

The Value of a Soul

Introduction:

1. Charlemagne, 742-814, was a great king and emperor of France, probably the most famous ruler of the Middle Ages, a key figure in European history. Reportedly, at his request, upon his death he was buried while sitting on a marble chair, and wrapped in royal robes. Many years after his death, archaeologists discovered his tomb which had been sealed for centuries. To their surprise, they discovered the skeleton of Charlemagne, with an open Bible on his lap, and a bony finger pointing to Mark 8:36, which reads: *"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"* Apparently, Charlemagne was impressed with the value of the soul.
2. Our lesson today is entitled "The value of a Soul."
3. Text: Mark 8:34-37.

Discussion:

I. Man Has a Soul!

- A. Some deny that man has a soul!
 1. Followers of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, better known as "Jehovah's Witnesses."
 - a. They say man "is" a soul; they deny that man "has" a soul!
- B. Some of the confusion exists because the same word can be used in different ways. *Psyche*, from which "soul" is translated, is such a word.
 1. It may refer to the person, I Peter 3:20, *"eight souls saved by water."*
 2. Life itself, John 13:38, *"lay down your life."*
 3. Something distinguished from the body, I Thess. 5:23, *"spirit, and soul and body."*
 4. Something distinguished from the spirit, Heb. 4:12, *"soul and spirit."*
 5. Something which exists after the death of the body, Matt. 10:28, *"kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul."*
- C. Man exists after the death of the body!
 1. Matt. 10:28.
 2. The rich man, Luke 16:22-23.
 3. The thief on the cross, Luke 23:42-43.
 4. The righteous dead are *"with Christ: which is far better,"* Phil. 1:23.
 5. Heb. 12:23, *"the spirits of just men made perfect."*
 6. I Pet. 4:6, *"them that are dead....but live according to God in the spirit."*
 7. Rev. 6:9-11, John saw *"the souls of them that were slain....and they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'how long, O Lord, holy and true, doest thou not judge and avenge our blood....'"*
 8. Rev. 14:13, *"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord..."*

II. The Soul (Your Soul) is Valuable!

- A. Evidenced by our text, Mark 8:34-37.
- B. Evidenced by the Divinity of its origin.
 1. Man was created in the image of God! Gen. 1:26-27.
 2. God is the Father of spirits, Heb. 12:9.
 - a. God is a spirit, John 4:24.
 - b. A spirit *"hath not flesh and bones,"* Luke 24:37-39.
 - c. Eccl. 12:7, *"and the spirit shall return unto God Who gave it."*
- C. Evidenced by the price paid for its redemption.
 1. Not redeemed with corruptible things, *"but with the precious blood of Christ..."* I Peter 1:18-19.
 2. John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; I John 4:9; Isa. 53:3-7.
- D. The nature of its power.
 1. It is able to make decisions, Josh. 24:15.
 2. It is able to worship God, John 4:24.
 - (1) The worship we offer must be in keeping with the Object we worship!
 - (2) We must worship God from the very depths of the soul! John 4:24; Eph. 5:19; I Cor. 11:28.
 - (3) **Note:** Sometimes we are called "Phariseeical" because we insist on following "book, chapter, and verse!" But that is the very opposite of Phariseeism! Cf. Mat. 15:8-9; 23:1-2.
 3. It is able to glorify God, I Cor. 10:31.

- E. The Eternity of its existence.
 - 1. There was a time when you did not exist.
 - 2. But there will never be a time when you will cease to exist! Matt. 25:46.
- F. The Devil's interest in the soul!
 - 1. He is "*the god of this world*," 2 Cor. 4:4.
 - 2. He is our "*adversary*," 1 Peter 5:8-9.
- G. Its Loss is the most tragic of losses! Matt. 16:26.
 - 1. It is a loss in time! Mark 10:29-30.
 - a. God has put eternity in our hearts, Eccl. 3:11. Deep within every person is a longing for beyond this life.
 - 2. It is a loss for all eternity! Matt. 25:46; 2 Thess. 1:7-9. "When one loses his soul he will exist in an eternal nightmare that will never end!"

III. Yet many "**Exchange**" their souls for that which is without real value!

Note: "*Exchange*" in Matt. 16:26 is a term used to describe a business transaction.

- A. Some Sell their Souls for Prosperity, Matt. 16:26.
 - 1. No one man has ever gained "*the whole world*," though many have become very, very wealthy. If you sell your soul for prosperity, remember:
 - a. It won't last, 2 Peter 3:10.
 - b. It will never satisfy! Eccl. 3:10-11.
 - c. You can't take it with you! 1 Tim. 6:7.
- B. Some Sell their Souls for Popularity.
 - 1. The Pharisees were guilty of this! Matt. 23:5
- C. Many sell their souls for the "passing pleasures of sin."
 - 1. Like the young man in Prov. 5:1-14.
 - a. In a moment's passion, virtue is destroyed, unwanted pregnancies occur, marriages are destroyed, families are ruined.
- D. Many sell their souls for False Doctrine, 2 Cor. 11:13-15.
 - 1. This is why we need to follow the example of the Bereans, Acts 17:11; and heed the instructions of John, 1 John 4:1.
- E. Many Sell their souls through sheer neglect and laziness.
 - 1. Acts 24:25; Heb. 2:3.
 - 2. Some who do obey the gospel neglect to give the needed diligence to add "the christian graces," 2 Peter 1:5-9.

Conclusion:

- 1. How valuable is your soul?
 - a. What answer do you think the rich man in hades would give to that question? Luke 16:23.
 - b. What answer do you think those described in Rev. 14:13 would give you?
 - c. What answer would God and Christ give you, John 3:16; Heb. 2:9.
- 2. Properly understood, you simply cannot afford to lose your soul!
 - a. Yet only you are able to take the necessary steps to save your soul! Acts 2:37-40.

--Bobby Witherington, Feb. 7, 2016