

## **Do You Know How Valuable You Are To God?**

“We know and believe the love that God cherishes for us. God is love. And he who abides in love, abides in God, and God abides in Him” (1 John 4:16).

“You did form my inward parts; You did knit me together in my mother’s womb. I will praise You for the wonder of my birth! Wonderful are Your works and that my spirit knows well. My frame was not hidden from You when I was being formed in secret. I was intricately and wonderfully wrought in the depths. Your eyes saw my unformed substance, and in Your book all the days of my life were written before ever they took shape, when as yet there was none of them” (Psalm 139:13 to 16).

“You are He Who took me out of my mother’s womb; You made me hope and trust when I was nursed. I was cast upon You from my very birth; from my mother’s womb You have been my God” (Psalm 22:9 & 10).

‘Behold, I have indelibly imprinted you (like a tattoo) on the palm of each of My hands’ (Isaiah 49:16).

Do you truly realise how valuable you are to God? Can you comprehend the enormity of His Master Plan for the lives of His most precious Creation? Earth is only a training ground for eternity and God has a place for every one of us. Most of us don’t really comprehend this concept and as a result, many of us throw ourselves away. To really comprehend how valuable mankind is to God, we need only to look at the description of the creation of man. We were formed and created in the absolute visual image of God. Head up top, arms, hands, legs, feet and torso all in the same place, just like our Father. We were created in His shape; in His form. God stands like we do. He sits like we do. We were also made in His likeness. We can read more about this in the sermon titled ‘We are the living image of God’ on this website.

‘God said, “Let Us Make mankind in Our image, after Our likeness, and let them have complete authority ... over everything upon the earth.” So God created man in His own image, in the image and likeness of God He created him’ (Genesis 1:26 & 27). This is plural. The ‘Us’ and ‘Our’ is Jesus (before He came to earth) speaking to God the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus was the spoken Word of God, His Expression, Who later became flesh (John 1:1 to 4). The image of God is a visible image. The likeness is in the character. Jesus was the image of God and He was in the form of a Man, proving that we are in the same form or shape as God. The likeness of God is internal; spiritual. Jesus was also in the likeness of God, in that He did everything He saw the Father doing (John 5:19).

God is a triune Being: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Man is also a triune being: spirit, soul and body. We were made in God’s image and likeness and we were made to have dominion or rule over the earth. When we read John 1:1 to 4, we see that the Word was Jesus before He was born on earth as a baby and our Saviour. When we read about the Creation in Genesis, we realise it wasn’t God the Father Who created us, but God the Son who shaped and moulded us into the human form out of the dust (Genesis 2:7). He used His hands to make us (Psalm 119:73) – the same hands that were nailed to a cross that He Himself had created, and He was crucified by the men He created.

We were not made as simple beings, we were made a living soul, with feelings and emotions and choices. Animals act largely on instinct, but humans act through the human soul. The breath of life breathed into us at creation, changed the lifeless shape of man

made of dust, into a living soul. Never before or since has God done that act. It was the only time ever in the history of eternity, as recorded in the Bible, has God moulded dirt into shape then breathed life into that moulded piece of dirt. With that breath, the dirt came alive and became a breathing, flesh and blood masterpiece with all the mental, spiritual and physical faculties. Humans are absolutely unique in that aspect. That was achieved by the single breath of God. It wasn't a tiny sigh, it was a deep full exhale, such as we would do, if we were trying to breathe life into a near-drowning man, who was twice our size and weight. We wouldn't give that person little puffs of air. We would take the deepest breath we could hold and blow life into that victim. That is the type of breath God breathed into Adam.

Adam was a living soul (Genesis 2:7), Jesus is a life giving Spirit (John 20:22; 1st Corinthians 15:45 to 49). The Spirit is life giving; the soul is life receiving. When Jesus breathed on the apostles He gave them new life. 'It is the Spirit of God that made me, and the breath of the Almighty that gives me life. Behold, I am toward God even as you are; I also am made out of the clay' (Job 33:4 & 6). There were two processes to our creation: the moulding or shaping of the dust, and then the breath of life.

Many people cannot understand how they were created and what they were created for. Man is the supreme masterpiece of the Creator; His workmanship (Ephesians 2:10). No other creation was formed by hand out of dust then had life breathed into them, turning them into living, breathing, flesh and blood creatures, who are intelligent enough to worship their Creator. No other creation was given a Saviour. Angels are also made in the image of God and in His form, but they are in spiritual form, not flesh and blood (Matthew 22:30). Although they can appear to us looking like humans (Luke 1:11; Hebrews 13:2), they can disappear just as quickly (Luke 1:38). Animals and birds were also made out of the ground (Genesis 1:24 and 2:19) but they never received the breath of life from God. Mankind was made to be a partner with God (Genesis 2:18 to 20). Everything up to that point of creation was good, but that was the first time God saw something that was not good ... it was not good for man to be alone, so God made Eve out of Adam's flesh and bone to compliment him (Genesis 2:21 to 23). Until they sinned, Eve was equal to Adam, and only after they sinned, did Adam rule over Eve (Genesis 3:16).

The Lord visited Adam and Eve every day (Genesis 3:8). Imagine having God the Creator walking through your garden every evening! What a privilege! It is hard to image why Adam and Eve were disobedient, knowing their disobedience would destroy that wonderful close fellowship. Anyhow, in Genesis 3:9, we see that God called to Adam. How like our God that is! God also calls out to us to fellowship with Him. Even though man disobeyed and broke fellowship with God, God never gave up on man. He sent Jesus to save us and to restore fellowship with God (James 4:5). God put a Spirit into each of us from Himself and He jealously desires that Spirit. It is amazing that God would be bothered to be jealous. It is with a righteous jealousy that He desires our fellowship. He longs to be gracious to us and we are blessed if we wait for Him (Isaiah 30:18). That shows He really wants us.

