

"HOW MUCH ARE YOU WORTH?"

Mark 8:34-38

*Attman Race getting stronger - Beach in 30' it took 2 men to carry \$10 worth of groceries
Now any little boy can carry that much!*

This evening, I want to call upon you to use good judgement. I say that let us do as the old prophet said, years ago - come, let us reason together. Because we want to talk to you about your decision and about your life, and to handle the question really -- what are you worth? You realize how tremendous and how significant you are in the sight of God. In the eternal purpose and plan of your life. What is the purpose, and what is the plan in this world, in God's cause in the matter of value.

It was reported that 40 million dollars was spent by the efforts of the U. S. Navy in all of their parties in their search for Amelia Earhart. The American woman who went down in the Pacific just before the 2nd World War. Now that seems like an awful lot of money. For a government to spend searching for one of its citizens. But aren't you glad that you live in a country that shows that much concern about and for, an individual.

In ancient days men were buried with articles that they had used in life. It was hoped that they could use them in the next life. In 1922, a notable discovery was made in the tomb of King Tut. He ruled in Egypt about 1358-1346 BC. The Royal tomb was filled with all sorts of furniture and many kinds of expensive things made of gold. A royal throne. And obviously, they felt that these treasures would be carried on to Heaven with him.

*Attman about Minister, did you see May 2 News Diamond Rings el got for Marx?
"Yes, He replied" el saw them when you put that Nickel in the min. offering.*

We know that material things in life, such as food, shelter, and clothes and tools and transportation, education, religion - many things are necessary.

And they cost money. And yet, Jesus taught us to pray - give us this day, our daily bread. Patton Neff, a governor of Texas, put it this way - the way to lay up treasure in Heaven is to invest in someone that is going there. That is, to spend your money and invest it in people that are on their way to Heaven.

There was an Italian ship wreck that was bound for Brazil many years ago. A Gospel tract, written by a Baptist missionary, fell into the hands of one of the men on the ship. It appealed to him - and he went to the First Baptist Church in Rgo and he became a Christian. And ultimately became a missionary to the Italian speaking people, in the United States. This man came as a missionary and toured in Missouri. He told about his conversion, etc. A Missouri farm woman who heard the story questioned him about the tract. Then, it was discovered, that she was a person who gave the money to help print that Gospel tract, and how wonderful that in even this lifetime - she could see some results of her investment in the extension of the Gospel. That had been multiplied through this man's life.

When the late Howard Hughes died, men began to access his value. And try to count up and add all that he really owned. What was his worth? Well, he was a very strange individual. He had a fear of germs and he lived a very strange life. And they tell us, that at the end, his hair was very long as well as his finger nails. But he, himself, personally as to his body - had the chemicals in it were probably worth \$2.00 on today's market. But how much do you think you are worth? This body is not really me. Not you - that is right! There is something else that makes you and makes me - and that is something beside this physical being right here. That is the indefinite something that we have struggled with through all of the ages.

It is life - and when life ceases - this body just goes to dust. But that

life somehow goes on. There is some kind of immortality to it we believe. There is something distinctive and and is different - and yet the life that we have is different from that of an animal, a dog, or a tree, or a fish. And life really has no adequate definition of what you are. Or what I may be.

Now philosophers have tried to describe the difference about self-consciousness. That is, there is something in this body - in this old house that has a capacity for memory and for moral choices. It has a capacity to be aware of itself. To remember history and future events as well.

Now that is where the Bible really comes in and helps us. Because there is a word in the Bible that really directs us to our worth. And that word is called the soul of man. In creation it is said that God formed man out of the dust of the earth. Here is dust, my body - I am furnished and fashioned physically, out of the dust. But then God breathed into his nostrils life. Made him a living soul. So the Bible uses this word - (living soul) Something divine. That is a part of the great cosmos - something that is a part of the great creator, who put into us that which is eternal in him. And it is called the living soul.

Perhaps there is no better definition of what you are or what I am. Than to say that (we are souls.) But we don't use it that way often. (We say, "oh, my soul." Or, he is a sad soul. Or, on a ship - a captain may speak - concerning the number of passengers that he has, there are a number of souls on board. It is not that I have a soul - I am a soul. In the broadest sense of the word - and that defines me and that defines you.

Jesus had some questions. He talked about the priceless thing that you are and I am. In the verses that we are considering in this message.

