

# Anyone can

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Let us turn to **John 7: 14-17**.

## **John 7: 14-17**

- 14 But when it was now the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and *began to* teach.
- 15 The Jews then were astonished, saying, "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?"
- 16 So Jesus answered them and said, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.
- 17 If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or *whether* I speak from Myself.

Here, we have a group of people looking at the Lord Jesus, the Light of the world. But many of them were blind. They could not see the glory of God in the face of the Lord Jesus Christ. They could not recognize Him as the One who created the universe, the One who is the resurrection and the life, the One who could save them and bring meaning to their lives.

So the Lord Jesus answered them and said – when they asked the question "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?" – "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or *whether* I speak from Myself."

What is the significance of the Lord Jesus saying “If anyone is willing to do His will”? Why does the Lord say “anyone”? Why did He not say, “Those of you who are mature will understand, you will see. Those of you who are well educated, who are taught well in the Scriptures, you will know. Those of you who are older, you will be able to understand”?

But the Lord Jesus did not say any of these things. He said, “If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know...”

Many a time, when our lives are not right, when we do not know how to live our lives, when we go astray, we give many reasons why it is we do not know, why we do not see. Some will say, “I cannot. Others can, but I cannot. I am not brought up that way. I do not have that privilege. I have not gone through that experience. I have not been shown that revelation. Others can know but I cannot.”

The Lord Jesus says: “anyone”.

Let us be clear about this important truth. Anyone can know. Anyone can see. What is so critical and so important? No one is left out. No one is prevented from knowing. No one has to be spiritually blind. Anyone can know; anyone can see.

But what is it that we want to know? What do we want to see?

In this context, it refers to knowing of the teaching that helps us to appreciate who the Lord Jesus is, so that we can properly believe in Him, trust Him and walk in His ways.

It refers to spiritual insight, which, when properly responded to, can lead to spiritual, eternal life.

I want to bring your attention to other passages of Scripture which highlight this aspect of what God has provided for everyone.

**John 3: 14-16**

- 14 "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up;  
15 so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.  
16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

We are told: "whoever believes will in Him have eternal life"; "whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life". Anyone can believe; anyone can have eternal life. Anyone who believes shall have eternal life. It is open to all – everyone. No one is excluded.

**Revelation 22: 17**

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.

Let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost. Anyone who wishes to do so may do so. It is open to anyone. The one who wishes can take the water of life without cost. So God has provided for all of us. Anyone can receive spiritual life, can have spiritual sight.

But then the reality of life is that many, many people will perish. Many, many people will be spiritually blind. Many, many people will not have the water of life. Why?

Since it is available to anyone and everyone and whoever wills, why is it that in reality, it is not benefiting the people that God wants to benefit?

**Matthew 19: 21-22**

- 21 Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go *and* sell your possessions and give to *the* poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."  
22 But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property.

This young man wanted eternal life. He came to the Lord Jesus, asking how could he find eternal life. He longed for it, he wished to have it. He was seeking for the water of life. He wanted eternal life.

We see eternal life is available to whoever believes. Whoever wishes can take of the water of life. But why is it this man went away grieving? He did not receive what he wanted.

The reality is that if we wish, then we must choose, we must act, we must take the necessary steps.

There is a condition to all that God has promised to us. Yes, it is available to anyone, to everyone, but it is to anyone who believes, it is to everyone who is willing to do the will of God. It is conditional upon this.

If this is absent, then you cannot just ask God to give to you whatever you wish to have. You cannot just take of the water of life just as you wish. There must be repentance, there must be faith; there must be true belief in Him.

Notice what the Lord Jesus said: "If you wish to be complete – if this is what you want, you long for it, you want it", then, He says: "...go... there is action, practical steps you must take. Go *and* sell your possessions and give to *the* poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." These are all expressions of action, response, choice.

But does it mean that anyone who sells all that he has and gives them to the poor will have eternal life?

Obviously, the answer is no. The reason is: Ultimately, it is a question of the meaning within the heart.

The Lord Jesus said, "If you wish to be complete". The word translated as "complete" comes from the Greek word "*teleios*", which means "having reached its end". "Having reached its end": So it can be translated as "complete" or "perfect" or "mature". And the appropriate translation may vary, depending on the context in which it is used. Sometimes, it is more appropriate to translate it as "perfect"; sometimes, "mature"; sometimes, "complete".

In this context, it seems to me that the word "complete" is quite suitable. Why?

It was in the context in which this young man told the Lord Jesus that he had kept the various commandments: When the Lord Jesus told him, "There is *only* One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments." *Then* he said to Him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER; YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY; YOU SHALL NOT STEAL; YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS; HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER; and YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept; what am I still lacking?" Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go *and* sell your possessions and give to *the* poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

The young man said, "I have kept all these commandments; I have done all these things. What am I still lacking? Is there something lacking? Have I not done all that I should have done?"

