

It Matters Values Matter Part 2

Intro: Everyone has values. Whether they have ever been expressed verbally or not, values are influencing your life and your decision.

- You chose to go to college because you valued that choice instead of going to work.
- You chose to get married because you valued that above staying single
- You chose to stay at your job because you value what is familiar and predictable over the risk of what is unknown
- You chose to take vacations because you value making memories not just making money.
- You chose to go to the gym because you value being in shape over being out of shape.
- You chose to come to church today because you valued being here over something else you could be doing.

Values are the foundational building blocks of your life and future. Values are the non-negotiable issues of your life. Without values, our lives are ships without a rudder. We will be controlled by the ever-changing circumstances of life instead of the unchanging nature of values. Our lives will be the sum result of the values we live. That's the power of values.

- Today we are going to answer three foundational questions regarding values.
 - Why do I need values – Where do we get values – How do I live my values?
- Solomon was a king in Israel 3000 years ago and he wrote the book of Proverbs. Proverbs are values that build your life. The book of Proverbs communicates these values in a creative, poetic way. The book begins like this....

Prov. 1:2-4 "Their purpose is to teach people wisdom and discipline, to help them understand the insights of the wise. ³Their purpose is to teach people to live disciplined and successful lives, to help them do what is right, just, and fair. ⁴These proverbs will give insight to the simple, knowledge and discernment to the young." (NLT) Values have always been important and the key to your life. So, let's answer these three questions.

1. Why do I need values?

Eph. 4:14 "Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth." (NLT)

Col. 2:8 "Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ." (NLT)

Values protect us from influences that will damage our lives. There are a lot of voices out there you can listen to get directions. How do you know what is right? How do you keep from

getting lost? How do you not get taken captive by wrong thinking? The influence of values cannot be overstated. Here's why...

- Values provide direction

Values are the compass settings for your life. How do you know you're moving in the right direction? How do you make decisions when your emotions are confused? How? You navigate by truths that do not change. Values are like the North Star. They are like your Nav system for life. Feelings change but your values do not.

- Values provide clarity for decisions

When faced with tough decisions, values provide the clarity to make the right ones. If you make a decision that violates your values, then it's the wrong decision. For example: Taking a job that violates the values of "Family", it would be the wrong decision no matter how much money you make. (explain) For some, money is the highest value – why? Look at the decisions. People sacrifice relationships – family – even their own personal health for the sake of wealth.

- Values provide confidence

Feeling lost or insecure about decisions will create a lack of confidence. But values provide an assurance that no matter what is going on in your life, if you are living your values, you can accept the results. The right values will produce the right results. That's a confident way to live. This is not pride or self-elevation. It is confidence that values are influencing your life more than circumstances.

- Values provide motivation

When you have confidence in how you're living, you are motivated to keep living that way. Living out values is not easy. There are sacrifices you must make. (We'll talk about that later). You must be assured of the reward. It's like working out. How do you stay motivated? You're convinced it's worth it. AND, you see results. Results are motivating.

- Values provide protection

Values protect you from alternative pathways. Values protect you from consequences that come from poor choices. Values protect our hearts and minds from all the distractions. Values allow you to decide what to keep and what to reject. Values literally guard your life. Values are the foundation of boundaries that keep us healthy. We get to say NO without guilt and YES without manipulation. Values allow you to live free,

- Values provide results

Our lives will be defined by the values we live. The right values produce the right results. If you look into the future and see the life you want, then you must have the right values to get you there. It will not be luck or chance. Your life will be the results that your values have created.

Values have a powerful influence. How are your values influencing your life? What values are influencing your life and future?

2. Where do we get our values?

Matt. 7:24-25 “Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. ²⁵ Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock.” (NLT)

- Values come from the word of God

If you have values that contradict God’s word, they are the wrong values. Our values need to be consistent with the Kingdom we are a part of. If we want a life that can withstand the storms and something that will last, then we need to have values that are consistent with God’s values.

- This is why knowing God’s word is so important. God’s word gives you a way to evaluate your values. You and I must measure our values against the principals of God’s word.
- Therefore, as you clarify your values, you should be able to back it up with the word of God.

