How Much are You Worth?

1. Scarcely 150 years ago, men, women, and children were sold as property in this country. Their value was often assessed by their potential for productivity, or their ability to make their owners money. I wonder if you could imagine being one of them, and finding out you were worth a mere one hundred dollars. We still assign value to people based upon their productivity…it is something called wages. You earn what someone else thinks you are worth. If you feel you are worth more, at least you may have the option of moving on to another employer.
   a. How much are you worth? How valuable are your children?
   b. If we were to have an auction here for several of the children, who do you think would bid the highest? (Of course, their parents!) Why do you think that their parents would value them higher than anyone else would?
   c. Today, we are going to look at discovering how much we are worth, and where you do obtain that value from.

2. If you think about it, most of us derive our worth from what others tell us we are worth.
   a. Abusive parents tell their child he or she is worthless…and they grow up without a sense of purpose or value.
   b. Unconsciously, we train our children to believe their value comes from what they do, and how well they do it. From the emphasis we place on good grades, to memorizing scripture in church. Whenever we reward a behavior, we imply that that behavior is more valuable than another behavior.
      i. When our children were young, we emphasized good grades. We tried to infuse in our kids that “excellence” was a virtue, not just the grade, but the disappointment on our faces when a child came home with a “c” often betrayed us. Yes, we loved our children regardless of their grades, but in a child’s mind, they don’t always understand that.
   c. As we grow and discover our abilities in sports, music, art, etc., we and others assign value to us for what we can do and produce for others. A good football player is valued higher than a schoolteacher.
   d. Self Worth is defined as the measure of worth we assign to ourselves. The view we have of our own self. It is the measure or opinion or view we have of ourselves! Not what others think of us, but rather what we think about ourselves. Granted, much of what we think about ourselves comes from what others have said about us or inferred the value or lack of value to us. If we were treated as valued by our parents.
      i. Compare this to Self Esteem, which is how we FEEL ABOUT OURSELVES based upon external factors, most especially in the comparison of ourselves to others.
         1. According to psychologists, self esteem is derived from comparing ourselves to others, and often comes from our actions, what we do or don’t do
         2. Self Esteem is emphasized in our educational system, and has been the place where we don’t want children to “feel bad” because they got held back because they couldn’t read at the level required to advance to the next grade. When we base our feelings of value by comparing ourselves to others, we will always find someone better (and worse) than ourselves. It is a cycle that never truly gives lasting value, because something, somewhere will take it away.
ii. Self worth is something we get from an understanding of our intrinsic value, it is not gained from what we do or don’t do. Your self esteem can change but your worth never changes. It is a constant.

iii. So I wonder, what affects how you see your value and worth? When do you feel most worthless? If you are like most human beings, it is when you are being criticized or demeaned by others, or when you fail to live up to others or your own expectations. And if that is the case, you and I need to attack the lies at their source, which means we have to know where our true worth and value come from.

3. There are three ways to know what our value and worth is.
   a. **Authorship** – who authored your life. In whose image are you made? (Gen 3)
      i. Many people see themselves as made in one of their parent’s image. The problem with that is that no parent is perfect, and the way we see our parents is often how we see ourselves.
         1. In counseling individuals and couples, I am still amazed at how much I see father or mother wounding in an adult child that affects the way the person sees themselves, others and the world in which they live. We often see ourselves the way our parents saw us, even long after that parent has passed on.
      ii. Fortunately, God didn’t intend us to be made primarily in our parent’s image, but rather in His image and likeness.
         1. Genesis 1:17 *God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*
         2. This means that (before the fall of man), Adam and Eve, (representing us) accurately reflected God’s character.
         3. When you look in a mirror, what do you see? An image of yourself. Why doesn’t something else appear? Because a mirror’s job is to accurately reflect the image of the one standing in front of it. So it is with you and me. We were created to accurately reflect the image of God, so that when He looks at us He sees Himself. (Heavy, huh?)
         4. Here is the big question of the day: How well do you reflect the image of God? What is standing in the way of you reflecting Him better? What has to change?
         5. Even with sin in our lives, we still carry the indelible image of God in our lives. It is why Jesus when asked about taxes, asked to see a coin. He told the crowd, whose image is on this coin? Caesars? Then render unto Caesar what is Caesar (that is what has his image on it), and give to God what has God’s image on it!
   b. **Ownership** – Who owns you?
      i. How much would you pay for a set of fake pearls? $20/ $30... maybe as much as $100? But what if if that set of pearls had been owned by Jackie Onassis Kennedy? Her fake pearls went at auction for a little over $200,000/
      ii. How much would you pay for a toothbrush? Would you give $5? $2? 50 cents? Well, what you pay for a USED toothbrush? Now, what if that toothbrush was once owned by Napoleon? How much would you pay then? Well, at auction, somebody paid $21,000 for it.
         1. That toothbrush was used. The pearls were fake. They weren't valuable because of what they were. There was nothing intrinsic to them that gave them worth. They derived their value from the person who had owned them.
      iii. **Ownership determines value.**
iv. Who owns you? The bible tells us that God does. You may or may not know this. You may be living your life as if you own your own life, but the truth is that God paid for you with the life of His only Son.

