



Seeing Your Value through Christ's Eyes

What does it mean?

1. What is the definition of...?

Value: 1. A fair return or equivalent in goods, services, or money for something exchanged 2. The monetary worth of something 3. Relative worth, utility, or importance

Worth: 1. Monetary value 2. The value of something measured by its qualities or by the esteem in which it is held 3. Moral or personal value

Many dictionary websites all seem to define “value” with a monetary worth. “Worth” seems to have the added quality of assessment apart from economic value.

2. In what ways do we assess value?

❖ **Intrinsic Value:** belonging to the essential nature or constitution of a thing

Food, tools to some extent – based on need, oxygen. They have intrinsic value because we always need them.

Does anything really have value in and of itself? Ultimately, I suppose only God does.

❖ **Subjective Value:** dependent upon who is evaluating it – worth different things to different people.

Gold, Beany Babies? Egyptian precious stones were very different from modern precious gems. Many stores are selling things that have no value to men but women think them highly valuable.

❖ **Economic Value:** what it's current monetary value or trade in equivalent is

Whatever the market place deems is valuable. Gold is super valuable now but 15 years ago a lot less. Food prices vary on supply.

Women During Jesus' Time

3. What do we know about how women during Jesus' time were treated? And how they functioned in society?

At the Feet of Ordinary Women; Finding Yourself in Titus 2:4-5

By Angie Conrad, Janet Cox, Tammy Eagan, Sandy Kershaw, and Pam Miller

p. 41 The Role of Women in Jesus' Time

New Testament Scholars provide us with a sketch of how women were often viewed and treated. Women were secluded from public life as much as possible. With the exception of their wedding day, it was shameful for them to be seen publicly with their faces uncovered. Touching or speaking to a woman in public was taboo for a devout Jewish man, especially if he was a religious leader. Sometimes, even in the home, men and women were strictly segregated. It was reported that in very stringent homes, it was possible for a boy to grow up without seeing his mother's face.

A first-century Jewish woman was considered to have the same status as a slave or a piece of property owned first by her father, then by her husband. A father could sell his daughter into slavery until she was twelve years old. After that, he could give her in marriage to the man of his choosing, as long as the man could meet the dowry price the father demanded. The woman typically had no voice in these decisions.

There were, of course, exceptions to the cultural norms, and some women were given greater status in the family. However, the conditions described above were not unusual.

Doesn't fully match what we know in the Bible of what God intended women to be treated like. But anytime a nation "moves away" from God, there are bound to be abuses. And by Jesus' time, the Jewish people were a scattered group that had been greatly influenced by the cultures that had taken them into captivity and the Romans. God's plan for His children obviously became skewed and warped as they drifted further from Him.

Sketches of Jewish Social Life

by Alfred Edersheim (*He was an expert in Rabbinic literature and was a Jew who became a twice born child of Abraham.*)

In order accurately to understand the position of woman in Israel, it is only necessary carefully to peruse the New Testament. The picture of social life there presented gives a full view of the place which she held in private and in public life. Here we do not find that separation, so common among Orientals at all times, but a woman mingles freely with others both at home and abroad. So far from suffering under social inferiority, she takes influential and often leading part in all movements, especially those of a religious character. (p.129)

Of course, against all this may be set the permission of polygamy, which undoubtedly was in force at the time of our Lord, and the ease with which divorce might be obtained. (p.132)

Proverbs 31:10-31: *Women could earn an income, own property, run a household... super woman par excellence. This woman is in Proverbs 31 because she is of great value for her faith, as well as the fact that she "does all these things," none of which are looked down upon.*

Deborah (Judges 4): *Women were put in positions of authority at times... I thought good, believing women, were to stay in the home. (sarcasm here)*

Jezebel (1 Kings 16-21): *a woman could attain great power and be feared by the people... It is interesting that her daughter became queen of Judah. What does that say about Judah that a queen on the throne wasn't grounds for rebellion? In Egypt there was a case of powerful women, but the one that ruled had to disguise herself and take the trappings of a man.*

Mary & Martha : *unmarried and wealthy enough, hanging out with all these single guys... and Mary was sitting there studying with the men.*

Mary – Jesus’ Mother: *God chose to be born of a human woman... what an honor*

The Women at the Tomb: *who was graced with being the first to see our risen Lord? And then they were sent to tell the men.*

Others: *A few more?*

Nehemiah 8:2 Doesn’t sound like they were excluding women from learning, does it?

What about the numerous prophetesses in the Bible? Miriam being one of the first...

New Testament – Paul – not the chauvenist some say... look at all his letters where he is thanking the various women who serve, with him as well as for him. And in Ephesians he tells men to love their wives as Christ, giving their lives for them (they aren’t mere possessions.)

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p. 42 – Jesus Values women

p.43 – Paul values Women

How was Jesus Different?

What do we learn from each encounter Jesus has with various women in the Bible?

- ☞ How is each woman feeling? What are her feelings of self-worth?
- ☞ How does Jesus help them? How does Jesus’ approach differ from the others in their society?
- ☞ What changes in their lives because of their encounter with Jesus?
- ☞ What did Jesus value about them? What does His “approach” & help to them show?

It is interesting how Jesus treats women in some ways as if there is no distinction “between the sexes,” as if there was on humanity that he was going to redeem and die for and save. It was, in some ways, women who appreciated this all the more because they are the ones that you see coming to Jesus as sinners. But for Jesus, it didn’t matter if it was a woman at the well or a man. It only mattered to the disciples. (Joe Johnson)

4. Matthew 9:18-26 / Mark 5:21-43 – The Woman with Bleeding

Read & Assess:

What is her feeling of self-worth? *Feelings of worthlessness because of disease and ability?*
Isolation and exclusion?

