

ETERNAL QUESTIONS

LUKE 18:26 • TV-322A

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Luke 18:26

“And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved?”

An old time preacher once made this statement; I think it’s very interesting, he said; “We preachers are prone to take for granted that our hearers, our congregation, are well acquainted with the Gospel of Christ and salvation, when in reality, most people are really ignorant of the whole divine system of grace and salvation.”

Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke to the religious people of His day and He said: *“You do err not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.”*

And I believe it’s far better to assume that people know nothing and clearly present to them the Gospel of God’s redeeming grace than to assume that they’re well taught and allow them to perish without instruction.

There’s an interesting illustration over in the book of **Luke chapter 2**. I’d like for you to turn over there and read these verses with me in **Luke chapter 2:42-45**. It says; *“And when Jesus Christ was 12 years old His that His parents went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the Feast. And when they had fulfilled the days of the Feast, as they returned, going back to their home; the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and Mary knew not of it but they; supposing Him to have been with them but they supposing, (taking for granted that He was with them) went a full day’s journey and then they began to look for Him. They sought Him among their kinfolk and acquaintance and they found Him not.”*

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In other words, Mary and Joseph had gone to Jerusalem to keep certain Feasts and after the days were accomplished they packed up and started home. And they'd traveled an entire day's journey taking for granted, supposing that the Lord Jesus Christ was with them, when in reality He was not with them at all. Then at the end of the day's journey they began to look for Him and found out that He'd never had been with them.

And what I'm suggesting is this and what I'm asking is this; is it possible that we might be going about our religious duties and our holy days and our traditions supposing, taking for granted, that the Lord is with us, taking for granted that He is in our midst, and supposing that we have His blessed presence?

And that's what Mary and Joseph were supposing; they supposed He was with them, supposing that we have His blessed presence, supposing that we're saved, when in reality He's not with us at all.

So I plan to take that old preacher's advice. I plan today to speak to you, to this TV congregation, as if everyone listening to my voice, every person, is totally unacquainted with the Gospel of God's grace and completely ignorant of what it means to be saved or what it means to be lost.

I'm going to speak to you as if I were speaking to people who never in their lives have ever heard the Gospel because I think there's a great danger of traveling a day's journey and you know a day's journey in the Scripture our lives are referred to as, "*A day's journey.*"

And I think it would be a terrible, terrible, experience to come to the end of this day's journey and then begin to take inventory concerning our relationship with God and find out that He never was with us, we never did have Him with us, and we were never blessed with His divine presence.

So, I'm going to speak to you. And I want you to just pull up a chair and listen to me. I'm going to speak to you on eternal questions, questions that are vastly important. Now here are the six questions I'm going to present on this telecast:

First of all: How did man get lost in the first place?

Secondly: What does it mean to be lost?

Thirdly: Who's lost?

Fourthly: How are lost men saved?

Fifthly: What does it mean to be saved?

Sixthly: Who then can be saved?

Now listen; here's the first question: How did man get lost in the first place?

Men need to be saved because they're lost. That's why they need to be saved. Christ said in **Luke 19:10**; "*The Son of man is come to seek and to save the lost.*"

Now how did man get lost in the first place? Well, Adam in the Garden needed no salvation because he was not lost. When God created Adam He created him in His own image. Adam was holy, pure and without sin.

When God made him, he was created in the image of God and he was holy and upright. So Adam in the Garden before the fall needed no salvation because Adam was not lost. But Adam cast out of the Garden, separated from the presence of God, guilty, unclean, naked, fallen, dead and dying, needs to be saved because now Adam is lost.

What happened, what happened in that Garden? What took place? Well the Scripture says Adam sinned against God. In the midst of the Garden there was a tree of which God said; *“Thou shalt not eat thereof. In the day you eat thereof ye shall surely die.”*

And Adam being tempted by Satan took that fruit and ate it. And when he did, he died, he died spiritually. In the day that he ate of the forbidden fruit and rebelled against God Adam died. Adam became guilty; Adam became a sinful, fallen creature, needing salvation.

Well you say, “Preacher; how does that affect me, what’s that got to do with me, what have I to do with the fall of Adam?” Well Paul tells us in the book of **Romans chapter 5**; listen to it, **verse 12**; *“Wherefore, by one man, (that is Adam) sin entered the world and death by sin. So death passed upon all men for all sinned.”* In other words, Adam stood not only for himself but Adam was the representative of the whole human race. Adam was that one man who stood for the whole human race.

