

The Value of Your Soul

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[0:00] Take your Bibles and turn to the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew chapter 16. Matthew is the very first book of the New Testament. Jesus Christ. So Matthew chapter 16. And we're going to begin reading at verse 13. And we'll read through the rest of the chapter. So Matthew chapter 16 and verse 13.

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, who do people say the Son of Man is? Who do people say that I am? They replied, some say John the Baptist. Others say Elijah and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets. But what about you? He asked. Who do you say I am?

Simon Peter answered, you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus replied, blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.

And I tell you that you are Peter. And on this rock, I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven. And whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

Then he warned his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ. And from that time on, Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law.

[1:46] And he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. Never, Lord, he said, this shall never happen to you.

And Jesus turned and said to Peter, get behind me, Satan. You are a stumbling block to me. You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men. And Jesus said to his disciples.

If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

For whoever wants to save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world yet forfeits his soul?

Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? But the son of man is going to come in his father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.

[2:57] I tell you the truth. Some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the son of man coming in his kingdom. Well, brother, come preach God's word to us.

Well, it's an absolute delight to be here. Thank you for your fellowship and your friendship. And today I would like to turn your attention to verse 26 of the passage that we read together.

What good will it be for a man to gain the whole world yet forfeit his soul? What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?

Elvis Aaron Presley was born on the 8th of January 1935. He was born in the little town at the time of Tupelo, Mississippi, and into a very ordinary home.

Very plain. His parents were working class. And like many children in the neighborhood, he had a fairly steady stay-at-home mum who loved her son, who cared for him, and who wanted the best for him.

[4 : 16] His childhood was not abject poverty, but neither was it one full of privileges. It was just very ordinary. As soon as he was of adequate age, his restless spirit took him to the highways of America as a truck driver.

It was at that point in his life that he met and befriended a small-time studio manager who encouraged him for a few dollars to make a couple of records and have a bit of fun and just see how it goes.

And that launched Elvis Presley in a direction that he and his family and his friends had never dreamt was even possible. Indeed, it launched him into heights of fame that in many senses were unparalleled, certainly in the 1950s.

From 1956, when he filmed his first movie, Love Me Tender, right through the 1960s, he made over 20 movies.

And every single one of them at the time was eagerly anticipated and received by the public of many nations. Great excitement was the order of the day outside of movie theaters all over the world when one of Elvis' new movies was about to be released.

[5 : 50] His name was known in almost every home throughout the Western world. Throughout Asia, South America, and even many of the African countries, Elvis Presley was indeed considered a hero.

He was esteemed, he was loved, he was admired. He had fan clubs on every continent by the score, even by the hundreds.

Wherever he went, he was mobbed by emotional and happy crowds. There was not a frown on a face when Elvis was around. Everybody who could wanted to have a glimpse of Elvis Aaron Presley.

For over a decade, he was by far the main influence upon young people in the United States of America. And I'm even told that his influence was such that in the most rural parts of Scotland, on a Friday night, young farm lads would take off their overalls and dress like Elvis and comb their hair like Elvis.

And they wanted to sound like Elvis and move like Elvis. Even in the highlands of Scotland, Elvis was everywhere. In just a few years, his life changed from being a trucker, hauling loads across the United States, to being one of the greatest so-called superstars that the world has ever seen.

[7 : 26] Indeed, his fame and his fortune was unsurpassed. When President Nixon was going through a very hard time, his PR guys told him, bring Elvis to the White House.

Let people see you hanging out with Elvis. And he did. And his approval ratings, although poor, were raised for a little bit because he was one of Elvis' friends.

At least that was the image that was created. Elvis was loved by millions. Millions. The world was at his fingertips.

He had gained, it would seem, everything the world could offer him. He had fame. And he wasn't just famous, he was popular in that fame.

There's many a person's name is known throughout the world, but they're not popular, they're not loved. Ah, that wasn't the case with Elvis. He had the love of those millions.

[8 : 26] He had wealth more than he knew what to do with it. He had influence. He had all of the world's beautiful people seeking his attention.

And yet we ask the question, what did it profit him? You see, his last days were sad. They were lonely.

They were marked by confusion and depression and anger and broken relationships. It seems that he was addicted to drugs and he was overusing alcohol.

And this young man that had become a so-called icon in the world's eyes, worshipped indeed by millions. He was very alone and very low and very miserable.