37

The first question - V. 37, what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world yet he loses his own soul. What shall a man - if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life. For what is a man to give. He says, for his soul.

There are two things in this question that Jesus asked - and one is the world. What is it? Not in a negative way. But we think of the sin, the flesh, the world is not simply the definition of the meaning of living. All the world that provides the means for living - the house, our food and clothes.

Now what happens if you get so absorbed with the means of living that you lose the very purpose of living. After all, life is more than meat and bread. Clothing and housing. This soul has some purpose and fulfillment in this life and in the life to come. What gain is there in this life - and in the life to come. If we forget the very purpose for which we are here.

You remember Satan appeared to Christ in the wilderness and offered him the greatest prize - which was at his disposal to bestow. Satan said, all of the kingdoms of the world, with all of their glory, will be yours. He made this offer provided he would fall down and worship him.

Now there was great power in that offer. The entire world was presented - the temptation was to buy the soul of Christ.

You know, Satan always promises an impossible gain. He continues to do that - he offers the world to those who are willing to fall down and worship him. And his offer is always a bad bargain. And the world is perishing - and yet he offers this to man.

So, the question of Jesus is - what shall it profit a man?

Gold has gone wild in its cost. Well over \$800 in a short time. How expensive. Now what shall it profit a man to gain all of this gold that is in the whole world.

It is quite possible for a man in one sense, to make a huge success of life. And then, in another sense, living a life that is (not worth) living. The real question is - what do you put your values - and where do you put them in life.

So a man may sacrifice honor for profit. A man may desire material things and be not over particular how he gets them. The world is full of temptations for possible dishonesty.

George McDonald tells about a man who sold drapery material. Who always used his thumb to make the measure just a little short. He said, he took from his soul and put it in his silver bag. The real question that will come sooner or later - how does life look on the balance sheet when God is looking over the account.

The man may sacrifice principle for popularity. A man may not say now what

does God think of this. But his whole verdict is on public opinion.

A man may sacrifice the lasting things for the cheap things. It is always easy to have cheap success.

A man may choose a job that will bring him more money - more comfort. And so on. But does not render anything to his fellow man. Man may spend his life in little things and let the big things go. A woman may prefer a life of pleasure. Which she calls a life of freedom.

Mark Hopkins in education, had President James A. Garfield, one of his students said - Here is the description of the ideal college. Mark Hopkins on one end of the log. And on the other end, a student. And they talk back and forth. Hopkins had his way of asking questions about life. One question was this - If you could have everything in this world that you wanted, all the money you desired, all the things it could buy, what would you be willing to give for it? Would you be willing to give one hand for all of that. Chop it off, and you can have it all. Well yes, I could give one hand, for that - because I could get along without a hand. Would you give two hands? Or would you give a leg? Yes, I could buy an artificial leg. And I could get people to take care of me well enough. I could get by. Would you give your hearing and your speech. And he raises the bid - with each question. And finally, would you give the sight of both eyes. Both legs, both arms, and at that point - would you draw the line. And say, oh no, it is not worth it! I could have everything - all the means of life, but I could not pay that kind of price.

Jesus said, the ultimate question - the price is so often that we pay. It is

not an arm, or a leg, or a hand. Or even an eye. But our very souls. Sit down and count the profit and loss. He says, and what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his soul.

Now the second question that Jesus asked here - what shall a man give in exchange for his soul. There are some losses that are (irreplaceable) You can lose your health, and maybe by medicine or by surgery - you may regain your health.

You may lose your possessions and by hard work, you may regain those possessions. You may lose your position in life, but by good fortune and some help and hard work - you may gain that position.

But when you have lost your soul, when you have lost yourself, when you have lost the thing that makes you, you - and it is gone, it is irreplaceable. You cannot supply another one.

What in the world would you give? Out yonder, say in eternity - there may be some people who would say - (oh, if I could just get back one Sunday, back in July or August. When the church was in revival meeting - and I had the opportunity to make a choice. What I wouldn't give to buy back that day and that hour, in that church, on that Sunday. I would give anything to get it back - that I might make the right choice.

There is a good illustration on this - during the gold rush days in Alaska. When perhaps over 30,000 men went seeking their fortunes in gold. The story is told

about a boat load of miners coming off the coast. Coming down to California. They were loaded down with gold. Tied to their bodies. Because there was no place to deposit the bags of gold. They carried them under their clothing. With their guns strapped to their sides. But the ship struck something and began to sink. The shore was not too far away. They could see it and they could swim to it. As the boat was going down. Men began to strip off their gold and throw it on the deck. And jump into the water to save their lives.

