

SERIES: LUKE: THE SON OF MAN, THE SAVIOR
HAS COME, WEEK 68

TITLE: A PICTURE OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP

TEXT: LUKE 9:23-26

INTRODUCTION: (1) WHEN JESUS CALLED PEOPLE TO FOLLOW HIM, TO COME AFTER HIM, TO BE A DISCIPLE, HE WAS GIVING AN INVITATION TO SALVATION, TO BE SAVED, TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN.

*** HE WAS NOT GIVING AN OFFER OF A "HIGHER LIFE" OR TALKING ABOUT A SECOND STEP OF FAITH FOLLOWING SALVATION, OR ANOTHER LEVEL OF DEDICATION AFTER SALVATION, OR THAT YOU CAN BECOME A DISCIPLE AFTER YOU BECOME A CHRISTIAN.**

**** JESUS WAS NOT TALKING ABOUT A HIGHER LEVEL OF "SUPER SAINTS", HE WAS TALKING ABOUT BEING A TRUE BELIEVER.**

*** FOR YOU SEE EVERY CHRISTIAN IS A DISCIPLE.

**** TO ILLUSTRATE THAT, IN MATTHEW **28:19&20, OUR LORD'S GREAT COMMISSION** WAS TO GO INTO ALL THE WORLD AND MAKE WHAT? DISCIPLES!!

(2) IN THE BOOK OF ACTS THE WORD DISCIPLE IS USED CONSISTENTLY AS A SYNONYM FOR A BELIEVER, SPECIFICALLY IN ACTS 6:1&2, ACTS 6:7, ACTS 11:26, ACTS 14:20&22 AND ACTS 15:10.

* IN FACT IN ACTS **11:26 IT SAYS, "AND THE "DISCIPLES" WERE FIRST CALLED "CHRISTIANS"** IN ANTIOCH. THEN QUOTE ACTS 6:7.

** SO WHAT IS A DISCIPLE? A CHRISTIAN! AND WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN? A DISCIPLE, ONE WHO FOLLOWS JESUS CHRIST, A LEARNER, A PUPIL, A SERVANT OF HIS, **THAT'S** WHAT A DISCIPLE, A CHRISTIAN IS.

*** A TRUE CHRISTIAN IS NOT SOMEONE WHO HAS MADE A PROFESSION OF FAITH WITHOUT FRUIT AND OBEDIENCE THAT FOLLOWS SAVING FAITH.

**** A TRUE CHRISTIAN IS NOT ONE WHO SIMPLY **BUYS "FIRE INSURANCE", WHO SIGNS UP JUST** TO AVOID AN UNPLEASANT AFTERLIFE.

***** A TRUE CHRISTIAN IS ONE WHOSE FAITH EXPRESSES ITSELF IN SUBMISSION, OBEDIENCE, ACTIONS, FRUITS AND A NEW DIRECTION, BECAUSE THEY ARE A NEW CREATION IN CHRIST. QUOTE II CORINTHIANS 5:17.

(3) AND ONE WHO IS IN CHRIST IS COMMITTED TO CHRIST, HE IS NOT PERFECT, HE FALLS, BUT **BY GOD'S GRACE GETS BACK UP. HE SINS, BUT** THEN CONFESSES IT, WHEN HE FAILS, HE SEEKS FORGIVENESS.

* HE OR SHE PERSEVERES IN THE FAITH BY **GOD'S GRACE, THIS IS HIS OR HER SPIRIT, THIS IS** THEIR DIRECTION OF LIFE, FOLLOWING JESUS, CONTINUING IN HIS WORD, QUOTE JOHN 8:31.

** NOW UNDERSTAND THAT WHEN JESUS CALLED DISCIPLES, HE CAREFULLY INSTRUCTED THEM ABOUT THE COST OF FOLLOWING HIM.

*** HALF-HEARTED PEOPLE UNWILLING TO MAKE THE COMMITMENT DID NOT RESPOND.

**** THUS JESUS TURNED AWAY THOSE RELUCTANT TO COUNT THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP, LIKE THE RICH YOUNG RULER.

