



Win the Lord, and Lose the World

“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matthew 16:26)

“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Mark 8:38)

“For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?” (Luke 9:25)

These three very interesting parallel verses shall be our meditation for the New Year. Life is full of wins and losses. In business, there will always be profits and losses. In sports, there will be wins and losses too. So, it would seem that life is like a Financial Balance Sheet. You either win or lose. Your life can be divided into assets and liabilities. Was this the intent of the Good Lord’s message to His disciples?

In its scriptural context, Jesus had just rebuked the Apostle Peter despite his grand confession that the Lord is the Christ (Mk. 8:29) of God (Lk. 9:20), the Son of the Living God (Matt. 16:16). Peter got the right answer, but loses his reward of praise from the Lord! What was the reason for this? Jesus had just revealed to the disciples that He will be sacrificed for our sins. While Dr Luke did not report this incident, both Evangelists Matthew and Mark recorded it meticulously for our learning. The Lord Jesus had to rebuke Peter because of his lack of understanding. While he had the privilege of learning first hand from the Lord about His Passion, he could not accept the truth. In fact, both Matthew and Mark recorded for us that “Peter took him, and began to rebuke him” (Matt. 16:22; Mk. 8:32). What audacity for Peter to even dare to rebuke the Lord? Well, one may say that

he did it out of anxiety and love for Christ. For certain, he did not want the Lord to go through the Passion and suffer and die! Jesus did not rebuke Peter for his love for Him; he rebuked him for his impulsiveness and lack of understanding of His teaching. Our Lord Jesus came the first time for a purpose – “For the son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Lk. 19:10)! This was

Jesus’ mission on earth. He is to become that sacrificial Lamb of God to die on the cruel cross for all our sins in order that we may live. Christ must die or lose His life on earth, so that we can live eternally and win our souls forever! That is the Gospel Truth.

Immediately after this discourse, He taught them about True Discipleship.

“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” (Matt.

16:24)

“Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” (Mk. 8:34)

“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” (Lk. 9:23)

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Jesus had to teach the disciples about self-denial and daily cross-bearing. Suffering is part and parcel of Christian discipleship.

General Superintendent's Address

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Jesus had to teach the disciples about self-denial and **daily** cross-bearing. Suffering is part and parcel of Christian discipleship. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians: *“For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.”* (Phil. 1:29) Christ did not promise us that the Christian life will be like lying on a bed of roses, and having the skies always blue with sunshine. There may be moments of disappointments and sufferings as well. In fact, suffering is part of God’s way to manifest His love for us. Scripture does not shy away from this topic of suffering. The Apostle James says, *“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation (testing): for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”* (Jas. 1:12) The Apostle Peter says, *“Wherefore let him that suffer according to the **will of God** commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.”* (1 Pet. 4:19) To the Romans, Paul wrote, *“And not only so, but we glory in tribulations (sufferings) also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope.”* (Rom. 5:3-4) Finally, to the Corinthians, Paul wrote about his personal testimony, *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as it is common to man: but God is faithful, who will suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”* (1 Cor.

10:13) Our Lord Jesus appeared to Paul in a vision to affirm him: *“My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”* (2 Cor. 12:9)

There is much at stake when we fail to understand the grace of God in our daily living. Instead of investing our life with eternity’s values in view, we put all our God-bestowed resources, talents and time into gaining the world. That will be the greatest tragedy! It is in this context that these three verses were spoken. My beloved Lifers, would you trade your life for eternity in Christ, or would you trade your life for worldliness? Jesus taught the parable of the rich fool to the disciples, and He said, *“Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”* (Lk. 12:20-21)

Let us live life with eternity’s values in mind. Let us invest our life as true Disciples of Christ. Let us trade our resources, the God-bestowed talents and time to gain spiritual wealth and blessings rather than material gains in this life. Let us be “Aflame for Christ; Commit to Godliness” in 2010 as a family of God’s people.

Emmanuel,

**Elder (Dr) Sherman Ong,
General Superintendent,
Life B-P Church Sunday School**

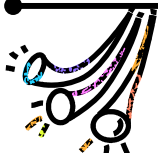
TAKE THE WORLD

Take the world, but give me Jesus
All its joys are but a name;
But His love abideth ever,
Thru eternal years the same.

Take the world. But give me Jesus
In His cross my trust shall be;
Till, with clearer, . Brighter vision,
Face to face my Lord I see.

O the height and depth of mercy!
O the length and breadth of love!
O the fullness of redemption
Pledge of endless life above!

BUT GIVE ME JESUS



Announcement

Today is Staff Dedication Sunday. All Sunday School staff are strongly encouraged to attend the dedication at the 10:45 am worship.