

## **WHAT DOES IT PROFIT A MAN? (Matthew 16:24-26)**

### **I. Does the Bible teach that man has a soul?**

- A. The Bible definitely teaches that man has a soul.
  - 1. This is what separates us from the animal world.
  - 2. Animals have the breath of life in them, but man has been endowed with a soul by God (Genesis 2:7).
- B. There is no other creature said to be made in the image of God as man has been said to be (Genesis 1:27).
  - 1. God is an eternal spirit (John 4:24).
  - 2. Thus, man, though flesh and blood unlike God, must have something eternal in him, in order to be made in the image of God.
  - 3. This eternal entity is the soul or spirit (Ecclesiastes 12:7).
- C. Man's physical body shall be laid to rest and turn dust, but the soul shall live on (Genesis 35:18).
  - 1. This is what death is - the departing of the soul from the physical body.
  - 2. That soul lives on in either paradise or gehenna (Luke 16:19-31).
- D. We are to fear the one who can destroy both body and soul, not just the body (Matthew 10:28).
- E. Souls will one day be united with our resurrection bodies (1 Corinthians 15:35-58).
- F. Our souls await the final judgment, at which it will be judged by the word of God by Christ (Ecclesiastes 12:14; John 12:48; Acts 17:30-31).

### **II. Why is the soul so valuable?**

- A. We have mentioned one reason already.
  - 1. It is the soul which separates us from the animals.
  - 2. We are made in the image of God, thus we have an eternal spirit.
  - 3. It is this possession that allows us the ability to think and decide.
  - 4. It is this possession that gives us the ability to comprehend right from wrong, death and life and other deep things of life.
  - 5. It is that which separates men from animals (Psalm 8:3-8).
- B. It is also valuable because we have complete control over it.
  - 1. Our body types are not up to us - it is a matter of genetics.

2. Our great-great grandfather can influence things about us and our bodies.
3. We have no control over eye or hair color or how long we keep our hair.
4. We cannot stop the aging process or death.
5. We can change the status of our soul at any time or stage in life.
6. With the gospel, we can change our attitude, our outlook and our eternal destination (Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 5:21-22; Colossians 3:12-15).

- C. The soul is also valuable because it is eternal.
1. Nothing else that we possess will last eternally.
  2. The fact is that man is born to die.
  3. The body soon wears down and ceases to function as it once did.
  4. The money, homes and cars we own, along with everything else, will all decay and vanish one day.
  5. The soul, however, returns to God (Ecclesiastes 12:7).
  6. It awaits final judgment (2 Corinthians 5:10).
  7. Because it is eternal, we need to weigh each decision we make that affects the soul - will it harm or help my soul and the souls of others with whom I have influence?

### III. **What will I exchange for my soul?**

- A. The word exchange means to “barter or trade.”
- B. So the question may be better asked in this way: For what will I trade my soul?
- C. Man’s answer seems to be: for anything and everything.
  1. For some the price is money (1 Timothy 6:10).
    - a. They chase it with everything they have.
    - b. They labor endless hours to obtain it or steal it if they have to do so.
  2. For some it is the lust of the flesh (Proverbs 5:1-14).
  3. For others it is power and praise.
    - a. People lie, cheat and kill to obtain power.
    - b. Some will do anything to obtain the praise of others.
  4. Some trade their souls for their families.
    - a. They won’t go against the long held family choice of denominationalism.
    - b. They won’t go against the lifestyle of work all week and rest on Sunday.
  5. Even others trade their souls for recreational activities.

- a. Every weekend, ball fields and courts are filled with kids whose parents are in the stands when they ought to be at worship.
- b. Every weekend, lakes and forests are filled with fishermen and hunters who should be filling pews.
- 6. Many other things could be listed here for which men sell their souls.
- D. Ask yourself this question: For what am I selling my soul?

## **From an article by Billy Hayes**