(4) JESUS WARNED ALL WHO THOUGHT OF BECOMING DISCIPLES TO COUNT THE COST CAREFULLY LATER IN LUKE 14:28-30.

* AND BEYOND THAT, OUR TEXT TODAY SETS FORTH THE HEART OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP AND IT STRIKES A DEATH BLOW TO THE EASY BELIEVISM PRESENTATIONS THAT ARE SO POPULAR IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN CHRISTIANITY.

** AND YES TO TRULY COME TO JESUS CHRIST IS TO RECEIVE AND TO KEEP ON RECEIVING FOREVER. WE RECEIVE SO MUCH THROUGH HIS GRACE AND MERCY AND ONLY COME BY GRACE.

*** BUT JESUS REPEATEDLY MAKES CLEAR THAT THERE MUST BE A CROSS BEFORE THE CROWN, SUFFERING BEFORE GLORY, SACRIFICE BEFORE REWARD.

**** THE HEART OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP IS GIVING BEFORE GAINING, LOSING BEFORE WINNING, TAKING UP OUR CROSS AND FOLLOWING HIM.

(5) BECAUSE OF THAT, I'VE TITLED OUR MESSAGE TODAY, "A PICTURE OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP" AS WE STUDY LUKE 9:23-26.

* AND IN OUR STUDY OF LUKE 9:23-26, **WE'LL** LOOK AT 4 POINTS, NO. 1 THE PRECEPT THAT JESUS COMMUNICATES, V. 23; NO. 2 THE PARADOX THAT JESUS COMMUNICATES, V. 24; NO. 3 THE PROFIT THAT JESUS TALKS ABOUT, V. 25; AND NO. 4 THE PROBLEM, V. 26.

**** SO WE'LL LOOK AT THE PRECEPT, THE PARADOX, THE PROFIT AND THE PROBLEM UNDER THE THEME OF A PICTURE OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP.**

***** AND WITH THAT IN MIND, LET'S JUMP INTO OUR STUDY BY LOOKING AT V. 23 WHERE WE'LL SEE THE PRECEPT, LOOK AT LUKE 9:23 PLEASE.**

I. THE PRECEPT, (READ V. 23)

A. NOW BEFORE WE GET INTO V. 23, LET ME REMIND YOU OF THE CONTEXT OF OUR PASSAGE.

* PETER MAKES A GREAT CONFESSION OF FAITH ABOUT JESUS IN V. **20 OF LUKE 9, YOU ARE "THE CHRIST OF GOD."**

** AND IF YOU RECALL FROM THE PARALLEL COMPANION TEXT IN MATTHEW 16:17 JESUS CALLS PETER BLESSED BECAUSE THE FATHER REVEALED THAT TRUTH TO HIM. THEN JESUS TALKS ABOUT HIS CHURCH THAT HE IS GOING TO BUILD IN MATTHEW 16:18 AND HOW HE WILL USE PETER AND THE OTHER APOSTLES IN A UNIQUE FOUNDATIONAL WAY.

*** AND THEN GOING BACK TO LUKE 9:22, JESUS TELLS HIS DISCIPLES HOW HE MUST SUFFER MANY THINGS AT THE HANDS OF THE RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENT, HOW HE MUST DIE, AND HOW HE MUST RISE AGAIN ON THE THIRD DAY.

**** AND THE MUST HERE IS THE MUST OF THE PLAN OF GOD, THIS MUST TAKE PLACE, THIS IS WHY JESUS CAME.

1. AND THE PROBLEM FOR THE 12 WAS, THE WHOLE PICTURE DID NOT FIT TOGETHER FOR THEM. THEIR THINKING ABOUT THE MESSIAH WAS INFLUENCED BY THE COMMON VIEW OF THE DAY. AND THEY COULD NOT IMAGINE A SUFFERING MESSIAH, LET ALONE ONE WHO WOULD DIE AT THE HANDS OF JEWISH RELIGIOUS LEADERS.

* WELL, JESUS, IN VERSES 23-26 OF LUKE 9, EXPANDS THE SUFFERINGS FROM HIMSELF, TO ALL THOSE WHO FOLLOW HIM WHICH WOULD INCLUDE THE 12.

