

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

I would like to thank God and this congregation for the opportunity to bring forth the word of God this morning. I hope and pray that what I have to say will be of benefit to all who hear it. I pray that God would anoint my lips to speak with His anointing, and that He would anoint the ears of those who hear what I have to say. Let us pray at this time.....

## **Introduction:**

I've learned many things over the years in my secular job that are beneficial to keeping me safe and sound. I've also learned that some of those items can be applied to the spiritual aspects of my life. This morning, I would like to share with you some of those items.

Every year at work as a part of my required training, I take a driver's training class. The driver's training program that we use is called "The Smith System". The Smith System is a series of five driving principles designed to reduce wear and tear on your vehicle. Increase your gas mileage, and prevent accidents.

What I am proposing to you this morning is a five step plan that will help you to stay saved. Therefore, the title of my sermon this morning is: *"Five Steps to Staying Saved" (Repeat)*

In this sermon I'm going to relate to you what these five safe driving steps are, and how they relate to your walk with Christ. For our opening text let's turn to: **Philippians 2:12**. If we would all please stand in honor of the reading of God's word.

**Philippians 2:12** Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

I have found in my personal experience, that the harder I work at staying saved the easier it is to walk with Jesus. On the flip side, the easier I try to live for God, the harder my walk becomes. Even though we're saved by grace through faith, we still have to put forth some effort into staying saved.

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

God has made a path for us to follow; nevertheless, we're still required to walk that path.

However, this sermon tonight is not about faith vs. works, it's about learning to live for God in a more intelligent way. This life we live for Christ Jesus is not going to be fought in the flesh, it's going to be fought in the mind, and we have to keep our mind on right things. This morning, I will make every effort to show you some of those right things.

## **The first step in the Smith Driving System is to:**

### **1. Aim high in steering**

In the Smith system you're supposed to look far down the road so that you can see things happening well in advance, and prepare for them. It also makes it easier for you to maintain your position on the road. People whose cars are wandering all over the road are almost always low aim drivers. A low aim driver is someone who is looking just over the front of their cars at the road instead of looking down the road far enough so they can maintain their lane position without a lot of jerky movement.

### **Christian Version: Aim for Heaven**

**Hebrews 12:2** Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Many Christians look at life the same way as they do a road. They look at the "Here and Now" and don't see the reward that's at the end of the road. They get depressed and then they just give up. They walk away thinking it's just not worth the effort.

We need to look way down the road and look toward our final destination. We need to see where our lives are heading, and look to see where the world is heading. It'll help to keep us on the straight and narrow without too much swerving toward the shoulder of the road, because we certainly don't want to crash and burn on our way to heaven.

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

Jesus told us that in the world we would have tribulation, but to be of good cheer, because He'd already overcome the world. You need to realize that even Jesus had to put up with a bunch of garbage while he lived in this world. He was lied about, spit upon, punched, and crucified among other things.

You might think that Jesus would've had the perfect life with nothing ever going wrong for Him. But life wasn't that way for him.

- ◆ He born into a poor family.
- ◆ He had a King that tried to kill him when he was just a young child.
- ◆ He told the truth and all it did was irritate the spiritual leaders of His country to the point they wanted to kill him because of it.
- ◆ Eventually, they did kill Him, and just for telling the truth!

If Jesus had this kind of trouble, what else can "You" expect in life? Jesus told us that if they hated me they will hate you also. You'll be hated in this world for His name's sake. You'll have problems in this world that don't even concern your spiritual stand for Christ. That's why we need to get our minds on Christ and on the world to come.

The Apostle Paul stated in **1Corinthians 15:19** "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

The Apostle Paul kept his mind on things above and not on the earth below. We too have to keep our minds on the ultimate goal, which is to go to heaven. Our goal is to hear Jesus Christ say to us: "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord"

If we keep our minds on this world and all its troubles we'll get depressed and that can lead to a weakening of our defenses against temptation. It'll make it easier to give in to sin. We need to keep our minds on Jesus Christ and not on the troubles of this world.

Stay away from pity parties; they'll only drag you down. You know when they're coming on and you can nip them in the bud if you want to. You have

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

to learn to recognize the signs and catch them early to have your best shot at defeating them before it's even a battle.

The scriptures tell us that we are not ignorant of Satan's devices. We know his tricks and we need to be smart enough to rebuke him when he tries to pull them on us. We need to aim for heaven in everything thing that we do. We need to keep our minds on those things above:

- Those pearly gates, mansions, and streets of Gold.
- Where there's no more heat.
- No more cold.
- No more temptation.
- No more sin.
- No more depression.
- No more loneliness.
- No more heartache
- No more sorrow.
- No more suffering from pain
- No more sickness.
- Most importantly, where we'll be forevermore in the presence of the **Lord God Almighty**.

