

The Making Of A Masterpiece

Mark 8:36-37

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

One of my closest friends in the world is from Botwood, Newfoundland, a rural village on the East coast of Canada. In this small village, survival depended largely on logging and fishing.

- My friend, Paul, who is part of a large family, did not have the privileges that many of our children enjoy today.
- There were very few toys and definitely no game systems, TV or video.
- This is a land of poor and rugged people, who in order to get by, learned to improvise and became masters of ingenious inventions.
- Paul and his brothers learned how to carve wood, build furniture, and fabricate all sorts of tools, instruments and various items for everyday use.
- Over the years they have become quite accomplished, receiving many awards and nationwide recognition for their work.

Recently, Paul has completed a project that will no doubt earn him the title of master craftsman.

Paul's seventeen year old son, Kyle, is a developing musician. Over the last couple of years has begun to shine as a singer and worship leader at my home church in Oshawa, Ontario.

In his most recent creation, Paul decided to hand build an electric guitar for his son Kyle. Over the past five months or so, he has been posting pictures on Face Book of every stage of the project. I have been amazed to witness Paul's creative ability in his latest creation.

If you know anything about guitars you will recognize the name “Paul Reed Smith.”

- Paul Reed Smith started out making guitars by hand about forty years ago.
- Today, Paul Reed Smith guitars are some of the most sought after guitars on the market.
- Their company slogan is, "Build extraordinary guitars, guitars with magic".

Paul decided that he would pattern his guitar after the 'Paul Reed Smith' Custom 24 design. Off to work he went.

- For every hour in his work shop he would research for three hours on the internet.
- So much information he needed.
- The details were endless;
 - Scale length.
 - Fret board radius and width.
 - Neck depth and profile.
 - String spacing.

There was so much to learn.

Because Kyle is a lefty, Paul had to make a left-handed guitar. Parts for left-handed guitars are especially hard to find in Canada, so there was a lot of time spent waiting for parts to arrive.

- The top of the guitar was made from quilted maple, the body and neck from Honduras mahogany, and the fingerboard from Brazilian rosewood.
- Piece by piece, stroke by stroke, every bit of it was formed and fashioned by Paul's hands.

Paul would let Kyle come and look it over, he would ask Kyle to hold it in his hands so he could make the proper adjustments. "Every thirty-second of an inch counts", he would say. Paul wanted to be sure that this guitar was as perfect as possible for his son.

- Then there were the mother of pearl inlayed carvings.
 - Each one, Paul made by hand, no CNC machine.
- Coat after coat of sealer was applied, too many to count, then the top coat.
 - No stopping until it was as close to perfect as possible.

To be clear, this was not a Paul Reed Smith, but a Paul Peyton.

No *PRS* on the headstock, just *Peyton*, written in beautiful mother of pearl.

And then the final touch, the truss rod cover, inlayed with a mother of pearl cross.

A Gift from a Father to his Son.

- Let me ask you, who makes a guitar for his son? What a treasure.
- Who fashions an instrument from his own hands for his son to play? Very few.

Kyle could not wait to finally bring his guitar to church and play it for real. The sound was amazing, even better than he expected. It is a gift that he will keep forever.

This gift is much more than a guitar, it is the essence and magic of his father's determination and handiwork.

- What would this be worth?
- To put a price on it would not be right.
- There is no price.

As I was thinking about what Paul did for his son, I couldn't help but think about what Jesus has done for me. So many parallels in this story.

There is no price I could pay, for what Jesus did for me.

Our text said;

Mark 8:36-37

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Do you know what Jesus was saying here?

There is no price one can give in exchange for their soul. Your soul is worth more than the whole world.

Think about that. Your soul is one valuable possession.

Who gave you your soul?

God did! The life that you have today is a gift from God.

- You were created by the hands of your heavenly Father.
- God formed you out of the dust of the ground.
- God breathed the breath of life into you.
- You are the essence of his handiwork.
- You are a priceless gift from God.

You are a master piece!

You might be thinking, couldn't God have spent a little more time on me?

- Couldn't He have given me more brains, more hair?
- Couldn't He have given me a better looking nose?
- A few less pimples?
- Could He have made me a little taller, a little slimmer, a little more attractive?

But God made you just like you are for a reason!

