**What Would You Like to Lose? What Would You Not Like to Lose?**

**Body:**

1. As we begin this lesson, I want us all to think about two things. We’ll start with the first. **What are some things you would like to lose?** Think about it. While you think it over, I have something to share with you. I surveyed several of my friends and asked what they would like to lose. The number one answer was losing weight. Losing bad habits was second, while sin and student-loan debt were tied for third. Other good answers I received were about losing negative attitudes, worries about money, lust, cursing, procrastination, stress/anxiety, bad influences, worry, vanity, selfishness, debt/expenses, apathy, bad eyesight, the desire for worldly things, being self-conscious, homework, and the mouse infestation in the shop of one of my friends. I’m sure some of those crossed your mind; while others may have given you some inspiration. Now, I want us to examine five things that we should want to lose, according to Scripture. Since we are only covering five things, I’m sure I may miss some good examples, but hopefully the examples I give will suffice.
2. **We must not be afraid to lose our lives for Christ.** (Matthew 10:38-39) “And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.” NKJV It is a most noble thing indeed to lose your life in the name of Jesus and in the service of Christ. I certainly hope this never happens to any of us, but if someone was holding a gun to your head, asking if you believe in Jesus, if you say yes, you know you will be shot. What would your answer be? Even in a tough situation like that, I hope all of us would say “yes.” We would certainly lose our lives physically, but our spiritual lives would be in paradise. [This assumes we have lived a faithful life.]
3. **We must lose the sin in our lives.** (Hebrews 12:1) “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,” NKJV Sin is an encumbrance, and it certainly entangles us in many dangerous ways. We must lose the sin in our lives, so that we can defeat Satan and the sin in which he can entangle us, and run that race in the name of Christ, and finish with an everlasting reward in heaven.
4. **We must lose our worries.** (Matthew 6:25-34) “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; not about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.” NKJV As humans, we have a tendency to worry, and to worry about what turns out to be trivial matters. We must lose the worry in our lives. It won’t add any time to our lives. (Verse 27) Instead of worrying, we must recognize that God will always take care of us. The only thing that will help us is to seek first His Kingdom and His Righteousness.
5. **We must lose the vanity in our lives.** (II Peter 2:18-19) “For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.” NKJV Vanity is associated with other terrible things, like fleshly desires and sensuality. And while all of these things may seem good at times, they enslave us in reality. Vanity corrupts our lives and our souls. We must extinguish it from our lives.
6. **We must lose our love of the world.** (I John 2:15-17) “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.” NKJV It is clear that the world is passing away. It is temporary, fleeting, and corrupt. If we love the world, we are not of God, and it will destroy both our salvation and our soul.
7. And now it is time for us to think about our second topic, which is the opposite side of the coin. **What things do you not want to lose?** As you think it over, I will share the results I received in my survey. The number one thing my friends said that they did not want to lose was family. Second was their faith in God, and third was their own salvation. Some other answers included not wanting to lose their significant other [spouse, boy/girl friend, fiancé] their job, their patience, the souls of their family and friends, their mind/sanity, their house, their car, their guns, the church, their dogs, their hair, any body parts, their deodorant, their optimism, and their hope. Those were some really good answers. I’m sure as last time, many of these things crossed your mind. Now we will examine five passages in the Bible and explore five things that we must not lose.
8. **We must not lose our courage.** (II Chronicles 15:7) “But you, be strong and do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded!” NKJV In the world in which we live, it can be an easy thing to be afraid and also easy to be discouraged. But while we may face those dark times of fear and doubt, we must continue being courageous. We must rise above the fear and discouragement that can harm us. If we keep our courage, the reward is great for us.
9. **We must not lose heart.** (Galatians 6:9) “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.” NKJV As with our previous point, it is easy to lose heart in our negative society. Sometimes it is easy to lose heart. We become discouraged and we feel like giving up. But no matter how negative things can get, and no matter how terrible that makes us feel, we must never lose heart. If we do not lose heart, we shall reap good things.
10. **We must not lose good counsel and our desire for learning.** (Proverbs 1:5) “A wise man will hear and increase learning, And a man of understanding will attain wise counsel,” NKJV Anyone who is truly wise does seek wise counsel. Obviously, the best counsel we can seek is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. But we can also seek solid and sound counsel with our fellow Christians. We must lean on each other and look out for each other. We also need to continue to learn. We must have a constant craving and desire to study our Bibles, to glean all we can from God’s Word. May we never lose our desire to constantly seek wise counsel and to learn all we can from the Bible.
11. **We must not lose Christ, but rather gain Christ.** (Philippians 3:7-8) “But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ” NKJV We all lose things sometimes. We’ve all probably lost toys as children. Sometimes we lose money, clothes, keys, and things like that. Sometimes our losses can be great, like the loss of a loved one. But no matter what we lose, and no matter how painful some losses may be, we must never lose Christ. Losing Jesus is a blow from which none of us would ever recover. Instead, we must gain Christ, even if it means we lose everything else.
12. **We must not lose our soul.**  (Matthew 16:26) “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” NKJV Living in the society that we do, we all have many opportunities to gain the world. There are so many ways in which we could do so. But while we could gain temporary and fleeting opportunities from this world, chasing such things will distract us from what truly matters, the maintenance of our soul. Our salvation should be our greatest purpose, our foremost concern. Our soul is the most important thing we possess; no worldly thing could ever replace it.

**Conclusion:**

What things do you need to lose from your life? Are you burdened by sin, worry, vanity, or something else? Or perhaps you need to gain courage, gain Christ, or make sure that your soul is not lost for all eternity. If you need the help and prayers of the church, then make that desire known at this time.

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