** AND CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT AN EYE OPENING EXPERIENCE THAT WAS. NOT ONLY WOULD THEIR LEADER SUFFER AND DIE, THEY WOULD HAVE TO TAKE UP THEIR CROSS AND SUFFER IN FOLLOWING CHRIST. WOW!

*** NOW JESUS HAD ALREADY TOLD THE 12 IN MATTHEW 10:38 WHICH IS CHRONOLOGICALLY BEFORE LUKE 9, HE SAID, (QUOTE IT).

**** NOW HE EXPANDS ON IT HERE AFTER HE CLEARLY TELLS THEM THAT HE IS GOING TO SUFFER AND DIE AND THIS WAS SHOCKING.

2. BUT CHRIST WAS COMMUNICATING THE COST OF BEING A TRUE FOLLOWER, A TRUE DISCIPLE, A TRUE BELIEVER IN CHRIST, A CHRISTIAN.

* JESUS NEVER USED SALESMANSHIP TECHNIQUES OF TRYING TO TELL PEOPLE ONLY WHAT THEY WANTED TO HEAR, HE WAS HONEST AND OPEN, THERE WAS NO FINE PRINT IN SIGNING HIS CONTRACT TO FOLLOW HIM.

** BUT UNDERSTAND THAT AT THIS POINT THAT JESUS IS NOT ONLY SPEAKING TO THE 12, BUT **ACCORDING TO MARK'S GOSPEL IN HIS** COMPANION PARALLEL PASSAGE TO THE ONE WE ARE STUDYING SAID IN MARK 8:34:

*** THAT JESUS SUMMONED THE MULTITUDE **WITH HIS DISCIPLES, AND SAID TO THEM, "IF ANYONE WISHES TO COME AFTER ME, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF, AND TAKE UP HIS CROSS, AND FOLLOW ME."**

**** SO JESUS MAKES THIS CLEAR TO HIS 12 FOLLOWERS, ONE WHOM WOULD BACK OUT, REALIZING THE HIGH COST - JUDAS ISCARIOT, BUT ALSO POTENTIAL FOLLOWERS FROM THE MULTITUDES.

3. AND **JESUS' MESSAGE WAS RADICALLY** DIFFERENT THAN A LOT OF THE SLICK GOSPEL PRESENTATIONS TODAY THAT ONLY ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE.

* AND HOW YOU CAN HAVE YOUR BEST LIFE NOW, WITH HEALTH, WEALTH AND HAPPINESS, AND SELF FULFILLMENT, AND UNABASHEDLY PROMOTING SELF-LOVE AND NOT SELF-DENIAL.

** WELL, JESUS MAKES IT PLAIN IF ANYONE WISHES, IS WILLING, DESIRES TO COME AFTER HIM, WHICH IMPLIES A VOLITIONAL ACT, THAT THERE ARE 3: 3 VERBS, DENY, TAKE UP, AND TO FOLLOW.

*** AND FIRST OF ALL SELF-DENIAL, WHICH IS A REALLY POPULAR CONCEPT IN OUR SOCIETY, RIGHT? **AND OBVIOUSLY I'M BEING SARCASTIC.**

**** FOR ADVERTISING AND THINKING TODAY COMMUNICATES WHAT? GET WHAT YOU WANT, WHEN YOU WANT IT, HOW YOU WANT IT FOR YOU DESERVE IT. DEFERRED GRATIFICATION DOES NOT SELL REAL WELL IN OUR CULTURE.

4. COMMERCIALS DO NOT TELL US TO WAIT, BUT BUY - **COMMERCIALS DON'T NORMALLY** DEAL WITH OUR NEEDS BUT OUR WANTS, OUR SELFISHNESS.