The debate will continue. Was his death a deliberate suicide? Or was it an unintentional result of a disturbed and dangerous and strange pattern of behaviour that he fell into?

[9:37] People will debate that. God alone knows. But what we do know is he was in a state of misery. We know that his life was messed up.

We know that Elvis Presley, who had everything going for him, fell into a condition of utter disaster. What a shame.

He had everything as far as the world could give him in terms of success as far as this world is concerned. There was really nothing that he didn't have that he wanted.

But more than anyone in the 20th century, he is an example of someone whom the Lord Jesus Christ, in a sense, describes in our text.

He gained the whole world. He gained the whole world. Whatever he wanted, whoever he wanted, whenever he wanted.

[10:41] And yet, if Elvis Presley died in a drunken or drug-induced condition without the Lord Jesus Christ, then he's a sorry specimen of one who gained the world, but lost his own soul.

And there have been many like him. Many. That had everything this world can offer. But at the end of the day, were left with nothing.

What is a man profited if he gains the whole world and loses his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? These are timely words to each and every one of us.

Perhaps someone here who's even now seeking to weigh the world and the gospel. The world and all that it can offer. The world and all of its pleasures.

The world and all of the anticipated delights. And on the other hand, the claims and the commands and the offers that are contained in the gospel.

[11:48] Perhaps a young person with ambitions and hopes and dreams and desires.

Perhaps even someone a little bit older and seasoned in time. Thinking life is whizzing by. Life has almost passed me by. What am I getting out of it?

Am I getting the most out of it? Is it wise to follow Jesus? Or should I be pleasing myself and milking the world for all that it offers?

And milking the world's relationships and the world's offers for all that I can get from them? Should I be less focused on the things of God and give greater priority to the things of time?

But I'd like to encourage you that above all in life, you make sure your soul is prepared to meet God.

[12:46] That above all you endeavor to be right with God. And I've got three reasons that I would like to give you. And the first reason that you should weigh the value of your soul is because of its nature.

The nature of your soul. What is this soul that Jesus is speaking about? Well, the nature of the soul derives from its originator, which is God himself.

After creating the beasts of the field and of the forests, the Lord says in Genesis 1 and verse 26, Let us make man in our image after our likeness.

So the persons within the Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, they declare the intention that man should be made and that he should be set apart from all of the other creatures.

What would make him unique would be that he would be made now in the image of God. And according to Genesis 2 and verse 7, The Lord then formed man out of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.

[14:05] And man became a living soul. So it's this living soul aspect that is the image of God.

The scriptures are very clear when it comes to the issue of origins. That man did not come from a tadpole that shed its tail and grew some legs and hopped for a few thousand years and then began to catch on.

He could swing through trees and stand upright and then pick up his books and go off to college. The Bible is very clear that that's not how man came into being.

The scriptures rather show us that God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into man. And man became a living soul.

One who was in the image of God. Now we know that today there is a massive attack on creationism. Indeed, there is a mighty effort underway to take God right out of the picture.

[15:16] And what's that all about? It's about man then being able to continue on in a sinful way without ever having to think that he will be held accountable before God.

That's the root of it. It's not that science proves that there is no God. It's not that academics have absolutely reliable information that God does not exist.

It's just that in the heart of man there is a hatred of the fact that they are one day going to be held accountable before a holy God. And man in his sin despises that and wants to shut God out of the picture and wipe God out.

And so one of the great methods is to attack the fact that God created all things and that man is a creation of God and that man will stand and be accountable before God one day.

Indeed, evolution does not need to be watertight or scientific in order to sway men. It has an inbuilt attraction due to the fact that it allows mankind to exist and to be the master of his own destiny without having a moral or a spiritual accountability.

[16:33] Man can, through evolution, celebrate his own existence without giving any praise to God or homage to God or in any way feeling that he has to one day stand and be tried in the presence of God.

So man can be what he wants to be. He can sin and there is no day of reckoning. The normal standards of science, as you know, are the study of facts, observable facts.

Yet when it comes to evolution, men gladly cast aside what they insist on when it comes to mathematics or when it comes to physics or chemistry.

Something they can observe, something that they can examine, something they can test, something they can prove. When it comes to evolution, that's all set aside and it's pure speculation.

