

Answering Life's Most Important Question
Matt. 19:16-26

I. Some Preliminary Considerations

- About the man who came to Jesus:
 - Eager to talk to Jesus (Mk. 10:17)
 - Reverent in demeanor (Mk. 10:17)
 - Young (Matt. 19:20)
 - A Moral Person (Matt. 19:20)
 - Rich (Matt. 19:22)
 - Prominent – a certain ruler (Lk. 18:18)
 - Wanted to be saved...to a point.
- His Questions to Jesus:
 - What shall I do to have eternal life? (Matt. 19:16)
 - Goes to the right source. (Jn. 6:68)
 - Life's most important question. (Lk. 10:25; Acts 2:37-38; 16:30-31ff)
 - Our response determines our eternal destiny.
 - What lack I yet? (Matt. 19:20)
 - Something is missing
 - The response of Jesus...
 - His refusal.
- The Disciples Question to Jesus:
 - Who then can be saved? (Matt. 19:25)

II. Answers Men Would Give To The Question, "Who then can be saved?"

- **Some would answer: "No One" can be saved:** The response of the Atheist.

- Who denies and scoffs at the existence of God, heaven, hell...
- Who is identified by God as a fool. (Psalms 14:1; Rom. 1:22)
 - Heb. 3:4
 - Rom. 1:20-21
 - Psalms 19:1-6

- **Some would answer: "Everyone":** The Universalist.

- Universalism: the false teaching that says all men (including Satan and the demons) will finally be saved.
- Alleged proof texts substitute and confuse God's provisions and desire for the salvation of all with the false premise that all will eventually be saved.
 - Jn. 1:29; 3:17; II Pet. 3:9; I Tim. 2:3-6
- God's word refutes the universalist: (Matt. 7:13-14; Matt. 25:46; Rev. 20:10; 21:8)

- **Some would answer: Those unconditionally elected:** This is the answer of the Calvinist.

- Statement of this erroneous belief: *"By the decree of God...some men...are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained unto everlasting death...their number is so certain and definite, it cannot be either increased or diminished"*
- The Bible teaches that Salvation is conditional: (II Pet. 3:9; I Tim. 2:4; Josh. 24:15; Rev. 22:17)

- **Some would respond: Good moral people:** Many believe this:

- Perception of many is that hell is for only history's arch villains, and that most live lives good enough to pass the test.

- Consider:

- Rom. 3:23; 6:23 – eliminates salvation based on merit.

- Matt. 25:30; Rev. 21:8; II Thess. 1:7-9; Acts 10:2,22; 11:14

- **In similar vein some would answer: All sincere religious people:** Denominationalism

- Sincerity is required: (Jn. 4:24; Rom. 6:17-18)

- But, sincerity by itself not enough:

- Rom. 10:1-2

- Acts 23:1; 26:9

- Eph. 4:4-6: There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

- **The Answer Many Would Give: One is saved by "faith only" ; just accept Jesus as your "personal Savior".**

- Teaching of men: "Wherefore, that we are justified by faith, only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort."

- God's word:

- Mk. 16:16

- James 2:17,24,26

III. God's Answer To The Question: "Who then can be saved?"

- Those who...

- Hear the gospel. (Rom. 10:17)

- Believe the gospel. (Mk. 16:15-16)

- Repent of their sins. (Acts 2:38)

- Confess their faith in Jesus as the Son of God. (Acts 8:36-38)

- Are baptized in water for the remission of their sins. (I Peter 3:21)