**The Value of a Soul**

*Mark 8:34-38*

**Introduction**

1. After rebuking Peter for rebuking Him concerning His necessary death, Jesus spoke openly to the disciples and the people concerning true discipleship (**cf. Mark 8:34-38**).
2. Jesus’ words show the reality of a man’s soul, and emphasizes its value:
   1. (**vv. 34-35**) – There is a denial of self, but at the same time there are measures taken to save self – different facets of man.
   2. **(vv. 36-37)** – An explanation of saving your life and losing it – whole world = Physical. Lose soul? Implied is that there is nothing worth your soul.
   3. (**v. 38)** – The need to be right with Jesus to save your soul, not being ashamed of Him.
3. It is imperative we understand the value of our souls.
4. The Soul
5. Humanism
   1. There is an increasing number of those who do not believe man has a soul. They are focused on the material world, and view man as merely the height of evolutionary processes.
   2. Humanist Manifesto I:
      1. Article 2: “Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as a result of a continuous process.”
      2. Article 3: “Holding an organic view of life, humanists find that the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected.”
   3. Humanist Manifesto II:
      1. Article 2: “Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful. They distract humans from present concerns, from self-actualization, and from rectifying social injustices. Modern science discredits such historic concepts as the “ghost in the machine” and the “separable soul.” Rather, science affirms that the human species is an emergence from natural evolutionary forces. As far as we know, the total personality is a function of the biological organism transacting in a social and cultural context. There is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body. We continue to exist in our progeny and in the way that our lives have influenced others in our culture.”
   4. The humanist view of man is that he is simply a highly evolved animal. There is an absolute end to man, without a continuing existence beyond the physical life. The physical is all there is. This is at variance with the Bible’s teaching.
6. The Bible Doctrine of Man
   1. Like animals in a sense – **Ecclesiastes 3:19-21** – Man and animals are indistinguishable on a physical level, but their eventual destinations are different.
      1. **(vv. 19-20)** – As far as the body goes there is no difference.
      2. **(v. 21)** – However, the spirit of man belongs upward.
      3. **Ecclesiastes 12:6-7** – Spirit of man returns to God.
   2. Jesus reflected this distinction of man – **Matthew 10:28** – There is a soul in man – such cannot be affected by the physical forces.
   3. Jesus spoke of others, and to others suggesting an existence after death – **Luke 16:22-23; 23:42-43; 1 Peter 3:18-19** (Of Christ Himself, regarding His spiritual state of existence upon His demise. – ***“MADE ALIVE IN THE SPIRIT”***)
   4. Other Biblical evidence of the soul of man:
      1. Inward man and outer man – **2 Corinthians 4:16**
      2. Spirit, Soul, Body – **1 Thessalonians 5:23** (Spirit and Soul distinction, but also used interchangeably – distinction not easily discerned – **Hebrews 4:12**)
      3. Must put off tent – **2 Peter 1:13-14**
   5. Every man has this dual existence. The Bible teaches that the soul is of utmost value and gives ample evidence to this fact. Christians especially are those who are mindful of such and should grow in this acknowledgment of the soul.
7. The Value of a Soul
8. Evidence of its Value
   1. Image of God
      1. **Genesis 1:26-27** – created in God’s image.
      2. This is said of no other creature.
      3. God – logic, emotions, volition, conscience, morality (**Ezekiel 18:20** – we each have choice to do right or wrong, and are responsible for ourselves; morally responsible)
         1. God is spirit – **John 4:24** – not an animal.
         2. Not simple animals – **Psalm 8:3-8** – the animals are under our dominion, our rule, placed their by God for us.
      4. Ought not to act like animals – **cf. Jude 10** – behave like beasts.
      5. Sin – **Romans 3:23**
         1. We fall short of the glory of God in whose image we were created when we sin.
