

“For What Shall It Profit A Man?”

by: Michael R. Hughes

Text: Mark 8:36

Theme: To stress that the temporary enjoyments of sin are not worthy of losing our eternal salvation.

Introduction:

1. Everybody is interested in certain words suggested in our question: “gain,” “profit,” “loss,” or lose.”
 - a. The tragedy is most interested in earthly gains, losses, etc.
 - b. Most values change.
 - 1) True of bonds, stocks, etc.
 - 2) But the worth of a soul remains constant.
2. It is no less real, though not seen.
 - 1) Things that are seen are only temporal, while things not seen are eternal.
 - 2) II Co. 4:18 (Joy, sorrow, pain, ether, electricity are as if seen; soul, life).

Discussion:

- I. The question proves a person can lose his soul, or life, eternally.
 - A. This is the sad, miserable fate of the vast majority of the world, Mt. 7:13-46
 - B. Sin is the power causing loss
 1. Jo. 8:21
 2. If a soul is lost it is due the the person’s own decision, Ac. 13:46

- II. The question warns of man's danger of exchanging his soul.
- A. Jesus often warned of this.
 - B. There are many things for which people exchange their souls
 - 1. Too concerned with everyday things of this life
 - a. No time to read the Bible, don't take time to read the Bible.
 - b. Don't take time to be holy, Lu.10:41
 - c. Evil associations
 - 1) 1Co.15:33; 5:6
 - 2) "If we run with the goats we will smell like the goats."
 - 3) We warn the young about this, but adults need to be very careful here as well.
 - d. False doctrine
 - 1) Renders man worship vain.
 - 2) A strategic plan of operation on the part of Satan.
 - 3) Mt.15:9; Ga.1:8,9
 - e. Life of sin
 - 1) Jo.3:19
 - 2) Sin is pleasurable; this must be true or there would not be so many sinners.
 - a) Why do people take dope? Not to fry the brain, etc.
 - b) Alcohol - to kill someone on the highway? No - pleasure
 - c) Mention any other type of sin here, as the need suggests
 - 3) But the pleasures of sin are but for a season
 - f. Life of ease and false security
 - g. Takes effort to serve God
 - 1) Mt.23:8-10
 - 2) Takes our prosperity in his service.
 - 3) The road of least resistance has become a highway.
- III. The question teaches that man cannot have everything
- A. He gains one thing at the loss of another. Many simply do not believe this.

1. Cannot have sin and heaven too.
 2. Can't sow to the flesh and reap to the spirit.
 3. Must be an exchange
 - a. Mk.13:37
 - b.
 - B. A wise trader is one who gives up all for the kingdom: Mt.13:45,46
- IV. The question stressed that the most tragic loss is one's soul
- A. Lesser things are bad enough
 1. Gain all world and lose one's health
 2. Gain all and lose physical life
 - B. Loss of soul really means two losses
 1. Loss of blessings now
 - a. Happiness
 - b. Good influence
 - c. Fellowship of God's people
 - d. Privilege of being like Christ
 2. Loss of heaven later, Re.21:27
 - C. The gravity of the loss of soul is seen in God's love for man
 1. Ro.8:8,9
 2. ICo.15:3; Jo.14
 - D. The soul is eternal
 1. IICo.5:1
 2. Ec.12:7

Conclusion:

1. There are three symbols and three inscriptions over the three doors of the Milan Cathedral
 - a. Over the left door are roses, with the words: "That which pleases is but for the moment."
 - b. Over the right door are thorns, with the words: "That which troubles is but for a moment."
 - c. Over the middle door is a cross, with the words: "That alone is important which endures forever."
2. Let us guard against the loss of our souls.

Invitation:

Bibliography:

Sermon by same title by J.F. Doggett