And yet it's still embraced and it's loved and it's a religion that men and women are devoted to. They will still believe in it and defend it as absolute fact.

[17:41] Even though, for example, Piltdown Man, who was supposed to be an evidence of half man, half monkey, was proven to be an elaborate hoax.

They can then just set that aside and move on and say, oh no, we've got other evidence. Well, what about Nebraska Man? And that was proven to be conjectures from a pig's tooth.

Just absolute imagination from a tooth. And then the tooth was discovered to be a pig's tooth. Oh, we'll just push that aside. We've got other evidence. Well, what about Ramathippicus that was discovered not to be an early man, but to be an orangutan?

Oh, well, we'll just push the orangutan aside now that we know that that's what it is. And we'll hold on to other proof. What about Orchiman? That was built from a piece of a skullcap that was imagined to be a man's skullcap.

And then it was discovered it was a donkey's skullcap. Oh, we'll push that aside. What about Lucy, an early woman? Well, actually, pieces of Lucy were found two miles apart, scattered all over the place.

[18 : 48] And yet it was all brought together and made as if, well, it must be the same skeletal remains. It must be from the same one individual skeleton. When in actual fact, it was just scattered pieces of bone.

And the evolutionist will hear things like that and just go, oh, well, we'll try something else. And we'll believe something else. But the faith in evolution is not shaken. The denial of God is not in any way it would seem disturbed.

Rather tenaciously, the godless man will hold on to his doctrine. Because it allows for the fact that there is no God. And there is therefore no sin that needs to be repented of.

And there is no such thing really as sin. There is no standard other than the standard that society declares is that which is good and right.

And of course, Jesus Christ, well, he can be reduced to at best a good man who once lived. Lies, falsehoods, deceits, cons, frauds.

[19 : 51] All dressed up in scientific jargon. All given credibility by the popular media. By educational establishments. Even by government. Who are all looking for a way to do what the psalmist David saw in his day.

That is break the bonds of God. The psalmist declares in Psalm 2 and verse 1. Why do the nations rage? Why this anger against God, he says.

Why do they plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves. And the rulers take counsel together. Against the Lord.

And against his anointed. Saying, let us break their bands in pieces and cast away their cords from us. What did David see? David saw an organized universal conspiracy against God.

A hatred at the highest places in society and in government. Men banding together and trying to figure out ways that they could be God.

[20 : 59] And denying the reality of God. And yet, no matter how hard man tries to cast off any thought of God. There is still in his heart a sense that God is there.

There is a huge universal craze to obliterate God. But no matter how hard they try to rub him out.

And erase him. The fact is, man is left at the end of the day knowing. Ah, but there is a God. And not just a God.

He is the God that reveals himself in the Bible. It's imprinted into humanity. Because man was made a living soul.

In the image of God. And no matter how hard he tries. No matter how much he squirms. No matter how much he resists and shakes his fist at God. The reality is, God is still there.

[22 : 04] And man can't help but knowing that God is still there. And boy, it irritates. Boy, it's sickens. Boy, it's a pain in the neck.

For human beings. And it's the soul. The fact that God has not made us as mere animals. But he has given us a spiritual dimension.

That exalts us above the beasts of the fields. And makes us different from the animals of the jungle. Well, like man, we were made from the dust of the ground.

Like animals, excuse me. We were made from the dust of the ground. They too were made from the same substance. Physical substance. In Genesis 1.24. God says, let the earth bring forth the living creature.

And the animals were formed from the ground. Physically, there are many animals who were created even with abilities and powers that we don't have. And that we even long for.

[23:09] For example, the birds of the air. Who hasn't longed for the ability to fly? Who hasn't fantasized? What would it be like to just take off and fly from here to there?

Who hasn't? Who hasn't even desired the speed of the cheetah? And as we've looked on that wonderful cat, we think, wow. To be able to run at over 70 miles an hour.

The strength of the bear. Oh, we will take a bear on, providing we've got a huge gun. But we won't take a bear on man to man, so to speak. Because it's a bear.

And it would destroy us. Who hasn't even admired the agility of the monkey? And of the ape. Indeed, when it comes to superiority in physical matters.

And when it comes to just strength even. Man is often pretty far down the list. However, the animals are not living souls.

[24:09] They are not made in the image of God. To be made in God's image does not imply that we were made to physically reflect what God looks like. God is a spirit.