Do you know that most people don't notice your flaws like you do?

You are probably harder on yourself, than anybody else.
You have imperfections on the inside of you that only you know about.

- Nobody else can see them.
- They are hidden from view.
- You don't want anybody to find out about them.

You want everybody to think that everything is OK.

Isn't that right?

To the unlearned eye Paul's guitar is perfect, without flaws.

However, he can point out certain flaws or blemishes that he alone knows about. A casual observer would probably never notice. Only Paul and his son know.

- From the outside, it may seem that everything in your life is perfect, but God knows all about your little problems.
- God knows all about your imperfections.
- God can see every flaw.

But the good news is, God created you just the way you are, and you are perfect in his sight.

The Bible says;

Hebrews 13:20-21

20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,
21 **Make you perfect** in every good work to do his will, **working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight**, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Through the blood of Christ you are made perfect and you are well pleasing in His sight.

You were made just like you are for a reason.

- The Bible says that you are fearfully and wonderfully made.
- You are precious in His sight.
- Your flaws and blemishes make you who you are today.

There is nobody else like you on this earth.

Kyle's guitar is truly one of a kind.

Even if Paul made him another one it would not be exactly the same.

- God created each of you unique.
- There never was and never will be anyone exactly like you.
- Your DNA confirms that there is nobody exactly like you.

That makes you special in his sight.

- You cannot be reproduced.
- If a copy of you could be made it would not be exactly you, it would be a little different than you.

Because of this, you can see the creative genius of God in your life.

- You might not be in this church serving God today if you had been created differently.
- The way that God has made you had led you to a relationship with Him!

You are unique and special!

- There are things God has called you to do that I would never be able to do.
- There are people you can reach that I can never reach.
- You have qualities in you that I will never have.

You are a masterpiece created uniquely by Him, Priceless, precious in His sight.

Can I get a witness today?

When Paul finally finished the guitar, he gave it to Kyle.

Paul does not play guitar. So, in order to see his dream fulfilled, he had to give the guitar to Kyle to play it.

- Kyle can make those guitar strings talk.
- Along with his voice, he can make amazing music.

Paul made the instrument, Kyle makes the music.

- Paul took the time to build the guitar.
- He purchased parts, he formed and fashioned it, he created it.
- Paul even put his son in guitar lessons to give him the ability to grow as a musician.
- But now Kyle has to put in his time. He has to practice and play.
- He has to read music.
- He has to meditate and write and create music.

When Paul heard Kyle play that guitar in church for the first time, it was worth all of the hard work, all of the frustration and all of the effort.

That is how it is with God.

- God made us.
- God uniquely created us.
- God purchased us with his blood.
- God filled us with His Spirit.

God has given each of us the ability to continue in His Will.

This is God's plan.

Now you must use what God has given you.

- You have to put your time in.

- You have to pray.
- You have to read the Word.
- You have to invite people.
- You have to witness.
- You have to teach.

God had done His part, now we must do ours!

- I am so glad there are some people at Life Church that realize God is not going to do it all.
 - You are willing to pull up your sleeves and get dirty.
 - You are willing to knock doors.
 - You are willing to clean the church.
 - You are willing to fast and pray.
 - Teach Bible Studies.
 - Put on a Drama.

Can you give yourselves a handclap!

What I really like about this story is the finishing piece that Paul put on this Guitar.

In one of the final finishing touches, Paul added the truss rod cover to the guitar.

- This truss rod cover is inlaid with a cross, hand carved from mother of pearl.
- The Cross of Calvary is the symbol of what Jesus did for each one of us.
- It is the symbol of a Christian.

The casual observer may not understand the significance of this cross, but Paul put it there to remind Kyle of the purpose for which the guitar was made.

- To play this guitar in worship and song to the Glory of God.
- Every time Kyle picks up his guitar, he is reminded of his purpose.

This afternoon, I called Paul to get permission to tell a personal part of this story.

You see, I didn't tell you about Paul's older brother, Raymond.

- Raymond is a year older than Paul and was also one of my closest friends.
- He is one of the greatest guys you would ever meet in the world.
- Raymond is just as talented, maybe even more talented than Paul, in creating works of art with his hands.

In fact, Paul learned a lot of his skills from his brother Raymond.

