

Who then can be saved?

It is said that there are over 7 billion people who live upon the earth; the covid virus could infect any one of them. Thankfully a vaccine has been discovered that will protect many lives but the question remains “who can be saved”. Potentially every one could be saved if the vaccine was available and the people agree to receive their jab in the arm. There are many people who will not take advantage of the vaccine because of conspiracy theories that abound, suggesting that scientists and pharmaceutical companies are in league to make money. There also seems to be a blase spirit among some who think that they are not going to be affected by the virus and still gather for illegal raves, where alcohol and drugs are the attraction. Where common sense prevails it is good to see hundreds of people queuing at the various vaccination centres to get inoculated. As aged over 80 my wife and I were very pleased to be given both doses of the vaccine, with an assurance of over 90% protection. The race is on as to whether the vaccination programme can get ahead of this virulent strain of covid 19. Thousands of people are dying daily so the problem is an urgent one. It is so sad to hear of family members being infected and dying and our sympathies go out to all families that have been affected.

On April 14th 1912 the sinking of the Titanic raised many unanswered questions. On its maiden voyage this so called “unsinkable ship” went down after hitting an iceberg in the North Atlantic Ocean. Shortly after impact the foremost question was “who can be saved”. It was apparent that there were not enough lifeboats on the ship to cope with the total number of passengers and crew. It is said that some lifeboats were being launched without a full compliment of people on board. There was some confusion concerning the names on the passenger list and who was actually saved and who was lost. It is thought that between 1,400 and 1,600 passengers and crew lost their lives. A story I heard long ago concerned an evangelist who was a passenger on the Titanic when it went down. He was in the water and other men in the same predicament were being washed together by the waves and the evangelist would ask them the question “man, are you saved, are you ready to meet God”? We don’t know how many people the preacher spoke to in the water but it was his last opportunity to call men and women to repent and believe the gospel, for he was drowned. One man that he spoke to was rescued into a lifeboat. Years later in giving his testimony as to how he was converted he began by saying “I was the last convert of the evangelist that perished in the sinking of the Titanic”. That Christian might well be right, but then again there could have been others who heard the preacher who also repented and received Christ as Saviour. Concerning the sinking of the Titanic there was a limitation as to who could be saved and sadly many perished.

In *Mark chapter 10* we read of a young man who ran to the Lord Jesus Christ and asked the question “***Good master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him Master, all these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions***”.... Jesus went on to

say “ *Children how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of the needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of measure saying among themselves Who then can be saved?*” His illustration of a camel going through the eye of the needle is a graphic one and would be well understood by the hearers. They would visualise a merchant arriving at a city after dark when the gates of the city would be locked against them. The only way in to the security of the city was to unburden the camel of its merchandise and to get the animal on its knees to pass through the postern gate, which was at the side of the main gate. The lesson is clear, people have to unburden themselves from the obstruction of worldly treasures, get down on their knees before God and call upon Him to be saved.

It is impossible for man to devise any way to be saved. Every endeavour would prove futile. Just as the young man came urgently requesting eternal life, he was shown the “one way” was to trust Christ and to follow him. This young man went away from the Lord sad but he did not go away unloved, as the scripture above says “*Jesus beholding him loved him*”. The Bible is conclusive and inclusive, *John 3 v 16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”* The word whosoever in the text tells us clearly that anyone in the world can be saved. Romans 10 v 13 says “*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*”

Are you saved?

God bless,

Stan Burditt