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PROMISES OF GOD IN THE NEW TESTAMENT
LESSON 3: The Promise of God's Power

Scripture

Mark 10:27 NIV

“Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.’”

Biblical Context

Mark 10:27 comes at the end of Jesus' encounter with a wealthy young man who wanted to know how to inherit eternal life. The man approached Jesus with urgency and respect. He ran to Him, knelt before Him, and asked, “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” His question was sincere, but it also revealed a common human assumption: that eternal life could somehow be achieved by human effort.

Jesus directed him to the commandments. The young man replied that he had kept them since his youth. On the surface, he appeared moral, disciplined, and religiously responsible. Yet Jesus saw beneath his outward obedience. Mark tells us, “Jesus looked at him and loved him.” That detail is important. Jesus' challenge was not harsh rejection; it was loving exposure.

Jesus told him: *One thing you lack. Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.*”

The issue was not simply money. The issue was ultimate trust. The man's wealth had become the thing that gave him identity, security, and control. Jesus exposed the hidden attachment that stood between the man and full surrender to God. The young man went away sad because he had great wealth. He wanted eternal life, but he did not want to release what ruled his heart.

Jesus then turned to His disciples and said how hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God. The disciples were amazed because many people in that culture assumed wealth was a sign of divine favor. If a wealthy, moral, religious man could not enter easily, then the disciples wondered who could be saved at all.

They asked: *Who then can be saved?*”

Jesus answered with the promise of Mark 10:27: “*With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.*”

This promise is not just about overcoming difficult circumstances. In its immediate context, it is about salvation, surrender, and the transformation of the human heart. Jesus teaches that no person can save themselves. No amount of morality, education, wealth, influence, achievement, or religious activity can accomplish what only God can do.

The greatest impossibility is not a problem outside of us. The greatest impossibility is the transformation needed within us. Only God can save the soul, reorder the heart, and bring a person into the kingdom.

Explanation of Mark 10:27

1. Jesus Speaks with Careful Attention. “*Jesus looked at them and said...*”

Mark includes the detail that Jesus looked at them. This was not a passing comment. Jesus was addressing the disciples’ confusion directly. They had just watched a man with status, discipline, and religious seriousness walk away from Jesus. The disciples were shaken. Their assumptions about salvation, blessing, and human worthiness were being challenged.

Jesus’ look suggests compassion, seriousness, and authority. He was not simply correcting their theology; He was reshaping their understanding of God, salvation, and human limitation.

There are moments when Jesus must look directly at our assumptions and challenge the things we thought were true. The disciples assumed that some people were closer to the kingdom because of status, morality, or visible success. Jesus teaches that entrance into the kingdom is not ultimately based on human advantage. It depends on divine grace.

2. Human Power Cannot Accomplish Salvation. “*With man this is impossible...*”

Jesus’ statement is direct: there are some things human beings cannot do. Human beings can build systems, earn degrees, develop skills, make money, create technology, and achieve impressive goals. Yet human ability has limits. When it comes to salvation, the renewal of the heart, deliverance from sin, and entrance into the kingdom of God, human effort is insufficient.

This confronts the spirit of self-sufficiency. Many people are taught to believe that if they work hard enough, think positively enough, or discipline themselves enough, they can become whatever they want to be. While discipline and responsibility matter, Jesus identifies a deeper truth: the human soul cannot redeem itself.

The rich young man had moral achievement, public respect, and material success. Still, he lacked surrender. He had managed his behavior, but his heart was still bound. He had religious credentials, but he did not have freedom.

Jesus is teaching that salvation is impossible if it depends on human strength. No one can buy it. No one can earn it. No one can perform well enough to deserve it. Eternal life is not a reward for human achievement; it is the gift of God's grace.

3. God's Power Begins Where Human Ability Ends. *But not with God...*

The phrase *but not with God* is the turning point of the verse. Jesus does not leave the disciples in despair. He acknowledges human limitation, but then He redirects their attention to divine possibility. What is impossible for people is not impossible for God.

This is the theological center of the promise. God is not limited by human weakness, social categories, economic status, personal history, emotional wounds, generational patterns, or spiritual bondage. God can reach what human strength cannot reach. God can change what human effort cannot change. God can save the person who cannot save themselves.

The words *but not with God* invite believers to shift their confidence. We are not called to deny reality. Some things really are impossible for us. But a believer's faith does not end with what we can do. Faith begins to rise when we remember who God is.

4. God's Possibility Is Rooted in God's Sovereign Power. *All things are possible with God.*

This phrase must be understood carefully. It does not mean God is obligated to fulfill every human desire. It does not mean every plan we make will succeed. It does not mean faith gives us control over God. Rather, it means nothing that belongs to God's will and redemptive purpose is beyond God's power.

