

(Basics) 38. Jesus Valued People More Than Things

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes that Jesus valued people over material possessions, calling Christians to reflect this love in their lives.

Duration: 13:11

Scripture: Zephaniah 3:17, Matthew 11:28, Matthew 20:28, Mark 12:37, Luke 19:10, Romans 12:15, 1 Corinthians 13:2

Topics: "Stewardship Of Wealth", "Godly Priorities"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher highlights the upside-down values of the world, where money is often prioritized over God and people. He emphasizes that Christians should believe and live as if God is more important than money. The preacher laments that very few Christians truly prioritize God over money in their lives. He also points out the tragic reality that people are often loved less than material possessions, which goes against God's teachings. The preacher urges Christians to follow Jesus' example of valuing God and people above material things.

Transcript

Do you know what God wants us to do with people as opposed to things? We're supposed to love people and use material things. But do you know what's happening in the world today? People love material things and use people. This is the opposite.

This is because man's following the devil. Jesus is our example. Let's look at Him and learn something about this.

One of the things that sin has done in this world is turn everything upside down. Our sense of values is upside down. The world is full of people who think that money is more important than God.

With their lips, they will say God isn't more important than money. But in their lives, what urges them, motivates them, what they live for, proves that money is more important than God. Don't you think that such a world is living upside down? And in the midst of this upside down world, God has sent His children to show them the right way to live.

But how are God's children living? How many Christians have you met in your life by observing their life that you could say that they believe that God was more important than money? There are very few. Very,

very few. The vast majority of Christians in our country also believe that money is more important than God.

This is one example of an upside down world. And when money becomes more important than God, money also becomes more important than people. We love money more than we love human beings.

This is tragic. Jesus has come to show us the truth that God is more important than money, that people are more important than money. And if that understanding has not come into your mind, my friend, I want to tell you the truth.

Your mind is still perverted. It's upside down. Things have been given by God for us to use.

All material things, money, food, fruit, vegetables, and everything in the world has been given not to be loved but to be used. But people have been given to us not to be used but to be loved. Do you use people? Do you know that the world is full of factories and offices where businessmen use people for their own ends? To achieve their own ends, they use people.

Of course, they pay them a salary, as little as possible, but in order to promote themselves and promote their business. Well, we can understand that out in the business world, but the same thing is happening in many Christian organizations and churches, where so-called Christian leaders use people to promote themselves. We can say that such people haven't understood the love of Jesus.

They have not understood what it is to value people. They use people for their own ends. They have not been converted to a right way of thinking.

Their mind has not been renewed. But how is it with Jesus? Jesus never used anybody to promote himself. He loved people.

He knew that people were far more important than material things. Think of Judas Iscariot, and you'll see a clear example. Judas Iscariot was the treasurer of that band of disciples.

And whenever people gave money to that group that were with Jesus, Judas kept that money as a treasurer. Now, have you ever thought to whom were those disciples giving that money? The people. To whom were the people giving that money? Were they giving it because they appreciated Judas or because they appreciated Jesus? That's clear.

They gave their money in appreciation for Jesus' ministry. For his healing, perhaps, for his preaching. And Jesus took it and told Judas to keep it.

It wasn't Judas' money at all. It was money that came because of Jesus' ministry. Well, what was Judas doing with that money? He was stealing it, using it for himself.

And Jesus loved Judas. He was willing to lose that money if he could save Judas' soul. He was not bothered that Judas was stealing that money.

He was concerned about his soul. That's an example of Jesus' attitude to people. He wanted to save people from the corruption of sin, which has made them value material things more than people.

Jesus shared the burdens of people. He had words of kindness for those who were defeated in life's battles, words of encouragement for the downtrodden. He never considered a single human being as

worthless.

They may be uncultured, crude, not able to speak properly or illiterate, but they were people who needed to be redeemed, and he had come to give his life for them. When the Bible says that the Holy Spirit fills our hearts with the love of God, this is what happens. It makes us like this, towards people.

