

IMPOSSIBLE WITH MEN BUT POSSIBLE WITH GOD

MARK 10:25-27 • TV101A

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Mark 10:25-27

“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them saith, with men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.”

I want you to open your Bible today to the book of **Mark**. I’m going to be reading from **Mark chapter 10**, and my text will be taken from **verses 25-27**.

Here’s the message; this is my topic: **“IMPOSSIBLE WITH MEN BUT POSSIBLE WITH GOD.”**

Now listen to the Scripture in **Mark the 10th chapter verses 25-27**: *“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.”* Now, this is the Master speaking; this is Christ our Lord speaking to His disciples.

And the disciples were astonished out of measure; they were completely amazed by what the Lord had just said. And they said among themselves; (they didn’t say this to Him) they began to ask one another, *“Who then can be saved?”*

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Our Lord had said this, “*It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.*” And the disciples were astounded, just completely astounded, He said, “*out of measure.*”

They began to look at one another and say: “*Well, who then can be saved?*” And the Master looking upon them, knowing what they were saying, understanding their thoughts, replied; “*With men it is impossible but not with God, for with God all things are possible.*”

Now, there are two questions asked in this chapter. I want you to go back and read the entire chapter. Of course, I don’t have time to cover the whole chapter in a message of less than 30 minutes.

But, I want you to go back and read the whole chapter later on. You will find there are two questions asked in this chapter. The first question was asked by a rich man who came running and kneeled to the Master. Matthew gives us an account of this, and this was the rich man’s question:

First of all: The rich man asked the Lord, “*Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?*” *I am interested in eternal life. I am interested in heaven. Now good Master, tell me what good thing shall I do that I may inherit or earn eternal life?*”

Secondly: It was asked by the disciples; they asked among themselves, they asked one another: “*Who then can be saved?*”

And our Lord, I believe, answered both questions with this one statement: “*It is impossible with men.*” Salvation, justification, and eternal life are impossible with men. It is utterly, completely, out of the question and impossible as far as men are concerned, but not with God. “*With God all things are possible.*”

Now, let’s go back and learn a little bit about this rich man who came to Christ and asked the first question. We can learn a great deal about this man from reading the context.

First of all: I know this; I know that this young man was very zealous. He was very interested in eternal life!

It says: “*He came running.*” No procrastination there and no indifference there. Nobody had to go out and beg him to come to the meeting. Nobody had to go out and beg him to come to church.

Nobody had to go out and beg him to come and meet with them and inquire about eternal matters and salvation and eternal life. He came running. He came unsolicited. He was zealous and interested in eternal life and he came running.

Not only do I know that he was zealous and interested in eternal life but he seemed in the Scripture, to be very reverent and very humble. It says, “*He came running and kneeled.*”

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He fell down before Jesus Christ on his knees. He knelt before the Master and he knelt before the Son of God. Here he is, a man, a rich man, a wealthy man, and a proud man, on his knees before the Lord.

I'll tell you something else about this man:

Secondly: He spoke to the Lord in a very reverent fashion, in a very respectful manner!

He said: "*Good Master.*" He didn't call the Lord Jesus Christ by some blasphemous title. He didn't ridicule or make fun; he spoke to the Master in a very respectful manner, he said: "*Good Master.*"

As he came running and knelt before the Lord he spoke in a reverent tone, he said: "*Good Master; now, what good thing must I do to inherit eternal life?*"

Here's another thing I learned about this man:

Thirdly: He thought that eternal life and salvation was a prize to be won or to be earned by good works!

That's what he thought; he really did. He believed that he could earn or merit eternal life by what he did. Now, Mark doesn't give the account that way; Mark simply says: "*He came running and knelt and said good Master what must I do to inherit eternal life?*"

But Matthew reporting the same incident said: "*The rich man asked the Lord; what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?*" That's the world's philosophy. That's the religious world's philosophy that eternal life is something you earn, something you work for.

It's a reward for service that you have rendered to God by way of your fellow man. That's what this man thought. Some of you may think the same thing. And so, you can learn from what our Lord tells this man and how our Lord deals with him.

But the next thing I know about this man is this:

Fourthly: He knew nothing, absolutely nothing, as most people today do not know. He knew absolutely nothing about the spirituality of God's holy law!

He knew nothing about the spirituality of the holy law because when our Lord reminded him, "*thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery, (and so-forth).* Oh he said: "*I've kept all of these from my youth up: (I've never broke one of those. I've never killed anyone. I've never committed adultery. I've never stolen anything). I've kept all those from my youth up.*"

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There's no way my friend that a man can keep the holy law of God as it's applied spiritually by the Holy Spirit. You don't even keep man's law, let alone God's law. You don't go a week without in some way violating the laws of men, let alone the laws of God.

