

ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE WITH GOD

TEXT: LUKE 18:18-30

Introduction:

1. In Luke 18 we have the interesting conversation between our Lord and the rich young ruler (Luke 18:18-25).
2. After the conversation, “they that heard it said, Who then can be saved?” (18:26).
3. Our Lord answered them, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God” (18:27).
4. That is a wonderful Scripture, and it is taught throughout the Word of God. Genesis 18:14 says, “Is any thing too hard for the LORD?”
5. Matthew 19:26 says, “With God all things are possible.”
6. In Mark 9:23, Jesus said, “If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.”
7. In Mark 14:36, our Lord prayed, “Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee.”
8. In Matthew 17:20, our Lord said, “For verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.”
9. In Luke 1:37, the angel said to Mary, “For with God nothing shall be impossible.”

I. THE THINGS WHICH ARE IMPOSSIBLE WITH MEN

1. Some things seem physically impossible. When Mary was told she was going to give birth, she asked, “How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?” (Luke 1:34).
2. But with God all things are possible (cf. Matthew 17:20; Luke 18:27).
3. When it comes to salvation, it is impossible for man to save himself (Luke 18:26, 27).
4. Nicodemus was a great man, a very religious man – “a ruler of the Jews” (John 3:1).
5. Jesus told this great religious leader, “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again” (John 3:7).
6. Nicodemus was baffled at this statement, and he said, “How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born?” (John 3:4).

7. In other words, this is impossible for man.
8. The new birth is described in John 1:13, “Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”
9. In other words, this is impossible for man. Man can invent rituals and ceremonies. He can make idols and altars. He can write holy books and make up his own religion.
10. But man cannot regenerate a man who is dead in trespasses and sins.
11. In John 15:5, our Lord said, “For without me ye can do nothing.”
12. In John 15, our Lord is talking to His disciples, not to an unregenerate religious leader. Therefore, not only is salvation impossible for man; so is service and sanctification.
13. All efforts to serve God in the flesh are certain to fail.
14. Peter tried to serve God in the flesh and he failed miserably. He was so self-confident, that he boasted, “Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended. (Matthew 26:33).
15. Our Lord responded to this boast by saying, “Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice” (Matthew 26:34).
16. Ignoring our Lord’s warning, Peter continued in his carnal self-confidence: “Peter said unto Him, Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee” (Matthew 26:35).
17. Soon, Peter denied our Lord three times, just as our Lord had predicted (cf. Matthew 26:69-75).
18. Peter was full of self-will. And we cannot be full of the Holy Spirit when we are full of self.
19. Andrew Murray preached often on this theme. He wrote, “At the beginning of the Christian life, the young convert has no conception of this truth. He has been converted; he has the joy of the Lord in his heart; he begins to run the race and fight the battle. He is sure he can conquer, for he is earnest and honest, and God will help him. Yet, somehow, very soon he fails where he did not expect it, and sin gets the better of him. He is disappointed, but he thinks: ‘I was not cautious enough. I did not make my resolutions strong enough.’ And again he vows, and again he prays, and yet he fails” (*Absolute Surrender*).
20. I thought this quote was timely since this is New Year’s Eve, a time when many people make vows, only to fail by the end of the month (and sometimes a lot sooner than that).
21. Andrew Murray points out that after repeated failure, many Christians give up attempting to live a holy life. “There are multitudes of Christians who come to this point: ‘I cannot.’ They then think that God never expected them to do what they cannot do. If you tell them that God does expect it, it

- is a mystery to them. A good many Christians are living a low life – a life of failure and of sin – instead of rest and victory, because they began to say: ‘I cannot, it is impossible.’ And yet they do not understand it fully. So, under the impression, I cannot, they give way to despair. They will do their best, but they never expect to get on very far.”
22. We should not be content to live a life of defeat and despair. The apostle Paul wrote in Romans 7:24, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”
 23. Paul answers that question in the next verse, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin” (Rom. 7:25).
 24. When a man is determined (“So then with my mind I myself serve the law of God”) to do the will of God, God will give that man the power to obey the will of God (cf. John 5:14; 8:11; I Peter 1:15, 16; I John 2:1).
 25. Philippians 2:13 says, “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”
 26. Judson W Van De Venter wrote the great hymn, “I Surrender All.” This is how the song came to him: “For some time, I had struggled between developing my talents in the field of art and going into full-time evangelistic work. At last the pivotal hour of my life came, and I surrendered all.”
 27. Have you reached that point of complete surrender to the perfect will of God?

II. ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE WITH GOD

1. After we have realized that it is impossible for us to live the Christian life in our own strength, we come to the blessed realization that, “But with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26).
2. “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God” (Luke 18:27).
3. Hudson Taylor said, “There are three great truths, first, that there is a God; second, that He has spoken to us in the Bible; third, that He means what He says. Oh, the joy of trusting Him!”
4. Hudson Taylor was right. God means what He says (Luke 18:27).
5. In Isaiah 45:2, the LORD said to Cyrus, “I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight.”
6. As we head into a new year, let us consider what the LORD says in Isaiah 52:12: “For the LORD will go before you.”
7. When Abraham was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him, and said, “I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect” (Genesis 17:1).

8. Our Lord said in Matthew 5:48, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”
9. How could Abraham leave home and travel to a far distant country where he did not know a single soul? By faith. We understand that all things are possible by faith.
10. Hebrews 11:8 says, “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.”
11. That is why Jesus said, “If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.”
12. When we study Hebrews 11, that great chapter on faith, we notice all the great men and women of faith obeyed God – Abraham, Noah, Moses, et al.
13. They had faith. They trusted God. And since they were trusting in God, they were able to obey God. The reason many Christians do not obey God is because they are not trusting God.
14. Do you really believe God’s plans are better than your plans?
15. Do you really believe God’s will is better than your will?
16. Than “trust and obey.”

*When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way!
While we do His good will, He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey.*

*Trust and obey, for there’s no other way
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.*

17. Over 100 years ago, after one DL Moody’s evangelistic meetings in Brockton, Massachusetts, there was a testimony meeting, and a young convert stood up to speak. It soon became clear that this man knew very little Christian doctrine. But he finished his testimony by saying, “I’m not quite sure—but I’m going to trust, and I’m going to obey.”
18. Daniel Towner, the great musician and hymnwriter (“At Calvary,” “My Anchor Holds,” “Only A Sinner Saved By Grace,” “Ship Ahoy!” etc.) was there at that meeting. He jotted down the words, and gave them to John Sammis, who then wrote the lyrics to “Trust and Obey.”
19. That new convert grasped what many older Christians haven’t. “I’m not quite sure—but I’m going to trust, and I’m going to obey.”
20. All too often, Christians think they can work things out their way, and then they can ask God to come along and help them (usually after they mess everything up). That is certainly not what the Bible teaches.

21. In order to let God work in our lives we have to come to the point of complete helplessness. God is omnipotent. God is sovereign. But man is weak and hopeless and helpless.
22. And yet, God is willing, with His whole omnipotence (“With God all things are possible”), to place Himself at our disposal.
23. In Mark 14:36, our Lord prayed, “Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee.”
24. God is our Father too. Galatians 4:6 and 7 says, “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

III. GOD WORKS IN AND THROUGH MEN

1. Ephesians 3:20 says God “is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.”
2. Now if the Bible merely said God is able to do all that we ask or think, that would be wonderful enough. But it does not say that.
3. It says, God “is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.”
4. And this is all “according to the power that worketh in us.”
5. What is that “power”?
 - That power is the indwelling Holy Spirit (Eph. 3:16).
 - That power is Christ, dwelling in our hearts by faith (Eph. 3:17).
 - That power is “the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge” (Eph. 3:18, 19).
 - That power is “all the fulness of God” (Eph. 3:19b).
6. God works in us and through us. Without Him, things are impossible.
7. With Him, “all things are possible.”
8. God wants to work out our lives for us, but He cannot and will not until we are yielded and surrendered (Romans 12:1, 2).
9. Some Christians think they are unable to live a life that is completely surrendered to the will of God. Jesus said, “With God all things are possible.”
10. I have heard young people make excuses for their lack of dedication by saying, “This is New York!” As if Jesus meant to say, “But with God all things are possible, except in NYC.”
11. In fact, Romans 5:20 says, “But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”
12. The Gospel light shines much brighter in dark places like NY.

CONCLUSION:

1. Hudson Taylor said, “I have found that there are three stages in every great work of God: first, it is impossible, then it is difficult, then it is done.”
2. Hudson Taylor learned that great lesson and God greatly used him in China.
3. The flesh and the self-life must be conquered. There must be an absolute surrender to the will of God. Then God starts working in us and through us.

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