

“God’s Values: Why Is This Important?”

By Brother Andy Giebler

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Morning. One other thing; I believe they were leaving me the privilege of doing it: I have the privilege of having my dad, Russ, and his wife Sue, visiting from Southern Illinois, here this morning.

This month we’ve been talking about God’s values. We’ve heard three wonderful messages already this month, and I’m kind of going to recap those a little bit, and then add a little bit, too, this morning. Not to re-preach those messages, but just to keep these things fresh in our minds.

There’s times when I look at this, and I think, “Okay, God’s values, other peoples values, why are all these values important?” We’re raised in our natural families, and we don’t have a choice in that, really, we’re born in that; that’s where we are. We’re stuck with our parents values. I’m having a little fun with my dad. As I stand here this morning, I think back, and, as I had a chance to visit, I think back to the things that I learned from my mom and my dad. Even though my mom left a little early, I still remember the things that she taught, and my dad taught us. My dad has remarried, and I gained a second mom, and I still learned things from both of them, and I still count that a privilege. As I see them interact with their children, their grandchildren, their great-grandchildren, their nieces, their cousins... And that’s a godly principle, and I’m going to get in some scriptures on that later on, that we respect our parents, that we respect our elders, those that teach us. We live in a society today that wants to stop us from sharing those good and proper values.

Just to kind of highlight some more examples of things that we find important to us, in our own families, there are things that are values that are taught. I remember things that were taught to me; being honest, doing things right, being compassionate, to be giving, and those are just a few that come to mind. Each family has things that they taught their children, things that are important to them, things that are important to their culture, because each one of us comes from different cultures, whether it’s a different country, or a different state in the United States, or a different ethnic culture. We have different things on how we were raised that are important to us. We honor those. We have—Parrish alluded to it, in his message—the military; when you join the military, you learn a whole new set of values, you learn a whole new set of instructions, a whole new set of things that you have to adhere to. It’s the same thing on a new job, or even when you begin to date or get married. That’s a whole ‘nother set of values there, that’s some shared values. Sure, you get to know your spouse to be, your boyfriend or girlfriend; you learn who your husband or wife is going to be, you learn things about them. You make it a point to know those things, to find out what’s important to them, to figure out what they value. As we talk about God’s values, we look back at bosses, or jobs, or a chief in the Navy, or a wife, or even our parents, we take the time to learn those by heart, to see what they value, and, even more so, God’s values.

How do we learn God’s values? How do we learn what’s important to God? We live in our natural homes for eighteen, nineteen, twenty years, for most people, and then we leave home. We live with a spouse, hopefully for life, and those are things that we have to work on, because we want those circumstances to be the way they should be, to gain favor in their eyes, to get a better job, make more money or whatever. But, God’s values, that’s eternity. God’s values, that’s forever. That’s a relationship that has to be cultivated as well. We talked about some of the things that re God’s values. We don’t know those values unless we seek them out. So, what re some ways that we can seek out God’s values? Prayer, exactly. Take time to get on our knees, find that prayer closet, and that’s something that the world doesn’t want us to do, either. That’s something that you won’t hear them teach in school; they want to take it out. But, personal time with God. Read the Scriptures; learn them; study them. Learn what is important to God. And, as you will find, and many of us have, when you start studying those things, then you start

learning what God values, learning what's important to Him, it becomes more than, "Okay, what's going to make God happy?" It becomes a relationship; it becomes not just finding out facts, but a relationship that you have with your God, a spiritual relationship. Not just a church relationship, not my Sunday morning ritual type thing, but a relationship with God, and that will only enhance anything that happens in this life.

This is the relationship we're talking about, being born again into Christ:

Romans 6:4 *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

Those are the values; that newness of life.

The scripture that we use for the month is:

Jeremiah 9:24 *But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD*

I had to read that Scripture a few times to really get everything out of it, a handful of words, there. I want to back up into twenty-three, to kind of give it a little more context.

Jeremiah 9:23- *Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom...*

If we look up the word glory right now, it's talking about boasting, making a show, celebrating it.

Jeremiah 9:23-24 *Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.*

I want to take this apart a couple more times. From the back: the things that I delight in, saith the Lord; that he understandeth and knoweth Me. That we know God. I know I may sound like a broken record, but I want to push on this a little bit, because it's something that it bears reminding ourselves of. But let men glory, let us boast, let us make show of, let us celebrate that we understandeth and knoweth Me. That we know God; let that be our boast. Let that be our, you know, it's easy to say, "Yeah, I've got a new truck; I've got a new car; I've got a new home." Those are all good things; it's not bad to have them, but, those are riches. Let him that glorieth, him that boast, him that makes a show of, or celebrates, let him understand that I am the LORD, which exercises lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

Parrish shared with us, the first of the month, that there are some things that we find in the Scriptures that are values, and one of them is God's name. Throughout the Old Testament, He had different names He was referred to as. He made it a point to give them a name, that they knew who He was. It's no different now. Jesus said:

John 5:43 *I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.*

In other Scriptures, he says, "I bear the name of the Father. I manifest Thy name." (John 17:6) Sure, he had different names, but this is the one that we were given. This also in the name of the Son.