And when he stood, we stood. When he sinned, we sinned. When he fell, we fell. When he was separated from God, we were separated from God. That’s what the Scripture teaches. That’s how man got lost in the first place.

Romans 5:18 says this; *“Therefore, by the offence of one man, judgment came upon all men. By the offence of one man, judgement, (condemnation) came upon all men. For by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.”* And then in **1 Corinthians 15** the Scripture says, *“In Adam all die.”*

Now my friends; this is the way God answers my question. I asked, “How did man get lost?” And God says that when Adam fell that his sin was imputed to every one of his race by imputation.”

Adam’s guilt and condemnation was imputed to us. The whole human race sinned against God, the whole human race fell. And not only was Adam’s sin imputed to us but Adam’s sinful nature was imparted unto us; *“For that which is born of the flesh is flesh.”*

Now what you think about that; that’s not the issue. What you feel about it; that’s not the issue. I’m simply answering the question. How did man get lost in the first place? And that’s the answer from the Word of God.

“Wherefore, by one man, sin entered this world, and death by sin, and so death, (spiritual death), passed upon all men. For when Adam fell all sinned.”

Secondly: What does it mean to be lost?

Now we found out that man is lost. He’s lost in Adam. What does it mean to be lost? Well, one verse of Scripture which strongly describes what it means to be lost is found in the book of **Ephesians 2:12**; now listen to it, this is what it means to be lost. This is the condition of a lost man; *“That at that time; (listen to it), you were without Christ having no hope and without God in this world.”* Paul is describing the lost Gentiles. And he says; *“At that time, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenant, you were lost.”* And you were without Christ, you had no hope and you were without God in this world.

Now a lost man is without Christ. You say; “Well, what does that mean to be without Christ?” Well, Christ is wisdom, *“He’s made unto us wisdom. Of God Christ is made unto us wisdom.”* And if you read the book of **Proverbs** you’ll find that often Christ is referred to as, *“Wisdom.”*

So, if Christ is wisdom and a lost man is without Christ, then that lost man is in spiritual ignorance and darkness as Christ said, *“You don’t know God. You don’t know me or my Father.”* So a lost man without Christ is without any spiritual wisdom; he’s ignorant.

Second, Christ is our righteousness. Now that’s what the Word of God declares; He is our holiness. He is our purity. He is our righteousness and therefore a man without Christ is unholy.

He is unclean in God’s sight, as unclean as the old leper of the Old Testament who use to have to cry, even when someone’s shadow fell upon him; *“Unclean, keep away, unclean.”* Christ is our holiness. Therefore, to be without Him, is to be unholy and ungodly.

What does it mean to be lost? Christ is our redemption. That’s what the Scripture says. So without Him we’re not only unclean but we’re under the curse of God almighty’s law, under the judgment and curse and condemnation of the law.

We stand accountable before God for every law which is on the books of God. We’ve broken every one of them; *“For to offend in one point is to be guilty of the whole law.”*

There’s not a criminal in the penitentiary that is in worst shape physically and materially than we are spiritually without Christ. He is our redemption and without Him we are criminals charged in the court of God as being guilty of having broken every law, not one but every law.

Next; Christ is the sin-offering. He’s the sacrifice. So without Him we have no priest. We have no sin-offering. We have no sacrifice, we have no atonement, and we have no entrance into the Holy of Holies.

We are outcasts. We’re outside and there’s no way in. *“For without the shedding of blood there’s no forgiveness and there’s no remission.”*

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Not only that, but Christ is the one Mediator. Paul said: “*There’s one God, (and one Advocate, one Intercessor), one Mediator between God and men and that’s the man Christ Jesus.*” And if you don’t have Him, if you’re without Christ, you don’t have anyone to represent you to God; you have no advocate, you have no mediator.

You have no one to whom, through whom, to pray. You have no one to present your petitions, your appeal, or your praise to God. It’ll never get there because you have no mediator.

And then; watch this, Christ said: “*I am the way, (the way to God). I am the truth, (the truth of God). And I am the life.*” What does it mean to be lost? It means to be without Christ, without righteousness, without wisdom, without redemption, without a sin-offering, without a Mediator, without life, without a way to God, and without the truth.

But that’s not all. What does it mean to be lost? A lost man is without hope, no hope, absolutely no hope. There’s no hope. All hope is gone. There’s no hope of sin forgiven. There’s no hope of mercy. There’s no hope of grace.

