

WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT A MAN?

You remember the words that Jesus spoke about this, right? Sure you do. Here is what He said: *“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul”* (Mark 8:36-37)?

The word “soul” is sometimes translated as “life.” In this setting, the Master was definitely talking about losing true spiritual life, which would be the loss of the soul. A soul is not lost in the sense that it can be misplaced or cannot be found, nor does a soul being lost mean that it goes out of existence. To “lose” one’s soul means the loss of spiritual well-being — separated from God by sin in this life, and ultimately separated from Him eternally in the life to come (II Thess. 1:8,9).

A quick look at the context in which Jesus was teaching about gaining the world and losing one’s soul shows that Jesus’ message challenged people to make choices. In Mark 8:34 we read that our Lord calls on all people to follow Him. Will we? He calls on each person to deny himself and take up His cross (8:34). Will we? He appeals to us to lose our life for His sake and the gospel’s in order to save it (8:35). That simply means that He wants us to give up our devotion to ourselves and our own desires and count Him and His will as being most important. Will we do that? He further makes it clear that He does not want us to be ashamed of Him and His words (8:38). Will we?

All of the teaching in this context at the very end of Mark 8 shows us that we have to make decisions — important decisions, tough decisions, eternal-destiny-determining decisions. They are, indeed, “big stuff.” And, right there smack dab in the middle of these instructions is the Christ’s question about what does it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul. Well, what is the answer? In the big picture of things, what would it profit him? Jesus’ inquiry causes us to think soberly about

what really matters most in life. In our heart of hearts, just what is it that ranks right up there in the top position on our list of “most important stuff?”

I am reminded of another occasion when Jesus told some covetous Pharisees, *“...but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God”* (Luke 16:14-15).

The ads thrown at us on the radio and TV make winning a lottery sound like a piece of cake that brings ultimate bliss. But if gambling will cost a person his soul, what does it profit to win a bunch of money? Being a lottery winner brings fame and fortune. But, like the Master said so clearly, *“that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.”*

If a woman could become the richest woman in history, but in the process rebel against Jehovah and lose her soul, what profit would there be for her to have heaps of gold and the notoriety of being Miss Money Bags?

If a Christian couple can amass mountains of money, but when it comes to contributing to the Lord’s work, they give like paupers, what shall it profit them to have gigantic sums of wealth if they only give God their leftover crumbs and ultimately lose their souls?

If two Christian men who are brothers in the flesh run a business that has been in their family for four generations, and they take that business to a financial level that brings them both millions of dollars in annual profits, but they make a bunch of their profit by dishonesty and other immoral practices, not to mention the fact that they only attend 25% of the services of the church (because a fellow has to make a little living, you know) — what, what, what does all of their money profit them, if in the end they lose their souls?!

If over the weekend a married man sleeps with the head turning harlot that works with him down at the office, and as a result he gets nods of approval and slaps on the back from

his male co-workers on Monday morning, what shall it profit him if it causes him to lose his soul?

If a teenage girl wears skimpy clothing that reveals her cleavage and thighs for all the young men to gawk at and is known as “the hottest” girl in school, what shall it profit her if she loses her soul in the process?

If a young man downs some beers, smokes a joint of marijuana, and uses profanity to prove to his buddies that he is a mature man (???), but he loses his soul because of his ungodliness and lack of self-control, what has his so-called show of manliness gained him?

Brothers and sisters, if we want to be popular in the eyes of other humans, the devil has an unlimited number of ways to help us pursue popularity. If you and I count making money and acquiring material goods as our biggest goal in life, do not worry. Satan’s got us covered on that one, too. He has every kind of ploy that one could imagine to assist us in getting our hands on material things. We may never make Forbes’ list of the most wealthy people in the world, but covetous people have a way of getting their hands on stuff. For a heart filled with covetousness, though, there is never a feeling of being satisfied with what one has. There is always the longing for more, more, more. I recall that someone asked, *“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”* Are we listening?

My soul is my most valuable possession. But here is the question that each of us must face: Do I really count my soul and its eternal safety as being most important? I know that God does, but do I? God knows if I do or not, and when you see my choices in life, you will know, too.

“What shall it profit...?”

Roger D. Campbell *from Seek The Old Paths*

BIRTHDAYS

Wilba Hopkins, 08-16; Nicole Parish, 08-16;
Tom Tucker, 08-22.

ILL

Sunday: Janice Carter (PM); Millie Robertson (PM).

Wednesday: Janice Carter; Millie Robertson.

John Shafer's daughter, Jody, was admitted for a MRI and other tests on Wednesday night. Jim O'Connor was released from Centerpoint Medical Center on Wednesday and is recovering at home. Floyd Thrasher was released from Cox South on Tuesday and is recovering at home.

Those battling cancer: Ledgia Campbell, Betty James and Cleo Stone. Please remember these in your prayers.

HOME BOUND

Kathleen Camp is in Room 101 at the Royal Terrace Nursing Home in Olathe. Cleo and Marion Stone are at home. Barbara James' Aunt, Evelyn Marquardt is at Sharon Lane in Shawnee. Please remember these in your prayers and visitation.

MEMBERSHIP

Stanley and Judith Anderson expressed their desire to work and worship with the church here last Sunday. Their address is: 390 W. Westhoff Place, Gardner, KS 66030. Phone: 913-884-4482. We welcome them to Park Street!

OUT OF TOWN

The Nemechek family is in Abilene, KS visiting relatives this weekend. Debra Gragg was vacationing in Cleveland, OH last Sunday. Chris Edwards was away on business last week. John and Barbara James were away camping last Sunday.

AREA EVENTS

There are several Gospel Meetings and other activities in our area during August. See the flyers in the foyer.

ATTENDANCE

Sunday AM, 41; Sunday PM, 31; Wednesday PM, 29.

Those To Serve

August 16, 2009

BUILDING AND COMMUNION..... Brown

MORNING WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS..... Trent Thrasher
SONG LEADER..... Joel Nelson
OPENING PRAYER Jeff Nemechek
PRESIDE..... John Cody Carter
ASSIST..... George Thomas
ASSIST..... Dave Parish
CLOSING PRAYER..... John Dodson

EVENING WORSHIP

OPENING PRAYER Chris Edwards
CLOSING PRAYER..... Steve Brown
LORD'S SUPPER..... John Cody Carter

WEDNESDAY 19th

SONG LEADER..... Jeff Nemechek
INVITATION Joel Nelson

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday

Bible Study 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 10:30 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM
Bible Study 7:00 PM

Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher

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