

Things God cannot do:

Matthew 19:23-26 ***Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.***

...With God, all things are possible.

(Prayer)

People will often read this passage, misinterpret it, and then come to a false conclusion. They believe that this means that there is nothing God cannot do. But that is not what this passage is telling us. As always, we must look at the entire context of the passage.

Jesus has just finished talking to a man who asked:

Matthew 19:16 ***...one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?***

Notice he says "good thing"? "Good thing" is singular. This man is asking "what is the one thing" he needs to do to have eternal life.

Jesus responds to him to keep the commandments:

Matthew 19:18-19 ***Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.***

To which the man replies:

Matthew 19:20 ***All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?***

(update 5/18/17 – what commandments did Jesus not mention?)

- Thou shall have no other Gods before me
- Do not make unto thee any graven images
- Do not take the Lords name in vain
- Remember the Sabbath
- Thou shall not covet thy neighbor's house, wife or possessions)

This man is showing his pride and arrogance here. He is proclaiming he has kept the whole of Gods law, that he has lived a perfect life, so what else does he need to do? A lot of people ask this very question today.

Matthew 19:21-22 **Jesus said unto him, *If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.***

This man didn't want to part with his possessions. We don't know the amount of this man's possessions, but the implication is that he had come by them honestly, but they were precious to him and he was unwilling to give these up. And this is when Jesus says to his disciples:

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The focus of this passage is pointing out that it is harder for the rich to enter heaven? Why?

We find our answer in Luke 12:48

Luke 12:48 ***But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.***

A rich man has more responsibility. He has been given much more, so much more is expected of him.

Is he using his wealth properly? Does he use it to further Gods will? When he makes mistakes, does he use it to correct those mistakes? Does he praise God for his blessings?

OR

Does he start to hoard his wealth, spending it on his desires alone? Does he use his wealth to "be above" the law, escaping his duty to make right his wrongs? Does he start bragging on his own cleverness for his riches?

To whom much has been given, much is expected. And while the temptations may be that much greater for a rich man, the disciples realize that ALL, rich or poor, can fall to these temptations. We all want to please ourselves. We often want to shirk

our responsibilities, and bask in our own cleverness. This prompts the disciples to ask: **Who then can be saved?** Prompting Jesus response "**With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.**"

Jesus is speaking in regards to salvation. He is not saying that God can do everything. Jesus is stating that in the area of salvation, none could be saved under their own merits or devices, but with God, regarding salvation, all things are possible.

Many things are possible with God, but there are some things God cannot do.

Some of you are probably thinking "Charles, you've lost it. We all know God can do anything he wants". I disagree. So is there anything that God cannot do? Yes! Of course there are things God cannot do, but these are things that are against is very nature. Could God Sin? Of course not!

Let's take a look at God's own Word to see what God Himself tells us that he will not do.

1. God Cannot Lie

Titus 1:2 ***In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;***

Psalms 119:160 ***Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.***

This may seem like a trick question, but think hard on it for a few minutes. God stands on his own word:

Psalms 138:2 ***I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.***

God himself has placed his own word above himself. His word is his contract, his oath that he made with himself. If God could lie, then morally he would be no different than fallen man! He would be similar to Satan, whom God calls the father of lies (John 8:44)

Since God is holy, all His other characteristics or attributes are also holy. Thus, when God speaks, He *will not* and *cannot* lie. He never deceives; neither does He distort nor misrepresent what He says or does. Lying is against His nature.

If God could lie, why would we trust in his word? Passages like "**Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth** (John 17:17)" and "**I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me** (John 14:6)" would be in doubt if there was the remotest possibility God could lie. Paul states:

1 Corinthians 1:17-18 ***For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. (18) For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.***

Paul would be correct: We would be fools to preach the cross if it was a lie!

God cannot lie.

2. God Cannot Change

Malachi 3:6 ***For I am the LORD, I change not...***

Hebrews 13:8 ***Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.***

Just as God cannot Lie, God doesn't change. God is immutable. God never Changes his mind. What he declares to be good one day will not be declared evil another.

When we change our minds, it is often because new information has come to light that was not previously known, or the circumstances have changed that require a different kind of attitude or action. On the other hand, God is omniscient, meaning he is all-knowing. There is nothing that God doesn't already know. God cannot learn something new that He did not already know. Nothing surprises God. Thus, God does not Change!

So, remembering that God cannot lie and God cannot change, we come to the third thing God cannot do:

3. God cannot allow anyone into heaven unless they are born again!

This is where we often have problems: We often sin here, because we want to make a God in our own image! We want to believe that we are good enough to merit heaven. We want to believe that loved ones who are unbelievers will be in heaven with us!

The problem is, God, who cannot lie and cannot change tells us:

John 3:3,5 ***...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. (5) ...Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.***

We are told three times in scripture that our God is a consuming fire. He is a judge of righteousness who must punish sin! This is bad news for us:

Romans 3:23 ***For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;***

That may be a difficult truth to accept, but accept it we must. We want to believe that we are pretty good, but we are all sinners!

1 John 1:10 ***If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.***

We are all sinners, bound for hell. But is there a way to escape hell, a way to heaven? Let's examine more of God's true words to us. Jesus tells us:

John 14:6 ***...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.***

Jesus explains that there are not many ways to get to heaven. There is one way, and that way is Jesus Himself, because "***...while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us***" (Romans 5:8). Again, we know this is true, because **God said it. God doesn't lie. God doesn't change.** "***Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved***" (Acts 4:12). Salvation is only through Jesus.

A prison guard in act chapter 16 asks Paul and Silias this same question:

Act 16:30-31 ***...Sirs, what must I do to be saved? (31) And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...***

You may say, "*But, don't I have to do something else?*" God gives the answer:

Ephesians 2:8-9 ***For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast.***

God made salvation so plain and so simple!

So what are we to do? **Simply take God at His word.** His Word is eternally true (Psalm 119:160). You now know that you are a sinner. You now know that there is no salvation in works. You know that you must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved. Jesus said:

Mar 1:15 ***...repent ye, and believe the gospel.***

Romans 10:9 ***That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.***

Salvation is not about certain steps we must follow to earn salvation. Yes, Christians should be baptized. Yes, Christians should publicly confess Christ as Savior. Yes, Christians should turn from sin. Yes, Christians should commit their lives to obeying God. However, these are not steps to salvation. They are results of salvation. Because of our sin, we cannot in any sense earn salvation. We could

follow 1000 steps, and it would not be enough. That is why Jesus had to die in our place. In Genesis 22, Abraham and Isaac have gone to worship. Abraham is heavy hearted because he has been told to sacrifice Isaac. We read:

Genesis 22:7-8 ***And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? (8) And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.***

God will provide himself a lamb... That is what Jesus was. It is impossible for us to pay our sin debt. . We could never clean ourselves. Only Jesus could do that! Jesus himself completes the "steps" and thus offers salvation to any who will receive it from him!

Salvation does not come by "inviting Jesus into our hearts". Salvation comes by repenting from our sins, Salvation comes by faith alone! In Christ alone!

An unchanging, never lying God has told us:

1 John 5:13 ***These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.***

God wants us to know how to be saved, and how to know when we have been saved! If you have repented and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, then know that you have eternal life, but if you have never trusted in Jesus, please make this that day!

(Closing prayer)