This man did not understand the spirituality of God's law. Our Lord gave it in **Matthew chapter 5**. We will get to that in a few moments. But, you see, the law of God reaches not just to the manners but to the imagination, not just to the act but to the attitude of the creature.

God looks on the heart. God looks on the forming of the sin. God looks on the desires of sin. God looks on the thoughts of sin and the thoughts of foolishness of sin. So, this young man had no conception of the holiness of God's law, the spirituality of God's law.

Fifthly: I'll tell you something else I learned about this young man; he loved his possessions more than he loved God.

He wanted this world a whole lot more than he wanted eternal life. He just thought he wanted eternal life. He just thought he wanted to know the Lord. It came to a choosing between following the Lord and keeping his wealth and riches and materialism.

He made his choice just like you and I do every day. He loved his possessions. He loved the world more than he loved God and he loved himself more than he loved his neighbor.

The Lord understood his covetousness and the Lord exposed his covetousness. The Lord exposed his evil heart. When the Lord said to him: "*You know the commandments.*" He said: "*Well, all these have I kept from my youth up.*"

And the Lord said: "*All right; go sell what you have and give it to the poor and take up your cross and follow me.*" Oh, he found out he didn't love his neighbor as himself. He found out he didn't love God with "*all his heart, soul, mind and strength. And he went away sorrowful.*"

He thought he could have eternal life on his terms, by his works, as a reward for his good deeds. And when he found out that he had to part with these possessions and riches and materialism, he went away sorrowfully.

"No man can serve two masters" and Christ is not your Saviour if he's not your Master. You know, a lot of people seem to think that Christ is our Saviour and the world's our master. Christ is our Saviour, but our possessions and materialism is our master (but Christ is our Saviour).

No sir my friend! Christ said: "*He that is not for me is against me and no man can serve two masters.*" No man can serve God and the god of this world.

The fault is not in riches. I must make this clear; it's not always a rich man that's covetous; sometimes a poor man is just as covetous, or more so, than a rich man. The Bible doesn't say; "Money is root of all evil;" it says the, "*love of money is the root of all evil.*"

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There have been some wealthy men in the Scriptures that knew God. David was a man of great power and great wealth but a man of great faith. Abraham was a man of great faith, but a man of great wealth.

Job was a man of unusual wealth and power and influence but a man who walked with God. You see, somebody says; “Well, riches have ruined this generation.” No, that’s not true; this generation’s ruined riches.

That’s not what caused our ruin; our ruin was in the heart. I hear them say: “Drugs have ruined this generation.” No, this generation has ruined drugs.

I was just recently in the home of a woman who had rheumatoid arthritis. And I thank God for the drugs that can relieve her of some of the pain. I thank God for drugs. I thank God for people who have gone through operations and have the privilege of being put to sleep. But drugs didn’t ruin us; we ruined drugs.

They say, “Sex ruined this generation.” No; man ruined it. This is the problem. The problem is not in things; the problem is in the heart and these things; we try to possess them and love them and dedicate ourselves to them. That’s our problem; it’s a heart problem.

Adam was wealthy. Adam was surrounded by everything. Adam was a man of power when he walked with God. Adam had dominion over the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and the beast of the forest.

Everything was his, well, a man of great, outstanding wealth, but it was a means instead of an end. He used it and he walked with God. But today, these things are using us and dominating us, and controlling us, and dictating to us instead of just being means to an end.

Christ saw this (man’s problem). He saw the materialism and wealth; these things were his problem and Christ said; “*Get rid of them and follow me*” and he couldn’t do it.

Now, there’s one reason why the disciples were astonished. After He told the rich man “*Go sell what you have and give to the poor and come follow me.*” He went away sorrowful because he had great possessions. When our Lord watched him go He turned to His disciples and He said, “*It would be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.*”

And I know there are a lot of people who talk about the gates in Jerusalem are called “needle’s eyes” and the camel had to stoop to go under. But let’s just don’t argue about that right now. Our Lord said what He said!

“*It would be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. How hardly shall they that are rich enter the kingdom of God.*”

And the disciples were troubled. They were astonished out of measure. They said: “*Well, who can be saved, who can be saved?*”

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You see; they thought the kingdom of God consisted of riches and materialism. They thought it was a material kingdom. They thought it was a kingdom of power. They thought it was an earthly kingdom. They thought it was a Jewish kingdom and they thought it was going to be set up on this earth.

