

**“Whoever Loses His Life” (Matthew 10:34-42)**

For Your Life in Christ the Week of the Second Sunday after Pentecost

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Saint Paul’s Lutheran Church of Irvine, CA (LCMS)

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**Ephesians 4:22-24: “to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires,<sup>23</sup> and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,<sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”**

**Introduction: A Word Study**

**Matthew 10:39: “Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”**

- A. The original word *psyche* [strictly speaking = *himself*, but is commonly translated “soul” or “life”] is the vital force that resides in the members of the body and finds expression in our breath and daily living.
- B. In and of itself, it is a neutral word. Everyone has a soul, everyone has a true “self”.
- C. Our concern is what is behind this self or soul, the spiritual condition or quality of this self or soul.
- D. There are other verses that communicate the same truth as Matthew 10:39:

**Luke 17:33: “Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it.”**

**John 12:25: “Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.”**

**Part 1: So Which Is It? Are We to LOSE Our Life or FIND Our Life?**

- A. It depends on WHICH LIFE you’re referring to! Christians have TWO DIFFERENT souls/selves/lives.
- B. There is the one you were born with in sin; and there is another that you were “born again” with through “water and the Spirit” (Jn 3).
- C. One you are to constantly LOSE; the other you are to constantly FIND.
- D. One represents the natural man and the other your new life in Christ. Scripture is clear about contrasting the two:

**Part 2: Comparing the Two Lives:**

**NEW LIFE**

- 1. Fights against sin
- 2. Longs for what God approves
- 3. Forgiveness for repentance
- 4. Worship to stay in new life
- 5. Puts others first

**OLD LIFE**

- 1. Accepts and excuses sin
- 2. Longs for what God condemns
- 3. Forgiveness for rebellion
- 4. Worship to stay in old life
- 5. Puts self first

- A. The Christian life therefore is a constant dying to the old self, and a constant rising to and living in the new self.
- B. Consider the *Luther’s Small Catechism* here:

**“...the Old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.”** (Section 1: The Sacrament of Holy Baptism)

**Part 3: Now We Can Make Sense of the Rest**

**Matthew 10:34 & 36: “Do not think I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword...<sup>36</sup> And a person’s enemies will be those of his own household.”**

- A. First this is NOT a contradiction of the FACT that Jesus is the “Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6) and that His coming meant “peace among those with whom he is pleased (Luke 2:14).”
- B. We do indeed have peace through Christ, but notice the qualification and context:

**Romans 5:1: “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

- C. The Scriptures teach that through Christ WE HAVE PEACE WITH GOD because Jesus came to TAKE OUR SIN and to GIVE US HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.
- D. The Gospel is nothing less than the Good News that Jesus has your sin and that you have His purity and holiness through His life, death, and resurrection FOR YOU!
- E. So as a result, you have PEACE WITH GOD.
- F. When God sees that you have faith that Christ is YOUR Savior and that you TRUST in His Word and promises, God also sees His perfect Son covering you!
- G. God therefore accepts you, loves you, and considers you His own. He is on your side now. So Christ really is the Prince of Peace: Jesus has established peace between you and God!
- H. **HOWEVER, not everyone believes in, accepts, and lives according to the Gospel.**
- I. **If anyone rejects Christ, then they do not live according to the new life, but according to the old life. If this is the case, then deceit (for example) will dominate that person.**
- J. **NOW: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ONE WHO IS COMMITTED TO TRUTH TRIES TO FORM A RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMEONE WHO IS DOMINATED BY DECEIT? Answer: It’s like oil and water! Such a relationship will suffer division. In this way, Jesus has brought a sword or division, because those who follow Him are not to compromise their new life. He states it this way in St. Luke’s Gospel:**

**Luke 12:51: “Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division.”**

**Part 4: In Order to be Faithful to Christ, We Apply God’s Wisdom to Relationships:**

**To Anyone Who Rejects The Gospel Presented To Them:**

**Matthew 10:14: “And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words shake the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town.”**

**To Anyone Claiming to be a Believer but Lives in Rebellion:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 5:11: “...[do] not associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler – not even to eat with such a one.”**

**In Regard Close Relationships That Directly Influence You:**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14: “Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?”**

**In Regard to Someone Stirring Up Unnecessary Division:**

**Titus 3:10-11: “As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, <sup>11</sup>knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.”**

**Conclusion: But Doesn’t This Contradict Our Call to Love?**

- A. Not in the least.
- B. Jesus did indeed shed His blood for ALL PEOPLE.
- C. As a result we are to LOVE all people, so:

**Matthew 22:39: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”**

**Matthew 5:44: “But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”**

- D. This does not mean, however, that you TRUST everyone; nor does it mean that you can be CLOSE to everyone.
- E. LOVE = extends kindness, help, and service, but in FELLOWSHIP there is also unity. When true unity is gone, there is division. But we are in Christ, in a common faith and a common service as the family of God at Saint Paul’s!