

# The Tragedy of One Lost Soul

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One of the striking things about Jesus' teachings is the way He gets to the heart of every issue in a few simple words. There is no better illustration than the following: "For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" (Mat. 16:26). According to the context, Jesus is talking about the life of the soul, rather than one's physical life. This passage has some sobering implications:

1. **Man possesses an immortal nature.** Man has a body and a soul or spirit which separate at death (Jam. 2:26). Jesus speaks of "both" soul and body (Mat. 10:28). Such false philosophies as Humanism, Communism, and Evolution deny this truth, making man a merely material creature with no more soul or spirit than a rock.
2. **The soul is one's most priceless possession.** It is worth more than all material things combined. It is divine in origin (Heb. 12:9), unending in duration (Mat. 25:46), and it transcends earthly relationships (Mat. 10:37). It was redeemed with Jesus' blood (1 Pet. 1:18-19).
3. **The soul can be sold or exchanged.** Some exchange their soul for pleasure (2 Tim. 2:4). Some sell out for popularity, loving the applause of men more than the praise of God (John 12:43). Some exchange their soul for the false philosophies of men (Col. 2:8). Others trade their soul for prosperity (Luke 12:16-21).
4. **Whatever the exchange, it is foolish and costly.** The world and all that is in it can never answer the deep, vital need of the soul to be at peace with God. This earth and all of its material contents is bound by time and must someday perish (2 Pet. 3:10). At death we must leave everything behind (1 Tim. 6:7).
5. **There is no loss as terrible as one's soul.** The loss of health, of a child, of one's family, or of one's life in attempting to gain the "whole world" would be tragic enough, but these are not comparable to losing one's soul. The soul lost is a multiple loss. The beauties and joys of Heaven must be forfeited—the agonies of Hell endured. A lost soul is a complete loss with nothing that matters preserved. A lost soul is irreparable; none can help or remedy our loss. A soul lost is for eternity. What could possibly be more important to you than to do what the New Testament teaches for your soul's salvation?

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