* BUT JESUS SAID, FOR HIS FOLLOWERS, FOR PEOPLE TO COME TO HIM AND THEN LIVE FOR HIM, **THERE MUST BE A WILLINGNESS TO “DENY SELF”.**

** AND THE VERB DENY WHICH IS IN THE IMPERATIVE MOOD WHICH IMPLIES THAT THIS IS A REQUIREMENT, NOT AN OPTION IN FOLLOWING JESUS, BUT LIT. THIS VERB MEANS TO GIVE UP OWNERSHIP, TO DISOWN, TO **RENOUNCE CLAIM, TO LOSE SIGHT OF ONE'S SELF AND ONE'S OWN INTERESTS, TO FORGET ONE'S SELF.**

*** AND BASICALLY, ONE WHO FOLLOWS JESUS MUST HAVE A WILLINGNESS, MUST REALIZE THAT HIS LIFE IS NOT HIS OWN TO DO WITH AS HE PLEASES.

**** AND PAUL BRINGS THIS OUT IN I CORINTHIANS 6:19&20 (QUOTE THEM). ALSO QUOTE ROMANS 14:7&8.

5. AND BELOVED WHAT DOES ALL OF THIS MEAN? WELL, IT MEANS THAT CAREER, LOCATION, COMFORTS, PLEASURES AND MATERIAL GOODS, ETC. ARE NOT A MATTER OF PERSONAL CHOICE, BUT MUST BE BASED UPON **THE LORD'S CLAIM TO ONE'S LIFE. (WE'VE BEEN BOUGHT WITH A PRICE!)**

* AND THE THING I SEE IN AMERICAN CHRISTIANITY ON THE WHOLE, WHICH I BELIEVE STARTS WITH A FAULTY UNDERSTANDING OF THE GOSPEL AND SOVEREIGN GRACE, IS A TOTAL LACK OF SELF-DENIAL.

** THE LORD GETS THE LEFTOVERS WITH OUR TIME, TALENTS AND TREASURE! HE GETS THE DREGS, THE LAST OF EVERYTHING NOT THE FIRST, IF THERE IS ANYTHING LEFT OVER. SOME **THINK IT'S SACRIFICE TO** COME TO WORSHIP WEEKLY. AND LET ALONE BE ON TIME, **I'LL DO IT IF IT WORKS OUT, IF I HAVE TIME, IF I DON'T** HAVE SOMETHING MORE IMPORTANT TO DO. **IT'S AN ATTITUDE.**

*** AND IF YOU HAVE THOSE ATTITUDES, YOU **EITHER DON'T UNDERSTAND SOVEREIGN GRACE, OR HAVE MEMORY LAPSE ABOUT IT, OR YOU HAVEN'T EXPERIENCED IT!**

6. WE NEED TO BE CALLING PEOPLE TO COMMITMENT IN SALVATION AND SERVICE, TO SELF-DENIAL, AND FOR CHRIST TO BE OUR FIRST LOVE.

* BUT NOT ONLY ARE WE CALLED TO SELF-DENIAL IN FOLLOWING CHRIST, TO BE LIKE HIM FOR HIS ENTIRE LIFE WAS SELF-DENIAL, BUT ALSO TO TAKE UP OUR CROSS IN V. 24.

**** AND TRAGICALLY "CROSS BEARING" HAS BEEN DEGRADED TO ANY INCONVENIENCE OR DISAPPOINTMENT IN LIFE.**

*** BUT THE CROSS WAS A WELL KNOWN SYMBOL OF DISGRACE, TORTURE AND DEATH. IT WAS AN INSTRUMENT OF EXECUTION USED WIDELY BY THE ROMANS TO KILL ANY THEY CONSIDERED UNFIT TO LIVE UNDER ROMAN RULE.

**** IN FACT, THE CROSS WAS SO DISGRACEFUL AS A METHOD OF DEATH THAT IT WAS FORBIDDEN FOR ANY ROMAN CITIZEN, NO MATTER WHAT THE CRIME.

7. SO WHEN THE DISCIPLES AND THE CROWD HEARD JESUS SPEAK OF TAKING UP THE CROSS, THERE WAS NOTHING MYSTICAL TO THEM ABOUT THE IDEA **AND THEY DIDN'T GET ANY** WARM FUZZIES.

