FOR WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT A MAN IF HE SHALL GAIN THE WHOLE WORLD AND LOSE HIS OWN SOUL?

Mark 8:36
Donald Townsley

Introduction

1. Everybody is interested in certain words in this question – “profit”; “gain”; “loss”.
2. The tragedy is that so many are interested only in earthly profits, gains, and losses.
   a. This is their chief concern – Matt. 6:24.
3. Most values fluctuate, this is true of bonds, stocks, and real estate – even money.
4. The fact that the Soul cannot be seen makes is no less real – 2 Cor. 4:18.
   a. Joy, sorrow, and pain are invisible, but their evidences are seen.

I. THE QUESTION PROVES THAT A PERSON CAN LOSE HIS SOUL.
   a. This will be the miserable fate of the majority of the world – Matt. 7:13–14.
   b. Sin is the destructive power over the soul which causes it to be lost – Rom. 3:23; 6:23; Rev. 21:27; John 8:21.
   c. If the Soul is lost it is due to the person’s own decision – Matt. 11:28–30; Acts 2:40; John 5:40.

II. THE QUESTION WARNS OF MAN’S DANGER OF EXCHANGING HIS SOUL.
   a. Jesus asked, “Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” – Mk. 8:37.
   b. Some exchange their souls for the everyday affairs of life.
      i. Too busy making a living or keeping house to read the Bible, work for God, and attend the services of the church.
      ii. Too many are like Martha, “troubled about many things” – Lk. 10:41; Matt. 6:25–34.
      iii. Only a few like Mary, “who hath chosen the good part” – Lk. 10:41–42.
   c. Some exchange their souls for evil association.
      i. We cannot get away from the power of influence – I Cor. 15:33; 5:6; Gal. 4:16–18.
      ii. If you run with the wrong crowd you will begin to act like they do.
   d. Some exchange their soul for false doctrine.
      ii. Another gospel will condemn us – Gal. 1:6–9.
      iii. People who practice false doctrine are workers of iniquity – Matt. 7:23.
      iv. People who practice false doctrine have not God – 2 John 9.
   e. Some exchange their Souls for a life of ease:
      i. It takes effort to serve God – Matt. 16:24; I Cor. 15:58; James 4:17; Phil. 2:12; Eph. 2:10.
      ii. Teaching our family the gospel (Eph. 6:4); the mature teacher teaching others how to teach (2 Tim. 2:2); Personal teaching of our friends (Acts 20:20; 8:4); Attend all the
services (Heb. 10:25); Live a righteous life (Tit. 2: 11 – 12); Help the needy (Matt. 25: 34 – 40); Visit the sick (Matt. 25:36).

III. THE QUESTION TEACHES THAT MEN CANNOT HAVE EVERYTHING.
   a. Man gains one thing at the loss of something else.
      i. Man cannot have a life of SIN and have Heaven later – Rev. 21:27; Gal. 5:21.
      ii. Man cannot sow to the flesh and reap eternal life – Gal. 6: 7 – 8.
      iii. Man can have a life of sin, but at the sacrifice of Heaven.
   b. The wise trader is he who gives up everything for the kingdom of Heaven – Matt. 13: 45 – 46.

IV. A MAN’S MOST TRAGIC LOSS IS HIS SOUL.
   a. Even lesser losses are bad enough.
      i. Health and life.
      ii. To lose one’s soul is a million times worse – Matt. 10:28.
   b. The loss of the soul really means two losses.
      i. Heaven – Rev. 21:27.
      ii. The loss of many blessings now – Acts 8:39.
      iii. The value of the Soul is seen in God’s love for it – John 3;16; Rom. 5:8.
      iv. The Soul is eternal – 2 Cor. 5: 1 – 2.

CONCLUSION
   1. Have you made ready? If not, why not now???