In the context of Mark 10, Jesus is speaking especially about salvation. The disciples asked, *Who then can be saved?* Jesus answered by teaching that salvation is impossible with man, but possible with God. The transformation of the heart is God's work.

The greatest evidence that all things are possible with God is not that circumstances change. The greatest evidence is that God can take a soul that is dead in sin and make it alive by grace.

Contemporary Summary

Mark 10:27 speaks powerfully to a generation surrounded by achievement, ambition, pressure, and comparison. Many people are taught to measure life by performance: grades, career goals, income potential, social influence, physical appearance, relationships, followers, accomplishments, and future plans. Success can easily become a source of identity. Achievement can become a form of security. Ambition can become a way of trying to prove personal worth.

The rich young man represents a person who seems to have everything going for him. He is respectful, disciplined, morally serious, and financially secure. Yet Jesus reveals that he is still spiritually incomplete. His life is impressive, but his heart is not surrendered.

Jesus' words challenge the illusion of self-sufficiency. Human beings can accomplish much, but they cannot save themselves. They cannot manufacture eternal life. They cannot heal the deepest

condition of the soul apart from God. At the same time, this verse offers hope. No one is beyond God's reach. No heart is too hard. No past is too complicated. No bondage is too strong. No situation is too far gone for the power of God.

The promise of Mark 10:27 calls us to stop treating God as a last resort and begin trusting Him as the source of life. It invites us to bring our limitations, questions, fears, attachments, and impossible situations before Him.

Discussion Questions

1. Why did the rich young man's wealth become a spiritual barrier between him and Jesus?
2. What are some things people today use for identity, security, or control?
3. Why is it possible to be outwardly successful but inwardly unsundered?
4. What does Jesus mean when He says, "With man this is impossible"?
5. How does this verse challenge the idea that people can save or fix themselves through effort alone?

Memory Verse

Mark 10:27 NIV

"With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God."

Write it. Memorize it. Live it.

Student Worksheet
Lesson 3: The Promise of God's Power

Scripture

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God."

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Section A: Multiple Choice. Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. What question did the rich young man ask Jesus?
 - A. "How can I become one of Your disciples?"
 - B. "What must I do to inherit eternal life?"
 - C. "What is the greatest commandment?"
 - D. "When will the kingdom of God come?"

2. What did Jesus expose in the rich young man's life?
 - A. His lack of intelligence
 - B. His hatred for the poor
 - C. His attachment to wealth and lack of surrender
 - D. His lack of interest in religious matters

3. Why were the disciples amazed by Jesus' teaching?
 - A. They believed wealth often indicated blessing and advantage
 - B. They had never seen a wealthy person before
 - C. They thought Jesus was speaking only about taxes
 - D. They did not understand the meaning of money

4. When Jesus says,
"With man this is impossible,"
He is teaching that:
 - A. People should not work hard or take responsibility
 - B. Human beings cannot save themselves by effort, status, or achievement
 - C. Wealthy people can never be saved
 - D. The disciples should stop asking questions

5. The phrase: *but not with God*
means:
 - A. God is limited by the same things that limit human beings
 - B. God's power begins where human ability ends

- C. God only helps people who are already strong
- D. God avoids impossible situations

6. In the context of Mark 10, the greatest example of, “*all things are possible with God*” is:

- A. Becoming rich
- B. Winning every argument
- C. The salvation and transformation of the human heart
- D. Avoiding every hardship in life

Section B: True or False

Write TRUE or FALSE on the line.

1. _____ Mark 10:27 was spoken after the rich young man walked away from Jesus.
2. _____ The rich young man’s main problem was that he had money; the amount of money itself was the sin.
3. _____ Jesus loved the rich young man enough to expose what had control over his heart.
4. _____ Human effort alone is enough to earn eternal life.
5. _____ “All things are possible with God” means nothing is beyond God’s power when it belongs to His will and purpose.
6. _____ This verse teaches shallow optimism rather than serious faith in God’s power.

Section C: Personal Reflection

1. What is one thing people often depend on for identity, security, or control?
2. What is one area of life where you need to trust God’s power more deeply?
3. Write a short prayer asking God to help you trust Him with what feels impossible.

Closing Thought

Mark 10:27 teaches that human strength has limits, but God’s power does not. No one can save themselves, and no one can transform the human heart apart from God’s grace. The good news is that what is impossible with man is possible with God. He can save, change, restore, and bring life where human power has reached its end.