- Do not pursue the values of this fallen world

1 John 2:15-16 “Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. ¹⁶ For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world.” (NLT)

Know the difference between the values of the world and God’s Kingdom. The world values 3 core pursuits. These are Pleasure – Possessions – Pride. There’s nothing inherently wrong with all three of these things. BUT, they should never be allowed to be driving forces of our lives. If these become our values, we sacrifice what is of greatest value to God. You simply cannot build your life with these things.

- Pleasure, Possessions and even a healthy pride can be the results of biblical values but they should never be allowed to be the value itself.

- Values need to be consistent with who you are.

WHY? Because God designed you very uniquely, therefore some of your values should reflect this. Living in a way that God designed you brings Him honor and you more happiness.

You are fearfully and wonderfully made by God - We are His workmanship – His masterpiece. We are uniquely created for good works – we are specifically gifted by the holy spirit. All this implies that our values should free us to be who God created us to be.

Let me explain.....

3. How do I live my values?

Prov. 3:5-6 “Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own

understanding. ‘Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.’ (NLT)

If I am going to trust the Lord with all my heart, then I must trust that He knows what is best. His values from His word are the best way I can live life in this broken world. I am not going to depend on myself. I’m not going to get my values from culture – social media – some YouTube influencer. I’m going to seek His will for my life. Are you ready?

- Pray – This is a spiritual process needing God’s help. Ask Him for clarity – courage – and strength to change. Don’t do this flippantly, quickly, or without some serious reflection. Slow down.
- Write values down (with biblical references) You don’t need a scripture passage to specifically talk about your value. It could be a biblical principle you are applying to your life. You also don’t need 15 values. Have 3-5.

Let me share with my top 4

- **Faith** – This includes all aspects of my faith – my relationship with God – my serving – my giving – the church - the outworking of my faith – praying – growing, learning,... Easy to support all this from Scripture.
- **Family** – This has evolved over the years from wife – children – sons-in-law – grandchildren – God’s word is so clear about the priority of relationships. Loving God and loving others are the greatest commandments. These need to be part of our core values somehow. This value has helped me make a lot of hard decisions over the years.
- **Freedom** – This has nothing to do with being born in the US. It’s a value based upon how God created me to function. My personality needs freedom – I am expressive – creative – risk taker – don’t thrive with a lot of restraints. I literally crave freedom. I avoid highly restrictive environments and people. Since I am God’s workmanship, knowing my design has helped me make decisions. God doesn’t want you functioning contrary to your design. Your design honors God.

- **Fun** – This has to do with life balance. This is about managing energy not just time. God created us with a life to enjoy not just to exist. Fun may not sound spiritual, but it is. The bible talks a lot about joy. Why shouldn't this be a value? Isn't God honored and pleased as we are having fun enjoying the life He gave us? Fun isn't all we do but it should be part of our lives. I believe when we have joy, when we are enjoying the life He gave us, it brings God joy a well.
 - When I watch my kids and grandkids playing, laughing and enjoying our pool area we have created for this very purpose, it gives me joy.

- Evaluate – what parts of my life violates these values
Now the tough part begins. When we start creating values, we may see how much of our lives simply don't reflect what we really desire. In fact, this may explain a lot of stress and internal tension many of you feel. When your life doesn't reflect your values, you simply feel more stress. Your nervous system will let you know something is wrong. There is an internal tension.

- Make tough changes – Values require lifestyle changes –
Values go into our lives first – we fill in the rest around values.

- **Jar illustration**

Once your values are in place...

- Submit decisions to your values.
This requires courage and will. It's easy to just react to life and circumstances instead of submitting your decisions to your values. Values are not immediate gratification. Sometimes they require big sacrifices – even painful decisions – but the long-term payoff is what you're chasing.

Can you see how values matter? Take some time this week and reflect on your values. Look at your decisions – and see what values you have been living. Maybe you've been making decisions that are contrary to your internal values and this is the tension you feel? Maybe it's time to spend time in prayer – reflecting – asking God for clarity – and eventually writing them down. This just might be the life clarity you've been waiting for. Values matter.

Prayer