And that means that man has been given spiritual reality. And a spiritual dimension. A rational and a moral dimension.

That the animals do not have. Man is created in the likeness of God. And therefore, he has the capacity to know God.

He has the power to reason. And he has a gift of intelligence. As opposed to mere instinct. This gives to man a sense of what is right and what is wrong.

It's ingrained into human nature. That they know the law of God. And they will sin against the law. They will seek to obliterate the law.

[25:06] But they know the law of God. It is written in their heart. Indeed, man is able, unlike the animals, to know God.

Man is able to consciously, therefore, glorify God and commune with God. The best instincts of even the best trained animal is incapable of enabling that creature to make moral decisions.

And no matter how well trained your dog is and how smart you think your pooch is. The fact is, that dog is unaware of, completely unaware of the existence of God.

Man is different. You are different. You have been made in the image of God. You have a soul. Your soul is aware of God.

You know the reality of your sin that separates you from God. Your soul is an amazing aspect of your being. Of course, we have shown that evolution is an attempt, a deliberate attempt to reduce man to the condition of making him no more than the animals.

[26:20] However, no matter how far evolutionism seeks to brainwash the masses, it can never change the reality that man has. You have a God consciousness.

You know it. You may deny it. You may even publicly refute it. But when you're in your bed and the darkness has come down around you, you know there is a God.

It is between you and God. And you may despise that. And you may kick against that. But you know that it's true. Like the creator, the soul will never die.

Unlike God, man has a beginning because he is a created being. But like God, the soul is everlasting. The soul will never cease to exist.

It will never fade away. It will never be annihilated. It will never be exhausted or discarded. It will never go into a state of non-consciousness.

[27 : 19] The soul lives on. As the old song says, John Brown's body lies a molding in the grave. But his soul goes marching on. As does every man's.

Men will prepare for the future of their bodily care and their bodily needs. Indeed, one of the sectors that's still very alive and doing well in the financial industry is the sale of endowments and the sale of pensions.

Men will prepare for the future and look ahead. Why? Because if they're able, they'll seek to ensure the future well-being of their body.

They might even go as far as ensuring the future care of their corpse. I can remember as a young lad, my dad and my next-door neighbor having a talk across the garden fence, the garden hedge as it was.

And the conversation went something like this. My dad said, Jimmy, did you see that Cador Cemetery's got a discount on plots? And Jimmy shouts back, I saw that.

[28 : 33] I'm thinking of buying one. And my dad's saying, that's what we're thinking of doing as well. How long does the sale last for? Oh, I think it's another two weeks. Oh, I think I'll go down maybe this weekend and put in for one of the plots.

And Jimmy and my dad both doing it. And then my dad's saying, Jimmy, as you think about that, it reminds you that you're going to die, doesn't it? Aye, it does, Gordon. Jimmy, what about your soul?

Oh, Gordon, enough of this nonsense. Oh, well, Jimmy, your soul's not going to die. Your soul's going to go some... Ah, Gordon, enough of this nonsense. Ah, as Jimmy then walked into his house.

And even as a young lad, unconverted at the time, and my dad pointed this out, which helped me think of it more clearly than I probably would have, I realized at that time, there's a man prepared to look after his body, even in the grave, and go for a good deal and get a good plot that's in a nice location, looking out on the hillsides of the Campsie Hills there, just north of Glasgow.

He's getting all that in his mind, but he's not even prepared to have a conversation about his soul. He'll talk about the body, he'll talk about the funeral, but he'll not talk about the soul.

[29 : 51] And Jimmy's been dead many years, many years he's been dead, and I've been to that plot that he bought on discount many times because there's many family members in that cemetery.

And I've thought to myself, Jimmy, your body is nothing now. Your body has completely just disintegrated, but your soul has gone marching on.

Where are you, Jimmy? And sadly, I think I know where Jimmy is. Think about your soul. Jesus says, what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?

Think about your soul because of its nature. It is the aspect of you, not how you look physically, but it is the aspect of you that is in the image of God.

The fact that you will live on. The fact that you have, as a soul being, got the capacity to know God or to resist God.

[30 : 50] Think about your soul because it is a very special and a very important aspect of your overall being. Your body, yes, and soul.

But secondly, think about your soul today because of its value. Its value. Not just its nature, but its value.

