Jimmy’s sermon last week addressed the question of what must I do to be saved? The implication of the question of the person who asked Jimmy to speak on the topic was the idea that there are things a person must do before salvation is even possible. Also implicit in this question is the idea of personal responsibility.

Personal responsibility is most definitely a feature in the New Testament. Paul wrote in Romans 14:10-12:

*Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God;****11****for it is written,*

*“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
    and every tongue shall confess[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+14%3A10-12&version=ESV#fen-ESV-28276a)*] to God.”*

***12****So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.*

It is often easy to speak of hearing, believing, confessing, repenting and being baptized as the five acts of salvation. But what does this mean about how we are to daily live our life? What is the “to do” list we need to follow? Here are some suggestions from three Bible passages going from the most general to the specific:

Micah 6:6-8

In this well-known passage Micah sets out three principles: (1) do justice; (2) love mercy; and (3) walk humbly with your God.

Matthew 25:31-46

In a preview of judgment, Jesus sets out what a person must do: (1) feeding the hungry; (2) welcoming the stranger; (3) clothing the naked; and (4) visiting the sick and imprisoned.

Ezekiel 18

Ezekiel 18 is usually studied for the question of whether the father is responsible for the sins of the children and vice versa (18:19). But Ezekiel establishes a very specific principle: “the soul who sins shall die.” (18:4, 20). A corollary principle is that the “righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.” (18:20). In other words, we are accountable for what we do. But what are we supposed to do? Ezekiel gives us a partial list. A righteous person (v. 5):

-- Does not lift up his eyes to idols (v. 6)

-- Does not defile his neighbor’s wife (v. 6)

-- Does not approach a woman in her time of menstrual impurity (v. 6)

-- Does not oppress anyone (v. 7)

-- Does restore to the debtor his pledge [collateral] (v. 7)

-- Does not commit robbery (v. 7)

-- Does give bread to the hungry (v. 7)

-- Does cover the naked with a blanket (v. 7)

-- Does not lend at interest or take any profit (v.8)

-- Does withhold his hand from injustice (v. 8)

-- Does execute true justice between man and man (v. 8)

-- Does walk in God’s statutes (v. 8)

-- Does keeps God’s rules by acting faithfully (v. 9)

The person who does all things “shall surely live.” (v. 9). Equally important, a person who turns away from sin “shall surely live.” (v. 21, 27). The prior sins will be forgotten and the new righteousness will be remembered. (v. 22, 28). Likewise, the righteous acts of a previously righteous person who turns to sin will be forgotten and the recent sins remembered. (v. 24, 26). The point of this is that we cannot rest on our laurels nor are we doomed because of prior bad acts. Repentance is key.

For our discussion, take an honest inventory on how (or whether) you are living a righteous life. What can you do to improve? What do you need to stop doing? None of this is to imply we can earn salvation without God’s grace, but it obvious that we have responsibility for our personal conduct. How are you doing?