

What You Are Worth To The Lord

Introduction. When I look at God, I realize that He needs nothing (Acts 17:24-25). I also see myself as someone who is not worthy to be a disciple (Isaiah 6:5; Matthew 3:11; 8:8). But God's view of us is different. He chose us (1 Peter 2:4). He loved us enough to send His Son (Romans 5:8; 8:3). Therefore, we have worth to the Lord. Worth means "the quality of something that lends importance to it and is measured by the esteem placed on it." So worthy means having value. The Lord has work for you to do. He has a use for you (Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:7; cp. 2 Thessalonians 3:13). How do you have worth to the Lord?

I. You Have Worth To The Lord By Being Useful For His Purposes

- A. To be useful to God, I have to purge myself of what is dishonorable (2 Timothy 2:14-21). I have to learn to overcome temptation and put to death sin (Colossians 3:5). Sin can no longer reign in my mortal body (Romans 6:6-7, 12).
- B. In perfecting holiness (2 Corinthians 7:1), you become more like Christ (Romans 8:29). He is the One who gave you value and wants you to embrace it to the fullest — and be appreciated for who you are.

II. You Have Worth To The Lord By Dispelling Darkness

- A. You are a child of light (1 Thessalonians 5:5-6), and you have to let the light received from Christ shine (1 Peter 2:9-12).
- B. In the Old Testament, God's glory was housed in the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34-38) and in the richly decorated, golden Temple (1 Kings 8:10-11). Now as Christians, His glory (through the Holy Spirit) resides within each of our bodies. We are the new temples of God's glory (1 Corinthians 6:19).
- C. You have value, and value must be preserved with great love and care. In every decision you make, do not ask, "How far can I go?" or "How much can I get away with?" but "How holy can I be?" Sin will cause me to lose my soul, tarnish my reputation, and harm my worthy influence.

III. You Have Worth To The Lord By Spreading His Word

- A. The gospel is a worthy treasure preserved in earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4:7). When we teach, we please God (2 Timothy 2:2).
- B. Every Christian is a preacher or proclaimer, as seen in Acts 8:4 when the persecution of the church reached its highest level. We may not be able to do everything, but we can do our best to invite, warmly greet a visitor, or go see someone who recently visited our congregation.
- C. Furthermore, spreading His word can involve my participation in encouraging my brethren (Acts 15:32; 16:40; 18:27-28; 20:1-2) and in teaching Bible classes (Acts 17:2, 17: 18:4, 19; 19:9).

IV. You Have Worth To The Lord By Faithful Worship

- A. Everyone has to worship in spirit and truth, for this was the command of Jesus to the woman at the well (John 4:24). God created us for His glory (Isaiah 43:6-7; 1 Corinthians 10:31), and worship is a wonderful way to manifest His glory.

1. Is my faithfulness in attendance worthy of the Lord? Am I forsaking the assemblies of the church when I really could push myself and be there (Hebrews 10:25)?
 2. Is my observance of the Lord's Supper worthy of His great sacrifice? Am I examining myself appropriately and eating in a worthy manner (1 Corinthians 11:28-29)?
 3. Is my singing and attentiveness to teaching worthy of all the benefits I have received? Am I singing from the heart for the purpose of teaching and admonishing my brethren (Colossians 3:16)?
 4. Is my giving worthy of the love He showed me? Am I giving cheerfully and liberally (2 Corinthians 9:6-7)?
- B. Whatever I do, it ought to be worthy of Him because He has done so much for me (Psalm 116:12).

V. You Have Worth To The Lord By Remaining Firm And Steadfast

- A. After assuring the Corinthians of their victory over death through Christ, he exhorted them twice to faithfulness (1 Corinthians 15:58; 16:13).
- B. It is so saddening to see so many people give up their faith in Christ (2 Timothy 4:10), so why do people do it?
1. Some fall away because they neglect their own spiritual welfare.
 - a) Christians have a "great salvation" that should not be neglected (Hebrews 2:3). When a person does what the Bible commands to do to be saved, he enters the kingdom as a newborn enters an earthly family (1 Peter 2:2).
 - b) One of the responsibilities of a Christian is to mature in their faith (2 Peter 3:18; cp. 1 Corinthians 3:2). People would never neglect their physical needs such as food and rest, yet they carelessly neglect their spiritual needs (Romans 7:4; 2 Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 10:25). As a result, they grow disinterested, and eventually drift away.
 2. Some leave the faith as a result of persecution.
 - a) In His parable of the sower, the Lord revealed that a person can fall away because of persecution (Matthew 13:21).
 - b) People are drawn to the gospel because of its "abundant life" and its eternal life (John 3:16; 10:10). But they fail to count the cost (Luke 14:27-32; 2 Timothy 3:12). When hostility arises, their faith becomes like the seed destroyed by the noonday sun.
 3. Some abandon the faith because they fall prey to false teaching.
 - a) Faithful Christians will take heed how they hear (Luke 8:18; Acts 17:11). In Matthew 22:23-33, Christ rebuked the Sadducees because of their ignorance of the scriptures, and attributed their many errors to ignorance.
 - b) Paul foretold of a time when some would fall away because of the doctrines of false teachers (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-7). Tens of thousands of religious groups make it easy to fall victim to human doctrines.
 4. Some may have left the faith because of suffering in the world.
 - a) We do not inhabit a world reminiscent of Eden — we live in a world ravaged by the effects of man's sin (Genesis 3:16-19; Romans 5:12).

- b) Our planet is ravaged by natural disasters and our bodies are ravaged by an increasing list of diseases. These assaults stir deep-seated emotions about the benevolence and omnipotence of God, and a vibrant, living faith is displaced with the seeds of doubt.
- 5. Some place their confidence in men, only to find that they have feet of clay.
 - a) Can you imagine the terrible influence Peter's denial of Christ or his hypocrisy with the Jews would have had on the disciples (Matthew 26:69-74; Galatians 2:12-14)?
 - b) Setting aside the damage done by trusting in man, God pronounces a curse on the one who does it (Jeremiah 17:5; cp. Psalm 20:7).
- 6. Some leave because they do not have regular association with Christians.
 - a) God intended us to favorably live with and use each other for mutual support (Romans 15:32; 1 Corinthians 16:18; 2 Timothy 1:16).
 - b) A constant exposure to the world causes commitment to God to wane. Strong brethren can be an effective balance to these forces.
- 7. Some fall away because of the harsh and inappropriate actions of Christians.
 - a) Christians, whose actions may be well-intentioned, can "lay it on the line" so harshly that it drives the weak and worldly away instead of gently turning them back.
 - b) If we answer non-Christians with "grace," "gentleness," and "respect" (Colossians 4:6; 1 Peter 3:15), should we not do the same with Christians (cp. Galatians 6:1)?

Conclusion. Know your worth to the Lord. Some judge themselves unworthy of the Lord by rejecting His word, just like the Jews did when they rejected the preaching of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:45). This is a fatal error. Accept the word gladly today like the people of Pentecost in Acts 2:41. After obeying the gospel, some who fall away are worthy of the worst punishment (Hebrews 10:26-28). Today, like that prodigal son, recognize that you are no more worthy to be called God's son and return. The loving father is ready and waiting on your decision (Luke 15:20-21).