

The Greatest Loss

by James Smith

The greatest loss is losing one's soul, and the only way to secure salvation is by committing one's soul to Jesus and trusting in his finished work.

Scripture: Matthew 11:28, Mark 8:36, John 3:16, Acts 4:12, Romans 10:9, 1 Timothy 1:12, Hebrews 7:25, 1 John 5:12, Revelation 3:20

Topics: "Eternal Salvation", "Soul Security"

Description

James Smith preaches about the importance of securing the salvation of our souls by entrusting them to Jesus. He emphasizes that while we may lose many things in life, the most crucial thing is to ensure the safety of our souls through faith in Jesus. Smith urges readers to consider the eternal consequences of losing their souls and highlights the necessity of committing their souls to Jesus for salvation, as nothing else can save or justify them before God. He warns against the dreadful fate of damnation for unbelievers and encourages readers to believe in Jesus to secure their souls' eternal safety.

Transcript

Some time ago, two friends met in Gloucester market, and entered into conversation. The one was somewhat cast down, and began to tell a long mournful tale of losses he had experienced. The other heard him patiently for a time, and then said, "But you have not lost your soul!" At this, the other brightened up, and replied, "No, for I gave that to Jesus forty years ago!" The soul therefore was in safe keeping. Much that he kept himself--he lost; but what he committed to the Lord Jesus--was kept safe. Jesus always keeps safely what is entrusted to him.

Of this the apostle Paul felt sure, and gave him confidence in the midst of his trials, persecutions, and dangers; therefore he wrote to Timothy, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." A believer may lose much--but the principal thing is safe. A sinner may get much--and yet he may experience the greatest loss, for he may lose his soul! If the soul is safe--the great thing is secured; but if the soul is in peril--everything is in danger.

Reader, how is it with you today? What is your state? Is your soul safe? Have you the witness in yourself that it is so? Can you refer back to the time when you realized its danger, felt concern for its safety, and by an act of faith committed it to the Lord Jesus? No one can save your soul, but Jesus. He does not save any soul that is not committed to him. But he never refuses to receive and save the soul of any sinner,

which is entrusted to him. Unless you have personally, under a sense of danger, committed your soul to Jesus, it is not saved. Nor can it be saved without this.

Your prayers and tears will not save it. Your good purposes and good works will not save it. Nothing can remove its guilt--but the blood of Jesus. Nothing can justify it before God--but the righteousness of Jesus. Nothing can purify and make it fit for heaven--but the Spirit of Jesus. Nothing can secure you through life's trials, or bring you honorably through death's struggles--but the intercession of Jesus. Now the blood of Christ, alone avails for those who trust in it--the righteousness of Jesus, is only placed to the account of those who believe in him--the Spirit of Christ, is only found in those who obey him--the intercession of Jesus, is only made for those who put their cause into his hands. He alone is safe, therefore, whoever commits his soul into the hands of Jesus to be saved by him; for the faith that brings salvation to the soul, is believing in his name, trusting in his finished work, relying on his faithful word, and committing the soul without any reserve to his keeping.

The tried man at Gloucester, had had personal dealings with the Lord Jesus forty years before. He knew this. He had felt the need of a Savior. He had responded to the Savior's request, "My son, give me your heart," and he had given his soul to Jesus. He had proved this by his daily walk and lifestyle, and therefore his friend could say to him with confidence, "But you have not lost your soul!" And with a similar confidence he could reply, "No, I gave that to Jesus forty years ago!"

Oh, what a mercy to have one's soul safe! To be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation. Then, though our path is rough, our trials great, our losses many--yet we may rejoice and be glad; for when a few years are passed, when we are safe in heaven--it will matter little about these things, because the soul is safe. But however smooth our path, however comfortable our lot below, however great our gains--if our souls are lost, the remembrance of these things will not alleviate our sufferings in hell!

Let us therefore, at once, seriously consider the Savior's question, "What shall it profit a man--if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" Profit! Profit--if one gains a world! Why, what would a world be--to a lost soul? To one doomed to suffer the wrath of God, the lashings of a guilty conscience, and the company of devils and damned souls forever? All the waters of the world would not quench the flames of hell, or cool the parched tongue of the sufferer for one moment! All the wealth of the world would not purchase one moment's ease, or freedom from those dreadful pains!

Lose the soul! What is to be compared to this? Lose the soul! Who shall say what is comprehended in this? Lose the soul! What, do it oneself? Do it with one's eyes open? Do it, though solemnly warned against it? Do it, in order to indulge our lusts and passions, or to gratify our carnal propensities? Do it, when we know that if the soul is once lost, it is lost forever?

Lose the soul! What, when Jesus offers to save it? When salvation is brought to one's very door? When the sound of the words is constantly ringing in our ears, "He who believes shall be saved, and he who believes not shall be damned!" How plain this promise, "Shall be saved!" How absolute the threatening, "Shall be damned!" Shall be damned!

And what is damnation? Eternal, indescribable punishment. Damnation! It will require an acquaintance with all the torments of hell, and the endurance of them to all eternity--to enable one to define it. And will every unbeliever be damned? Yes, every unbeliever! And is every man considered an unbeliever, who does not give his heart to Jesus, and confide in him alone? Yes, every one who does not renounce the world, and withdraw his heart from it--who does not receive God's testimony concerning his Son, and trust

in Christ alone.

Reader, you have a soul of incalculable worth! That soul must live forever in heaven--or in hell. Its future depends on the present. It will be saved or lost, now. If saved, it must be saved by Jesus. If lost, it will be lost by yourself. This thought we want to fix in your mind. We want to get your attention riveted to it. Because we want you to be saved. Knowing something of the terrors of the Lord, we would persuade you to flee from the wrath to come! Knowing something of the love of Christ, and the sweetness of enjoying a present salvation, we would persuade you to come to Jesus, and give him your soul.

We were saved thirty and eight years ago, and never repented of the act, no nor never shall. Repent of it! Why, if anything we ever did will give us joy in heaven forever, it will be this, that we did, as a poor lost sinner, give the soul to Jesus to be saved by his grace. And if you live neglecting the salvation of your soul, and if it is lost through your negligence and folly--nothing in hell will torture you like the remembrance of such folly!

Oh, think of being in hell--in hell by your own fault--in hell, though friends tried to prevent you going there--in hell forever!

But we will hope better things of you, though we thus write. The door of mercy is still open. The way of escape is still at hand. The invitation still remains. Jesus is willing to save you. His promise remains good, "He who believes shall be saved." Believe, then, in the Lord Jesus Christ--and you shall be saved.

Let the first thing attended to after reading this be, to secure beyond the shadow of a doubt, to secure beyond the possibility of a failure, the salvation of the soul. This done, everything else will be done better and easier. This done, you will have peace of conscience, peace with God, and comfort under all the trials and troubles of life. This done, you will be prepared for death and a glorious immortality! This done, you will be enabled to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ with boldness--and be by the Judge himself, invited to inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world! This done, the great, the all-important thing is done!

But if you leave this undone, if you despise your own soul, and persevere in your course of sin, perhaps before another year closes, you will lift up your eyes in hell, being in torment--and then you will rue your folly, and increase your torments by your ceaseless self-condemnation!

May God in his infinite mercy, bless these lines to the awakening of your soul--nor may you be allowed to rest, until you find rest at the feet of Jesus, who at this moment says to you, "Come unto me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

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