**CHRISTIANITY, A VERY EXCEPTIONAL RELIGION [A]**

**ACTS 27:27 – 31**

**INTRODUCTION:**

1. After great efforts to save the ship and the sailor’s attempt to abandon it, Paul issued this

 warning to the centurion: “*Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved*” (Ac 27:31).

 A. Within this statement is an absolute requisite for the salvation of those on the ship.

 1. Their very lives hung on the balance of this exception.

 B. Everything depended upon the word EXCEPT.

 C. The ship and all those who were on it were lost, EXCEPT they remain in the ship.

 D. Remaining with the ship was the condition upon which **ALL** lives could be saved.

 1. It was an absolute requirement.

2. This same emphatic, conditional and provisional “EXCEPT” is employed in the Scriptures to

 express the perfect conditions God offers salvation from sin and the promise of Eternal LIFE.

 A. To ignore these EXCEPTS [God’s Instructions] jeopardizes the opportunity to be saved.

 B. Christianity is, according to God’s Word, an “exceptional” religion.

 1. Man must recognize every EXCEPTION found in God’s Plan of Salvation.

**BODY:**

**1. EXCEPT THE LORD BUILD THE HOUSE** (**Psa 127:1**; **Isa 2:2**)

 A. Man must conclude God [alone] can build the house worthy to stand, Eternally.

 1. Further, one must conclude He [alone] can keep the city.

 B. When one understands the church, as God’s House, is built by none other than Deity, one

 understands how those who attempt to do otherwise labor in vain (1 Tim 3:15).

 C. The Lord promised to build **BUT** [one] church (Mt 16:18).

 D. The New Testament teaches Jesus is the head of [one] church (Eph 1:22, 23; Col 1:18).

 E. Jesus clearly warned about the result of those other “plants” (Mt 15:13).

 1. Many religious groups exist, having been built by man, with human creeds, wearing human names are awaiting the day of which they will be rooted up (Mt 15:14).

**2. EXCEPT YE BELIEVE THAT I AM HE**

 A. Jesus warned concerning the necessity of belief (Jn 8:24).

 1. To die in one’s sins is to face Eternal Condemnation.

 A. **BUT**, there is an exception to such a death (Jn 8:28, 29).

 1. One can believe in Christ (Eph 2:8, 9).

 2. The absolute condition, stated herein, for salvation is faith (Lk 6:46).

 B. The world is lost without salvation (Jn 8:49).

 1. Except man turns to God, in belief, one will die in that current condition (Heb 5:8, 9).

 C. It is imperative for the God’s Word to reveal, what is impossible to please (Heb 11:6)?

**3. EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN AGAIN**

 A. When Nicodemus came to Jesus by night to inquire of salvation, he was told of the

 necessity of the new birth (Jn 3:3, 5).

 1. Thus for one to enter the Kingdom of God, one must be willing to be born anew.

 A. This is an absolute requirement!

 B. To understand this meaning, [we] turn to the first gospel sermon preached following the

 institution of the church (Ac 2:29 – 41).