

Small Profit or Big Loss — Mark 8:36
Basil Howlett - Carey Baptist Church – 18 November 2007

In everyday life, if you have a big decision to make and are faced with two options, it is wise to list the advantages and disadvantages of each option. Many here this morning are faced with a major decision, and there are two options. Should they remain as non-Christians not really bothering about Jesus, just living for the attractions of this life, or should they become Christians and put Jesus first? It's the biggest, most far-reaching decision that anyone could ever make. To help with this decision we need to list the advantages and disadvantages of each option. Jesus urges us to do that in Mark 8:36.

Option 1: Continuing as a non-Christian. Ignoring Jesus Christ and living for self.

A. Advantages – we could perhaps gain the 'whole' world.

- gain a million and have enough possessions to make everyone jealous.
- gain a life crammed with pleasure and fun.
- gain massive popularity.
- gain the top rung of the ladder in our profession.
- NB All these advantages are uncertain and temporary.

B. Disadvantages

- we will never find true peace and happiness.
- we will lose our souls. That means that when we die we will go to a place called hell and be lost there for ever.
- then there will be nothing we can do to retrieve the situation (verse 37).

Option 2: Becoming a Christian and living for Jesus Christ.

A. Disadvantages: there is a cost and sacrifice involved.

- we may not have as much money to spend on ourselves.
- we may have to give up some of our 'pleasures' .
- we may lose some of our friends who think we have become religious nutcases.

B. Advantages

- all our sins will be forgiven immediately.
- we will be set free from the grip of sin.
- we will have peace and joy.
- we will go to heaven when we die
- NB All these advantages are certain and eternal.