* THEY IMMEDIATELY PICTURED A POOR, CONDEMNED SOUL WALKING ALONG THE ROAD CARRYING THE CROSS BAR, THE INSTRUMENT OF EXECUTION ON HIS OWN BACK, SIGNIFYING SUBMISSION TO THE ROMAN GOVT.

** AND A MAN WHO TOOK UP HIS CROSS TO FOLLOW JESUS BEGAN HIS DEATH MARCH.

*** A CROSS WAS DEATH! AND LIKEWISE A FOLLOWER OF JESUS DIES WITH CHRIST AT CONVERSION AND IS RAISED TO WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE, IN HIS CHRISTIAN WALK.

**** AND WE MUST DIE DAILY TO SELF AND LIVE FOR JESUS, WE MUST TAKE UP OUR CROSS DAILY. QUOTE GALATIANS 2:20.

8. BELOVED, A BELIEVER MUST HAVE THE **ATTITUDE THAT SAYS, "I DO NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO DETERMINE MY OWN COURSE OF LIFE OR THE ELEMENTS OF IT: I AM DEAD, CRUCIFIED WITH JESUS, I LIVE TO SERVE HIM, I DO WHAT HE WANTS!"**

*** YET MANY PEOPLE TODAY WANT A "NO COST" ME CENTERED DISCIPLESHIP, BUT CHRIST OFFERS NO SUCH OPTION. AND THAT IS THE PRECEPT THAT JESUS MAKES VERY CLEAR IN V. 24 TO THE 12 AND TO THE CROWD.**

** NOW THE THIRD VERB HERE IN V. 23 IS FOLLOW, TO FOLLOW JESUS. AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE STARTS WITH A WILLINGNESS THROUGH REGENERATION, TO FOLLOW JESUS, **FOR NATURALLY IN OUR DEADNESS, WE DON'T** DESIRE THAT, BUT IT CONTINUES IN OUR WALK, WE DESIRE TO FOLLOW JESUS; HOWEVER IN **BALANCE WE DON'T ALWAYS FOLLOW JESUS.** (ILLUST. PETER FOLLOWING AFAR OFF)

*** BUT PLEASE UNDERSTAND THERE IS A GOD-GIVEN DESIRE THROUGH CONVERSION, SALVATION TO FOLLOW JESUS.

**** **THUS THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS A LIFE "AFTER CHRIST."** IT IS A DESIRE TO LIVE THE WAY HE DID AND OBEY HIM, QUOTE JOHN 10:27 AND MATTHEW 4:19.

- BELOVED, A TRUE CHRISTIAN, AT LEAST DESIRES TO FOLLOW CHRIST AS A NORM, NOT ALWAYS, BUT THERE IS AN INWARD DESIRE TO DO WHAT HE WANTS US TO DO, ENERGIZED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO INDWELLS US.

- **WHICH LEADS US TO OUR 2'D POINT TODAY,**
THE PARADOX, LOOK AT V. 24 PLEASE.

II. THE PARADOX, (READ V. 24)

A. NOW SALVATION IN A SENSE IS A PARADOX.

* FOR OUR LORD IS SAYING HERE IN V. 24 THAT WHOEVER LIVES ONLY TO SAVE HIS EARTHLY PHYSICAL LIFE, HIS EASE AND COMFORT AND ACCEPTANCE BY THE WORLD, WILL LOSE HIS OPPORTUNITY FOR ETERNAL LIFE.

** BUT WHOEVER IS WILLING TO GIVE UP HIS EARTHLY WORLDLY LIFE AND TO SUFFER AND **DIE, IF NECESSARY, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, WILL** FIND ETERNAL LIFE.

*** AND FROM OUR HUMAN PERSPECTIVE, **EVERY PERSON HAS A CHOICE. HE CAN "GO FOR IT" NOW AND LOSE IT FOREVER; OR HE CAN** FORSAKE IT NOW AND GAIN IT FOREVER.