The answer is, yes. There is something lacking. It was not complete. He kept these commandments, he thought that he truly kept them but in reality, he had not kept these commandments. Did he truly love his neighbour as himself? Did he truly love God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength? If he did, would he hesitate? Would he not obey God when the Lord Jesus commanded him to sell all that he had and give to the poor? Surely, he would.

If he really cared for his neighbour so much, he would not find it so difficult to part with his possessions. But he could not. He went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property. The property was gripping his heart. His heart was not properly given to God.

What is God looking for? He is looking for those whose heart is completely His.

This is the critical aspect that is lacking in Christian living today – and so, throughout the history of man. We keep things for ourselves. We hold back from God what should be offered to Him and yet, we say we love Him, we are prepared to do anything for Him.

Many of us may not realize that we are actually doing that. But if we are honest, we pause, we consider, we will know that it is true. In many, many instances, we know that we are in reality holding back. We keep things and not give them up truly to God. We are not complete in giving our heart to God. And this of course will manifest itself in the things that we do.

For this man, his property had a very strong grip on him. For some people, it may not be this area. It can be something else. It can be someone that you care about, it can be your reputation, it can be your work situation; it can be your ambitions.

There are many, many different things in this world that we can love and want and hold on to, which prevent us from truly receiving the life that God wants to give to us. God wants to give to us the very best but we are held back by the things that we cling on to.

**Verse 23** tells us: And Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven". A rich man finds it difficult to enter heaven because the riches grip him.

But we may want to be rich in many other ways, not just physical riches. We want to be rich in terms of people's opinion, we want to be rich in terms of the achievements in this world; we want to be rich in many things that we can enjoy. All these will hinder us from truly knowing true eternal, spiritual life. When our hearts are occupied with these things, when we do not properly give ourselves to God, we will become blind to varying, varying degrees.

Some people may be born blind physically and in the natural realm, they may not be healed. But everyone can have spiritual sight. It is available to everyone. God may not heal all the blind people in the world, but God is prepared to give spiritual sight to anyone.

And so the Lord Jesus said, "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or *whether* I speak from Myself. You will know Me if you truly are prepared to do the will of God." So, notice that the Lord Jesus said, "If anyone is willing to do His will". It is not that anyone can know without condition – "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know".

So, if we want to develop a deep fellowship with God, if we want to know Him such that we can relate with Him deeply, we can walk with Him with joy and meaning and purpose and direction, then we must be prepared to do His will, whatever it is, whatever it means, however it affects us, however we feel, whatever circumstances and outcome of things.

Are we truly willing to walk with Him and do His will? If not, then the things that hold us back will blind us to our vision of God, will hinder us from seeing Him, from knowing Him.

The Lord Jesus, God in the flesh walking amongst them: How many people saw Him as He really was?

They were blinded by the things in their hearts – they clouded their spiritual eyes. They could not see.

The man who was born blind was healed by the Lord Jesus physically. But we can see in that context, he also had spiritual sight. In his heart, he could appreciate spiritual goodness and when the Lord Jesus healed him, he was so very grateful to Him, very responsive to what the Lord Jesus had to say to him.

Are we grateful to the Lord for all that He has done for us? Are we preoccupied with ourselves, what we want, what we prefer, or are we willing to seek Him, respond to Him according to what is meaningful to Him?

What preoccupies us? That is a question that all of us will need to answer honestly before God.

As we partake of the Lord's Supper, are we focused on the Lord Jesus, who made it possible for us to find forgiveness, to find life, to be transformed to be like Him in His moral character?

If we behold Him, we are focused on Him, we seek to follow His example, we depend on Him, we receive His life; we will know Him increasingly.

But if we are focused on the things of this world, on what we prefer and how we feel, then the things of the world will grow very bright and our vision of the Lord will become very dim.

It is up to us what choice we make. And the steps that we have to take must first arise in our hearts, the meaning within us, and then expressed in the practical things that we do.

How we spend our time, what we want to strive for, what we want to be occupied with, what we enjoy, what we look for, the things that we do each day – these are the things that will manifest what is in our hearts.

The mouth will speak that which fills the heart. The hands will do that which the heart is motivated towards.

So, we can evaluate our lives and consider what is worth living for and how we should live each day.

Let us come before the Lord and ask Him to help us to think through our lives, to ponder and consider in the short time that we have on earth, how do you want to live it?

He is prepared to give us the very best – anyone. He is prepared to help us to the utmost in whatever way. But will we truly follow Him?