What is a man profited if he gains the world and loses his soul? Or what will you give in exchange for your soul? Think about that, Jesus is saying.

Now, he really knows the value of the human soul. Would you not agree? That the Lord Jesus as the Son of God, indeed, the book of John tells us very clearly in its opening chapter that he was in the beginning with God, he was with God, indeed, he is God and out of his mouth all things came to pass as he spoke and created all things.

And he knows the value as the creator. He has an absolute insight into the fact that men who live for sinful pleasure or live for selfish ambition are making the greatest blunder ever.

[32 : 07] They are making a mistake of just magnificent proportions. In our text, we find that Jesus does something really simple and we can all imagine this.

He takes your soul and places it on the scale and then he takes everything that the world has, everything, everything that Elvis Presley had and he places that on the other side of the scale and he says, watch this, your soul and everything this world has, which has the greatest weight, which has the most value, and the scale falls heavily on the side of your soul.

And Jesus says, is there anything in this world that you can rightfully, legitimately, justly, wisely get in exchange for your soul? And the answer is nothing.

Nothing. He asks these questions, two questions, what does it gain you or what can you then give in exchange?

They're rhetorical questions. That means there is an inbuilt answer. There is a correct answer that's built into the question. You don't have to go and scrape around to figure out the right answer.

[33 : 32] The question is designed to answer itself, obviously, answer itself. What will it profit to have everything and lose your soul?

The answer is, of course, there's no profit. What can you exchange for your soul? The answer is, there's nothing the world can offer that is of equal value to my soul.

The body that you feed, the body that you pamper and wash, and the body that you clothe, the body that you might wish that you could get some plastic surgery on to improve, the body that you're rubbing creams on to seek to preserve, that body is not in any way going to last even a zillionth even a zillionth of the time that your soul is going to last.

I'm told that a man who weighs 150 pounds, which is slightly less than I weigh, but that man whose body is 150 pounds, he comprises in his body of enough water to fill a 10-gallon barrel, enough fat to make seven bars of soap, sufficient carbon for 9,000 lead pencils, adequate phosphorus for 2,000 matches, magnesium for one dose of salts, enough lime to whitewash a small garden shed, and enough sulfur to deflea one dog.

Next time you look in the mirror, just think, that's all your body is able to do. It's humbling to be reminded that of all of the items listed, the most expensive there would be the pencils.

[35 : 35] So much care yet, so much attention is paid to the body, the value of your body, yet interestingly enough, so little care for the never-dying soul.

The soul is more valuable than all of the gold and all of the silver and all of the diamonds and all of the power and all of the pleasure and all of the luxury and joy that this world can offer us.

And yet, the body is given preeminence. There's no price, there's no position, there's no offer that could be made that would justify a man exchanging his soul for it.

The soul is worth 10,000 worlds, yeah, more than 10,000 worlds. I'm sure that most here can appreciate, therefore, the extent of spiritual blindness that has gripped the minds of men.

For we see daily that mankind is being sold the craziest of deals and they plunge headlong into exchanging their soul for the most stupid of things.

[36 : 48] Few take time to consider the value of their soul. There is a real hellish plot to seek to undermine the value of your soul.

It's the oldest con trick in the book. When you go to buy something, you undermine its value so you get it cheaper. Have you ever sold a car perhaps through a newspaper or on Craigslist or something like that?

I used to do that in Scotland. When I had a car, I'd keep it for six months and sell it and try and make a couple hundred pounds, not dollars, but pounds on it. And every single person that came, they would come and answer to the advert and they would walk up and they would have their faces screwed up from the moment they get out of their car and they're looking at it and they're shaking their head and they'd kick the tyres and they'd go, oh, a bit of rust here, a bit of rust.

Yeah, turn the engine on. Ah, it sounds a wee bit rough. Right? Nobody ever come up and said, wow, good tyres. Wow, the engine. Boy, how much do you want? Wow, that's cheap.

Nobody ever said that. Everybody would try and undermine the product so they could get it on a cheap deal. And that's what the world is doing with your soul.

[38 : 07] This precious soul that's worth more than you can ever imagine. Satan has been in the business of undermining it for millennium. And one of his cleverest tricks is to say you're not really in the image of God.

You're nothing more than a well-developed animal. You ought to explore the desires of your heart and you ought to live for just now, for the moment and forget about your soul.

