

Soul Value (Part I)

“How much better and of more value is a man than a sheep!” (Matthew 12:12, *AMP*).

“You are of more value than many sparrows” (Matthew 10:31, *NKJV*).

We often hear people speak of the “fair market value” of a manufactured product or its “retail value.” We also hear of “wholesale value” or “trade-in value.” But, have you ever heard of “soul value”? Let me state my conviction up front: nothing is more valuable than a person’s soul. Think about it. What is the most important and precious thing today? It is life itself!

Studies have been conducted to determine the monetary value of mineral and chemical elements found in the human body. Together, their value is less than one dollar. Our most valuable asset is our skin. Based on the selling price of cowhide, the value of an average person’s skin is about \$3.50. Total monetary value per person equals \$4.50. But we are made up of more than oxygen, calcium, sodium, iron, zinc, copper, and about fourteen other minerals and chemicals. We are body, soul, and spirit. Simply put, we have eternal value. We are priceless. We are not for sale. We have already been bought by the precious blood of the crucified Lamb.

There are three things that will last for eternity.

- ❖ God
- ❖ Word of God
- ❖ Souls of men

We need to invest our lives with eternity in view. God places great value on a lost soul (John 3:16). It was for this reason that Jesus came into the world. “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). In one short sentence Jesus described His purpose—“to seek and to save.” He also explained His target group—the lost. We remain on the earth to finish the task. Before He left, He said, “As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you” (John 20:21). There are two things you can do on earth that cannot be done in heaven: sin and win the lost. I think we both know which we are supposed to be doing. Right?

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John 3:16).

“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). I once tried to teach this verse to my little girl. She kept getting

hung up on “begotten.” She would say, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only *forgotten* Son...” Really, it was good theology. God loved us so much that He forgot Himself, robed Himself in flesh, and came

and dwelled among us (John 1:1-14). Jesus paid the price on Calvary for our redemption. “For God bought you with a high price” (1 Corinthians 6:20, *NLT*). The songwriter said, “He paid a debt He did not owe. I owed a debt I could not pay. I needed someone to wash my sins away.” If God was willing to pay such an enormous cost imagine how valuable a lost soul must be in His sight.

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18). There are three types of lost souls:

- ❖ Willful Rejectors
- ❖ Indifferent Neglectors
- ❖ Unknowingly Ignorant

The first two groups have heard. One chose to reject the gospel; the other to neglect it. They will be lost and condemned because they heard but did not believe. The third will be lost having never heard the gospel at all; therefore did not believe. How sad. All are lost. All need to be found. All need the opportunity to hear the gospel at least once.

What possession do you have that you consider of great value? What would you do if you lost it? Your mind would not be at rest. You would abandon everything you are doing and search for your valuable possession (until you found it).

If you took a new (currency) note and offered it to a group of people, would anyone accept it? Yes, because everyone knows the value of money. If you took the note and wadded it up, would

anyone still want it? Yes, because the value did not change. If the note were spit upon, would people still want it? Yes, the value still has not changed. Throw the note down and stomp it into the ground. Would anyone take it now? Yes, there still would be takers. Why? The note still has the same value.

The Bible used the term “lost” to describe those who are away from God and will perish if they are not found and saved. A lost soul has tremendous value to Jesus Christ. It will never lose its worth. No matter how deep in sin a soul may get, no matter how filthy he may become, a soul never loses its value. How much value do you place on a lost soul?

J. Oswald Sanders in *Effective Evangelism* gives the following ways that the value of the soul can be calculated?

- ❖ By its nature and origin (Genesis 1:27)
- ❖ By the duration of its existence (Matthew 25:46)
- ❖ By the cost of its redemption (1 Peter 1:18-19)
- ❖ By the struggle required for its possession (Matthew 12:29)

“But go rather to the lost...And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 10:6-7).

Discussion Exercises:

1. Have you ever experienced the terror of being lost? Describe the occasion. How did you feel? Alone? Afraid? Disoriented?
2. Call a volunteer, blindfold him, and direct him around the room. Ask, “What feelings are you experiencing?”
3. What type of feelings does a lost soul experience? List them on the board or in your lesson notes.
4. How do we know evangelism is the priority of the Church?
5. Study your yearly or quarterly calendar and determine the percentage or number of evangelistic outreach activities compared with those designed for in-reach.

Study Questions

1. Explain the monetary value of mineral and chemical elements in the human body.

2. List three (3) things that will last for eternity.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

3. In one short sentence, describe Jesus' purpose for coming into the world. Support your answer with Scripture.

4. List the three types of lost souls.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

5. List (with Scripture reference) the four (4) ways the value of the soul can be calculated (according to J. Oswald Sanders in his book *Effective Evangelism*.)

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Additional Notes