         2. Instead, we are to glorify God in our bodies and spirits – **1 Corinthians 6:19-20**
   2. Eternal Nature
      1. **James 2:26** – body without spirit is dead, but spirit without body is not dead (**cf. Luke 16:22** – Lazarus died, but continued to exist).
      2. Our body is merely something which houses us, and it is temporary – **2 Corinthians 5:1-5**
         1. **(v. 1)** – Need for a house for our soul, but one promised is eternal.
         2. **(vv. 2-4)** – We long to be clothed in this heavenly habitation.
         3. **(v. 5)** – We are guaranteed this habitation.
         4. **(vv. 6-8)** – When we leave our body we can be present with the Lord. (**cf. Ecclesiastes 12:7**)
         5. Because of the reality of eternal existence – (**vv. 9-11a**) – We will be judged to determine where we will spend eternity. SO BE PLEASING TO THE LORD.
      3. **Mark 8:36-37** – no profit to gaining the world and losing your soul. The soul is eternal by nature, but the world is passing away (**cf. 2 Peter 3:10** – burned up)
   3. The Cost of Redemption
      1. **Ezekiel 18:20** – The soul who sins shall die.
      2. **Romans 3:23** – all have sinned.
      3. **Romans 6:23** – wages of sin is death. (**cf. Isaiah 59:2** – separation from God.)
      4. Jesus came to earth to die in stead – **Hebrews 2:9** – He died FOR us, i.e. FOR EVERYONE. (All souls are of equal value to God.)
      5. Without His death there could be no remission – **Hebrews 9:2**
      6. The value of our souls is seen with the cost of their redemption – **1 Peter 1:18-19. (cf. Hebrews 9:14** – how much more shall the blood of Christ…)
   4. The Rejoicing of Heaven Over One Soul
      1. When even just one soul is reconciled to God heaven rejoices.
      2. There is never the redemption of a soul that is simply taken for granted, and passed by as no big deal.
      3. Every single soul that is saved is celebrated to an enormous degree.
      4. **Luke 15:8-10** – Parable of the Lost Coin.
9. Valuing Our Soul
   1. Sustenance – word of God
      1. Those who value their physical health provide sustenance for it. Those who value their soul will provide sustenance for it.
      2. **Matthew 6:11** – daily bread – physical sustenance is a daily necessity.
      3. HOW MUCH MORE SO SPIRITUAL BREAD? – **John 6:27, 32-33, 48, 63** – Jesus is the bread from heaven, and we consume Him through His word.
      4. **Deuteronomy 8:3** – not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.
      5. Jesus’ temptations – **Matthew 4:1-4** – Jesus was more concerned with His spiritual health, that of His soul, than His physical.
         1. To succumb to temptation would have been to provide physical sustenance, but die spiritually.
         2. To refuse physical sustenance, but to obey God’s word was to keep spiritual life.
      6. **Job 23:12 –** we should treasure God’s word more than food.
      7. **Psalm 1:1-2** – the blessed man delights in God’s word.
   2. Provision – laying up treasures in heaven
      1. The one who values their soul will not be overly concerned with the physical, but will be determined to provide for their spiritual future.
      2. **Matthew 6:33** – seek first spiritual matters.
      3. **Luke 12:15-21** – We must not be like the Rich fool who provided for his physical future which is uncertain, and neglected his soul.
   3. Sacrifice – mutilate body to spare soul
      1. One who values their soul, and provides sustenance for it, and provides for its future, will not lay down when trial and tribulation strike, allowing themselves to lose everything. They will sacrifice anything in order to preserve their spiritual life.
      2. **2 John 8** – don’t lose what you’ve worked for.
      3. **Matthew 5:27-30** – One who values their soul will sacrifice anything for its health.
      4. **Luke 14:26-27** – Are we willing to sacrifice anything, take up our cross, and follow Jesus to save our souls?

**Conclusion**

1. We must understand the value of our soul, and live accordingly.
2. The world does not believe that we have an eternal component in our existence – the bible teaches otherwise.
3. **Mark 8:34-37** – what will you give in exchange for your soul?