

AN EXCHANGED LIFE

“For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.” —MATTHEW 16:25

We live in a day when heroes are seldom people who sacrifice anymore, but are people who have everything. They’re the ones who have become multi-millionaires almost overnight and, in many cases, have acquired celebrity status. The real heroes, however, are those who recognize that God is God and Jesus Christ is His Son, and He came into this world in order that we may be reconciled to God.

Jesus came to earth, died and was raised to life again so that we might enter into a relationship with Him whereby we live in His fullness and His strength. In the eyes of the world, that may count for little, but there’ll come a day when those in Christ won’t arrive simply washed up on the shores of heaven, but will arrive triumphantly. In our consumer society, this is counter to everything that people normally hold onto. There are so many things we want, and we fight harder and harder to get more and more, and all that does is give us more to worry about.

The offer Jesus extends to us is to give ourselves away; to deny and detach ourselves from the secular wants of this world, and live in relationship with Him. Though it appears we’re losing everything, in actual fact we’re gaining everything. Paul tells us, “For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ...” (Colossians 2:9-10). That is everything we are; all our failures and weaknesses replaced with the riches of Christ.

Hudson Taylor, a great 19th century missionary pioneer in China, versed it well when he said, “The secret to a changed life is in discovering it’s an exchanged life.” If we hand over our lives to Jesus, He will hand over His life to us, and we will find life in all its fullness. Jim Elliot, another missionary, martyred in Ecuador at age 22, wrote, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

Everything we give up for Jesus is temporary and perishable, but what Jesus gives back is imperishable and eternal. That is not to say we are to give everything we have away, but that we bring our lives under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and submit to Him all that we have and all that we are. It is living with a disposition of heart that says, “Lord, I’m available to You and your purposes.” Out of that will flow the infinite blessings of God, not only for the betterment of our own lives, but for the enrichment of others.

PRAYER: Dear Father, thank You for the incredible opportunity of replacing my life with the fullness of life I have in Christ. I am wonderfully blessed in Him.

TO REFLECT UPON: In what ways has the indwelling life of Christ enriched my life?