The name of the son who was the sacrifice. The name of the Son who was the Passover. We're going to talk about Good Friday, Easter. We're going to talk about the sacrifice more, and that name that he came to bear. That name that scriptures poured over, talking about the power of, the power to cast out demons, the power to heal; that's the name that saves us. That's the name that He gave us. Throughout the Old Testament, He talked about covenants. You know, baptism, that's our covenant today. That's our circumcision made without hands; that new covenant. I'm going to reference one more scripture on that:

Acts 4:12 *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

He talked about pride. God has things He likes, and things he doesn't. He made reference of: pride is a thing that will cause you to take credit for things that aren't yours. I'm just re-preaching what Parrish said; I'm not going to take credit for that. It makes us do things that just aren't right. Makes us think we're the ones doing it. Pride; and, as I'm going through these things, each one of these could be a Bible study or almost a sermon in and of themselves, the things that God values and doesn't. So, just going to be kind of short things that we're hoping will kind of whet your appetite to go dig into these things, to go back and re-read and re-learn these things. Whether you're learning for the first time, or just refreshing, just let God show you the things that He delights in.

Proverbs 29:23 *A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.*

Pride; that's a whole study in itself. It's something that's a pitfall. It's something that we need to keep that in mind.

God desires, and values a pure sacrifice.

Malachi 1:8 *And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts*

God wants the best of us. He doesn't want leftovers. In the Old Testament, they took the animals and they sacrificed the best of what they had. They didn't go out in the pen, and say, "Oh, this one's blind; it will never fetch any price at market. God can have this one." They went out and took the best, the firstborn, the one that would be the prize, the one that you would say, "That's the one that I've been looking for," they took that one and made it a sacrifice. They took the best that they had, and gave it. Look at Cain and Abel: One brought of what he had, and one brought of the best that he had, and God had respect for one above the other. As we're looking at the things that God values, if we take the time to offer the first of what we have, make that firstfruit sacrifice, even in our tithes and offerings. Firstfruit. I mean, I can't sit here and tell you exactly how much money I give, nor would I. I know there's times when I've done it, and I haven't. I've seen where God has blessed me. When I sit down with my budget; here's my paycheck—it's all in the bank, I don't have, physically, the bills in front of me, but I wrote out a budget, and the tithe goes first. Something may physically go out first, but I set that aside, in the beginning, and God honors that. It seems like, throughout the month, everything goes much better if you take the time, even if it looks like, "Oh, God, I know this is what I said I was going to do; I don't know if I'm going to be able to do it this month." Bite the bullet and go ahead and do it anyway. This isn't about shaking anybody for offering, this is about what God values. This is about what God wants. If you notice, we don't pass a plate here; we have a box in the back and that's it. We don't get in anybody's face to do that. This is Biblical principles. Firstfruits. It's more than just money; it's time. It's the time we put in.

Do I wait until the end of the day, and I've done everything else I had to do, to have my prayer time? I've been guilty of that, yet, when you make the sacrifice, and the Bible calls it a sacrifice for a reason. To take the best of what anyone has is a sacrifice. That's what God honors. That's what God requires, and that what God will bless.

Jessie talked about four values; four things that we see throughout the Bible: Wisdom, faith, humility, and mercy. Again, there's four Bible studies there.

Proverbs 8:11 *For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.*

And Rob even talked about faith. Not the faith that God *can* give you something; the faith that God *will* give you something. It's easy to say that God can do it; we know that. We know God is all-powerful; He can. That's nothing. Faith to say, "God will do this." That puts me on the hook, now; that says I have to step out on my faith.

The question that Jesse asked was, "How do we get this?"

James 1:5 *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.*

If we lack wisdom, God wants us to come to Him. This wisdom that God values is something that we have to get from God. If we ask—I like how you put that, Jesse, "If you... then you..." If you do things, you will get things. It's a two part thing; you've got to step out on that faith.

James 3:17 *But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.*

This is God's wisdom; this isn't our wisdom. There's a wisdom of this world that's not good. there's wisdom of this world that says to do what feels good, do what you think is right, do what your flesh says to do. We've got all kinds of doctrines, and philosophies, and theologies, and even medical doctors saying, "Yeah, this is what's right. This is the way you were designed; you don't have a choice." That's man's wisdom. God's wisdom is above that, but you don't get it unless you seek it. If you seek the world, that's what you find. If you seek God first, that's what you find.