What is that anyway? And millions are buying into it. Many through the medium of Hollywood and through the medium of music. And they want to hear about who they are and what the meaning of life is.

And they're going to all the wrong places. And they're being told life is all about pampering that body and caring for that body and making sure that its appetites and its desires and its lusts are looked after.

That's what it's all about. And they're being sold a real dud bill. And they're told that their soul doesn't matter. And where it does matter, well, sell your soul for rock and roll.

[39 : 18] You know, there's a phrase that we've heard in so many ways through so many different artists and days gone by. And so many are even glad to do that and wear the t-shirt that says I've sold my soul for rock and roll.

And they don't realise what they're talking about. It's glib and it's trite and it's silly. The value of the soul is cheapened and men and women buy into it.

And yet, they discover the meaninglessness of living for themselves. Madonna, who is a piece of work in herself, she said, take it from me.

I went down the road of be all you can be. Realise your dreams. I'm telling you that fame and fortune are not what they're cracked up to be. We live in a society that seems to value only physical things.

People will do anything to get on reality shows and talent contests. We're obsessed. Now, she said that and she's still obsessed. She said that and she is the epitome of all of that.

[40 : 25] Have you ever heard of Jim Carrey, the comedian, the actor Jim Carrey? A guy who has, in a sense, everything. He's everything. Go on YouTube and look up recent Jim Carrey videos of him receiving his Golden Globe or presenting the Golden Globe Awards in 2016.

He's announced as Jim Carrey twice winner of the Golden Globes and he comes out and in front of him, I don't really know movie stars, I've got to be honest. I watch a movie then forget it five minutes later.

But I recognise a lot of faces in the crowd and they're all looking adoringly at Jim Carrey and he stands up and he says, I'm Jim Carrey, twice winner of the Golden Globe Awards and they all laugh.

And he says, when I go to sleep at night it's not just a guy that goes to sleep, it's Jim Carrey, the twice winner of the Golden Globe Awards that goes to sleep and they're all laughing and they don't quite know where he's going with this because he's funny, he's got that kind of, you know how some people, they've got a face that just makes you laugh.

He's got that face and he's made millions because of that face and those teeth. It's just the way Jim Carrey is and the way he looks. And they're all laughing and then he says, you know, if I could just, when I dream, it's not just a man that's twice winner of the Golden Globe Awards that dreams.

[41 : 48] And he says, I dream that one day I'll be Jim Carrey three times winner of the Golden Globe Awards and they all laugh. And then he says, then I'll be enough.

And they're all laughing but they're not quite sure what is he getting at here. And it comes out later that what he's getting at is this is meaningless. And that's what he's saying.

That's what he, now the guy is lost. He's lost. But he's got everything. He's got everything that his bodily needs, desires, pleasures, lusts, the concern for entertainment and friends and sex and money and everything this world can give him.

It's all there for him. And he's going around just now saying this is all meaningless. Now he's coming up with bizarre ideas. But he's another example of a man who has bought in to the idea that oh, your body is so valuable and all its desires are so important.

And the soul is neglected. It's meaningless. The man who's neglecting his soul because he's building up his business or the young couple who are neglecting their souls so that they can have a nice home and a nice pool and a top of the range jacuzzi and every toy that they can imagine.

[43 : 12] They're being shortchanged if they're buying into that and neglecting their soul. They're being defrauded. Often the desire to gain possessions is the cause of neglecting the valuable possession that you already have.

Your soul. The young man who's willing to neglect the well-being of his soul so that he can keep those friends and be considered cool.

The young girl who's neglecting her soul so that she can receive attention from the opposite sex and so that she can be popular above all things. The soul is so vital.

The soul is so important but it's so demeaned and undervalued. But ask the dying man of the value of his soul. And if his eyes are in any way enlightened he's going to tell you the truth.

He'll realize that the only thing that matters now is his soul. Naked I came from my mother's womb and naked I will return. A couple of years ago I remember being asked to go and visit a man.

[44 : 20] His name was Wayne. he was in his early 60s and he was dying and he knew he was dying only had a couple of days to go and he wanted to speak to me.