And I want to ask you as a Christian, if you're a Christian, has the Holy Spirit filled you? You know, a lot of people speak about being filled with the Holy Spirit. What is the proof that your heart's been filled with the Holy Spirit? Romans 5.5 says, The love of God is spread abroad in our hearts, spread abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, shed forth. One mark of being filled with the Spirit is that your heart is filled with love for people, and you'll be right side up.

You won't be upside down. You'll value people more than material things. Jesus never valued material things.

He used them. He worked in a carpenter shop where he was using material things all the time, working with them to earn his living as a carpenter for many years. But can you imagine if some neighbor's child walked into that carpenter shop one day and broke something expensive which Jesus had just made? What do you think Jesus would have done? Would you think Jesus would have got upset and shouted at that child and chased him out of the carpenter shop? No.

I think Jesus would have just picked up that child and kissed him and said, Don't worry, my son. It's okay. I can make another one.

He loved people. He loved children. Material things didn't mean anything to him.

Material things were to be used to help people. He did not become a carpenter in order to be rich. No.

He loved people and not things. When the Holy Spirit renews our mind, you know what happens? We are able to see things the way God sees them. We see people as God sees people.

We see material things as God sees material things. And I believe one of the most important prayers you need to pray if you want to be a spiritual man is to ask the Lord to help you to see people as He sees them, to see material things as He sees them. The Bible says in Zephaniah chapter 3 and verse 17 that God rejoices over His people with singing.

Now, think of that verse. God rejoicing over people. Not over perfect people.

There are no perfect people anywhere in the world. He is rejoicing over imperfect people who have expressed a desire for Him and who want to love Him with all their imperfections. And Jesus walked on earth and He shared His Father's joy over people.

Think of the disciples who were with Jesus. They were not perfect. They were ordinary stumbling sinners just like you and me.

But Jesus looked at them the way the Father looked at them. He loved them. He wasn't always criticizing them for their faults and their awkwardness and their crudeness.

And because He was compassionate like this, we read in Mark 12 and verse 37 that common people heard Him gladly. People detected the beautiful aroma that came out of His Spirit, the love of God that

flowed out of His heart. Jesus was constantly moved with compassion when He saw sick people, needy people, hungry people, shepherdless people.

He put Himself in their shoes. He made their misery His own. And that's how He was able to comfort them.

You know, you can comfort the misery of other people, my friend, only if you identify with them. It's very easy to speak nice words, but you've got to put yourself in their shoes to understand what they're going through. And that's what Jesus did.

You know, we have used our imagination so much in the past for evil things. Isn't that true? You've used your imagination to think dirty things and bitter things about other people. All types of evil things.

Now that we're converted, what do we use our imagination for? Most Christians use their imagination for nothing. Let me tell you something good that you could put your imagination into use for. Use your imagination to put yourself in the situations of other people who are suffering, the ones you know around you.

When you see it, when you hear about it, put yourself in their shoes. Use your imagination to think that you're there, living in that little hut or living with that difficult husband or difficult wife or having a problem child, that you are the parent perhaps. Put yourself in their shoes and try to understand what they're going through.

That will be the proof of your love. Jesus did that. He was so grieved once when he saw men hard-hearted, unwilling to let a man with a withered hand be healed in the synagogue.

He saw a widow going in a funeral procession where her only son had died and he walked by and he saw the coffin and he stopped the whole funeral procession, opened the coffin, raised the boy from the dead and gave him back to his mother. It didn't start as a miracle to show people his power. It was to show them the love of God.

He had compassion. Every miracle of Jesus arose out of compassion. If you seek to do miracles for God and you don't have compassion, you will never be able to follow Jesus.

You are unfit to be his servant. Jesus always died to his own rights. He had no tears for his own griefs and sorrows, but sweat drops of blood for our sorrows.

He carried our burdens. He was never offended by anything that people said or did to him. He was never offended by the failure of others to do what they should have done for him.

Because he never came here to serve. He never imposed burdens on others. He came to carry other people's burdens, to serve them, not to be served.

And because he lived like this, his love flowed out like a sweet perfume and people were drawn to him. Why is it the message of Christ is not more accepted in our country? Isn't it because Christians do not seek to have this love? If you are a Christian, claim the name of Christ. I want to encourage you.

Seek with all your heart that you will have such a love like a sweet perfume coming forth from your life.

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