**** IF YOU ARE WILLING TO LOSE YOUR LIFE FOR CHRIST YOU SAVE IT, IF YOU WANT TO LIVE LIFE FOR SELF, YOU LOSE IT.

1. AND WE ARE TALKING ABOUT A WILLINGNESS OF HEART BY GRACE AT THE TIME OF CONVERSION AND THEN AS A DIRECTION AND DESIRE OF LIFE AFTER CONVERSION, SUPERNATURALLY, AS FRUITS OF SALVATION, NOT WORKS TO EARN OR MERIT SALVATION, OR TO MAKE US ACCEPTABLE.

* SO BY SAVING YOUR LIFE, LIVING FOR SELF, FOR ME, FOR WHAT I WANT, YOU LOSE IT ULTIMATELY ETERNALLY, BUT IF YOU LOSE YOUR LIFE FOR CHRIST, YOU SAVE IT.

** THE PARADOX IS LOSING, YOU WIN AND WINNING, YOU LOSE WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO THE REAL YOU AND ULTIMATELY YOUR SOUL.

*** AND UNDERSTAND THE CONTRASTS, THE PICTURE UP TO THIS POINT: DENY YOURSELF OR LIVE FOR YOURSELF. TAKE UP YOUR CROSS OR IGNORE THE CROSS. FOLLOW CHRIST OR FOLLOW SELF. LOSE YOUR LIFE FOR HIS SAKE OR SAVE YOUR LIFE, BUT LOSE IT IN THE PROCESS.

**** AND **IT'S REALLY NOT THAT COMPLEX AND** CERTAINLY IS NOT CONTRADICTORY, FOR JESUS IS PAINTING A VERY CLEAR PICTURE OF DISCIPLESHIP HERE USING THE PRINCIPLE OF PARADOX TO TEACH.

- WHICH LEADS US TO OUR THIRD POINT TODAY, THE PROFIT, LOOK AT V. 25 PLEASE.

III. THE PROFIT, (READ V. 25)

A. NOW IN V. 25, JESUS ASKS A RHETORICAL QUESTION. WHAT WILL A MAN BE PROFITED IF HE GAINS THE WHOLE WORLD, AND FORFEITS HIMSELF AND LIT. LOSES HIS SOUL? FOR THE COMPANION PARALLEL TEXT LIT. SAYS THIS IN MATTHEW 16:26, (QUOTE IT)

* NOW THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION IS OBVIOUS. NOTHING. THERE IS NO PROFIT, NO GAIN, IN GAINING EVERYTHING, IN HAVING IT ALL, BUT LOSING YOUR SOUL.

** AND THE CONTRAST HERE IS TEMPORARY GAIN OVER ETERNAL LOSS.

*** JESUS SAID IN ESSENCE THAT THE WORLD OF PHYSICAL PROFIT, POSSESSIONS, POSITION OR POWER IS ULTIMATELY WORTHLESS.

**** WHATEVER A PERSON HAS ON EARTH IS ONLY TEMPORARY; IT CANNOT BE EXCHANGED FOR HIS OR HER SOUL.

1. AND IF YOU WORK HARD AT GETTING WHAT YOU WANT, YOU MIGHT GET IT, BUT IN THE END IT IS WORTHLESS, **IF YOU DON'T KNOW JESUS CHRIST AS YOUR LORD AND SAVIOR.**

* AND THEN JESUS ASKS ANOTHER RHETORICAL QUESTION IN MATTHEW 16:26, IN THE PARALLEL TEXT AND ALSO MARK 8:37, **"WHAT WILL A MAN GIVE IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS SOUL?"**

** AND THE GREEK WORD FOR EXCHANGE LIT. MEANS THAT WHICH IS GIVEN IN PLACE OF ANOTHER THING BY WAY OF EXCHANGE OR WHAT IS GIVEN EITHER IN ORDER TO KEEP OR ACQUIRE ANYTHING.

*** WELL, WITH THAT MEANING IN MIND, JESUS SAID WHAT COULD POSSIBLY BE WORTH HAVING DURING THIS LIFETIME, IF TO GAIN IT YOU WOULD HAVE TO EXCHANGE YOUR SOUL?

