

Four Greatest Loses

Intro: The word lost is possibly the most feared word in the English language. Just consider a lost child. Today, I want us to consider the four greatest loses.

I. THE LOST BOOK.

A. 2 Kings 22:

1. Josiah a righteous king. 2 Kings 22:2 ⁴² And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.”
2. The temple was in disrepair, the people worshipping idols, but Josiah was beginning a reform.
3. 2 Kings 22:8-13 ⁴⁸ And Hilkiyah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. ⁹ And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD. ¹⁰ And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiyah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king. ¹¹ And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes. ¹² And the king commanded Hilkiyah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king's, saying, ¹³ Go ye, enquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.”

B. Today the book of the law is lost.

1. Because it is not read or studied.
2. It is lost in our nation; 2 Kings 22:17 ⁴⁷ Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.”
 - a. Notice our schools.
 - b. Look at the morality in our nation.

II. THE LOST CHRIST.

A. **Luke 2:41-51** ⁴⁴¹ Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. ⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. ⁴³ And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not *of it*. ⁴⁴ But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance. ⁴⁵ And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. ⁴⁶ And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. ⁴⁸ And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. ⁴⁹ And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? ⁵⁰ And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. ⁵¹ And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.”

B. Christ is lost by people today because of sin.

1. Rom. 6:23 ⁴²³ For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
2. Jam. 2:26 ⁴²⁶ For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

3. God expects us to put Christ first.
 - a. Mat. 6:33 ³³ But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”
 - b. Zec. 7:4-7 ⁴ Then came the word of the LORD of hosts unto me, saying, ⁵ Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh *month*, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, *even* to me? ⁶ And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat *for yourselves*, and drink *for yourselves*? ⁷ *Should ye* not *hear* the words which the LORD hath cried by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, and the cities thereof round about her, when *men* inhabited the south and the plain?”

C. But, Christ can be found.

1. Luke 19:10 ¹⁰ For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”
2. Mat. 7:7-8 ⁷ Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: ⁸ For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”

III. THE LOST OPPORTUNITY.

A. Luke 16:

1. The story of the rich man and Lazarus.
2. The rich man had ample opportunity to do good to Lazarus.
3. Yet, both died without the rich man availing himself of that opportunity.

B. Mat. 25:14-30

C. We often let opportunity slip by us.

1. The opportunity to do good to others.
 - a. Eph. 2:10 ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”
 - b. Gal. 6:9-10 ⁹ And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. ¹⁰ As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”
2. The opportunity to teach. 1 Pet. 3:15 ¹⁵ But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:”
3. We are to use our abilities.
 - a. Rom. 12:3-8 ³ For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. ⁴ For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: ⁵ So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. ⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith; ⁷ Or ministry, *let us wait* on *our* ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; ⁸ Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.”
 - b. 1 Pet. 4:10-11 ¹⁰ As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹ If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”
 - c. 1 Cor. 12:14-27

D. Jam. 4:17 ¹⁷ Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin.”

IV. THE LOST SOUL

- A. Luke 12:16-21** ¹⁶ And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: ¹⁷ And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? ¹⁸ And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry. ²⁰ But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? ²¹ So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”
- B. The importance of a soul.**
1. Mat. 16:26 ²⁶ 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?”
 2. Christ shed his blood for it.

Conclusion: Each of these losses can be prevented.