



Part 4 LOSING IS WINNING

Matthew 16:24-26

- * Way to GAIN everything is to GIVE UP your LIFE.
 - * There's a worldly WINNING, but it's of NO VALUE compared with what CHRIST has to offer.
 - * If you try to HANG ON to your life, you'll LOSE it.
 - * But, if you GIVE ALL THAT UP, there are HEAVENLY REWARDS beyond imagination.
- *What does this passage tell us we have to lay down or give up? How do we do it? What are the rewards if we do? What are the risks if we don't?*

Philippians 3:4-9

- * Paul: The things I once considered WINS, I now see as LOSSES: POSITION, HERITAGE, POSSESSIONS, QUALIFICATIONS, POPULARITY, REPUTATION.
 - * Things I once considered to be of ENORMOUS VALUE, I now see as HOLLOW & EMPTY.
 - * I now recognize that the real WIN is to GIVE ALL THAT UP & instead focus on the one thing of eternal value = KNOWING CHRIST JESUS MY LORD.
 - * i.e. What the world considers WINNING, I now see as LOSING.
- *What did Paul now see in a completely different light? What was his new pursuit? How could the first list be a potential disadvantage in the pursuit of this new goal?*
- *"What the world considers winning, I now see as losing. In Kingdom terms, if you lose by the world's standards, you actually win." Discuss!*

WHAT DOES LOSING LOOK LIKE?

1. BLESSING ISN'T NECESSARILY FOUND WHERE THE WORLD EXPECTS

- * Contrary to popular worldly thought, TRUE BLESSING isn't to be found at the TOP of the PILE, but is found in STRANGE PLACES like LOWLINESS, MEEKNESS, PURITY, POVERTY OF SPIRIT, EVEN MOURNING & PERSECUTION (Matthew 5:3-9).
 - * Leads to question: Where do YOU go LOOKING for blessing?
- *If you're honest, what do you see as blessing? Where, in the world's eyes, is the 'place of blessing?' Why is Jesus' Matthew 5 Beatitudes list upside-down? Is your thinking rightly upside-down or does it need inverting?*

2. SURRENDER & SUBMISSION PUT JESUS IN THE CENTRE ... You're always so much better off with Jesus at the CENTRE.

- * Matthew 16:24 → The great thing about DENYING SELF is that it moves US out of the CENTRE-GROUND and puts JESUS firmly there.
- * We are DETHRONED; He is ENTHRONED.
- * Jesus back at the CENTRE is always a WIN.

- * When we're LOSING, as long as Jesus is WINNING, it's a WIN.
- * The more you make it about YOU, the more DISAPPOINTED you'll become. The more you make it about HIM, the more PEACEFUL & JOYFUL you'll become.
- * Job 22:21 → You always WIN when you AGREE with God.

→ *What does it mean to 'deny self'? In what sense is it a loss? How does 'denying self' move Jesus back to the centre?*

→ *"He must increase; I must decrease. The less of you there is in the way, the more room there is for God. If you keep fighting for your own way, you'll never truly walk in His." How do you decrease? How do you make Him increase?*

→ *How does making it about you result in disappointment? How does making it about Him result in peace and joy?*

→ *"You always win when you agree with God (Job 22:21)" How do you 'agree with God?' What happens when you don't? What are the consequences of agreeing with God according to Job 22:21-28?*

3. TRUE LOVE IS PREPARED TO LOSE

- * The world teaches that they often have to LOSE, so we can WIN.
 - * The LOSING is us LAYING IT DOWN, being prepared to STAND ASIDE, to PREFER & PROMOTE one another ... even if COSTS us our LIVES (John 15:13, 1 John 3:16).
 - * The 'upside-down element:' You WIN when they WIN, and sometimes that means you have to LOSE.
 - * It takes great maturity to accept +ve CONSEQUENCES to them are a WIN, in spite of possible -ve CONSEQUENCES to you.
 - * Sometimes losing is winning, because LOVING is always WINNING.
- *They say it's a 'dog-eat-dog world.' Do you agree? What has been your experience? How did Jesus 'spectacularly burst that bubble?'*
- *How or why does walking in love sometimes require us to lose? What might that 'loss' look like?*
- *"Loving is always winning." Discuss!*

4. THE JESUS WAY IS MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU CAN GIVE THAN WHAT YOU CAN GET

- * When it leaves our hands for theirs, it seems to be a LOSS: but there is great BLESSING, POWER, CHRIST-LIKE-NESS in generosity.
 - * Anything that leaves YOUR hand in the direction of GOD'S is very good news. Actually, you don't LOSE at all; you can only WIN.
- *Are you a mad giver, a sad giver or a glad giver? Do you agree that we tend to progress along that continuum as we mature?*
- *"Anything that leaves your hand in the direction of God's is very good news. Actually, you don't lose at all; you can only win." Discuss!*

DEFINING THE WIN

→ *In kingdom economy, winning looks rather different. What are the real wins and how do we gain them? Where in your life does winning need to be redefined?*