And this man was infamous because of his hatred of God and his mocking of Christians his loud mouth very intelligent articulate man a man with high position in his work and he made life miserable for Christians but as he was dying he was holding my hand with terror in his eyes terror asking me what should I do what should I do he knew his soul now was all that mattered he had lived for money he had lived for his alcohol he had lived for parties he had lived basically for himself through and through and he was in utter terror and no matter how clearly I gave him the gospel he just couldn't understand it and my fear is that Wayne went to a lost eternity and lost his soul John Calvin comments on this he says what carelessness and brutal stupidity is this that men are so strongly attached to the world and so much occupied with its affairs as not to consider why they were born and that God gave them an immortal soul in order that when the course of this earthly life is finished they might live eternally with him in heaven what stupidity brutal stupidity doesn't it make sense the nature of your soul made in the image of God the value of the soul more than anything that this world can put in front of you so valuable the world trying to belittle that and demean that and undermine that and ridicule that concept so that you just go along merrily in your own way lusting after the things of this world pleasing yourself no wonder no wonder

Calvin says it's brutal stupidity there was a man in ancient days and his name was Solomon and he had everything that this world can offer it's wealth it's power everything to delight the mind and please the eye and charm the body he had music that would just chant the air around him and life was beautiful except for the fact that he was far from God and he looked at all of these things and with eyes that were now opened he said vanity of vanities emptiness of emptiness as Jim Carrey is saying meaningless of meaninglessness so think of your soul today because of its nature and because of its value but I would ask you finally to think of your soul because of its danger the danger that your soul is in what is a man profited if he gains the world but Jesus says and what if he loses his soul the danger is that you can lose your soul in another place

Jesus told a parable about a sheep that got lost it's recorded in Luke 15 and in that story there is a shepherd who realises that something is lost and he carefully diligently searches for that lost sheep he searches incessantly and he doesn't stop and he doesn't eat if he does he would feel terrible because the sheep is lost it needs to be found he's wasting time that should be spent in searching out for that which is lost and Jesus tells another story another parable in that same chapter of a little coin that is lost and the coin is missing and the house is literally turned inside out and upside down in order that the coin could be found nothing is spared something is lost and it needs to be found and we can identify with those parables can't we and then to go oh no it's lost how often have you lost your keys and the first thing you think is oh if only

I had been more careful I normally put them there but this time yeah I was thinking of something and I don't know where I put them and you've got the whole house running about like headless chickens looking for your keys and you're thinking to yourself oh if only if only isn't that what we say after we lose something if only before we lose the keys we're not thinking about the keys we're not thinking about the wallet or the purse but once we lose whatever we need we kick ourselves we grieve we're annoyed at ourselves if only I had been more careful when something is precious we have the tendency to care more for that thing we don't want to lose it but sometimes because of our foolishness or our distractedness we lose things that we know we can't afford to lose in

[49:51] Scotland we have the crown jewels there's two crown jewels in the United Kingdom there's the crown jewels in London at the Tower of London and then there is also the crown jewels of Scotland and they're in Edinburgh Castle I say in Edinburgh Castle they're not lying on the street in Edinburgh they're not even just sitting in a shop window with a quarter inch thick plate glass window in front of it to keep the crowds back no they're in Edinburgh Castle and the castle is the home to a garrison of British soldiers so they're in a castle and there's soldiers everywhere and they're in a room in the castle that is highly protected the door is literally 12 inches thick and I made the mistake one time of saying boy that's a thick door and trying to chap it because then

I realised it's also alarmed and the alarm went off and I was put in my place very quickly by an angry guard and when you're in that room the glass around the crown jewels is as thick as it's got to be half an inch to three quarter of an inch thick glass and I'm sure it's just not regular glass it'll be tempered it'll be hard to break and there's the crown and there's the scepter and there's always somebody as I say close to that door standing watching everybody coming in watching like a hawk what is this all about there is something valuable there is a treasure they say it's invaluable in actual fact and what that means is there's no price that really could be put on it somebody can't come along and say I'll give you a hundred million dollars oh sounds like a good deal sold yours there's no value that can actually be ascribed to them because it's not just the jewels it's the history of that crown whose head the crown has been on in days gone by whose hands have held that scepter and the other pieces of jewellery and what have you it's invaluable and the danger is that somebody would come along and steal it so in order that that will not happen your soul is way more valuable and yet it's in great danger great danger and caring for your soul and prayerfully and thoughtfully considering the realities that I'm presenting to you today it's not going over the top you saying