Faith

Hebrews 11:1-6 *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

Faith isn't just, "God, I need this." (Andy turned and walked away from the podium) Sometimes, that's the time for the prayer closet; where you ask God for something and you wait for an answer. Look at our natural relationships. You don't walk up to your mom and dad, when you were growing up, and say, "Hey, I need five bucks," and walk away. You stand there and wait; wait for an answer of some sort. If you just do a kind of a drive-by, you ain't getting nothing. Probably for the next several times you ask. Or, you might get something, but you might not like it. Diligence is not "tossing up a prayer" Seek God and wait for an answer

Humility

Matthew 18: 1-4 *At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

To stop and look at a child sometimes; sometimes you've got to stop and look at the humility of a child, the simplicity of a child, the brutal honesty of a child. They'll tell you exactly what they think and not even know what they're saying half the time. Whatever's on their mind, they're going to speak it. But, this is how we've got to come to God, in humility and faith. A little child will believe what a parent tells them. That's how we've got to come to God. Open and honest. We've got to come to God and say, "Okay, God, whatever you've got, that's what we're looking for." Too many times, we get the answer back, and say, "Not that. Really?" Sometimes we wrestle with it. That's our own pride, sometimes.

Jesse spoke of mercy.

Matthew 5:7 *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*

Micah 6:8 *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*

Another thing that we talked about was endurance. Chris talked about it. He made reference to Bob's hat that said, "I dealt with it." We've never been promised a bed of roses. We've never been promised an easy life.

James 1:12 *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

Matthew 24:13 *But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

Matthew 11:29-30 *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

And that is the key, sometimes; what burdens are we carrying? Are we carrying God's values? Are we carrying what he wants us to carry? Are we carrying the world's values? If we're carrying the world's values, it's heavy, it's cumbersome. It's things that we should not have; we're not designed to carry them. If you think of a yoke, it's something that is used to bind animals together to pull a load, to do work. If you take on the yoke of the world, who knows what you're pulling around? If you take on the yoke of the world, there may be things on there that you can't bear. And you can't take on God's yoke and the world's yoke at the same time; you can't serve two masters. A lot of times we get confused on what's right and what's wrong. "Why would God do this? Why would God allow that? Why do some people feel they should live this way or that way? Why do I have the urge to commit this sin?" And we wrestle with those things. "Why did God do this? How can this be right? Why do these bad things happen?" We're looking at symbols; we're looking at, "Here's what we've got," instead of looking at, "What load should I be bearing? What things should I be studying? What things should I be placing my value on?" If I'm putting my values in the world, I'm going to be really confused. In James, it talks about a double-minded man being unstable in all his ways (James 1:8). We can only serve one Master, we can only have one God. We can't live in the world and serve God at the same time. You will be confused, and you will wonder these things. We will get those questions, and, sometimes we can tell people that, but

you've got to pray for people, because they may not understand. If I said what I just said to you to some people out in the world, they may not get it, because they're not looking for it.

I want to get into love; God values love. 1 John 4:7-8 says that God *is* love.

1 John 4:7-8 *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*

We can look at love in quite a few contexts. Throughout the Bible there's different uses of the word, 'love.' There's love for God, there's the love for our family... I want to look at how we love God.

Ephesians 5:25-27 *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

Let me stop right there for a minute. It's talking about the love that God had for us, and that Jesus was that sacrifice, that He could present us to Him. Here was no other way. There was the death of a sacrifice. That was the love of God. That was what was done for us. In verse 28, it says, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies." Think about Jesus; He loved us more than His own body, because He allowed it to be hung on the cross. He allowed it to be beaten within an inch of His life. The sacrifice that had to be made.

Ephesians 5:28-33 *So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.*

That's a pretty powerful thing. When you look at the love of Christ; you look at the way a man is supposed to love his wife. There's a wonderful thing; it's a spiritual thing, rather than a bunch of rules. It's that way with God, as well, when we take the time to love God for who He is, and not a bunch of rules. When we lived at home, there were rules. It's true. When I was growing up—I've heard it said before, and I'll say it, "The older I get, the smarter my parents are." We learn those rules for a reason. But, in Christ, if we're in a relationship with God, a spiritual relationship, they're no longer rules. There's a Scripture, that talks about the law, and grace; this Scripture says that Gentiles, not Jews, not having the law, but, by the Spirit do the things contained in the law (Romans 2:14), because we're nurturing that spiritual relationship with God.

We're talking about the love between a man and his wife, and we've got young folk in here.

