How Concerned are You for Your Soul?

Zanesville, OH | January 20, 2019 | Sermon Notes

**Foundational Scripture:** Ecc. 12:13-14

**Intro**:

* There are many people in our world who live day to day with a very nonchalant kind of attitude in regard to religion and their faith. *“I’m not concerned about that right now.”* “*That’s not my area of expertise.”* *“I have better things to do with my life.”* As a society, we have come to accept that and dare I say praise that kind of attitude. We have come a long way from what God intended for us and so I want to ask you today: **How concerned are you for your soul?**
1. **All Souls belong to God: Ezek. 18:4**
	1. We must first note that every single soul in this room and outside of this room belongs to God. It is His possession since He is the one who made it and gave us the breath of life (Gen. 2:7; Ecc. 12:7). The soul is immortal and eternal just as the one who made it.
	2. He will ultimately decide where that soul goes when our lives on this earth is finished (Matt. 25:31-46; Jn. 5:26-29). He has the power and authority to make each soul live on forever or suffer forever.
	3. These statements, however, do not suggest by any remote stretch of the imagination that we do not have a say in where our souls will end up. God gives everyone in this room and everyone outside of this room the freewill to make decisions that will impact their eternal destiny (Josh. 24:15; Ecc. 11:9; Rev. 3:20).
	4. Ultimately, like most things, there is only one overarching decision that will allow us to live forever, to experience eternal peace, comfort, joy and love the likes we have not yet experienced and we will never experience on this earth. That decision is to fear God (Ecc. 12:13-14; Lk. 12:4-5).
2. **Strive to Enter In: Lk. 13:22-28**
	1. The fear of God, the fear that motivates us and is the driving force behind us opening our eyes and showing concern for our souls leads us to ask questions for which we want answers. Answers that can give us life everlasting. Jesus’ answer to this is that we strive to enter through the narrow door (v. 24).
	2. People were asking Jesus if it was true whether only a small amount of people would be saved (v. 23). Jesus’s response to them was that they needed to strive to enter through the narrow door. They needed to worry about where they stood with God.
	3. Jesus also states that many will seek to enter but they won’t be able to. Why? Because they don’t show enough concern for their soul! One’s effort in seeking God is only as proportional as the level of concern for their soul.
	4. Their question to Jesus may also indicate that they aren’t as concerned for themselves as they are about others. We should first ensure that we are right with God and then seek to help others along the same line (Matt. 7:1-4).
	5. The fact that only few will enter does not indicate that there is a limited amount of room in Heaven or that God has set a limit to the amount of souls He will save. The sad reality is that many people do not show enough concern for their souls as they do with other things. Jesus says the moment they show the necessary concern needed to be saved it will be too late.
	6. But what about those that get in? What about those who are saved and who have been conveyed from darkness into the Kingdom of light (cf. Col. 1:13)? Once someone is saved does that mean they can sit back, kick their feet up and relax?
3. **Contend for the Faith: Jude 1:3; 20-21**
	1. Jude’s answer to that question is a resounding NO! In writing to the saints, Jude pleads with them that they *“earnestly contend”* for the faith which was once delivered to all (1 Cor. 15:3; Heb. 9:26-28; 1 Pet. 3:18) and to build on that.
	2. The phrase used here is probably borrowed from one commonly used to refer to the competition of the Grecian games (Ancient Greek Olympics). Athletes would train vigorously and tirelessly to win, as Paul put it, a *“perishable crown.”*
	3. As Christians we must see ourselves in this light. We are spiritual athletes involved in a race that at times will get trying, brutal and seemingly impossible. Yet if the worldly athletes can show earnest concern and contention for a vain reward, how much more should God’s people show concern for their souls!
	4. The faith spoken of here is not referring to the basic belief one must have in a creator whom we cannot see or touch. Instead it refers to the collection of patterns, principles, ideals and values which Jesus taught and established. We must fight for that, contend to keep that in our lives as our standard and guide.
	5. There will be evil, there will be injustice and strong opponents against God and against us. Will we stand up for the truth in light of these things or will we fall flat and succumb to the pressures? Is there anything that is more valuable to you than your soul? **How concerned are you for your soul and what are you doing about it?**