

VALUING GOD ABOVE ALL ELSE

Valuing God above all else anchors you in Truth and makes your life calmer, richer and more rewarding both now and forever.

KEY POINTS

- ❖ Let's take a trip back in time to about 3800 years ago. You're living in a big tent and everything you need is there. Your family's been running a pretty good business raising sheep, selling wool and cheese and veghurt. You have basically everything you need.
- ❖ But there's something you really want and this "something" isn't exactly a thing. It's invisible. But you know it's real because you've seen it in action.
- ❖ It's what enabled all the provision and wealth around you. It's what makes your family different from all others and it's something you've decided you need.
- ❖ It's called the Blessing. Or you could call it the Promise or the Presence. Your father Isaac has it, and his father Abraham had it because he got it directly from God (Genesis 12:2-3).
- ❖ So, who are you in this story? You have a choice. You can choose to be Jacob and want this Blessing more than anything else on earth (*How do I get the Blessing, how do I get the Promise, how do I get the Presence?*), or you can choose to be his brother Esau, who felt like "life's pretty good as is."
- ❖ Fast forward almost 500 years. The descendants of Jacob are now not living in tents. They're also not independent entrepreneurs. They are in fact living in little houses in Egypt and they are slaves.
- ❖ And where are you in this story? You are not in one of the little houses and you are not a slave. You instead live in a palace made of marble and gold. You have servants to take care of your every need. You are educated and advised by some of the best minds in the world. You're loved and respected, and you've been carefully prepared to rule the greatest empire on earth. You are called Moses, prince of Egypt.
- ❖ And what did you do, Moses? Hebrews 11 tells us what you did (vv. 24-27).
- ❖ Moses had a big choice to make—and he made it not by looking at what could be seen, but by seeing what was invisible.
- ❖ Jesus said that if you really want to understand the kind of choice you have in front of you right now, you must look to the parable of the hidden treasure: "...The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid: and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field" (Matthew 13:44).
- ❖ Have you ever done that—made every effort, every sacrifice, you could in order to get or do the one thing you really wanted? If so, you know it's all about deciding what you really want.
- ❖ So, what's your story? What is something in your life that you sacrificed and saved for? Was it worth it?
- ❖ And then comes another thought: Have I valued God in the same way I've valued other things in my life?

KEY SCRIPTURE: Psalm 19:10

- ❖ Have I been willing to choose God—to do what He's leading me to do—over pleasure, or money, or image, or convenience, or whatever else?
- ❖ Compared to everything else that I value in life, how do I value God?
- ❖ God will at times use the things we value to gain our attention. Like TEA. Has God ever had a conversation with you about T-E-A: Time, Effort, and Attention?
- ❖ Think about it, T-E-A. It's what we do with the things we value. If we value God above all else, we can show it in how we spend our time and effort and in where we place our attention.
- ❖ John 4:23 tells us that "the Father seeketh such to worship him." This introduces an important aspect of us valuing God: It doesn't start with us. It starts with God. It comes from the realization of God's love for us (see 1 John 3:1-3).
- ❖ When this love dawns on us, it's overwhelming. It's life changing. Instead of trying to be good by constantly rejecting the things that we really want to do, it *changes* what we really want to do.
- ❖ The song says "To be like Jesus...." If we keep putting our minds into the word of God, and vice versa, day by day, this is what will happen.
- ❖ If you value God above all else, then one day you're going to see in a big way how He values you. (See Malachi 3:16-18; Revelation 22:1-7.)
- ❖ Maranatha. "the Lord is coming." Everything else is just noise, so let's value God above all else.

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. The lesson asks the following questions: What is something in your life that you sacrificed and saved for? Was it worth it? Share with the group.
2. If comfortable, share an instance in your life where you had to make a conscious choice to choose God. How easy/hard was the decision, and if faced with the same situation today, would the decision be just as easy/hard?
3. What's your focus—what are the values guiding how you think, how you make choices, and how you do your work?
4. It's TEA time: Time, Effort, Attention. Set aside extra Time to get into God's Word this week and make an Effort to do so. When you do, what things draw your Attention and how can they be applied to your life?

PRAYER TIME

"I want to see You, I want to know You,
Like I've never known You before.
To walk with You and talk with You,
To know You all the more."

WEEK OF SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2020

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

✓ (Reminds me/Confirms) 💡 (New idea) 🧠 (Think about)

! (Do this) ❤️ (Speaks to my heart) ↔ (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD
Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline

Start-up: In your opinion, what is the most valuable thing that you own? What makes this item valuable?