You can judge that by their conversation: *“Lord, when will you restore the kingdom to Israel?”* Or like James’ and John’s mother who said, *“Let my sons, when you come into your kingdom; one sit on your right hand and one sit on your left hand.”*

That’s what they thought. And that’s the reason they were astounded. They thought: *“Who’s going to be saved?”* You condemn the Pharisees for their self-righteousness. You condemn the rich for their covetousness and you condemn the religious for their idolatry. *“Who can be saved?”* That’s when the Lord said; *“With men it’s impossible, it’s impossible.”*

Now, why is salvation impossible with men? Just tell me why. I’ll give you three good reasons why salvation is impossible with men:

First of all: I mentioned it a moment ago and told you I would come back to it; it is because of the strictness of God’s law!

“Tell me, you that would be justified by the law, (you that would find your righteousness in the law, you that would present yourself to God by keeping the law like this rich, young, man) do you hear the law?”

The law demands and commands and requires you to love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength and requires you to love your neighbor as yourself. That’s what the law says.

If anybody’s wife has to die next year; let it be mine and not yours. That’s me loving you like I love myself. If anybody’s boy has to go off to war; let it be mine and not yours. If anybody has to lose his job; let it be me and not you. If anybody is going to get promoted; Lord, let him get promoted not me.

Huh? You don’t love anybody like you love yourself. You never have on this earth and never will. And the law says: *“To offend in one point is to be guilty of the whole law.”*

Christ said, *“You’ve heard it said by them of old times: Thou shalt not kill. I say unto you to speak harshly, to call a man a fool, is to be guilty of murder.”* Every one of us are murderers aren’t we?

Have you ever been angry with someone, just real angry, just put out with them, you just said, *“Well, you fool?”* You just killed him in your heart. Christ said, *“To lust, to desire, to look upon a person with desire, is to be guilty already of adultery.”*

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“*Don’t you hear the law?*” No, we don’t hear God’s law, we hear our law. We hear a watered-down version of the law that we have fixed up so that we can keep it. That’s what we hear.

We hear all these little Sunday school rules about “don’t go to the show, don’t take a drink, don’t smoke, don’t go to the ballgame on Sunday, don’t dance, and don’t play cards.” That’s no law. The law of God deals with weightier matters. It deals with justice and mercy and righteousness in the heart.

All of these preachers are running around here claiming to preach against sin is like one old-timer said: “They ain’t within spittin distance of preaching against sin,” yet, they don’t even know what it is.

They are talking about the by-products of sin and the products of sin and the fruit of sin. Sin is an attitude, a spirit, a principle in the heart. That’s where we have violated God’s law.

The reason salvation is impossible with men is because of the strictness of that law which most men don’t hear!

Secondly: It’s because of the corruption of human nature!

I’m talking about my nature and your nature. Do you know what the Bible says about our nature? It says, “*The natural man hates God,*” not his God, not is idol-god, not his version of God or his conception of God. He hates the God of the Bible. He hates the living God.

“*The natural mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God and neither, indeed, can be.*” Christ said, “*You don’t know me nor my Father. You let another come in his own name and you will receive him. Let me come in my Father’s name and you receive me not.*”

The Scripture says, “*There’s none good, no not one. God looked down from heaven and he saw that every imagination of man’s heart was only evil continually.*” Have you got that problem? “*When you would do good, evil is present with you.*”

You delight in the law of God yet you find another law warring within your mind and your heart bringing in captivity to sin? Don’t you? That’s your nature, the fallen, corrupt nature that you receive from Adam, “*In my flesh dwelleth no good thing.*”

Now, what you call good, God doesn’t call good. “*That which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination to God.*” Christ said, “*With men it’s impossible*” because of the strictness of God’s law, because of the corruption of man’s inward nature!

Thirdly: Because of divine justice!

Now, listen to me: The demands of divine justice are these: “*The soul that sinneth; it shall surely die.*” That’s never been repealed and that’s never been changed. The Scripture says, “*God will by no means clear the guilty.*”

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The Scripture says: *“Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”* God has, will, and must punish sin, He must. If He’s going to be God he’s got to punish sin.

How do I know God will punish sin? *“He spared not his own Son.”* Christ didn’t have any sins of His own. Christ was bearing my sin and your sin. And yet, the Father turned his back on His own Son.

So, my friend; *“salvation is impossible with men.”* It’s impossible with men either by law, by merit, by good works, by righteousness, by baptism, or by church membership because the law must be honored perfectly, perfectly, inwardly and outwardly.

Now, if you are going to pick out a few rules to keep, you better bone up on all of them because if a man starts toward God in the direction of the law, he’s under obligation to keep the whole law of God.

