

Soli Deo Gloria

Mk 10:17-27

It Is Difficult to be Saved

What is impossible with man...

Is possible with God

Intro: Many medicines and home care products come packaged today with child-safety caps. By design, it is difficult for a child to open these products. However, it is much easier (sometimes) for an adult to open such packages. What is impossible for the child is possible for the adult. Salvation is very similar. With human beings, salvation is impossible but with God salvation is possible. The attitudes and actions of the rich young ruler prove that **It Is Difficult to be Saved**. But, 1) **What is impossible with man...** 2) **Is possible with God**.

### I. What is impossible with man

- A. Humans are proud
  1. works for salvation
    - a. it is impossible for a small child to open a child-safety cap because he or she lacks the mental and physical power
    - b. in same way, salvation is impossible if human beings try to do it, accomplish it themselves
    - c. **(17-20)**
    - d. did you catch what the young ruler said? 'what must I **do**?' 'all these I have **kept**'
    - e. the words of the rich young ruler reveal one reason why salvation is impossible with man at the helm
    - f. sinful human beings reckon that they are able to do something in order to be saved
    - g. that idea appeals to the sinful nature inside every person
    - h. the sinful nature likes to get the credit
    - i. that idea inflates its pride
    - j. that idea appeals to the sinful nature inside each and every one of us
    - k. and at the devil's prodding all of us have said at one time or another:
      1. 'I'm a good person' 'I'm better than that person' 'I do this' 'I give x amount of dollars'
      - m. as if who we are and what we do makes us worthy of salvation is God's eyes
      - n. sinful humans like to believe that salvation comes by what they do
      - o. and that is one reason why salvation is impossible with man
  2. Scripture speaks against it
    - a. Scripture quite clearly condemns such an idea
    - b. **(Ro 3:20, "No one will be declared righteous in [God's] sight by observing the law...")**
    - c. salvation cannot come by works – absolutely NOT!
    - d. those who believe it can, will not be saved
    - e. so you see, salvation is impossible with man
- B. Human allegiance not with God
  1. riches all important
    - a. the attitude of the rich young ruler reveals another reason why salvation is impossible with man in the driver's seat
    - b. **(21-25)**

- c. the human heart's allegiance is easily and quickly drawn away from God by many things
- d. one particular thing Jesus mentions here strongly is possessions – money and stuff
- e. as we see in the man's behavior, his stuff was more important to him than God
- f. he was sad and sorrowful at the thought of giving it all up to follow Jesus
- g. we are very susceptible to the sin of the rich young ruler
- h. we live in the wealthiest nation on earth
- i. we live in a very materialistic world
- j. we live in a country where we don't even have to leave our homes to get what we want because of 1000s of .coms and QVC and Grub Hub, and the like
- k. moreover, our sinful nature leads us to greed and envy
  1. the sinful world tells us we need this, and have to have that like everyone else
  - m. and the devil just prods us along
  - n. and too many times we listen to our sinful nature, the world, the devil
  - o. and, like the man in our text, our stuff becomes more important to us than God
2. no salvation
  - a. and herein lies the problem
  - b. human hearts are sinful, weak, and corrupt and easily led astray from God by things like possessions
  - c. and that means trouble, big trouble
  - d. **(Mt 6:24, "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.")**
  - e. humans cannot give their allegiance to God fully all the time – their sinfulness will not allow it
  - f. and so salvation is impossible

Trans: Seeing these things and how sinful we are and how salvation is impossible if we are at the helm, we could easily despair like the disciples and say, **"Who is able to be saved?"** But we do not despair. We cannot despair. Because we know that what is impossible with man...

### II. Is possible with God

- A. Triune God did/does the impossible **(26-27)**
  1. God the Father
    - a. a child cannot open a child-safety cap but an adult can because an adult has the mental and physical power to do so
    - b. likewise, in the area of salvation, God does what is impossible for man because God can do all things
    - c. think about the impossible things God did and still does to save sinners
    - d. God the Father made an impossible plan to save sinners
    - e. he sent his one and only Son into this world as the one who is God and man at the same time to save sinners
    - f. conceived by the Spirit, born of a virgin
    - g. impossible BUT not for God
    - h. when the virgin questioned the veracity and possibility of Gabriel's words, Gabriel responded:
      - i. **(Lk 1:37, "With God all things are possible.")**
  2. God the Son
    - a. after God the Father made the impossible plan,
    - b. God the Son carried out that impossible plan by also doing the impossible
    - c. Jesus lived a perfect life as a human being under God's law, never succumbing to temptation – impossible

- d. Jesus spilled his blood and died and that death washed away the sin of the world - impossible
  - e. Jesus miraculously raised himself from the dead sealing his victory and our victory over sin, death, devil, and the grave - impossible
  - f. God the Son did the impossible to take away the sin of the world
  - g. and God the Father, on account of that life, death, and resurrection, declared that the world's sins were taken away
  - h. and that all who believe in Jesus will be saved
  - i. **(Jn 3:16, "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.")**
3. God the Holy Spirit
- a. finally, God the Holy Spirit does the impossible
  - b. with a few drops of ordinary tap water applied to the head along with the Word
  - c. he brings people to faith in their Savior Jesus
  - d. and with a pennies worth of bread and a sip of wine he preserves that same faith
  - e. by doing the impossible, the Triune God does what is impossible for humans
  - f. he saves them
- B. God did this for us
- 1. for you and me
    - a. the Triune God did the impossible for you and me
    - b. through all those impossible acts the Triune God has taken away our sin and brought us to faith in Jesus
    - c. and given us the salvation we need but could not accomplish ourselves
  - 2. treasure
    - a. now our real treasure is Jesus
    - b. and along with that treasure there will one day come more treasure – our final salvation
    - c. we will have treasure in heaven – a treasure that will never end and that will never perish, spoil, or fade
    - d. a treasure that will always and forever be ours
    - e. only made possible by God who does the impossible
    - f. to show our thanks for all the incredible things the Triune God has done for us
    - g. we will live the new spiritual life given to us by the Triune God
    - h. empowered by the gospel in Word and Sacrament we, too, will do the impossible
    - i. we will honor, serve, and obey our God and give glory to his name in all we think and say and do

Concl: May the Triune God who has saved us and who is able to do all things help us to that end. Amen.