One man said, you fools - you have worked for your fortunes. You now have it and you are throwing it away. And he jumped overboard with his bag of gold, still strapped to his body - and he sank to the bottom. Like a lead anchor. He was pulled down by his gold. He lost his life, weighted down by his gold.

Jesus is saying, there are the weights of life that can be heavy - and can weight you down. There are the times in life when you face moral and spiritual decisions. Decisions between life, eternity - here and hereafter. And the fulfillment of God's purpose in your life and you have to make a choice. Are you willing to unbuckle and throw off these weights. Or will you go down.

Then having gone down - what would you give for a chance again to make another choice. But you cannot make another choice.

So Jesus would have you and me, on this day to look at ourselves. What are we worth? Oh, the awesome reality of what this (soul) is worth. What this being, this self-hood, that which makes you and makes me. What is it worth?

If you use your reason - you know, you can go to the marketplace today or go to a grocery store, and you can talk about values. And talk about things that have worth. To them, and that are important. There are always several factors that you can consider when you are going to determine the value of something.

I. DESIGNER

The person who designed this article or this thing - is something that helps in the value of the thing. Who made it? How much workmanship went into it.

When I was up in Alaska - and had the opportunity to see this - the Eskimo craftsmen working on raw bone. And then, etchings on skins. These craftsmen take hour after hour to make these figures of dogs or seals, or various figures. And yet when they get through, they are worth many many dollars. In fact, there are people who take just a simple object worth \$5, \$10, or \$100 - and when they get through. There are people who will pay \$1,000 for it. There are decors today being sold today around the country that are claimed to be valuable and priceless. Because of who made them - the designer. The workmanship, the craftsman, who worked on it.

Rembrandt, the painter - some of his works have sold for over a million and a half dollars. Not because of the canyass - that he used - but it is because of the Master craftsman who painted it. What are you worth? Who made you? What was involved in bringing you to this present hour? The great God of the universe made you. The one who put the world in existence and planted the stars. Who brought order to the universe. And who still organizes the sunsets and the sunrises. The waterfalls, the lakes, the trees, the seasons - now this is the one who took his own

hands and shaped you out of dust. He made you. You are God's finest creation. And God stood back and said - 'it is good.' God made you.

And then, through Jesus Christ, his son, he (redeemed) you! You think of that. That is how important you are. You were worth so much, that God in the form of Jesus Christ, left Heaven and came down to be fashioned as a man. He was born in Bethlehem as a baby. He lived among us without sin. He died on the cross for our sin. And when he cried - he said, it is finished. At the end. Is redemption for you and for me. That is how important that you are.

As you lift your voice up and say - I am so important that Jesus died for me. Yes, if you had been the only lost person in all of the world, Jesus would have come from Glory, and died on the cross for you. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him, now that is a personal thing to you and to me. He did not die just for all humanity - but he died for you a person. He died just for you.

And God made this universe and made you. And he is concerned about this world. And he is so concerned, the Bible says, that even a sparrow drops off a tree limb and falls dead to the earth - that God knows about it. Even the hairs of your head are numbered - that is how important that you are. That is what you are worth to God. Now we are talking about your soul. Now, we need to see this. You are somebody. You are a most important person on the face of this earth. That he made you, he made me - he redeemed you. And that is what you are worth.

So the first thing, if you are going to determine how much you are worth, you have to think about the designer.

II. DURABILITY

Another thing, when you go to a grocery store or somewhere - and are going to determine its value, say for example a man goes out and buys a suit of clothes. Now that is not necessarily true about women. But I think most men go and they buy something that is durable. Something that will last. Now there are some people who think they will buy only for style. But you think, how long will this last. How long will it wear. If it will wear well, then it will be a good buy.

You know, in fact, I guess everybody is in the same boat. But you know, I have some narrow ties and shirt collars, etc. They are not worn out yet. And I tell you, I don't see any reason in throwing them away. Because they are worth something. But nobody is wearing them now. But, they will come back. I believe they will!

I believe that they are worth something because they are still durable. They are not worn out. And they are still good.

