

Gain and Loss for Eternity.

by Horatius Bonar

The sermon emphasizes the importance of eternal hope and the consequences of losing one's soul, heaven, and Christ.

Scripture: Job 27:8, Matthew 16:26, Philippians 3:7

Topics: "Hope in Christ", "Eternal Gains vs. Losses"

Description

Horatius Bonar emphasizes the stark contrast between the eternal gains of the godly and the irrevocable losses of the ungodly, as illustrated in Job 27:8. He warns that while the ungodly may gain worldly pleasures, they ultimately face eternal loss, including their souls, heaven, and Christ. Bonar urges listeners to recognize the fleeting nature of earthly gains and the importance of securing true hope in Christ, which remains steadfast even amidst trials. He calls for self-examination and repentance, reminding that it is not too late to turn to God and embrace the hope of salvation. The sermon serves as a poignant reminder of the eternal consequences of our choices in this life.

Transcript

"For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he has gained, when God takes away his soul?" - Job 27:8

"For what hope do the godless have when God cuts them off and takes away their life?" Job 27:8

The word "hypocrite" means properly the "ungodly," and corresponds to the "wicked" and "unrighteous" of whom Job was speaking. To this passage, probably, our Lord refers when he asks, "What shall it profit a man, if he gains the whole world, and loses his soul?" Job asks, What becomes of the vain hope of the ungodly when this life is done? Whatever they may have of gain here, all is loss hereafter. This may be their "time to get," but that shall be their "time to lose." And their loss is not for a day, but forever. It is not all gain with the godly here. Paul says, "For whom I have suffered the loss of all things." He who casts in his lot with the people of God must prepare for loss as well as gain. He must count the cost beforehand, and be ready to pay it when the day comes for payment. There is the taking up of our cross and the denying self, and forsaking all. He loses,

(1.) This WORLD: whatever may be in it of pleasure, or satisfaction, or pomp, or gaiety, he loses; for he cannot have both worlds.

(2.) His NAME: perhaps he stood high in reputation with the men of this world, and had a name for many things; this he loses, for his name is cast out as evil.

(3.) His RELIGION: for the likelihood is that he had a sort of religion or religiousness like Saul of Tarsus; all this past religion of his must be left behind- it will serve him no more.

(4.) His GOODS: this may not always be demanded to the full extent, as in days of persecution; but still he must be prepared to part with everything; counting it no more his own.

But his "hope" is never lost. He is "saved by hope"; his eye is on the "things hoped for"; "he abounds in hope." This well never runs dry. This treasure-house is never exhausted. Whatever of darkness there may rest on his present, his future brightens with "hope"; and that hope "makes not ashamed"; it contains the incorruptible and everlasting. And even now he has abundant compensation for loss and trial.

Not so the "ungodly." He has indeed a "hope," a hope of being saved, or, at least, of not being lost; a hope of going to heaven, or, at least, of not going to hell. But his hope is not "the good hope through grace." It is a self-originated hope; an unscriptural hope; a groundless and unreasonable hope; a fallacious hope; a hope that will not be sickness- proof, nor deathbed proof; or if it be so, it perishes at death; it is wrapped up in his shroud, and buried in his grave; for it there is no resurrection.

Thus the one thing which seemed gain to him, goes from him at death; and all is loss, utter, infinite, irreparable, eternal loss! For him there is no morning, but only night; night without a star, or even a meteor-gleam. His losses cannot be enumerated or estimated, they are so many and so terrible. He loses such things as the following-

I. HIS SOUL. I might say his body too; for if the man is lost, then soul and body are gone. But it is the soul that is the special and supreme loss. The loss of that which moulders in the grave is after all subordinate, but the loss of that which cannot die is great beyond measure. He who has lost his soul is poor indeed. Yet in the case of the ungodly man that fearful loss is incurred. He loses his soul! Not that the soul perishes or is annihilated. That would be some relief to the poor doomed victim of sin. The soul is lost, but cannot die. The loss of the soul consists in eternal condemnation and ruin. All is gone for which the soul existed. It exists now only for woe. Life is no longer life, for the soul cannot enjoy it. All that constituted life, true life, in time or eternity, is gone. Life is now become worse than death, for the soul is lost; lost in darkness, woe, anguish, and an endless hell; lost from God, and goodness, and blessedness, and from all holy beings forever and ever.

II. HEAVEN. The future state and place of blessedness has many names: a kingdom, an inheritance, a city, a new heaven. All of these are names of joy. "Heaven" is a noble and glorious name, embodying in it all that is excellent, and divine, and perfect. Its joy is perfect, its light is perfect, its holiness is perfect. Its songs are perfect, its service is perfect. It is day without night, it is the blessing without the curse. All this is lost to the ungodly. What a loss must a lost heaven be! To be shut out from such a kingdom, dispossessed of such an inheritance, no, made the heir of such sorrow and darkness- how infinitely woeful! Think, O man, amid all your losses, past or prospective, what a lost heaven must be! A lost kingdom, a lost city, a lost inheritance! Who can measure such a loss.

III. CHRIST. Yes, Christ is lost, and this is the heaviest loss of all. None like it, so infinite and so irreparable. This is the loss of losses, the woe of woes. A lost Christ! What can equal that! This is the loss of the ungodly. This loss is great, (1.) Because of what Christ is in himself- the glorious Immanuel; (2.)

Because of what he has done on the cross; (3.) Because of his love; (4.) Because of his sympathy, and fellowship, and consolation; (5.) Because of his reward.

This loss is indeed unutterable. Men do not see this, or think of it. Yet it shall one day be felt. In hell it shall be realized as the loss of losses, that which makes the place of woe so unutterably woeful. "I might have had Christ," will the lost sinner say, "but I would not have him, and now he is gone forever; I cannot have him now. Instead of Christ, I have Satan; instead of heaven, hell." Consider your losses, O you ungodly! They are unspeakable and eternal. Look at them now, and prevent them.

There is some little compensation now for such losses, in the world's pleasure, or lust, or wealth. There shall be no compensation then. It will be unmingled woe, a cup of undiluted, unsweetened gall and wormwood. What a disappointment to you who have been hoping and hoping! To lie down with a false hope, and go up to the Judge expecting to be received! How dreadful the agony of such a disappointment! It is not too late. Your soul is not lost, heaven is not yet lost, Christ is not yet lost. All may yet be won! The gate stands wide open; go in, go in! God's record stands still true concerning his Son; believe it and be saved.

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