



"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." Matthew 28:20

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Who, Then, Can Be Saved?

Ben Vick

A rich young ruler came running to Jesus and asked, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" After a comment concerning the One who is truly good, God, He listed some of the commandments. The young man said that he had kept these since his youth. "Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come take up the cross, and follow me" (Mark 10:21). The man went away sad and grieved, because he had great possessions.

Jesus then turned to his disciples and said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" (verse 23). The disciples were astonished at his words; so, Jesus further explained, "Children, how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to through the eye of the needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Mark 10: 24-25).

The disciples "were astonished out of measure" the text tells us; and they were "saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?" (Mark 10:26).

This text, or its parallel accounts, is not saying that it is impossible for a rich man to go to heaven. There are some godly rich men named in the Bible; for example, Abraham and Job. The eye of the needle does not refer to a small hole in the wall of a city that a camel, in order to get through, had to get on its knees. Luke's account uses the word in the Greek for a surgeon's needle. The Lord explained his statement by saying that it is hard for those who trust in riches to enter into the

kingdom of God. In other words, a man, rich or poor, who trusts in riches, or wealth, cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

Paul commanded Timothy, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

Who, then, can be saved? Not the man who trusts in riches.

Neither can the man be saved who does not believe the gospel. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the gospel is necessary. Jesus said, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). The gospel must be received and believed (1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 10:13-17).

A man cannot be saved who does not repent. Peter wrote, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). Paul, in the city of Athens, cried, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30). Repentance demands getting out of the sinning business.

A man living in adultery cannot "repent" and continue to live in adultery. He must get out of the adulterous relationship. A man cannot be right with God, steal \$10,000, go forward before the church, and confess his sin but not make restitution for his thievery.

A man cannot be saved who will not confess Christ before men. Jesus said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32). This confession is broader than the one made before baptism, but it surely includes it. The Ethiopian eunuch confessed, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:37).

One should not be afraid to acknowledge Christ before men, either before baptism or in living the Christian life. Some in the Lord's day were more concerned about their status in the synagogue and having the praise of men than in confessing Christ. John wrote, "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12: 42-43).

Who, then, can be saved? Not one who refuses to be baptized. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). Baptism, or immersion in water, to the penitent believer is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Baptism puts one into Christ where all spiritual blessings are found (Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 1:3). Baptism puts one into the one body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:13). Jesus is the Savior of the body (Ephesians 5:23). Therefore, one must be in the body of Christ, the church of Christ, in order to be saved (Acts 2:47).

Who, then, can be saved? Every one who remains faithful to the Lord. The Lord said, "be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:10). ■

The Growing Trend Toward “Jazzed-up” Worship

Wayne Jackson

Some folks are suggesting these days that we may have restored “truth” in our worship format, but we have not restored the “spirit” aspect of public devotions to God (John 4:24). They want to be able to shout, clap, wave their arms, etc. Some are asking: “How do we know the Spirit doesn’t ‘move us’ to do these things?” They argue that we ought to be able to feel the same emotional intensity that we did when we first became Christians — in every worship service.

First of all, “Spirit,” as employed in John 4:23-24, has nothing to do with the emotional climate of one’s worship. “Spirit” relates to the genuineness or sincerity of the worshiper. The whole premise, therefore, that we should “charge up” our services in order to tap into the “Spirit” is flawed. Moreover, it is in the nature of things that no one can mentally entertain the same emotional pitch, regarding any matter, indefinitely. This, in itself, ought to be a clue that true spirituality is not to be found in emotional “highs,” but rather in the satisfying depth of knowing that one is faithfully serving his Maker.

Repeatedly in the Bible we are taught that we receive divine instruction, edification, etc., by means of “words” (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:13). The Scriptures are able to furnish us completely unto every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17). How could this statement be true if we are in constant need of “nudges” from the Holy Spirit to recharge our religious batteries?

Then consider this: Suppose one has an understanding of what the New Testament teaches regarding a matter, but he feels that he is getting a “prompting” from the Spirit to do otherwise. Which should he follow? The fact is, it is the responsibility of those who argue for the validity of the so-called Spirit-induced emotional waves to show biblical support for such. We have clear precedent for Scripture-prompting; where is the authority for Spirit-prompting; where is the authority for Spirit-prompting—apart from the Bible? The Pentecostals can outdo us with this emotional subjectivism any day of the week, and some of our people are being seriously influenced by this movement. Make no mistake about it, it is a growing phenomenon.

I am convinced that this surge toward false emotionalism is due in part to the shallowness of our people in Scripture knowledge. Many have become so spiritually/intellectually lazy that they are looking for a quick-fix to alleviate their boredom. It is almost like some are searching for a sort of “Spirit” drug on which to get a fast “high.” The most thrilling and sustained “high” that you will ever have is when you dig deeply into the treasures of Bible Study. ■

Observations and Concerns

April 17, 2024

Welcome Visitors! It is our Honor to Honor YOU as our welcomed guests.

Praise in Psalm: “O give thanks unto the LORD, for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever” (Psalm 107:1).

Declaration of Appreciation: We are thankful for the quick sign-up for helping with VBS this year. The kids are certainly excited about our upcoming VBS.

VBS – June 9-12, 2024. This year’s theme is “**Jesus: Eternal God.**” Let’s remember to pray for its preparation, success, teachers, students, and visitors.

Also, beginning in June is our **Summer Series**. This year’s theme is “**Beatitudes of the Old Testament.**” There is a sign-up sheet in the foyer for speakers. It fully appears to be a good study to help each of us in our spiritual growth.

Our sympathy is extended to the **Carmona family** upon the passing of **Ed**. There will be a memorial service at 2:00 PM May 18, 2024 at the building of the Magnolia church of Christ in Magnolia, Texas.

Remember in Prayer:

- ▶ **Pat Taylor** is scheduled for surgery on her carotid artery on May 14th.
- ▶ **Glen Beamen**, brother of Dicie Jackson, has been diagnosed with prostate cancer. He is scheduled for surgery on May 13th.
- ▶ **Mary Hass** had shoulder surgery last Wednesday.

“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Galatians 6:9).

Schedule of Services	Assignments		
	Wednesday, April 17	Sunday, April 21 AM	Sunday, April 21 PM
Sundays			
Bible Classes 9:30 AM	Chris Nelson	Chuck Northrop	Chris Nelson
Worship 10:30 AM	Chris Nelson	Chuck Northrop	Chris Nelson
Worship 5:00 PM (except 2 nd Sunday – 2 PM)	Doyle Jackson	Ross Swearingen	Bill Dilks
Lord’s Supper (speaker)		Doyle Jackson	Ross Swearingen
Lord’s Supper		Chris Nelson	
Wednesdays			
Bible Classes 7:00 PM	Chris Nelson	Bill Dilks	Chuck Northrop
Prayer	Ross Swearingen	Chris Nelson	Ross Swearingen
Website: oologahcofc.org	Door Attendant	Ross Swearingen	Chris Nelson
		Doyle Jackson	