



## Articles and Sermons :: How They Gain The World

### How They Gain The World - posted by hulse (), on: 2012/5/9 22:30

And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. (Mark 8:34-38)

In Jesus' teaching on the soul, he uses the terminology of the marketplace. Souls are bartered for, Truth is bought and sold, profit and loss is accumulated, which is of eternal consequence. Indeed, Jesus asks, "What would a man exchange for his soul?"

But the soul is not usually lost in one major transaction, but in countless trivial exchanges which eventually 'total' up, too late for most to recognize, unto an irreparable loss. It is a lot like the use of credit cards, which people don't pay enough attention to, until a bill comes that is devastating, so it is with the soul.

I saw an example of this, which perfectly illustrates the teaching of Mark 8. I happened upon an airing of a Larry King show, in which two evangelical preachers and a noted evangelical pop musician were the guests. The musician, a young woman, had become noted for coming out as a Lesbian, yet wanting to continue in her 'music ministry', to which she testified that there was much popular support.

One of the evangelical pastors, compassionately urged her to repent, assuring her of the prospect of God's forgiveness for all sins, citing scripture against the sin, as well as promises of God's love. This was indeed a faithful witness of the truth.

He did this over the objections of Larry King, who obviously took the worldly position on the subject, treating lesbianism as a valid lifestyle, and those who objected to it as bigots and haters. He accused the faithful pastor of being a 'homophobe' and inferred he was a hypocrite and was similar to those in the fifties who would have objected to inter racial marriage.

Larry stood as we would expect, an avid proponent of the spirit of this age. He forced the good pastor to pay for the truth that he had espoused. So also did the young musician, who laughed and mocked the pastor's attempt to call her on her sin, and to bring her to repentance.

But the other Pastor, a well-known evangelical, in fact a former head of the national association of evangelicals, sat by, until Larry King asked him what he thought of the issue.

He turned to the faithful shepherd and said, "Remember Pastor, the only thing Jesus ever condemned anyone for, was for judging others and telling them they are wrong!". At that moment, the young musician smiled, Larry King beamed, and I have no doubt that many in the listening audience appreciated the words of the second pastor.

It is as if they were all saying, "Here is someone who 'gets it', not like those obnoxious evangelical haters, (such as the first pastor), this pastor is compassionate, understanding, humane, and non judgmental, our kind of pastor. If only all Christians were as loving as this one..."

But at that moment, I believe the Holy Spirit spoke to me and said, "Do you see what He just did? That man just gained the world...". No, He didn't become rich and famous, or better looking or more popular. That is not what 'gaining the world' means, in the teaching of Jesus.

For just a sliver of the approval of a misguided pop singer in rebellion to God, and the applause of a depraved, godless television personality, Larry King and his audience, the second pastor in effect denied the biblical teaching on marriage and sexuality, and sided with unbelievers against a faithful witness of Jesus. That was what he was willing to exchange for the chance to look 'compassionate' before a television and radio audience, that was the price he was willing to pay

The second preacher was willing to look good at the expense of his more faithful brother, who was being accused of being a 'hater' by King, the young Lesbian, and by inference, himself, when he chided the preacher for judging. This is the very way that 'many shall betray one another' as our Lord warned us would be a characteristic of the last days.

That was what he was willing to 'exchange for his own soul'. The man may have gained the world, but he lost part of his soul. Do you see what I mean by referring to constant transactions? In little or big ways, all of us are being put in that position almost every day, even if we don't realize it

~Bill Randles~

<http://billrandles.wordpress.com/2012/05/09/how-they-gain-the-world-pt-4-mark/>