- Raymond has three sons that grew up in church.
- His sons also play the guitar and sing.
- They learned to do so in church.
- They have amazing talent and skill, and started their own worship band.

But at some point their dad lost sight of his Creator.

He lost sight of the calling on his life and turned his back on God. He works all week long to pay his bills, then every weekend serves time in prison.

Their dad did not make them a guitar, nor inlay a cross on a truss rod cover for them to see.

- And at some point they too lost sight of the cross of Christ.
- They quit using their talent for God.
- Now they are using their talent to sing in bar rooms all over Ontario.

I asked Paul today if the Cross had anything to do with his brother and nephews.

He told me that was exactly what was on his mind when he inlaid that Cross on his sons guitar.

- You see, Paul does not want Kyle to ever lose sight of the Cross.
- He doesn't want him to lose sight of Calvary.
- He doesn't want Kyle to ever forget the blood of Christ.

Paul knew that Kyle's cousins had a great influence on him and he didn't want his son to follow in their footsteps.

So he inlaid the Cross of Christ on Kyle's most treasured possession where he knew Kyle would observe it every day and be reminded of Who he served.

When Jesus saved you for his service, He put His mark upon you.

- The Blood of Christ has been applied to the doorposts of your heart at repentance.
- The Name of Jesus Christ has been applied to your life at baptism.
- The Spirit of Christ has been put in you when you received the Holy Ghost.

Now, Jesus Christ has His mark all over you.

- It is on the inside and out.
- You have been purchased by the Blood of Jesus Christ.

Paul said;

1 Cor 6:11

11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

- Don't ever forget who you belong to.
- Don't ever forget what your purpose is.
- Don't ever forget who is living inside of you.
- You have been called for His purpose.
- No worldly calling will ever fulfill you.
- The only thing that will satisfy you is to make your life a living testimony for Jesus Christ!

Are there any witnesses in the house tonight?

We can use our talents for worldly gain, or we can use them to lay up treasures in heaven.

Paul told me that last Friday,(Good Friday), Kyle was the leading performer in their Church Gospel concert to the community.

Paul and Kyle Peyton are laying up some treasures in heaven today.

I was also told that Larry Carter, (Pentecost's greatest guitarist), heard about his story and made a special trip just to see Kyle and his guitar.

But Paul doesn't want any credit for all of this.

I have been talking about how he is a master craftsman and how he created a master piece. But when Paul heard about all of the praise we have been giving him, he did not like it.

- He doesn't consider himself a master craftsmen.
- He doesn't agree that he makes master pieces.
- Paul wants to be thought of as a regular guy.

He is, I know him, he is just a regular, unassuming good guy! But He did create a masterpiece.

- I started thinking about that.
- And I started thinking about our church.
- I started thinking about our people and our new converts.

We are all just a bunch of regular people....

- You and I are just like David.
- We are like Peter, who denied the Lord.
- We are like Moses, who was afraid to speak up.
- We are like Abraham, who was a liar.

...we are not really anything special

- But when Jesus got his hands on us.
- When Jesus covered us with His Blood and filled us with His Spirit.

- He created a masterpiece in each one of us.

Look at what has happened here in the last two weeks.

You all created a masterpiece in our Drama.

Because of your efforts we had over sixty guests come through these doors in the last two weeks.

- We had over 120 in attendance over Easter Weekend.
- We had five receive the Holy Ghost.
- We had another one baptized in Jesus Name.
- Dozens of Bible Studies are being taught.

You are a masterpiece.

You are doing your part in the Kingdom.

That is what makes the difference, when we all do our part!

Matt 18:19-20

19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching **anything that they shall ask**, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

20 **For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.**

When two or three get together and agree in Jesus Name anything can be accomplished!

Do you know what God's masterpiece really is?

It is not just you by yourself....but it is two and three and four of us getting together...working together...agreeing together...praying together!

Now we are not just creating addition, but we are creating multiplication!

The Bible says; "One can put a thousand to flight, but two can put ten thousand!"
When God's people agree together....they become the Church!

- The Church is God's masterpiece!
- You are part of God's masterpiece!
- You are part of the Church!

Can you shout Amen!

- You are a somebody!
 - You are special!
 - You are part of something great!
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- You can do this!
 - You can make it!
 - Stay involved!
 - Get involved!