There’s no hope of resurrection, not the resurrection of life, the resurrection unto condemnation but not the life. There’s no hope at the judgment, no appeal. There’s no hope of eternal glory for a man without Christ has no hope.

To be lost is to be without God, totally without God in this world, and in the world to come, without God. Most people feel like that we’re all under, somehow, the love and the care and mercy of God. But that’s not so; listen to **John chapter 3**; “*He that believeth not on the Son the wrath of God abideth on him,*” like a cloud, always hovering.

“*He that believeth not on the Son, the wrath, (not the love, not the care, not the concern, and not the mercy of God but the Scripture says) the wrath of God.*”

Now I’m dealing with you as if you’ve never heard the Gospel. I’m not taking anything for granted. I’m not assuming anything. I’m not supposing anything; I’m just dealing with you on the basis of these questions as they relate to the Word of God.

How did man get lost? I showed you. What does it mean to be lost? It means to be without Christ. It means to have no hope. It means to be without God in this world. In **John 1:12** it says; “*As many as received Him to them gave He the right (and privilege) to become sons of God,*” not to all men.

Our Lord said to the Pharisees, the religious men of His day, after they said, “*God is our Father.*” He said, “*You are of your father the devil.*” So a lost man is without Christ. He has no hope and He’s without God. He has no Father.

Thirdly: Who is lost?

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“Are you talking to me preacher?” Yes sir, I’m talking to you. I’m talking to me. I’m talking to everyone who will listen to me. Who is lost? Let the Word of God speak now, let the Word of God speak.

People are always wanting to say; “Well I think, I believe. This is the way I see it.” Now that’s not the issue. The Word of God is the only foundation of faith and practice. **Isaiah 53** says: “*All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned, (most of us, well; the majority of us, no, all of us) to our own way.*”

All of us are lost. All of us are lost in Adam by representation. We’re lost by birth being born and conceived and shapen in sin, “*brought forth speaking lies*” and we’re lost by choice. Christ said; “*You will not come to me that you might have life.*”

Listen to **Romans 3:19**, who’s lost; “*Now we know that what things so ever the law saith; it saith to everyone under the law that every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty before God.*”

Who’s lost, all the world, everyone? “*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*” There’s no difference in Jew or Gentile “*for all have sinned.*” **Psalm 58:3**: “*The wicked are estranged from the womb. They go astray as soon as they’re born speaking lies.*”

Who’s lost? Every son of Adam is lost. Who’s lost? Every person in this world is lost, lost in Adam, lost by birth, lost by will, lost by choice, no exceptions: “*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*”

Fourth: All right, an important question: Then how are lost men saved? How can lost men be saved? Well, **Ephesians 2:8** tells us; “*For by grace are you saved,*” not by works, not by baptism, not by church membership, not by praying through, not by decision, not by shaking somebody’s hand, not by walking an aisle. “*For by grace are you saved.*” Who’s grace? God’s grace; it is by God’s grace and mercy that we’re saved.

The Scripture tells us (now this is what the Bible says); that God in eternity, before the foundation of the world; (that phrase is used frequently in Scripture) Christ was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world and chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; these things are used frequently.

Back in eternity before the world’s foundations were made God almighty according to His own Word determined to have a people, determined out of Adam’s race to redeem a people and make them like Christ, to populate a new heaven and a new earth.

In an everlasting covenant He chose a people out of Adam’s race, (“*out of every tribe, kindred, nation, tongue, and people under heaven.*”) He chose a people. He called them, “*His elect.*” He called them, “*His sheep.*” He called them, “*His jewels.*” He called them, “*His brethren.*”

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He chose them; God did and gave them to Christ because Christ frequently spoke of, *“The people that the Father gave me.”* You’ll read that several times in the Scripture and He made Christ their Surety and their Redeemer.

And these people called; “His elect,” “His jewels,” and “His sheep.” He says that they will be brought to Him, and they will believe in Him. They will be brought to Him by the Spirit of Truth.

And throughout the Old Testament, in Old Testament days, God promised this Redeemer that would come and redeem His people. He prophesied of this coming of this Redeemer. He pictured the coming Redeemer. He pictured Him in the Garden when He slew the lamb and covered the nakedness of Adam and Eve.

He pictured Him there when Abel brought the blood sacrifice as opposed to Cain’s sacrifice of works. He pictured Him in the Passover Feast down in Egypt. He pictured Him in, *“The brazen serpent lifted up.”* All the way through the Old Testament He pictured this coming Redeemer.