2. TO GAIN EVERY POSSESSION POSSIBLE IN THIS WORLD AND YET BE WITHOUT CHRIST IS TO **BE BANKRUPT FOREVER. IT'S A BAD EXCHANGE.**

* IT WOULD BE LIKE TAKING AN EXPENSIVE GIFT BACK FROM CHRISTMAS TO GET EXCHANGED THAT A PERSON PAID A THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR BUT THEY WILL ONLY GIVE YOU A DOLLAR FOR IT WHEN YOU EXCHANGE IT BECAUSE YOU **DON'T HAVE THE RECEIPT OR SOME OTHER TECHNICALITY.**

** WELL THAT WOULD BE A BAD EXCHANGE AND **I'M SURE YOU WOULD SAY THAT IT'S NOT WORTH IT!**

*** WELL, MULTIPLY THAT BY ABOUT A MILLION TIMES AND YOU START TO GET THE PICTURE, THE TERRIBLE EXCHANGE IT IS TO GAIN THE WORLD, OR TO HAVE EVERYTHING YOU WANT BUT LOSE YOUR OWN SOUL.

**** BUT THAT IS THE DECEPTION OF THE WORLD AND SATAN. WE THINK IMPROPERLY, IN A WORLDLY WAY AND THINK THAT THINGS AND MONEY SATISFY OUR SOUL, BUT ONLY JESUS CAN SATISFY YOUR SOUL.

3. THE WORLD'S GOODS ARE FOOLS GOLD,
CUBIC ZIRCONIA, FACADES THAT DO NOT
SATISFY. FOR LOOK AT PEOPLE WHO QUOTE
HAVE IT ALL. WHAT DO THEY WANT? A LITTLE
MORE, QUOTE PROVERBS 27:20 AND PSALM
107:9.

* SOLOMON SAID IN ECCLESIASTES 5:10, HE
WHO LOVES MONEY WILL NOT BE SATISFIED
WITH MONEY, NOR HE WHO LOVES ABUNDANCE
WITH ITS INCOME. THIS TOO IS VANITY. IT'S
VAIN!

** **AND THAT'S WHY PAUL SAID IN I TIMOTHY**
6:6-8 (QUOTE THEM).

*** **LET'S BE REMINDED OF THE TRUTH TODAY**
THAT GODLINESS IS GAIN, AND NOT THINGS OR
MONEY. AND WHAT IS A MAN
PROFITED...MATTHEW 16:26.

**** WHICH QUICKLY LEADS US TO OUR LAST
POINT TODAY, THE PROBLEM. LOOK AT V. 26
PLEASE.

IV. THE PROBLEM, (READ V. 26)

A. NOW VERSE 26 PLACES THE LOSING AND SAVING OF OUR SOULS IN V. 25 IN THE CONTEXT OF JUDGMENT ONE DAY.

* AND TO BE ASHAMED OF JESUS MEANS TO NOT KNOW JESUS CHRIST, TO HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH HIM AND WITH HIS WORDS, TO NOT FOLLOW HIM.

** AND AT HIS GLORIOUS RETURN TO THE EARTH AFTER THE TRIBULATION WHEN HE COMES IN HIS GLORY, AND THE GLORY OF HIS FATHER, THOSE ASHAMED OF HIM WILL ONE DAY BE JUDGED AT THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT.

*** FOR MATTHEW 16:27 SAYS: (QUOTE IT). (CONTEXT TO UNBELIEVERS FOLLOWING MATTHEW 16:26.)

**** SO JUDGMENT IS COMING FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT KNOW JESUS, WHO SHOW IT BY NOT DENYING SELF, NOT FOLLOWING CHRIST AND NOT TAKING UP THE CROSS.

1. THEY MAY GAIN THE WHOLE WORLD, BUT LOSE THEIR SOUL.

* AND FOR CLARITY, JESUS IDENTIFIES THOSE WHO WILL NOT REPENT AND TRULY BELIEVE IN HIM AS THOSE WHO ARE ASHAMED OF HIM AND **HIS WORDS, THEY WON'T CONFESS JESUS** BECAUSE THEY ARE ASHAMED, QUOTE MATTHEW 10:32&33.

