

Gaining the whole world, for what?

By: Kent Heaton

The fish swims peacefully along enjoying the pleasures of his underwater world when suddenly he sees the most beautiful worm ever. It is the biggest and most delectable looking worm that he has ever seen. There it is, floating all by itself and his for the taking. He lunges toward his prize with unbounded joy at the thought of swallowing whole the succulent prize. His mouth opens wide and he engulfs his bounty of pleasure and begins to swim away, overjoyed at his accomplishment. Suddenly, the joy of the moments pleasure turns into a horrible realization that something else was awaiting him. A steel shaft of death has been implanted inside his throat and he lunges to free himself of the deadly hook. It is too late however and the hook sets deep and all the trashing about that he does can never free him. He begins an upward journey to the bright sunlight and as the net surrounds him and he explodes above water, he realizes what has happened. The joy he thought was his turned out to be the joy of the fisherman. Caught on a lure, the fish will become a meal.

Sin is a lure that attracts men to hooks of death. Life is a journey of seeking and gaining. The decisions of life are trying to find out which of those things sought and gained are worth it all. Some men go about seeking everything they can find and will fall victim to what seems real but is not. A lure is a representation of the real thing but with deadly consequences. It is made to look like, act like and sometimes smell like the real thing. Hidden away and unobserved are hooks that will maim and kill those who accept the invitation.

Proverbs 7:5-27 speaks of those simpletons who seek pleasures of life and ignore the deadly hooks. "For at the window of my house I looked through my lattice, and saw among the simple, I perceived among the youths, a young man devoid of understanding, passing along the street near her corner; and he took the path to her house. In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night. And there a woman met him, with the attire of a harlot and a crafty heart. She was loud and rebellious, her feet would not stay at home. At times she was outside, at times in the open square, lurking at every corner. So she caught him and kissed him; with an impudent face she said to him: I have peace offerings with me; today I have paid my vows. So I came out to meet you, diligently to seek your face, and I have found you. I have spread my bed with tapestry, colored coverings of Egyptian linen. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love until morning; let us delight ourselves with love. For my husband is not at home; he has gone on a long journey; He has taken a bag of money with him, and will come home on the appointed day." With her enticing speech she caused him to yield, with her flattering lips she seduced him. Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, till an arrow struck his liver. As a bird hastens to the snare, he did not know it would cost his life. Now therefore, listen to me, my children; pay attention to the words of my mouth: do not let your heart turn aside to her ways, do not stray into her paths; for she has cast down many wounded, and all who were slain by her were strong men. Her house is the way to hell, descending to the chambers of death."

Jesus asked the question: "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:25) For a moments reckless folly, a soul is lost. Is it worth it all?