Remember, that at all times you need to:

- ◆ Stay between the lines by keeping your mind on the long range goal.
- ◆ Focus on the straight and narrow!
- ◆ Study the word of God!
- ◆ Pray without ceasing!
- ◆ Think on right things like those mentioned in Philippians 4:8!
- ◆ Fellowship with other like-minded Christians
- ◆ And don't get caught up with this insignificant thing that we call life.

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

**The second step in the Smith Driving System is to:**

## **2. Get the big picture**

In the Smith System you're supposed to look around you to see what's going on around you. You check your mirrors often to see who's behind you or beside you. You scan the sides of the road when in town so you can see if anyone is pulling out from a side street or parking lot. That way you can be prepared to stop easily or maneuver away from the offending vehicle.

## **Christian Version: Get a glimpse of God's work in the world**

**Matthew 28:18-20** And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

In the Christian realm, we get too focused on what's happening in our local church and we forget that we're only a small part of the God's worldwide church. There are so many things going on in this world. There are missionary endeavors into every country in the world. Revival is happening all over the globe.

God is not about to let the depravity of this world stop Him from performing His word. Scriptures teach us that in the last days there will be a revival like the world has never seen. There will also be a falling away like the world has never seen as well. If we'll just open our eyes, there's indisputable evidence that these things are happening even as we speak.

A couple of years ago in the Philippines, a nation wide crusade had 94,000 people filled with the Holy Ghost in one week. Every year in Ethiopia at the national crusade, 50,000 or more are filled with the Holy Ghost for the first time. The lame are healed, the blind eyes are opened, and the dead are raised. Other countries are experiencing tremendous revivals as well.

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

We need to understand that we as individuals are not the entire church of the living God; we're only a part of His church. We've got it so good in this country that we don't even know or care about what God has going on in the rest of the world. We worry about what we're going through and don't even know just how good we actually have it.

We can worry about our own little church and get upset when revival isn't happening at that particular time. We need to look at the rest of the world and rejoice with them as they enjoy revival. Our time for revival will come when we're as persecuted as they are.

People don't usually get serious about God until they go through a trial or some kind of tribulation. Look throughout the history of the church. The times of the church's greatest revivals were during the times that things were the roughest. The times of any country's greatest period of revival is when it was going through its worst times.

- Times of famine, war, or a major depression of the economy.
- Those times when man's wisdom can't carry him any further.
- That's when people get serious about seeking God and then, God sends revival.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we were to seek God for a revival now instead of waiting for tribulation to come? If we were to want His spirit to move in this country like it is in the other countries around the world!

Whether or not we're having revival in this church, at this particular moment it doesn't mean:

- That we can't get ready for it.
- That we can't rejoice with those churches that are experiencing revival.
- That we can't help them financially, physically, or spiritually to continue that revival.

You see if we help out those who are having revival, God will pour out a blessing upon us as well. That's why it's so important to fund foreign missions

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

endeavors. A church needs to tithe just like a person does. If a church will tithe to Foreign Missions or Home Missions then God will prosper that church.

I've seen it done and I've seen what happens when a church quits supporting the Missions field. They dry up and blow away, that's what happens!!! We need to get a worldwide outlook on what God is doing. We also need to prepare our hearts to do what God is calling us to do, and that's to witness to the world. It's up to Him whether that little part of the world is overseas, or right around the corner from right here.

Folks, don't concentrate on your own little section of the world. If you'll get the big picture of what God is doing in the world you'll be much happier with your own life and it will be much easier to live for God. It will be much easier to stay saved.

## **The third step in the Smith Driving System is to:**

### **3. Keep your eyes moving**

In the Smith system this refers to not getting tunnel vision. You can stare at that white line in the middle of the road until it's all you can see. You have to keep your eyes moving from side to side so that doesn't happen. If you don't, you get what they call "White Line Fever" and then you have a tendency to fall asleep at the wheel. That's when you crash and burn!

### **Christian Version: Keep looking for a ministry to fulfill**

**1Timothy 4:14** Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

Christians can get spiritual "White Line Fever". They have tunnel vision thinking there's nothing for them to do for God. When people start to backslide it's because they're bored with their life in Christ. They don't have enough to do to keep them busy or excited.

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

You may not have had hands laid on you, and a ministry prophesied over you, but there's plenty to do to keep you busy in the kingdom of God if you'll just look around.

Let me give you a very short list of things to do in the kingdom of God, and remember, all of these things are ministries:

- **Prayer:** Prayer is something that we all need to do and it's usually the first thing a person on the road to backsliding will quit doing. We all need to pray every single day. We must have our communication time with the Lord because that's where our strength comes from. Without our prayer time we become weak and susceptible to sin.

