

Searching the Scriptures / 91 / Whosoever Tries To Save His Life Will Lose It / Part 1

We find this very compelling passage in Mark 8:35–37: *“For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his: soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”*

This passage supports the concept that to live life solely for material gain without true spiritual life will only lead one to lose his soul in Hell. On the other hand, if one has received salvation in his soul, his physical life will be gladly spent in diligent service and loving obedience to his dear Savior as he anticipates spending eternity with Him. In our time together today, let us examine these three points related to the first part of verse 35:

1. The Value of the Soul
2. Misdirected Priorities
3. Living to the Glory of God

1. The Value of the Soul

Our modern society places little or no value upon the soul. Man has been created by God with an invisible, eternal soul and with a visible, temporal body. Unsaved man is naturally concerned with things that he can experience with his five senses, or his physical body. This fits in very neatly with the Bible’s definition of this world system, as summed up in 1 John 2:16, *“For all that is in the world: the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”* The things of this temporal world are what unsaved man craves with all his being. Both in unsaved man’s body and soul there is agreement. Since unsaved man is spiritually dead, he has a dead soul, as seen from Psa 51:5, *“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.”* Psa 58:3 also says, *“The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.”*

Man is on the wide road that leads to Hell, but he is oblivious to it, as we see in Mat 7:13, *“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.”* He is a deceived child of Satan as John 8:44 declares, *“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a [the] lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it [the lie].”*

2. Misdirected Priorities

This same text is also found in Mark 16:25–26 and Luke 9:24–25, with slight variations in each of them. But what do these verses really signify? An illustration from Scripture can help us understand what God says is truly valuable and most important in life. Luke 12:15–21 teaches: *“And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said; This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.’ But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall*

be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

This rich man paid no attention to the condition of his soul. Although he was materially wealthy, sadly he was “*not rich toward God*”. Having wealth can be a great curse, as we have just seen, or a wonderful blessing—it all depends on a person’s motives and priorities.

3. Living to the Glory of God

Earlier, I made reference to a description of unsaved man’s desires found in 1 John 2:16, “... *the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life.*” However, for the believer in Jesus Christ, God establishes a new set of directives that are exactly opposite of those found in the world out of which the Christian has been redeemed—contentment, obedience and humility. Of course, only God can produce these traits in the lives of His children as He works in them “*to will and to do of His good pleasure*”, as Php 2:13 instructs. The Christian is admonished to walk very humbly—as did His Master—recognizing that everything he possesses has been given to him as a gift, as 1 Pet 5:5b affirms, “... *and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*”

The greatest desire of one who has been redeemed is to be obedient to His Master’s will as set forth in His Word, the Bible. John 14:15 commands the believer, “*If ye love me, keep my commandments.*” The child of God has also discovered true contentment, as 1 Tim 6:8 asserts, “*And having food and raiment let us be therewith content*”. He is to be satisfied with food—the Bread of Life, who is the Lord Jesus Himself and His Word, the Bible. He is also to be satisfied with clothing—the robe of Christ’s righteousness, the only covering for man’s sin.