Ephesians 6:1-4 *Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

That's one of those things, you've got to look at it... I heard someone talking about when you get on an airplane, when you fly, some of the instructions that they give you on the seatbelt, and the emergency oxygen masks: The instruction is, if that mask deploys, and there's a child next to you, put

yours on first. Seems kind of strange, but, when you think about it, if I don't put that mask on first, I could be trying to put it on a child, and pass out, and neither one of us get the oxygen. With the Gospel, parents, we want to raise our kids right; I've seen a lot of people that say, "Well, my kids don't listen. I don't know how to get through to my child." I, as a parent, and as a grandparent, have to realize, "Okay, I'm not prayed up." If I'm not seeking God, then how am I going to teach them? How am I going to show them the right way? We want to teach them; we want them to do the right thing. We want to "Do as I say, not as I do sometimes." We have to take the time; we're taking that lifeline, first. We're taking the oxygen first; we're taking the time, and that's a sacrifice, too. Being right, being ready *for you*, before you can help your child.

The final scripture I'm going to use; talking about love:

Deuteronomy 6:1-5 *Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

All. Heart, soul, and mind. That pretty much encompasses pretty much every bit of humanity we have. All of our heart, all of our soul, all of our mind. Basically, everything we've got, we're to love God with all of it.

Deuteronomy 6:6-9 *And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.*

Throughout the Old Testament, we read where it says, "Read the Word. Rehearse the things that I am telling—that God is telling—to your children, to your children's children." Here it's talking about deliverance from Egypt; it's talking about deliverance into the Promised Land, as they walked through the Red Sea; as God parted that mighty river and they walked through on dry land. As he fed them manna in the wilderness. As He put a pillar of smoke by day and a pillar of fire by night, as He guided them through the wilderness, as He brought them into the land that He promised. That was the salvation that they were looking at there; the deliverance. What is it today? What are the things that we need to write upon our heart, the things that we need to teach our children? Let me read that again: "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." In our homes, in our families, with our brothers, with our sisters. Sure, there's things in the world that we talk about, but what's important to us? When I get up in the morning, and I talk to my wife, or we talk to our kids, when we sit down to dinner, when we retire at the end of the day, what's our conversation? Are we talking about the latest song? The latest television show? I'm not saying those things should never be talked about, but what's our focus? Are we taking the time to teach our kids, to teach each other, to write those things on our heart? That's our conversation, when we come together.

We talked about all these other things that God desires, and things He doesn't. Pride, humility... Are we taking the time to say, "God, I'm putting You first?" It may seem strange to a lot of people,

because, once again, the world doesn't like this. You look at what Jesus was up against. They brought the law up against Him; they brought rules and regulations and said, "You're one that stirreth up the people." They wanted to silence him. When he sent His disciples out, they were up against the law; they were up against established traditions. Paul, he was up against so much. John the Baptist, they took his head off because he said, "You can't have your brother's wife." The world does not want us to talk about this stuff. It's no different today, but we have to talk about these things. We have to bring it up, because it's so easy to be numb to it; it's so easy to go with the flow. I've been guilty of it. You go with the flow; you get up in the morning, you go to your job, you turn on the radio, you have your conversations, you come home, sit on the couch and watch a TV program, and then go to bed. We do that enough times, you know, and that's subtlety of the other side of Spiritual. Subtlety in the things that will take us and hinder us and keep us from having that relationship with God. Just as, the Disciples, when they went out, when Paul went out, "Stop talking about this Jesus. Don't even say His name. We don't want to hear it. Don't preach in His name." But it didn't stop them. And this goes beyond preaching, this is just in our own homes. Write these things, speak of these things, and, if I could encourage anything, it's just that we make it a joy to have a conversation with people, to make it a joy to seek the face of God as we go out. Sometimes we look at conversations with a stranger, and, as Jesse alluded to, wisdom: you don't get it unless you ask for it. In every conversation, I find myself wondering—sometimes deep into a conversation—there's nothing Godly in this conversation. Not that I'm speaking anything ungodly at the time, but I'm in a conversation with people and there's nothing Godly here at all. That's the time to ask for wisdom. "God, how do I give You glory in this circumstance? How do I lift You up?" And it may not be an opportunity to preach. It's an opportunity to—and you may not even know how what you said affected other people. But, if you're seeking God, you will say things that will bless people and they don't even know it, or you don't even know it, and they get something from it. Your actions, and it may be something simple like holding the door for somebody. God may prick your heart just to open a door. Something that simple. I've been in a check-out line and said, "God, how do I lift you up in this circumstance?" And God said, "Speak a kind word." I didn't preach at them; I didn't invite them to church. I just—God said, "Say something kind to them," and God's Spirit does the rest. They'll know that it's something God did that day, and not that it was anything of me; it was just the fact that God used me in that circumstance.

In closing, let me say this: The things that God values, the things that God wants to have, the things that God desires, we seek those things. Amen.