Now the prayer that I'm talking about goes beyond the need for our normal prayer life. I'm talking about intercessory prayer. Intercessory prayer is prayer for someone or something other than your self. You sacrifice your time for the benefit of the church and those in the church. It can, and should also include prayer for those that are lost, our country, those in positions of authority, and most especially those in leadership positions within the church.

- **Choir:** This will keep you memorizing God's word and songs of praise to God. You'll spend time in fellowship with God's people and you'll also enjoy learning songs and singing to the Lord. God will truly bless you as you worship him in song!
- **Outreach:** There's always a need for outreach. There are never enough people to witness door to door for the Lord. God will bless you for doing so, and it will give you confidence and boldness for him. It'll help you to mature as a Christian. It will encourage you to memorize scriptures. It's also fulfilling God's commandment to go out into the highways and the hedges to compel the lost to get saved.

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

- **Church Maintenance:** This includes cleaning the bathrooms, vacuuming the sanctuary, mowing the lawns if applicable, straightening up the classrooms, dusting, painting, chopping weeds, and on and on.

You may think that maintaining the church in decent shape is not a ministry, but it is. What would you think about a church that was dirty and nasty? That had bad stains on the walls, filthy bathrooms, and a lawn that was knee deep. You'd really be turned off wouldn't you?

The Pastor shouldn't have to do everything and God will surely bless you for taking on this ministry. If nothing else you're ministering to the Pastor, but in reality you're ministering to everyone else in the church, and to everyone who visits as well.

- **This is only the short list.** There are many other things like Prison Ministry, Juvenile Hall Ministry, Rest Home Ministry, street services, home bible studies, visiting the shut-ins, phone calls to the sick, home prayer meetings, teaching Sunday school, working in the nursery, teaching basic bible doctrine to new converts, and on and on and on.

You'll find that the busier you are for Jesus, the less time you have to get into trouble. So get busy for God and it'll help you to stay saved.

## **The fourth step in the Smith Driving System is to:**

### **4. Leave yourself an out**

In the Smith system this refers to positioning your vehicle so that you always have a place to go if someone makes a stupid move with their car. You've seen that move; in fact if you're honest, you'll admit that you've made that same move yourself a time or two.

We've all made mistakes and bonehead moves. But if we leave ourselves an out, when someone makes that bonehead move, we can come out of it without a scrape or a bent vehicle.

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

## Christian Version: Look for the way out

**1Corinthians 10:13** There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

In the spiritual world we can avoid the bumps and bruises as well. When temptation comes your way, and it will, run the other way as fast as you can!!! The Apostle Paul told Timothy in: **2Timothy 2:22** Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

You see even though Timothy was the Bishop of Crete, he was tempted by lust. Don't judge him too harshly because you are too!!! He was human, we're human, and humans are lustful creatures when they're in the flesh instead of the spirit. Jesus told Peter the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. We have to follow the spirit and not the flesh.

The problem with most people is: they want to see how much they can get away with and still be saved. When temptation comes their way, the first thing they do is to look around to see who's watching. It really doesn't matter who in this world is watching, Jesus is always watching and He's the only one that really counts anyway.

Temptations will come your way; the devil will make sure of that. If he doesn't, your flesh will. You may not believe this but more people are led astray by their own lusts than any temptations the devil will ever send their way.

When temptation comes your way (pause) **flee**, and do it right then. If you keep fooling around and thinking about that temptation, you'll convince yourself that you can handle it and that you won't fall into sin. The problem is that sin will always take you farther than you intended to go. It will keep you longer than you intended to stay, and it will cost you more than you ever intended to pay. Amen

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

I don't care who you are or how long you've been in church. You're weak as water when you aren't dwelling in the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost doesn't live in sin! You play with fire you'll get burned. End of story!

- You need to fast
- You need to keep prayed up.
- You need to renew your mind in Christ through the study of His word.
- You need to have a made up mind that you're going to serve God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.
- You need to think on right things:

**Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

God said He will **always** leave an out for you. Look for that “**out**” when temptation comes your way! Best of all stay away from your weaknesses to begin with. Don't be one of those silly people that want to see how close they can get to the world and still be saved! Run for your eternal life in the opposite direction! Get your mind focused on God and draw near to him with all your heart and not just with your lips. Doing that will help you to stay saved.

**The fifth and final step in the Smith Driving System is to:**

## **5. Make sure they see you**

In the Smith system “Make sure they see you” means to make sure the other driver actually sees you. To not assume they see you, but to take steps to ensure that they see you. You turn on your headlights during the day, use your turn signals, honk your horn or do other things to make sure they see you and don't pull out in front of you. You want them to know that you're there!!

