

Spiritual Exchanges

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Jesus asked, “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?” (Mt. 16:26). To exchange is to give or receive one thing in place of another. I’m calling to our attention some **Spiritual Exchanges**.

1) **Exchange Worry For Peace**. Too many worry. They are anxious and uneasy; their mind dwells on difficulties and troubles. How to exchange worry for peace: **Be in Christ**. He said, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you....Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (Jn. 14:27). “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace...” (Jn. 16:33). **Realize life is more than the physical**. “...Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?” (Mt. 6:25). **Remember God will take care of you**. “Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?” (Mt. 6:26). “...

if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?” (Mt. 6:28-30). **Recognize worry does no good**. “Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?” (Mt. 6:27). **Put first things first**. “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Mt. 6:33). **Live one day at a time**. “...Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof” (Mt. 6:34). **Cast all your care upon the Lord** (1 Pet. 5:7). “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (Phil. 4:6).

2) **Exchange Criticism For Praise**. Some are professional critics; fault-finding is their field! The Pharisees had this problem. “...when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault” (Mk. 7:2). No matter what you do or how you do it, you’ll never satisfy some people! “For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking;

and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!” (Lk. 7:33-34). Do you know what’s on the menu in the homes of some families for Sunday dinner? Fried elders, grilled deacons, and rotisserie preacher! And they wonder why their young people have a bad attitude toward the church and are uninterested in serving the Lord. Instead of being so critical, we ought to be like those in 1 Chronicles 23:30: “...stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even.” I like the attitude of the Psalmist: “And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long” (Ps. 35:28). If my tongue is busy speaking praise, it won’t have time to utter such criticisms! This is needed in the marriage relationship as well. Some husbands and wives whittle away at each other until nothing is left of their marriage! Remember Proverbs 31:28, “...her husband also, and he praiseth her.” How about exchanging criticism for praise?

3) **Exchange Murmuring For Gratitude**. Many are habitual complainers. Nothing is ever as it should be, and they’ll let you know about it! The biography of the children of Israel is the story

of complaining (Ex. 2:23-24; 3:7; 14:11-12; 15:23-24; 16:2-3; Num. 21:5). Paul made mention of such and admonished, "Neither murmur ye..." (1 Cor. 10:10). Two words from the Lord's mouth which we would do well to heed: "Murmur not..." (Jn. 6:43). Paul wrote the Philippians, "Do all things without murmurings..." (Phil. 2:14). Rather than complaining and murmuring, how about practicing: "...be ye thankful" (Col. 3:15) and "In every thing give thanks..." (1 Th. 5:18).

4) Exchange Hatred For Love. There is entirely too much hate in this world! Folks have long had problems with hatred: Cain hated Abel (1 Jn. 3:11-13), Esau hated Jacob (Gen. 27:41), Jacob hated Leah (Gen. 29:3), Joseph's brethren hated him (Gen. 37:4-5), and on it goes! The law said, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart..." (Lev. 19:17). Folks hate for lots of reasons. Some are just bloodthirsty! Proverbs 29:10 says, "The bloodthirsty hate the upright..." The Lord taught, "...Love your enemies..." (Mt. 5:43-48). God is the supreme example of this.

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). Colossians 1:21 presents us as "...enemies..." Wouldn't this world be a far more comfortable place to live if we'd just learn to "...love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt. 22:39).

5) Exchange Covetousness For Contentment. We live in a greedy society. Jesus uttered, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk. 12:15). Covetousness equates with idolatry! (Col. 3:5). The remedy for covetousness is contentment (Heb. 13:5; 1 Tim. 6:6-8).

6) Exchange Negativity For Optimism. The majority of people are of a negative attitude, it would seem. Remember the spy story of Numbers 13? Ten spies, the majority, said, "...We be not able..." (v. 31). They said, "We can't" and they didn't! Two, with a different spirit, Joshua and Caleb, said, "...we are well able..." (v. 30). They said, "We can" and they did! Put your

trust in the Lord and say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

7) Exchange Sin For Righteousness. All have a sin problem (Rom. 3:23). Its price is severe (Rom. 6:23). Through gospel-doctrine obedience, we can exchange sin for righteousness, "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17-18). This spiritual exchange is a matter of "life" and "death" (Rom. 6:21-23).

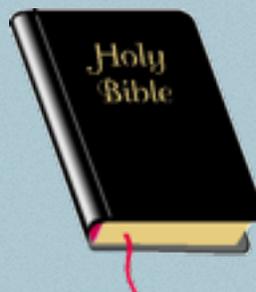
8) Exchange Unfaithfulness For Steadfastness. Too many Christians are wishy-washy! Some treat Christ's commands as if they are optional; you never know when they will be assembling; their pet is more loyal to them than they are to the Master! How about reading 1 Corinthians 15:58; Hebrews 10:22-25; Revelation 2:10 and give up your traitorous ways for steadfast, unmovable, always abounding, near-drawing, fast-holding, love-provoking, not forsaking assembling, faithful unto death Christianity!

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