

Thy Rod and Thy Staff Comfort Me

Psalms 23:4

Your past, your ethnic backgrounds, and your material things all give a false identity and self-worth to your individual value.

Young 18-year-old Brandy Vela of Texas City, Texas kills herself after cyber-bullying pushed her over the edge in December of 2016. She felt she had no value for living anymore.

- A father and son do a suicide pact on a web cam for the entire world to see. This typifies how some people do not feel is any value to human life.
- One American dies of suicide every 12.3 minutes.
- The bottom line is that the devil wants you to base your self-worth on the wrong value systems so you will react to hurt, pain, and losses in the wrong way!
- It is impossible for us to accurately judge our self-worth outside of God's opinion of us through His Word. Because it is God himself that brings and establishes real value in our lives.
- You won't find real self-value by the opinions of your relatives about you, or by your classmates, and church peers alone.
- Yet, we live our lives trying to find meaning, purpose, and self-value in the validation of our loved ones and friends.

Genesis 3:7

- A. They discover an inferior identity away from God. Their eyes are now open. They are taking in knowledge independent from God's Word causing them to become afraid and ashamed of their natural identity.
- B. They sow themselves fig leaves as substitute for self-worth. However, it only provided shame and fear.

I want to draw your attention to (two teaching truths), that gave Adam a restored self-worth.

Genesis 3:17-18 The law of the first reference shows us:

1. The Fear of The Lord
 - Adam was supposed to die.
 - But God gives him instructional Word to now live by.
 - God now teaches Adam, if you want to live and provide, you must take My Word more serious.
 - Proverbs 14:26 says, "In the Fear of the Lord there is strong confidence and His children shall always have a place of refuge."
 - Adam gets his confidence and self-worth back by fearing the Lord.
 - a) Paying attention to conviction.
 - b) Watching how God judges other people around you.
 - c) Proverbs 8:13 says to Fear the Lord is to hate evil, pride, arrogance, and perverted, twisted speaking.

Genesis 3:20-21

2. The grace of God covers Adam and Eve with a coat of skin.

- The coats of skin was Gods first act of grace for the human race.
- Now Adam can finally confront his shame, his fears, and isolation through God's grace.
- Adam had to stare at the dead animal (possibly put his hand on his neck, symbolic of temple sacrifices) and then wear the skin as a substitution for his death and sin.
- Adam now learns that the fear of God and the grace of God, both, go together in worship.
- Adams self-worth is restored by practicing the fear of God and the grace of God.
- You cannot appreciate the grace of God in your life until you understand the fear of God.
- Adams response to grace was binging his anger his depression and shame under the control of God's loving grace.
- Adam gave his wife the name, Eve, all out of embracing grace and the fear of God for his life.
- Grace and the fear of God, not only restores your self-esteem but also changes how you react and treat the saints and your family.
- Men, you cannot come out of this isolated living, pride and not asking for help until you embrace and walk in God's grace and the fear of the Lord.
- You see, when you take the fear of the Lord more serious you won't treat sin and stubbornness casually or persistently. This all affects your self-worth. It affects how you spend your time and money, because you don't want to offend God and His word.

God help me to:

- a) Honor what you honor!
- b) To love what you love!
- c) To hate what you hate!
- d) To give you the passionate praise and thanksgiving you deserve!
- e) To tremble in awe at the privilege of His presence and the wonder of His word!
 - This restores our self-worth in God.
 - This attracts God's grace and favor to our lives.

Psalms 23:3

What comforts David?

- Thy Rod and Thy Staff
 - 1. Rod- is symbolic of the fear of the Lord.
 - 2. Staff- This represents God's grace. Ephesians 3:2-8
- We can only step into next level thinking through walking in the confidence of God's grace.
- You will be stuck in low-level thinking and negative self-criticalness unless you learn and apply the rod of grace personally.
- Grace identifies me as one who wears the ornaments and military decorations of God's grace.
 - A. I now have value because I'm wearing:
 - a. The coats of skin for fearing God
 - b. The decorations of grace of what I've been thru.
 - B. Grace places a high value on your time because you are a trophy of grace to others.

Read Acts 15:16, Ezekiel 16:11

We must go to next level thinking!

1. How we plan our down time- how you manage your time.
2. How we choose our friends.
3. How we choose our careers.
4. How we go after souls.
5. How we give our time and gifts to the church.
6. How we take correction and advice from spiritual leadership.
7. How we view relationship conflict.
8. Becoming overachievers.

Closing: Exodus 2:12

- Before Moses could go to the next level in his thinking, he had to kill the Egyptian identity within himself and rely on God's mercies.

The Value of a Minute:

1. Halle Berry earns \$30 a minute, 18k an hour because of what she is.
2. Tiger Woods earns \$177 a minute for what he does, or \$189 million a year.
3. Stephen Spielberg earns \$635 a minute, by what he gets others to do. That is \$900 million a year.
4. The mogul Mittal, in India, earns \$2,011 a minute or \$4 billion a year.
5. Bill Gates earns \$6057 a minute or \$7 billion a year.
6. We don't see our earning because we don't place a value for our minutes!
7. People don't value the Pastor's counsel because we don't charge, but give it freely. You don't value the minute. If a lawyer or doctor gives you counsel, you pay them even when it's wrong because you have given them value for their minute. You let people step into your life having no value for your minutes. Don't let crazy people into your mind! Lord, increase my value!

Moses gave up all of his Egyptian identity to step into next level of thinking.

- He feared the Lord and embraced grace for 40 years in the land of Midian.
- He had to learn next level thinking in the wilderness.
- He had to become the very profession that he grew up to hate. That profession was that of a shepherd.
- For thy rod and staff comforts you Moses.
- Moses had another self-worth value system until he killed the Egyptian in his life. All to prepare him for promise land identity.

Read Psalms 138:8

DLR/ag

4/26/17
D.L. Rogers