But we say, what is the price of a tire. And somebody gives you a price - and then you say, how many miles will I get out of this tire. Oh, you can get 10,000-15,000 miles. Well, that is alright. How much is this tire. This tire is a steel belted tire. Oh, you can get 40,000 - maybe 50,000 or even 60,000. Well, that is three or four times as durable, isn't it. You say, I'll take that even at that price. So that which lasts is something that you measure in value.

Listen, we give or we ought to give much attention to this body. But it is not very durable. Did you know this body will only last about 3 score and 10 or maybe 40 score years.

It soon goes to dust - but we are made for eternity. This body is not made to last forever. That is what God planted in you in his image. How valuable you are because you will outlast the house that you live in, you will out last the body that you live in. You are going to out last the city that you live in. And the earth that you live on. So how precious it is and how important it is to measure by durability.

III. DEVELOPMENT

When you purchase something - you think of the development. How can it be used. Whether or not it is usable. For example, people go out and look at a piece of land here in Chesapeake - way off in the back woods. And they find a few acres back there and what is it worth. Well, what can I develop out of it. Well, if you are going to put hogs on it - it is not worth very much. But if you are going to go out here and get something that is on the main highway - where you can build a big development - there is a possibility that it will make it worth that much more.

*Boone down - a man Sam Sadowski dropped a penny - it went under the car - Move the car, it jammed in gear
Hit a parking meter launched into a Bldg. Breaking a window, car ended 1/2 block -
Damage \$102 to car plus window & meter
Not sure she found the penny -*

Well now, you take the possibility in the life that you have. Do you realize the possibility for you in becoming the child of God. With character, likeness to God. Oh, my soul, you say - what a potential, is within me. Why, I am not like a dog or a pig in a pen. Just to eat, drink, and die. Why here is his presence and his life. Even in the world to come.

So there is another factor, we might look at. There is the designer, the durability of it, and the development of it.

IV. DEMAND

Now we are told that gasoline will be going up a few more cents as the year goes along. Heating oil has gone up. And so, there balances out the shortage of supply with the demand. When the demand is greater than the supply - then that is what people rely on. But when we think of the questions that Jesus asked, and how much we are worth - then we come to answer this question. The demand.

Really there is no answer concerning what a man can gain, And there is no answer to the question of what he will lose. If you sell your soul - and live the life of no faith, for one world - you are going to lose many wonderful blessings. And there is a great demand on your soul, Jesus said. It has great value. A rich Southern farmer was building some lakes on his farm, and a laborer was helping him and commenting how nice these lakes were going to be. The farmer replied, yes, but they are costing me too much money. With the wisdom of Solomon the laborer replied, yes sir. But you can take the lakes with you - just as easy as you can take the money.

There is a story of Roland Hill - he was a preacher in the last century. And an evangelist in England. He built Surry Chapel which is still in existence today. Roland Hill was preaching in an open air meeting one day, and he saw a carriage drive up. He recognized that it belonged to a socially prominent and wealthy woman, of England. Her name, (Lady Anne Erskine) She said, she sat in

the carriage and listened as he preached. He quickly turned his sermon and preached directly to her. He said, friends, 'I am now going to conduct an auction.' I am going to auction off one of the most valuable pieces of property in all of this world. I am going to auction off the soul of Lady Erskine and he pointed to her in the carriage. She leaned out to see what the preacher would say.

What am I bid for the soul of Lady Erskine - oh, I have a bid. What do you bid sir? Do you bid comfort and luxury, and wealth and prominence and pleasure - all this world can offer and give to a person. Yes, who are you sir? And the voice comes back Satan. That is what I bid for her soul.

Then, is there another bid. Is there any demand. Oh yes, I have a bid over here. What do you bid sir. And the bid comes back - peace of heart, forgiveness of sin, freedom from guilt, abundant joy, fulfillment, life and happiness in this world, eternal life in the world to come, sonship with God. And who bids this. God, Almighty, through his son, Jesus Christ.

Then he said, Lady Erskine, there are the two bids for your life. Which bid do you take? Lady Erskine got out of the coach and came forward and gave her heart and life to Jesus Christ.

Now the drama that took place that day in the open air is taking place this very moment as you face your choices. There are two forces bidding for you. As one calls, I will give you all the means of living. All the things of life right here. If you want it, take it, the world at one time is yours. Live it up today.

Or will you take the other - the thing that is you. Yourself, your soul,
I give to you eternal life. Abundant forgiveness in Christ. And fellowship in
his church. Which do you take.