**The Whole World for Your Soul?**

Hope Chapel Honolulu

Mark 8:27 - 9:1

34 And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 35 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. 36 For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? 37 For what can a man give in return for his soul? 38 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

(Mark 8:34-38, ESV)

**Introduction**

Sometimes when we read Christ’s words, we are probably tempted to think that He is exaggerating or using hyperbole to make a point, such as when He compares the value of the human soul to the gross national product of the entire world! However, we may find ourselves focusing our attention on the value of the human soul because it’s easier to stomach than the preceding words, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Mark 8:34b).

**1. Peter’s confession of faith. (Mark 8:27-30)**

 a) Jesus and the disciples take a fifty-two (52) mile walk from Tiberias to Caesarea Philippi.

 b) It was here, far from the eyes and ears of Jerusalem, that Peter confessed Jesus as the Messiah.

**2. Peter rebuked for his lack of faith. (Mark 8:31-33)**

 a) Immediately after Peter confesses rightly, he rebukes Christ wrongly when He speaks of His death.

 b) Christ then rebukes Peter for sharing the sentiments of man rather than the heart of God.

**3. What can a man give in exchange for his soul? (Mark 8:34-9:1)**

 a) Christ intentionally gathers a crowd to declare the way of salvation.

 b) “For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?” (v.36)

**Conclusion**

Mark 8:34-38 should cause us to stop and consider the nature of our own relationship with God the Son. It’s hard enough for some to move from a “forgiveness only” gospel to a “discipleship required” faith and practice. To hear that, “…whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it” (Mark 8:35) makes it clear that while mercy and grace might be free, salvation comes at a price. Christ delivers a healthy shame message here, speaking the truth in love. How will we respond?

**For our prayerful study, discussion and application:**

1) Read Mark 8:27-30. What’s the significance of Peter’s confession and why does Jesus want it kept secret?

2) Read Mark 8:31-9:1. What is the truth that Jesus is speaking in love to the disciples and to you and me?

3) What are the Word and Spirit of God showing and telling you about value of your soul and that of others?

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