Notice how Jesus took the time to stop and chat with Zaccaeus in Luke 19:1 to 10, and as a result, Zaccaeus was saved. When we are saved, we are a new creation in Christ, and all the old sins are washed away (Corinthians 5:17). Being a new creation does not mean that suddenly we all look 18 again. It means all the sins we have ever committed, all the hurts that we have suffered and all the old life is gone forever. We are Spiritually recreated. Our bodies remain the same age, but spiritually, we are brand new. We are to strip off the old sinful nature and 'clothe' ourselves with our new selves (Colossians 3:1 to

17). The new creation restores the image of God that was marred by sin. In this newness of life, there is once again the likeness of God in the person of Jesus.

When we come to that place – that is the likeness of God – all difference in race, colour, denomination or culture, no longer divide us. This was a mystery that was hidden for ages and generations and was only revealed through Jesus (Colossians 1:26 & 27; Ephesians 3:3). The mystery is Christ in us, the Hope of glory. Our salvation plan, which God thought through carefully, and which Jesus suffered and died for, was the mystery or secret, in accordance with His good pleasure and grace. He planned it for the maturity of the times and the end of the ages. Again we see that it is Christ we need to put our confidence and hope into (Ephesians 1:6 to 13). Further to the salvation mystery, is this: that the Gentiles are now to be fellow heirs with the Jews – members of the same body and joint partakers in the same divine promise in Christ, through their acceptance of the full Gospel (Ephesians 3:6). The fellowship we Gentiles can have with the Jews is one that blesses us (Genesis 12:3). We can learn so much from the Jewish people because they have known the scriptures for a lot longer than the Gentiles have, and they really know what God is saying. If we listen to a born-again Jewish man preaching, his knowledge of the Word is far deeper than the average western pastor, and his anointing is more powerful.

If we study these following scriptures, we should never feel unworthy again, that is if we can comprehend our incredibly privileged place in eternity. Here is more about the secret or mystery that the Lord kept hidden until Jesus came – and the privilege we have of being shown God's secrets. These mysteries have been kept secret since the Lord created the earth – or since the foundation of the world. 'I will open My mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old' (Psalm 78:2). 'This was in fulfilment of what was spoken of by the prophet; I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things that have been hidden since the foundation of the world' (Matthew 13:35).

Even the Kingdom of God was prepared for us humans way back then. "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom that was prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34).

God already loved Jesus back then. "Father ... for You loved Me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24).

God chose us to be in Christ since before the foundation of the world. 'Even as He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world ...' (Ephesians 1:4).

These secret plans that had been thought through since before the earth was created, were revealed when Jesus came, and the fact that Jesus died, was all for our sakes. 'It is true that He was chosen and fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but He was brought out to public view in these last days for the sake of you' (1 Peter 1:20).

The Lord had planned for Jesus to die for us, to save us, since before He created the earth. 'All the inhabitants of the earth will fall down in adoration and pay Him homage, everyone whose name has not been recorded in the Book of Life of the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world' (Revelation 13:8).

Our salvation was in God's plan before we were created because in His foreknowledge, He knew that Adam would bring sin into the world and we would need rescuing. The plan to save us was worked out before creation began and was kept a secret for thousands of years. 'The prophets who prophesied of the grace of God, which was intended for us,

searched and inquired about this salvation. They sought to find out to whom or when this was to come ... into these things the angels longed to look (1 Peter 1:12).

'We confess; great and important is the hidden truth, the secret of Godliness: God was made visible in human flesh, vindicated in the Holy Spirit, was seen by angels, preached among nations, believed on in the world and taken up into glory' (1 Timothy 3:16). The Lord did this for our salvation, so we would have eternal life with Him forever. Jesus gave all He had to save us – He gave His blood for us. That is how valuable we are to Him.

Now that we are saved, we have so many spiritual gifts and other wonderful things, we need to keep focus on the fact that Christ is the centre of our lives, not the gifts. The basis of our security is the love relationship between God and ourselves. If we come close to God, He will come close to us (James 4:8). Read Ephesians 3:10. Everything that has been created is a revelation of God, but the church is the revelation of the grace and mercy of God; the unearned, unmerited favour of God. In the purpose of redemption through Christ, God had one specific purpose that He wanted to demonstrate to the universe forever, and that is His grace.

'The Kingdom of God is like something buried in a field which a Man found and hid again; then in His joy He goes and sells all He has and buys that field. Again, the Kingdom of heaven is like a Man Who is a dealer in search of precious pearls, Who, on finding a single pearl of great price, went and sold all He had and bought it' (Matthew 13:44 to 46). The men in this story sell all they have to buy what is the most precious item to them. The first man didn't want the field, he wanted the buried treasure in the field. The second man was a merchant and knew the value of pearls. By telling these parables, Jesus was saying the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price were as precious as we are to Him. That is how valuable we are to God; by His grace and mercy, the triune God gave everything He had to redeem us. God gave His only begotten Son; Jesus gave His blood and the Holy Spirit came to help us along. All we have to do is accept His sacrifice and love Him with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind and all our strength (Mark 12:30).

Amen and God bless you.

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