s prayer” (Acts 9; 22; 26).

- 1. Saul was on his way to Damascus to arrest believers.**
- 2. The Lord appeared to him and told him to “Arise and go into the city and you will be told what you must do” (9:6).**
- 3. Saul spent three days in prayer, but was not saved (9:9-12).**
- 4. Ananias was sent to him that he might “receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 9:17).**
- 5. Ananias told Saul: “And now, why are you waiting? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (22:16).**
 - a. Joel prophesied: “Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:16ff).**
 - b. Saul called on the name of the Lord when he arose and was baptized to wash away his sins.**

B. In every account of conversion, sinners obeyed the terms of salvation in the Great Commission.

Conclusion:

- 1. Those saved in the Bible believed, repented, confessed Christ and were immersed for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 8:12, 13; 8:36-39; 10:47,48; 16:14,15, 30-34; 18:8; 19:5).**
- 2. Do not trust your salvation to a man-made plan (Matt. 15:9,13).**

