Value - Mark 8:34-38

**34 And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 35 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. 36 For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? 37 For what can a man give in return for his soul? 38 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”**

Everything on this earth has a value, and most things have a price. You cannot go anywhere and not see this. The value of items from houses to cars, to something as simple as bubblegum has a value attached to it. Most companies have values attached to them that is why we have things like fortune 500 companies and multi-billion a year jobs. Hospitals who are supposed to be not for profit are increasing in their profits day in and day out.

This just goes to show that most things in this world have value. Even our time has a value attached to it. When we are at work it is called an hourly rate. There are many things that we humans have attached a value to, but Jesus knew the only thing on this earth with any real value is our eternal soul. We here today know the value of our soul. It cost one man His life. The rest of the world still puts its worth and value in other things.

There is another value of things, and that is self-worth. This is where things become hazy at best even for the believer. All of us have things we put our value and energy into. We all have things that we are passionate about that sometimes we put our value or self-worth in.

In today’s society it seems our image, value, and self worth are now constantly put on display via social media. We cannot really do anything without it being put out there for everyone to see and most people (Christians included) do all this voluntarily, and most of the time without a second thought.

So what do we really place our self-worth, and value in?

What if we put our value in places? Growing up I used to be enamored by the idea that I was born in Virginia. I am sure I got this from my mother. Who said almost every day when I was a young kid and we moved up here that she did not like it. She and dad would always reminisce about Roanoke and how nice the people were and how lovely the scenery was. I grew up thinking that Ohio was the armpit of the world. I hated being up here. I put my value in a place that I only lived for 4 years and do not even remember living in except from still shots or photos in my mind. My mind was made up at a young age that when the time came I was moving back to Virginia.

My whole self image was a Virginian, even though I lived up here much longer. I realized when I was in my 20s that that was wrong. In fact, where I live in Ohio was a lot better of a place to live than where I was from. Just look at crime statistics and the cost of living. I realized very quickly that my identity could not be put in place. I say all that to say this. You cannot put your self value in a place. It is bound to make you still feel empty, and lonely. A place has no value on its own. It is only the value you place on it. The only place in this world that has any value is the place that God called His land for His people.

We cannot put our value on places. What about things? We discussed earlier that most of everything of tangibility (or things we can touch) has a value. A lot of people even this morning are putting their value in the places they work making “good money” as they would say. Some people have all their life's work wrapped up into a business or in their house. Their value could be placed in the cars they drive. The obvious problem with placing our value in things is that one day it will all crumble. This earth will be burnt up 2 Peter 3:10 states “**But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.***”* Nothing on this earth will be left, not the money you make, nor the house you live in or the cars you drive. Everything will be gone. Whether it is from Christ’s return or when you get in front of Him at your death.

Our value or self-worth can be placed in people. Whether this is family or friends, possibly co-workers. For some people being socially accepted is directly tied to how they feel about themselves. I touched on social media. These are the types of people who take a photo of everything and their happiness depends on how many likes or comments they get. I get it, it is nice to “feel” appreciated. It is nice when people can get a laugh out of you or make you feel special. The problem is the fact that your self-worth is in people. People who above all things are corrupted and evil without Christ. Even our most loyal friends will fail us. If we have a spyglass on even our pastors we will feel failed by them, because no one on this earth is perfect, and everyone needs Jesus Christ whether they think they do or not.

The only real thing our value or self-worth should be put in and the only thing that will never fail us or make us feel empty is Jesus Christ. Everyone in this room should know the value of Jesus. He is worth more than any person, place or thing could ever be worth. The fact that God stepped down from Heaven and became less than what He was to redeem us (who are above all most worthless) speaks to His glory and majesty. Our lives were bankrupt before Christ gave us the Holy Spirit. He saw value in us when there was not any at all and even today we don't feel as if there is still value.**Romans 5:8 “While we were still yet, sinners Christ died for us”.**

**Psalm 139 says *“...We are fearfully and wonderfully made”***That is the value that Christ has put on us. We may put values on everything else in this world but nothing is more valuable than Christ, and His value that He puts on us. There are so many scriptures in the bible that show our importance to Christ and ultimately His importance to us. Think of verses like Matthew 18:12 where it says “**He will leave the 99 to get the one**”, or Luke 12:6-7 “**Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.** These are just a couple to show our value to Christ. His value to us is something we could never afford. I have said it before and I will say it again. Salvation is free, but it came at a cost.

In closing, It is ok to enjoy the people around you, it is ok to enjoy your home, your vehicles, the places you do or visit. God gave all of those things to us for us to enjoy and praise Him for, but never to replace Him. Remember that the only real value any of us have is in Christ Jesus as our Savior. When Christ came into our lives our old self was forfeit and we became new creatures in Christ…Amen