She approached Jesus

How does Jesus value her? *He calls her daughter – an intimate relationship, a closeness*

How does Jesus value her? Or show the woman her own value?

❖ How did/do many societies treat daughters? How did Jesus show God's love for not just sons but daughters?

- As property owned by her father and then her husband

❖ How do you think the woman who was subject to bleeding felt after 12 long years of suffering? How do you think her family treated her during this time?

We don't know.... Her family would have still been around her and loved her hopeful. But definitely, people around her would have been stand-off-ish because of her bleeding and being constantly unclean. It would have been isolating especially when everyone went to the Temple at those times of year and she could not. Missing every "Christmas and Easter" celebration...

In the book of Mark, which also tells about this woman it says, "She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse."

❖ Why do you think the woman didn't ask Jesus, but just touched him?

She was unclean – no one was supposed to touch her.

❖ How did Jesus show God's love to this woman? What did he call her? What does that mean?

Think of the O.T. clean/unclean laws. Unclean always makes other things unclean. But here, she touches him and becomes "clean" – how different... Jesus was changing all the rules.

5. John 8:1-11 – The Adulterous Woman

Read & Assess:

What is her feeling of self-worth? Feelings of worthlessness because of sin. Because of the condemnation of others – and it was deserved.

She was brought to Jesus by the Pharisees

How does Jesus value her? God values the broken...she deserved her "value" and yet Jesus tells the Pharisees they are "equal" in value to her.

How does Jesus value her? Or show the woman her own value?

❖ Did the Pharisees and Teachers of the Law care about this woman? Did they care that she did something wrong?

❖ Were the Teachers of the Law being fair? Doesn't it take two to commit adultery— where was the guy?

History is replete with the double standard

❖ The Pharisees thought they were righteous people who were good enough for God. How did Jesus show them they were wrong?

❖ How did Jesus show God's love and forgiveness to this woman?

Because of sin, this woman didn't have intrinsic value. But Jesus valued her anyway – All our value is really a subjective value. Adam and Eve were intrinsic by Creation, no it's the ultimate Subject who gives all value. No one would think anything bad at God for throwing away the ruined, dirty, broken into hell. But God values the broken – why? It's the great mystery of the universe.

6. John 4:4-15 - Jesus talks with a Samaritan Women

Read & Assess:

What is her feeling of self-worth? Feelings of worthlessness because of failure, sin, relationships. Here it's with men and divorces.

Jesus comes to her – asks for a drink

How does Jesus value her? Not only is she a woman, alone, but obviously living a sinful life, and a Samaritan... And Jesus thinks she's worth His gift (living water)

How does Jesus value her? Or show the woman her own value?

❖ Why do you suppose the woman deflected the conversation away from her marital status and toward a theological issue?

Imagine the question of value in this context. The Jews don't normally value the Samaritans. Yet this Jewish Rabbi does. Jews don't value conversation with Samaritans, but this man does. And good people don't usually value a woman who has failed in every relationship she has ever been in. How do you think she felt about her value?

❖ Why did Jesus "change the subject?"

7. John 2:1-11 – Jesus and his mother at the Wedding

Read & Assess:

What is her feeling of self-worth? Mary seems to be valuing herself rather highly as Jesus' mother at this point. She has no self-esteem issues here

She comes to Jesus in confidence, knowing he can help

How does Jesus value her? He "slips into" his role of Messiah here and honors her request, but corrects her as to the timing of his "ministry" He is no longer son obeying the authority of a mother, but the Savior addresses a "daughter" with love

How does Jesus value her? Or show the woman her own value?

❖ What can you surmise about the relationship between Son and mother in this scene?

❖ What transition is Jesus making when He calls her “dear woman” rather than “mother” in John 2:4?

He “slips into” his role of Messiah here

Knowing Our Worth

8. What does Jesus value in us?

Intrinsically?

Romans 3:10 There is no one righteous, not even one

Isaiah 64:6 Our righteous acts are like filthy rags

Subjectively?

1 Peter 1:7 faith – of greater worth than gold

1 Peter 3:4 inner beauty – of great worth in God’s sight

What are we worth? What really matters?

2 Corinth 1:22 The Holy Spirit as a Deposit – and it’s a guarantee, he’s coming back for us because we’re of value to him, we will go “home” with him

2 Corinth 6:16 Temple of the Holy Spirit – Isn’t that intrinsic worth?

2 Corinth 5:17 New creation, we have God in us and are the body of Christ! Those who don’t want that – what a tragedy of epic proportions.

Matthew 10:31 worth more than many sparrows / Luke 12:24 – ravens...

Proverbs 31:10 she is worth far more than rubies

Proverbs 31:11 her husband lacks “Nothing of Value”

9. Knowing we are valued....

How does it change us?

How will it change how we behave/live our lives?

How will it change the way we treat/value others?

Does it change how we look at the members/friends in our congregations?

10. How can we show other women their “Value in Christ?”

Take a painting – a painting that sold for millions...

What if someone asked you to hold the painting at your house for the weekend – what would you do? Where would you put it? What rules would go into place at your house while the painting was there? Would this matter even if you didn’t personally like it?

Look at the price that God placed on you. Astounding! And going against every economic value indicator every made. There are a whole lot of women, many better or smarter. And we’re not in the greatest shape, not talking about the extra pounds, but who we truly are – beauty within stuff– we’re ugly inside because of sin and our sinful nature.

But in an auction of one, Got bought us and paid the ultimate price, the holy God goes to hell, endures what is repulsive to his very nature. Son thrown away.

Isaiah 53.

Look at people, see the value, how can we not treat them with greater care than that?

Look in the mirror, see past you, look at the heart of God and how can we not proclaim a love that would value us that much.