1. 1 Cor 6:19-20 “You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price”
2. Is 43:1 “Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine”
3. How much did He pay for you? You were bought with a price, an INFINITE price. That is your true worth.

c. Scarcity and Demand –
   i. When something is rare or in scarcity or in high demand, it becomes more valuable.
   ii. Each of us is unique. No two people other than identical twins or triplets have the exact same dna. You were created by God to be unique, to do things that no one else on this entire planet could or would do. You have a destiny, a purpose. God has a plan for you. That scarcity makes you invaluable!
   iii. Supply and Demand: The devil wants you. God wants you. Even the devil knows your value.
      1. The devil knew Jesus’ value and lied to him to try to get him to sell out to the lowest bidder, himself!
      2. The value of your soul can be measured by the devil’s interest in it. Jesus said the devil is the prince of this world. He is the god of this age. The devil is greatly at work in our world, and he is after your soul.
      3. Satan is bidding for your soul. He tried it with Jesus in the wilderness …in Matthew 4:8-10 “the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.' "
      4. He tried to bribe Jesus with the whole world! And you are no different. Satan will promise you fame, feast and fortune for your allegiance. Every day He is making offers on your soul, to have you choose his price instead of God’s price.
      5. Jesus addressed this when he said, “’For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matthew 16:26)
      6. Who do you think is going to assign you the greater value? (the world is worthless in its lasting value, money, fame, possessions, popularity, power: they all fade away.)
      7. There is a war waging against your soul. Which side will you choose?

4. Closing
   a. In an auction you will see an item up for bids that draws no one’s money. Sometimes an item won’t even fetch a quarter. That was the case with several items any given week. The auctioneer tries his best to get a $1 bid but when it was to no avail, he generally concludes, “Let’s move on… it has no value.” “No value.” What he really means was that no one who was present and paying attention at the moment was willing to pay even a dollar for the item. An item is only worth what someone is willing to pay for it.
i. Jesus is God’s only Son, with the Father for all eternity. He enters this world in the fullness of time to pay a price that no one else can pay, to buy your soul back from the devil and the sin it was immersed in.

ii. You are that valuable. The value of your soul is measured by God’s concern for saving your soul. God is “not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us”

iii. God sees your soul as the most valuable thing in the world, so valuable that He sent His only Son to the cross to suffer and die so that your soul may be saved. And if you were the only person in the whole universe, Christ would have died for you.

Dennis Jernigan: “My role in the Kingdom is to live out my existence according to Who God says I am. To do anything else is to walk in compromise. Every time I declare what God has done for me I simultaneously declare Who He is and who I am because of Who He is! I love myself by calling myself what my God calls me. My past does not define me. My circumstances do not define me. My temptations do not define me. The current culture does not define me. Only One defines me…and He is my Father.”

5. Today, you have a choice. How you determine your value. God says you are of infinite worth, so valuable that He paid for you with the life of His Son. If you believe that, it is called Good News…and it can change your life forever.

a. God says in the bible that “God so loved the world (Your name) so that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life.”

b. If you have never received that infinite, unconditional love from God, you can do so today. You can discover the love that demonstrates just how valuable you really are! God will fill you with His Spirit and change your life.

c. Some of you here may be selling out to the devil. You believe him when he offers cheap trinkets in exchange for your soul. Time to turn, time to confront the lies, and embrace the truth that the devil is a liar and this world can offer nothing that lasts. Only Jesus has demonstrated His love and your value. No one else. Will you respond to Him today?

Invitation:

I wonder if there is anyone here today who feels like you are worthless. You have been instructed and taught from the Word that that is not true, but sometimes you need a real miracle – a healing. I really want to invite you to come for prayer, but I understand as well how difficult that may be. We want to pray with you.

Also, maybe you are for the first time today hearing that you have worth – that you are worth the blood of Jesus. I want to invite you to have a relationship with the God who gave His Son for you. He wants you to know Him. He wants to forgive you for your sin and start a real relationship with you. Will you accept His offer of love and acceptance today?
6. Application of knowing my value in Christ:
   a. How do I approach God? With fear or confidence?
   b. How do I pray? With begging or alignment with what I know to be His will?
   c. How do I minister to others? With fear of rejection or confidence that I represent Him?

I like to think of wealth, not by how much I can accumulate, but in terms of how much I can give away.

But J.H. Jowett said, “The real measure of our wealth is how much we’d be worth if we lost all our money.”

QUESTIONS:

Some of you may have allowed a low value to be placed upon you. Perhaps because of life circumstances you feel like you have a low worth. You may say, “I don’t like the way I look, so I have a low value.” I can’t sing, or do this or that…You may think, “I have done so many bad or evil things in my life that I have no value any more.” Maybe you don’t have the education that you had hoped to attain, or the position at work that you thought you would have at this stage in life. If you have been victimized at any time in your life you may feel like you are worthless. Sometimes it’s not a matter of life circumstances; sometimes it’s a matter of the choices we make. Perhaps you have struggled with a life controlling or addictive habit and you haven’t been able to get freedom from it – and because of that you feel like you have a low value. Maybe you have been caught up in sexual immorality and now, you feel as though you have cheapened yourself.

What is the value of a homeless people in the inner cities of America, or a starving child on the other side of the world?

What’s the value of the person who steals your parking spot at the mall or cuts in front of you at the checkout?

What’s the value of the Islamic terrorist named Osama Bin Laden?

You may say, well, I was born illegitimately, unplanned, I was a surprise. Well, you may have been a surprise to your mother and father, but you were no surprise to God. He doesn’t get taken by surprise. He knows everything before it ever happens. And just because it may have happened outside of the order that He prefers, doesn’t mean you have any less value to Him. He was willing to pay the blood of His Son for you. He knew you before you were born and He planned you for a purpose.

Psalms 139:16 “You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.” NLT

What would the church be like if every follower of Christ would see each other for what we were really worth? You see, in God’s economy, one is not worth more than the other. They are all equal. What would the church be like if we would all see each other as equal value – and that value was the blood of Jesus? We would love spending time with one another – if we saw each other’s value as that of the blood of the Savior.