

THE SALVATION OF THE SOUL

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Christ giving Holy Communion to His disciples. Byzantine mosaic of the 11th century from the Cathedral of Sancta Sophia in Kiev.

by St. Nikolai Velimirovich

After a large number of people had gathered around our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord spoke these words: «What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?» In addition, He spoke these words: «What can a man give in exchange for his soul?»

This means that a man's soul has more value than the whole visible world. And if a

man loses his soul, with what can he make payment, with what can he buy it back again? With nothing in the world. Not even if he gives the whole world can he buy his lost soul.

Blessed is he who knows this, and who guards his soul as his greatest treasure. Blessed is he who stands guard over his soul every day and does not permit his soul to suffer harm in any way. For he who saves his soul will save everything, and he who loses his soul will lose everything.

In a small town there once lived a very rich man. He lived in a small dilapidated house. He did not want to renovate his house, but saved and guarded his wealth.

Now this one night his house happened to catch fire and burn down. The man, however, jumped out of bed undressed, searched out his saved-up treasure, and leapt out of the house. His whole house was reduced to ashes, but he did not feel sorry about it at all. Rather, with his wealth he moved to a large city, and in this large city he built a beautiful palace, and there he continued to live cheerfully and free from worry.

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