** SO IF WE ARE NOT ASHAMED OF JESUS WE WILL CONFESS HIM. IF WE ARE ASHAMED, WE WILL DENY HIM, BY LIFE AND LIP.

*** SO TO BE ASHAMED IN THE CONTEXT OF LUKE 9:26 MEANS TO REJECT, DESPISE AND FIND THE LORD UNACCEPTABLE. BEING ASHAMED LEADS TO LOSING YOUR OWN SOUL.

FINALLY IN APPLICATION (1) LET ME SAY, WE MUST CONTINUALLY WORK ON OUR SANCTIFICATION PROCESS HAVING AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE.

* FOR WHAT A PERSON LOSES FOR CHRIST IN SELF DENIAL AND IN CROSS BEARING CANNOT COMPARE TO HEAVEN AND THE REWARDS THAT JESUS WILL GIVE AT HIS COMING, QUOTE REVELATION 22:12.

** AND BELIEVER THE ISSUE FOR US IS, THE CROSS COMES BEFORE THE CROWN, ETERNAL RETIREMENT IS COMING FOR THE WEARY IN HEAVEN, BUT NOT IN THIS LIFE.

*** THERE IS SUFFERING BEFORE GLORY AND SACRIFICE BEFORE REWARD. THE HEART OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP IS GIVING BEFORE GAINING, LOSING BEFORE WINNING.

(2) BUT THE GAIN IS INCOMPARABLE. THE WINNING IS SATISFYING, THE CROWN, WE CAN GIVE BACK TO JESUS.

* AND AS THE HYMNWRITER WRITES, IT WILL BE WORTH IT ALL WHEN WE SEE JESUS (QUOTE THE REST).

** AND BELIEVER WHAT WE NEED IS TO START THINKING RIGHT, BIBLICALLY, RATHER THAN WORLDLY AND TEMPORALLY. AND AS WE DO THAT, WE WILL SEE OURSELVES AS RICH.

*** PAUL WOULD SAY UNDER INSPIRATION IN II CORINTHIANS 4:16-18 (QUOTE THEM).

**** AND BROTHERS AND SISTERS, WE NEED THAT PERSPECTIVE. AND WE NEED TO COMMUNICATE CHRIST CLEARLY TO THE LOST AND TELL PEOPLE TO COUNT THE COST, AND CALL THEM TO CHRIST, **DON'T FALL INTO THE TRAP OF COMMUNICATING AN EASY BELIEVISM GOSPEL.**

(3) AND IF YOU DO NOT KNOW CHRIST, I PRAY THAT THE BLINDERS OF YOUR SIN AND THE WORLD WILL COME OFF TODAY, THE DECEPTION OF SATAN, FOR AGAIN MATTHEW 16:26 SAYS: (QUOTE IT).

* AND LAST OF ALL BELIEVER, LET THIS PRAYER FROM THE PEN OF A GODLY SAINT IN THE VALLEY OF VISION BE OUR PRAYER WHICH REVEALS A HUGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN **TODAY'S MAN-CENTERED** GOSPEL AND THE ATTITUDE THAT COMES FROM TRUE SAVING FAITH.

**** LORD, HIGH AND HOLY, MEEK AND LOWLY...**

LET ME LEARN BY PARADOX THAT THE WAY DOWN IS THE WAY UP, THAT TO BE LOW IS TO BE HIGH, THAT THE BROKEN HEART IS THE HEALED HEART, THAT THE CONTRITE SPIRIT IS THE REJOICING SPIRIT, THAT THE REPENTING SOUL IS THE VICTORIOUS SOUL, THAT TO HAVE NOTHING IS TO POSSESS ALL, THAT TO BEAR THE CROSS IS TO WEAR THE CROWN, THAT TO **GIVE IS TO RECEIVE...**

*** LET ME FIND THY LIGHT IN MY DARKNESS,
THY LIFE IN MY DEATH, THY JOY IN MY
SORROW, THY GRACE IN MY SIN, THY RICHES IN
MY POVERTY, THY GLORY IN MY HUMILIATION.

(LET'S PRAY)