So, if I was you I wouldn’t try that route. I would come by way of Calvary. It’s impossible with men because of the strictness of the law and because of the corruption of human nature and because of the demands of God’s justice.

“Who shall stand in his presence?” That’s a good question isn’t it, well, David answered, *“He that hath clean hands and a pure heart.”* Well, by nature we don’t have it. Well, then we will not stand there. *“We will be like the chaff which the wind driveth away.”*

But our Lord didn’t stop there. Thank God He didn’t stop there, He said: *“With men it’s impossible but with God all things are possible.”* He is able to save; God’s able; man’s not able. God’s able; *“God’s able to save to the uttermost them that come to him by Christ.”* Why? Because He is God!

He is not only able to save because He’s God but because He performs all that justice, and righteousness, and holiness demanded to be performed in order to save us.

Now, I am going to go back and pick up a few things, about five or six or seven. I want you to listen closely will you? Just get comfortable there with me now. With God it’s possible because He’s God and because He hath performed all that the law requires, all that justice demands, and all that the sinner needs to save some folks.

First of all: The Lord determined He wouldn’t leave us alone. He wouldn’t pass us by like He did the angels who fell, *“the angels who kept not their first estate are reserved in everlasting chains of darkness unto that great day. Christ took not on himself the nature of angels but he took on himself the seed of Abraham.”*

But God determined to save a people. He determined to have some people in heaven to inhabit glory just like His Son. He determined to have a people like Christ. And before the foundation of the world He chose those people.

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He said, *“I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.”* Christ said, “The Father hath given me a people.” In **John 17**, in that great, priestly prayer for them; He mentions them six times, *“Those that the Father gave me.”*

He said: *“All that my Father giveth to me shall come to me and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. I came down from heaven not to do my will but the will of him that sent me. This is the will of him that sent me that of all which you’ve given me I will lose nothing but raise it up at the last day.”*

So, the Lord God determined to have a people. He would not leave us in our darkness but He determined to have a people!

Secondly: He made Christ our Surety!

Before there was a sinner God provided a Saviour; that’s right, *“Christ was the lamb slain before the foundation of the world;”* Christ was our Surety.

You see; Christ was not an afterthought. There was a Saviour before man fell, *“a lamb slain before the foundation of the world.”* Christ is the Surety of the eternal covenant, not the temporary covenant of works, but the eternal covenant. He’s the Surety and He’s the Representative.

And all the way through the Old Testament Christ fulfilled every type; each of those types pictures Christ. The law, the ceremonial law is the schoolmaster that brings us to Christ that teaches us the character of Christ, the work of Christ, the offices of Christ, the sin-offering of Christ, the priestly work of Christ, and all of those things.

Thirdly: He sent His Son into the world!

“In the fullness of the time (when He had given all the promises, types, pictures, and shadows), in the fullness of the time God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them under the law (which you are born under, which you are obligated to obey).” Christ was born under that law.

And as a man, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, Son of a woman, but Son of God; He obeyed that law in every jot and tittle. He said: *“I didn’t come to destroy it but to fulfill it.”*

Fourthly: Then our Lord went to the cross and there, *“He who knew no sin was made sin for us.”*

“He bore our sins in his body on the tree. He was wounded for our transgressions.” There the justice of God fulfilled every demand on the body and the soul of Jesus Christ.

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Do you know, when our Lord told the disciples, “*Don’t fear man who can harm your body but can’t hurt your soul; fear him who is able to cast your body and soul into hell.*” Christ not only gave His body an offering for sin but His soul also; He made His soul an offering for sin and justice was wrought out upon Christ (every requirement to satisfy a righteous God).

Fifthly: Then our Lord was buried and then He rose again as our justifier and He ascended to the right hand of God where He is our Mediator.

And Paul said, “If we are in Christ, no one can charge us because God has justified us.” The highest court in the universe has justified us; there’s no further appeal. There’s nowhere else to turn. There’s nowhere else to go. God’s justified.

Well, how come we’re not condemned? It’s because Christ died and was buried and rose again and intercedes for us and “*no one can separate us from the love of Christ.*”

Sixthly: And in due time God regenerated dead sinners!

What does regenerated mean preacher? It means to give life. It means to raise from the dead and make alive that which had no life. It means to reveal to the heart and the soul the life of Christ. It means to put within this dead man a living man, a new man and a new creature.

Seventhly: And He regenerated us and brought us to faith in Jesus Christ!

Well, I would say this to you; cease from your works, not cease from your works in serving your fellow man but cease from your works to try to make yourself acceptable to God and rest in Christ, trust in Christ, believe on Christ, and receive Him. Glorify Him in your heart.

“*With men it’s impossible but not with God.*” Salvation is only possible with God!