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

## Christian Version: Make sure they see God in you

**Matthew 5:13-16** Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

In the spiritual world, “make sure they see you” refers to holiness. Anybody that knows me knows that I believe in a high standard of holiness. I believe that God rewards holiness with a greater anointing of His spirit, and history bears that out. I believe we need to have high standards, and those standards will shine like a beacon in our separation from the world. But there is a part of us which the world sees that unfortunately does not draw people to Christ, but rather it scares them away. That part is our attitude.

We are without a doubt the people of God, but unfortunately some people think **they are** God. They see sinners in the world doing their thing and they stick their noses sky high in the air as they walk past. They see a person claiming to be an Apostolic/Pentecostal that doesn't dress like they think they should, and they **instantly** condemn them **and** their Pastor. They think they're the best, **and we are**, but they expect everyone else to be perfect, and **we aren't**. Think about that one for a minute.... I said we aren't; not they aren't.

- It's a great thing to be Apostolic!
- It's a great thing to live Holy as the bible requires!
- It's a great thing to be in the church of the living God!
- It's a great thing to be dead to sin!
- It's a great thing to be filled with the Holy Ghost!
- But we need to **act** like it!!!!

I'm not condemning any particular individual in this church or any other. But what I'm talking about can be seen in Pentecost in general. It can be found in any church under heaven. The reason we have so much trouble

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

winning souls for Jesus is the sinners see too much of us and not enough of Jesus Christ!

- You don't have to agree with their sins, but you do have to treat them right.
- You don't have to agree with their dress, but you'll never convince them to dress more holy if you aren't friendly to them. They'll never be open to a scriptural study on the subject if you have a "Holier than Thou" attitude.
- They'll never come to church with you if you're too "Holy" to invite them!
- Don't judge a Pastor by any particular individual that attends his church. In case you haven't figured it out yet, some people are just plain rebellious when it comes to standards. You preach to them, you teach them, you try to love them, but in the end it's their choice whether or not they want to live in a way that pleases and glorifies God! Besides, that person might just be a new convert and their Pastor hasn't had a chance to work with them yet as it relates to standards of dress.
- Don't demand as much of the world as you do yourself. The people the waitresses hate to see the most are the Pentecostals. They're mouthy, demanding, obnoxious, and they tip poorly. Now what kind of a witness is that?

As Apostolic/Pentecostals we should be the best tippers, and the least demanding of all people on the face of the earth. If you don't like the service don't go back, but don't make a scene!!!

Moses was God's man to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, and how does the bible describe him? The meekest man in all the earth!!!! Let's have a Moses spirit when it comes to other people.

Don't let a bad attitude and a bad spirit send you to hell. Remember we're sinners saved by grace. Ask God for a tender heart and a double portion of the Holy Ghost. Ask Him for wisdom so you can be a soul winner. Then listen and be obedient to what God tells you to do. Remember: **Romans 8:14** For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

- Do your best to let the world see Jesus in you.
- Show them love and compassion.

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

- Ask them if they would like you to pray for something.
- Help them with their yard work sometime.
- Be a good neighbor!
- Be a friend!
- Invite them to a loving church!!!

Always remember that your attitude is as much a part of holiness as the way you dress. Showing the love of Jesus and concentrating on improving your attitude will help you to stay saved.

If the musicians will come at this time, I'm closing. (Pause)

This morning we've covered five things that will help to keep us saved. They are:

1. Aim for Heaven. (Remembering our goal)
2. Get a glimpse of God's work in the world. (Seeing what all God is doing)
3. Keep looking for a ministry to fulfill. (Get involved)
4. Look for the way out. (Seek God for the way out of temptation)
5. Make sure they see God in you. (Living a holy, consecrated life before men in dress and in spirit)

These five steps spell an acronym that's easy to remember: **All God's Kids Love Me!** (Show the last page) If we'll follow the five steps we've covered this morning it will go a long way toward keeping us saved and certainly far more happy in our walk with the Lord.

- **With every head bowed and every eye closed.**
- Is there anyone in this room that would like to stay saved? Then please raise your hand. Ok, I see those hands, you can put them down.
- Is there anyone in this room that doesn't know God and would like to have a personal, saving relationship with Jesus Christ? Then please raise your hand. Ok, I see those hands, you can put them down.
- Is there anyone in this room tonight that would like to ask God to help them to live for Him in a more productive way? Then please raise your hand. Ok, I see those hands, you can put them down.

# Five Steps To Staying Saved

- If you raised your hand on any one of these questions, please come down to the altar at this time. (Give them some time)
- Would the rest of you come on down and pray for these who have come down to this altar. We either need prayer or we need to be praying for someone who needs prayer. Come on down.  
(Continue to urge them to seek God, then turn it over to the Pastor)

All

God's

Kids

Love

Me