I'm going to have to take time out today to consider my soul if the world would put all of this security around the crown jewels of Scotland which is a small little country when it comes to this world relatively speaking how much more should you weigh the state of your soul where is my soul at how is my soul cared for today it's in danger the danger is it could be lost I placed my soul carefully in the hands of one who can care for it and protect it and preserve it and deliver it adequately who could such a one be let me tell you today the only one that can care for your soul is the one who's asking this question he knows he came so that the souls of men that would be lost that would be stolen as it were by the enemy that would be undermined and devalued by the system that the enemy of our souls the devil himself has established in this world he came so that all of that could be dealt with and that your soul could be preserved protected delivered have you ever been to a tourist area and you've seen a sign up saying beware of pickpockets if you go to

London for example to Covent Gardens where everybody goes when they go to London everywhere there's signs beware of pickpockets and the first thing you do when you see that you walk into a busy marketplace such as Covent Garden in London and you see beware of pickpockets the first thing you do is you know oh it's there and then if you're wise you're not going to leave your wallet in your back pocket you're going to take it and you're maybe going to get the best maybe put it in your front pocket and stick your hand in your pocket and walk about like that for the rest of the time if you've got a handbag you're not going to just leave it hanging over your shoulder you're going to take it and you're going to wrap it around you're going to put it at the front of you you're going to walk about that's the way you see the ladies in Covent Garden because there's signs there's a warning saying there's a danger here to that which is precious that which is valuable there's a danger and people naturally instantly react to that they respond to that well I'll care for my wallet my driving license my ID my credit cards I'll care for that what about today are you still sitting there nonchalantly carelessly just thinking all well and good but I'm okay are you do you not then see how deceived and how how utterly deluded you must be your soul is made in the nature of God your soul is valuable beyond anything that you have or ever will have listen let's face it you will never have the whole world let's just be honest right none of us are going to be

Elvis Presley right none of us and even Elvis Presley although we use them as an illustration he still didn't really have the whole world he had it metaphorically speaking you are never going to have the whole world even in Elvis's manner at best what are you going to have a little bit of pleasure a little bit of thrill a little bit of temporary joy a little bit of this world wealth a little bit of temporary satisfaction and meanwhile while you're having a little bit of this and a little bit of that living with a lot of guilt and a lot of knowledge that you're resisting the God of heaven and a lot of knowledge that you're not caring for your soul that is so precious and Jesus stands before sinners and he says come to me come to me and he describes those that come to him as being as it were in his father's hands and no man will pluck them out of his father's hands no man nothing and there's a sense that Jesus gives us of safety and security and real preservation from the the wicked insidious desires that our enemy the devil has young people

[57 : 38] I plead with you today flee to Christ your soul is precious the world says to you oh there's a lot going on over here and there is there's a lot going on but Elvis Presley didn't find it all that satisfying although he had a million times more than you'll ever have Jim Carey he right now is a miserable messed up lunatic of a man because he's realised it's all meaningless and he's got a lot more than you'll ever have we could go on couldn't we Marlon Monroe she had this world's fame and applause and yet she was a poor little soul a poor lost soul and she knew it and she died a horrible death as well and we could go on and we could go on Madonna oh this is all vain this is all empty meanwhile what does she do she carries on in the vanity and in the emptiness because she can't do anything else oh today I plead with you look at that all of the evidence and flee to the one who says I'll give you safety

I'll give you security I'll give you the forgiveness and the peace that you need in order that you might know your soul is well cared for praise God there's many in the room this morning that can say it is well it is well with my soul it's only well because Christ has come and has died in our place instead and I plead today with everybody here that they would look to him that they would trust in him and friend before this day is through that you would be able to say it is also well my soul is well cared for in Christ Jesus let's pray our father we thank you for your son's words here we thank you that he has such love and care for those around him even his disciples who were asking him questions and thinking about the future and he was able to just highlight the reality that they need to make sure that their souls are looked after and we can get caught up with the things of time the busyness the bustle and the hustle of life and Lord we confess that at times we don't give true attention to that which is important namely our relationship with you the wellness of our soul

Lord we pray that you would just be with us may it be today that each and everyone here would know the refuge the safety the shelter that the Lord Jesus gives to the soul and Lord we pray that we would rejoice in your kindness your goodness and your grace in Christ's name Amen God