He prophesied that He would be a prophet like Moses, a priest like Melchisedek, and a king like David, fulfilling every office toward the sinner as prophet, priest, and king.

Well, *“In the fullness of time”* that Redeemer came, that Surety of the covenant came, that Righteous Branch came in the person of Jesus Christ. *“In the fullness of time God sent forth His Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were born under the law.”*

And Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the God-man, God in human flesh, for the Scripture says; *“He made the world and He was in the world and the world knew Him not.”* The Scripture says; *“The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.”*

Jesus Christ the Son of God, the second person of the blessed trinity, the eternal creator of heaven and earth, came into this world, assumed the flesh and bones of His beloved people, was numbered with the transgressors, became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, and literally, actually, in reality, lived on this earth, born of a woman, just like we are, only without a human father, and was tempted and tried and tested in all points as we are, yet without sin.

And in the course of His 33 years on this earth He was tried in all points, without sin, and He gave us by His active obedience, a perfect righteousness in the sight of God. He fulfilled the law in every jot and tittle in the flesh as a man.

And then He went to the cross and there He paid the debt of our sin. There He endured the wrath and judgment and condemnation of God that was upon us, *“For the soul that sinneth must die.”* And then He was buried and rose again and ascended back to the Father.

And the Holy Spirit came into this world. And the Holy Spirit calls out these sheep, calls out these people given to Christ, redeemed by Christ, ransomed by Christ. He calls them out by the

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preaching of the Gospel. *“God hath chosen by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes.”*

And the Holy Spirit regenerates those sinners and gives them true repentance toward God and true faith in Christ and brings them to believe the Gospel, not only to believe it, but love it, not only to believe Christ but love Christ and long to be like Christ.

It is through the preaching of the Word of God. *“And those who believe are kept by the power of God,”* true faith, all the way through life. And when they die their bodies go back to the ground but their souls go to God who loved them, who chose them, who redeemed them, who called them, who kept them, and who will make them like Christ.

Now that’s how men are saved, through the representation of Christ. You see; *“By one man’s disobedience we were made sinners,”* (that is Adam), by Christ’s perfect obedience, *“we were made righteous.”*

By Adam’s disobedience we became sinners. By Christ’s obedience we became righteous. *“In Adam we died. In Christ we’re made alive. As we have borne the image of the earthy; we shall bear the image of the heavenly for by man came death, by man came resurrection unto life.”*

That’s how we’re saved, representation, the obedience of another, the death of another, the person and work of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Fifth: Well what does it mean to be saved? Well it means to be *“new creatures in Christ.”* It says in **2 Corinthians 5:17:** *“If any man be in Christ, (in Christ by divine election, in Christ by divine purchase, and in Christ by divine power, regenerated, born again) he becomes a new creature.”*

He’s got a new heart. He’s got a new nature. He’s got a new attitude; He’s got a new spirit. He’s a new person; he’s a new person with a new family, with a new direction, with a new attitude in life. He’s been born again; he’s been regenerated. He’s not the same.

Like old John Newton said; *“I’m not what I want to be and I’m not what I ought to be and I’m not what I’m going to be by God’s grace but thank God I’m not what I use to be. God has dwelt within me. The Spirit of God lives within me.”*

And not only to be saved means to be a new creature in Christ but it means to be delivered from the penalty of sin, from the penalty of the law. *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ.”*

“Well preacher; what about the wrath of God upon us because of our sins?” Christ bore them. *“Well what about the condemnation and judgment; God said, ‘the soul that sinneth shall die.’ Christ died.”*

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Every charge that the believer has against him Christ fulfilled and satisfied. *“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect; it is Christ that justifies.”* It means to be saved not only from the penalty of sin but from the power of sin.

“Sin shall not have dominion over you.” Yes; sin is present and sin does remain but it does not reign. The Spirit of God reigns in the hearts of believers. It means to be saved from the practice of sin. It means to be saved one of these days from the very presence of sin.

All right, in closing: Who can be saved?

You know, the disciples asked the Lord that question. They said, *“Well Lord, who then can be saved?”* And He said, *“With men it’s impossible, (it’s impossible, forget it).”*

Wait a minute! *“But with God all things are possible.”* God almighty can save sinners in Christ through Christ, by Christ, yea, even you, even me, the chief of sinners. Paul said; *“This is a faithful saying, worthy of acceptation by all men that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.”*

“Christ died for the ungodly. But God commended His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” My friends; I’ve got good news, *“He’s able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by Him.”*