

Message Five

Our Preparation for the Lord's Coming

(3)

Losing the Soul-life and Receiving the Salvation of the Soul

Scripture Reading: Matt. 16:25; Luke 17:33; John 12:25; Heb. 10:39; 1 Pet. 1:9; Rev. 12:11

I. "Whoever wants to save his soul-life shall lose it; but whoever loses his soul-life for My sake shall find it"—Matt. 16:25:

- A. To lose our soul-life means to lose the enjoyment of the soul, and to save the soul-life means to have the enjoyment of the soul, to preserve the soul in its enjoyment.
- B. When the Lord Jesus lived on earth, He lost His soul-life; that is, He gave up all His soul-life enjoyment; He lost the enjoyment of His soul in this age so that He might gain His soul in the coming age.
- C. To deny ourselves means to reject the soul's desire, preference, and choice—16:24.
- D. We need to make a choice: lose our soul-life today and gain it in the coming age, or save our soul-life today and lose it in the coming age.
- E. In order to have the enjoyment—the joy of the Lord—in the coming age, we need to pay the price in this age by losing our soul-life—25:21, 23:
 - 1. If we save our soul-life in this age, we may be assured that we will lose it when the Lord Jesus comes back.
 - 2. For the Lord's sake, for the gospel's sake, and for His testimony's sake, we need to be willing to lose the enjoyment of our soul in this age—Mark 8:35-38; Rev. 1:9.
- F. We need to lose our soul-life enjoyment for the sake of the church and for the sake of all the saints—Matt. 16:18; 1 John 3:16:
 - 1. Apart from the losing of the soul-life, the church cannot be built up; the losing of the soul-life is the basic factor in our being built up together—Matt. 16:18.
 - 2. We should lay down our human life for the brothers; the divine life (*zoe*) within us longs to love others and even to die for them—1 John 3:16.
- G. "For the Son of Man is to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will repay each man according to his doings"—Matt. 16:27:
 - 1. *For* indicates that the Lord's rewarding of His followers at His coming back will be according to whether they lose or save their soul-life.
 - 2. For both the losing of the soul-life and the saving of the soul-life we will be rewarded—Rev. 22:12.

II. "Whoever seeks to preserve his soul-life will lose it, and whoever loses it will preserve it alive"—Luke 17:33:

- A. Preserving our soul-life is related to lingering in the earthly and material things—v. 31.
- B. We linger in the earthly things because we care for our soul's enjoyment in this age:

1. Lot's wife became a pillar of salt because she took a lingering look backward at Sodom, indicating that she loved and treasured the evil world that God was going to judge and utterly destroy—v. 32.
2. Lingering in the worldly and earthly things will cause us to lose our soul; that is, our soul will suffer the loss of its enjoyment in the coming kingdom age.

III. “He who loves his soul-life loses it; and he who hates his soul-life in this world shall keep it unto eternal life”—John 12:25:

- A. The Lord, as a grain of wheat that fell into the ground, lost His soul-life through death that He might release His eternal life in resurrection to the many grains—v. 24.
- B. As the many grains, we also must lose our soul-life through death that we may enjoy eternal life in resurrection.
- C. To lose our soul-life through death is to follow the Lord Jesus that we may serve Him and walk with Him on this way, the way of losing our soul-life and living in His resurrection—v. 26.

IV. “We are not of those who shrink back to ruin but of them who have faith to the gaining of the soul”—Heb. 10:39:

- A. The gaining, or saving, of our soul depends on how we deal with our soul in following the Lord after we are saved and regenerated.
- B. If we lose our soul now for the Lord's sake, we will save it, and it will be saved, or gained, at the Lord's coming back—Luke 9:24; 1 Pet. 1:9.
- C. The gaining of the soul will be the reward of the kingdom to the overcoming followers of the Lord—Heb. 10:35; Matt. 16:22-28.

V. “Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls”—1 Pet. 1:9:

- A. Our soul will be saved from sufferings into the full enjoyment of the Lord at His revelation, His coming back—v. 7; 3:17; 4:1, 12-16, 19.
- B. We must deny our soul, our soulish life, with all its pleasures in this age, that we may gain it in the enjoyment of the Lord in the coming age—Matt. 10:37-39.
- C. At the Lord's revelation, some believers will enter into the joy of the Lord, and some will suffer in weeping and gnashing of teeth—25:21, 23; 24:45-46.
- D. To enter into the Lord's joy is the salvation of our souls—25:21, 23.

VI. “They overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death”—Rev. 12:11:

- A. Because of man's fall, Satan joined himself to man's soul-life—man's self—Matt. 16:23-24.
- B. To overcome Satan we must not love our soul-life; rather, we must hate it and deny it—Luke 14:26; 9:23.
- C. Not loving our soul-life is the basis for overcoming Satan—Rev. 12:11:
 1. Satan is afraid of only one kind of people—those who do not love their soul-life.
 2. If we would overcome Satan, we must realize that the basis of victory is the renunciation of our self-love.