

# Our Preparation

- We can only choose our preparation.
- *“Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” Mk. 8:34-37*

# Our Life & Our Soul

- *whoever desires to **save his life** (**soul**) **will lose it**,*
- *but whoever loses his life (**soul**) for My sake and the gospel's will save it.*
- Jesus Concluded
- *For what will it profit a man if he **gains** the whole world, and **loses** his own soul (**soul**)?*
- *what will a man give in exchange for his soul (**soul**)? ”*
- The emotions of His words echo and reflect our own feelings.

# If We Want....

- If we want Jesus to intervene at the last moment and “*save our soul*” as it leaves our body at death.
- We must “*come after Him,*” “*deny ourselves,*” “*take up our cross*” and “*follow Him*” now.
- Many people interpret these things to their own relative level of commitment.
- Jesus demands absolute/total commitment.
- commitment that leads to losing our own life
- *loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s*

# How Paul “Lost” his Life

*“But what things were gain to me, these **I have counted loss** for Christ.*

***I have suffered the loss** of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.” Phil. 3:7-9*

*I have been crucified with Christ; it is **no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.***

*Gal. 2:20*

Paul truly lost his own life for Christ.

# Making Every Day “*near death*”

- What most people think about when forced to at the point of death,
- Paul saw by faith as soon as He heard the gospel.
- *why do **we stand in jeopardy every hour?** 31 I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, **I die daily.** 1 Cor 15:30-31*
- What about us?
- Is our commitment so intense and complete that we too are willing to “*lose our life*” daily?
- *Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, **let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.** 24 For **whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.** Luke 9:23-25*

# A Question of Priorities

- *“Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.” Lk. 17:32-33*
- Lot's family had two choices:
- Die with Sodom and Gomorrah.
- Die to Sodom and Gomorrah by leaving it.
- Lot's wife was torn.
- She did not look back out of fear ... but longing
- Jesus' revealed we all have the same choice.
- To die with the world in our sins
- To die to this world and live on after it dies by sacrificing everything that holds us to this life.

# Losing or Saving our Life

- *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and **confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.** (They lost their life here).*
- *14 For those who say such things declare plainly that **they seek a homeland.** (laying up treasures in heaven).*
- *15 And truly **if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return.** (Losing or Saving their life...)*
- *16 But **now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country.** Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. Heb. 11:13-16*
- *Can we relate to them? Do we feel the same way as they did?*

# Losing by Putting to Death...

- *If then you were raised with Christ, **seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.** 2 **Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.** ... 4 **Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth:** fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 **Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, 7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.** Col. 3:1-7*



# Doesn't Ask More than He Gave

- *Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless **not My will, but Yours***
- The cup was His death on the cross. His ultimate sacrifice for the gospel -It wasn't easy
- *“And **being in agony**, He prayed more earnestly. Then His **sweat became like great drops of blood** falling down to the ground. Lk 22:42-44*
- This is quality of denial He expects and demands.
- This is how He lost His life for our sake.
- It is what we must do to *lose our life* for His sake.

# The Price of our Confession

- Jesus is Christ and Lord = both full repentance and the fruit of full repentance.
- No matter what the gain... Sin must be “**lost**.”
- Frivolous and unworthy goals must be “**lost**”
- *It is in our “fruits worthy of repentance” that we “**lose our life**.”*
- *I have **suffered the loss of all** things, and count them as **rubbish**, that I may gain Christ*
- *I have been crucified with Christ; it is **no longer I who live**, but Christ lives in me;*
- Can't bury the hatchet with the handle ready to be taken up again.

# We Would not be the First

- There have been many who have truly lost their lives for the Sake of God or His Christ.
- Stephen was stoned. James beheaded.
- Abel gave up His life for God's sake.
- Yet many who have not been recorded also did.
- *They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented — 38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. Heb 11:37-38*

# A Parable of Explanation

- *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Mt. 13:44*
- When you truly sell all you have to buy that field you have lost your life for His sake.
- *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, Titus 2:11-12*
- When we deny ungodliness and worldly lusts we sell all we have to buy that field.

# The Price of our Confession

- Even mother, father, son, or daughter must be “**lost**” and “**loved less**”
- “*He who loves father or mother **more than Me** is **not worthy** of Me. And he who loves son or daughter **more than Me** is **not worthy** of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is **not worthy of Me**. **He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.** Mt. 10:37-39*

# Are we worthy of Him?

- For some the church and our duties to her are one of many equally important commitments?
- When worship interferes with other commitments (work, hobby, family), our choice will tell Him which commitment is more important.
- We will “*save our lives*” and forsake the assembly or “*lose our life*” by giving up the commitment.
- We do the same with our children. Some teach to “*lose their life*” by placing other commitments last.
- Others teach them to “*save their lives*” by putting Christ’s expectations second. When sports or school activities come before Bible class or worship.