

Value

Value as a noun is defined as worth. As a verb, we value something when we think highly of it. Our values are derived from our comfort zone. We value our family, our jobs, our possessions, etc. because they bring a certain level of comfort and stability to us.

Because we place such high value on deriving personal comfort, it is a much easier endeavor to value possessions than it is to value relationships. A possession is inanimate, void of emotions, and totally under our control. Our ownership of it emits in us a sense of power and control over it.

We yearn for that sense of control to bring order and comfort out of the chaos of life. The more things we possess, the greater the control we convince ourselves we have. If I have a million dollars, financial disaster can't touch me. If I possess a warehouse of food, I will never go hungry. If I have all the current toys, I will be popular. If I have friends, I will never be lonely. Money, food, and other "things", all bring a sense of security against possible disaster in our life.

In very difficult times, we learn that we are really in control of nothing. Look at the natural disasters happening around the world where thousands of lives are left only with the thought that they survived. Go back in history to the Great Depression when financial devastation turned many a man's life from riches to rags. Think of the individuals who just went to work at the Twin Towers on September 11th, 2001 or those who have been swept away in recent hurricanes and tsunamis. Daily, individual lives are forever changed in moments. In no given moment are we in control.

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)

Unlike possessions, a relationship is dynamic, fluid, emotional, risky, and most of all, uncontrollable. A relationship involves two or more people both of whom are dynamic, always changing, emotional, and uncontrollable. It is the most risky venture in which a human being can be involved, propelling us out of our comfort zone and dropping us into a realm where we are threatened by the two things we fear the most --- deep, emotional hurt and failure.

The treasures of heaven mentioned in Matthew 6:20 flow out of our relationships. I John 4:8 tells us that God is love. There is no greater treasure in heaven than God. So we are to treasure and nourish love which is the essence of God. This treasuring and nourishing of love can only be done through relationships. You cannot love in a vacuum. Relationship is the springboard of love. Only when we take the risk to value relationship can love flow into and through our life.