



Ipod





What do all these things have in common?

They have value!

- *What makes each of these valuable? Who determines the value of these objects?*
- *Why are some objects more valuable if there are only a limited number of them?*
- *What role does personal preference play in determining how valuable something is?*

Now let me show you my valuable item:



Do you think these old broken shells are valuable?

They are to me! These are the first shells that Mason and Abigail picked while vacationing on Ocracoke Island on the Outer Banks of North Carolina with my family. We still have these shells on display in two of our bathrooms to remind us of the great time we had together. Even though we've never been back to that particular beach, the shells take us back to great feelings and great memories that fall of 2006.

There are times in each of our lives when the world may look at us and not see anything that valuable. Sometimes we look at other people and compare—or we judge. Honestly, there may be times when we look at ourselves and feel the same way. But just like the object I just showed you that has value because of the meaning it has to me, you have tremendous value because of what you mean to God. Today we're going to look at exactly what this means.

Read GENESIS 1:26-31 (NLT)

²⁶Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground."

²⁷So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

²⁸Then God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground."

²⁹Then God said, "Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food. ³⁰And I have given every green plant as food for all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—everything that has life." And that is what happened.

³¹Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good! And evening passed and morning came, marking the sixth day.

Let's explore what it means to be created in the image of God and how this dramatically impacts the way we see ourselves and our place in God's plan.

1. People have inherent value because we were made in God's image

- *The word inherent means that an inborn quality or attribute exists permanently in someone or something. So what do we mean when we say someone has inherent value?*
- *If God has created us with inherent value because we were made in his image, how does our culture attempt to alter the value we put on our ourselves—and on others?*
- *How does this concept change the way you view other people? yourself?*

We live in a world that sizes people up using its own standards of worth. Are you beautiful according to the world's standards? Then you're valuable. Are you talented? Then you're valuable. Do you have something the world needs? You get the idea: You're valuable. But what if you don't meet the world's flawed standards for attractiveness? What if you aren't talented in an area our culture values? Too often you are told you aren't valuable and don't have much worth. This could not be further from the truth. You are valuable simply because you were made in the image of God. God's standard of worth is the exact opposite of the world's standard.

2. Being made in God's image means having the power to impact the world

- *Being made in God's image doesn't mean looking like God. It means you have the capability to reflect God's character, ways, and glory to the world. How does this put you in a position to have great influence on the world around you?*
- *What are some practical examples of how you can reflect who God is in the world you live in each day?*

Think about a solar panel. Solar panels provide power for a lot of things: cars, businesses, homes, and so on. But on their own, solar panels have no ability to power anything. They must draw their power from a power source—in this case, the sun. Solar panels absorb the sunlight and then make their own impact. You are the same way. Because you are made in God's image, you have the power to make an impact on the world because of God's power in you. You can literally be a representative of God's character and God's ways in your school and in your community. Even more so when you trust Christ and the Holy Spirit sets up permanent residence inside of you, empowering you to do great things.

3. Your life has great value and great purpose because God's plan for this world involves you

- *God chose to create you as a wonderfully unique being. What does that say about your importance?*
- *If God's desire is to redeem all people from their sins—and it is—then what do you think this says about your life's purpose?*
- *How does your ability to reflect God's character shape the way you show others what it means to have a relationship with Christ?*

God is the creator of all things. God created you for a purpose. Ephesians 2:10 gives us a glimpse of the purpose behind God's decision to include us in his creation: For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. We were included in God's creation to use our lives to make an impact for God—to do "good things," as Paul put it in that verse. Your life has the potential to make a tremendous impact for the kingdom of God, all because God created you in his image and included you in his awesome plan.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20 (NLT)

¹⁹Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, ²⁰for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.

- *Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. What does this passage say about the ownership of our lives?*

PSALM 100:3 (NLT)

Acknowledge that the Lord is God! He made us, and we are his. We are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

- *Read Psalm 100:3. Based on this verse, why is it a good idea to seek God's will when it comes to our plans, our futures, and the things we want to do with our lives?*

- *Do you think most teenage Christ-followers truly seek God's purposes for their future plans? Explain your answer.*
- *Give some practical examples of what it would look like for someone to really use their life to make a meaningful difference in the world around them for the sake of Christ.*

Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 6 teach us that our lives are not even ours; we were bought with a price, purchased by someone else. Who purchased us? Jesus. And what price did he pay? He gave his life so we could live. When we think about our lives and our purpose and our value, we must remember that Christ loved us enough to lay down his life—and he did it so we would live a vibrant life of faith, directing others to God and his life-giving love.

- *When you see yourself and your self-worth in a negative way, when you look in the mirror and feel worthless or no good or think you don't measure up, what are you really saying to God about his creation? What are you saying to Christ about the life he purchased?*

I challenge you to begin seeing yourselves the way God sees you.

- *What have you learned today that might lead you to begin to see yourself as more valuable and more important to God and his plan?*
- *What are some examples of how this knowledge might begin to change the way you go about each day?*
- *How might this change the way you see your future?*

Think about your future plans. Come up with a one-sentence description of what career path you think you might choose and how this choice can make a difference in the world.

- *We know that God chose to create you to be a part of his plan to make his name and ways known in the world. How will you begin to see your future plans in light of this?*
- *How can you use your future to make a dynamic impact in the world in Christ's name?*

Have you ever known someone who had a bad argument with their significant other or just broke up with their boyfriend and got real angry? What did they do? They tore up their picture!

Satan hates God but is powerless to harm God. Since he can't do damage to God, Satan tries to do damage to His picture, His image. You are created in the image of God. Don't buy into Satan's lies by undermining your value in Christ. Don't let him damage or discourage you as the devil tries to get back at God by trying to destroy you, His image. Be strong. Fulfill your purpose. Glorify the Father. Shine! Shine in grace, mercy, love, forgiveness, patience, kindness, goodness, and other attributes of your Creator. Come up with one attribute of God that you might want to shine in this week and focus on that.

Until next week...

Memory verse for the week:

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago (Ephesians 2:10).