

The Brown Street Beacon

*"...Shine out among them like beacon lights,
holding out to them the Word of Life" (Phil 2:15-16)*



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What Will a Man Give in Exchange for His Soul

What is your soul worth to you? Is it worth the riches and wonders of this world? Would you consider exchanging your soul for the power, popularity and prestige that might be obtained in this world? Most people that have a religious interest would say no to this question; yet, this is what many in the religious world do when they compromise their convictions.

A long time ago, Jesse Jackson, famed civil rights activists, compromised his faith and in doing so condemned himself before the God of heaven. Why do I say this? Let me explain.

In 1977 Mr. Jackson wrote the following article in the National Right to Life News report.

"There are those who argue that the right to privacy is of [a] higher order than the right to life ... that was the premise of slavery. You could not protest the existence or treatment of slaves on the plantation because that was private and therefore outside your right to be concerned. "What happens to the mind of a person, and the moral fabric of a nation, that accepts the aborting of the life of a baby without a pang of conscience? What kind of a person and what kind of a society will we have twenty years hence if life can be taken so casually? It is that question, the question of our attitude, our value system, and our mind-set with regard to the nature and worth of life itself that is the central question confronting mankind. Failure to answer that question affirmatively may leave us with a hell right here on earth."

The words of Jackson are clearly pro-life and were no doubt made from the perspective of a Baptist minister. Jackson, who claims that he himself would have been aborted if his mother had followed the advice of doctors, also wrote the following.

"...in the abortion debate, one of the crucial questions is when does life begin. Anything growing is living. Therefore human life begins when the sperm and egg join . . . and the pulsation of life takes place. From that point, life may be described differently (as an egg, embryo, fetus, baby, child, teenager, adult), but the essence is the same."

However, as Jackson became more politically minded, and as a rising star within the Democratic party, his views had to be inline with that of the party. This article is not about politics, and I am not showing favoritism or an aversion toward one party or the other, but it is no secret that the Democratic party is pro-abortion. The majority of that party believes that a woman should be given the right to abort the child within her if she so desires. That being the position of the party, no one can rise very high in that party unless he or she takes a pro-choice position on abortion. Somewhere along the line Jackson must have figured this out because by 1988 when he was running for President, his position had totally changed. Notice Jackson of 1977 against Jackson of 1988.

1977— *"Some argue, suppose the woman does not want to have the baby. They say the very fact*

that she does not want the baby means that the psychological damage to the child is enough to abort the baby. I disagree. The solution to that problem is not to kill the innocent baby but to deal with her values and her attitude toward life -- that which has allowed her not to want the baby."

1988— "*...it is not right to impose private, religious and moral positions on public policy...If one accepts the position that life is private, and therefore you have the right to do with it as you please, one must also accept the conclusion of that logic. "*

By 1988, when Jackson was striving for the Democratic nomination for the presidency, he suddenly believed that women should have the right to do with their life what they please, in this case have abortions. Why did he change? Political power.

I don't have a problem with people changing positions. This though is different. Jackson's first position was based on his moral convictions derived from his understanding of scripture as a Baptist minister. To change positions in this case necessitated a compromising of his faith. The same compromise has been made by other democratic civil rights activists on the homosexual issue. The Bible teaches one thing. Baptist ministers stand with the Bible on these kind of moral issues until it conflicts with a political party's agenda, then it is time to change positions.

Political power affords one a lot of clout. The question is, is it worth an exchange of the soul? Now, we know that the soul of Jesse Jackson is already in peril because He is not a member of the Lord's church, but he doesn't realize that and he is still willing to compromise his faith for a political position. For what are you willing to compromise your faith? Will you exchange your soul for earthly clout or the popularity of the world? I hope the answer is no.

Don

The Stories of Our Lives

By Edwin L. Crozier

I know I'm a little bit weird. But sometimes I enjoy commercials. I got this from a book on teaching logic that encouraged teachers to have children watch commercials and then consider the claims made to see how logical they are. Finding the fallacies and propaganda is somewhat fun to me.

Just this week I picked up on a very interesting spin in teeth whitening commercials. One night I saw a commercial for a leading brand that put down another leading brand for dissolving. It showed a split screen; on one side was a woman putting the whitening strips on her teeth and the other showed a woman putting dissolving strips on. The announcer asked something like, "How is your whitening?" The woman with the strips that remained smiled brightly. The woman with the dissolvables said, "Mine's already gone." The moral: dissolving strips don't stay on long enough to do any good, strips that remain work better.

The next night I saw another commercial. This one was for the dissolving strips. It had a similar split screen. This time, the woman with dissolving strips was all excited because she could put on her strips and then leave. The one with the strips that had to be manually removed looked lonely, dejected and abandoned. She bemoaned the fact that she was shut up in her house whitening her teeth. The moral: strips that remain burden you, dissolving strips give you freedom.

Same products, two different stories.

Then I realized how much like our lives this is. Like the commercials spin the story to make their own product look good, how easily we can spin the stories of our lives to overlook flaws and our needs for improvement.

Perhaps this is why the Bible uses the phrase “Do not be deceived” repeatedly. Do not be deceived, unrighteousness will not enter the kingdom of heaven (I Corinthians 6:9). Do not be deceived, bad company corrupts good morals (I Corinthians 15:33). Do not be deceived, we will reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7). Do not be deceived, every good gift comes from God (James 1:16-17).

We naturally want to put our lives in the best light. Certainly, there are times for being pumped up and seeing what a good job we do at some things. However, growth means revealing what needs to be changed and changing it. There is only one way to do that. Be not deceived. We must not spin the stories of our lives, but look at our lives honestly. Let’s face it, we can’t propagandize our way into heaven. Spinning the story may work for selling teeth whitening systems. It doesn’t work for growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord. Let’s make sure we are honest with ourselves. Only then will we grow without being deceived.