

**Slide 1**

# **Valuing What God Values**

**LUKE 16:14-18**

## **Introduction**

1. As many of you know, the month of March is considered the windy month.
2. During this time, it is not unusual to see a number of things being blown around on an especially windy day (styrofoam cup or plate, cardboard, trash can, etc.)
3. The apostle Paul utilized a similar illustration to describe people who are constantly shifting in their beliefs and values.
4. In Ephesians 4:14, after stressing the importance of our striving to become mature men and women within the body of Christ, Paul added, “As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming” (Ephesians 4:14, NASB95).
5. We live in a world of constantly changing values.
6. Because of this, we need our own North Star by which to steer our ship of faith so that we value that which God values.
7. Without it we will find ourselves being blown all over the sea of life without ever reaching our intended destination.
8. Today, I would like for us to examine these words which God inspired His servant Luke to record and seek to value in our own lives that which God values.
9. What does it mean to cherish God’s values?

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## **I. Cherishing God's Values Means That We Do Not . . .**

### **A. SERVE WEALTH**

"No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth." (Luke 16:13, NASB95)

1. Two weeks ago, we looked at what Jesus said to His disciples about their attitude toward wealth.
2. He exhorted them to be generous with their wealth and utilize it to bring others into His kingdom.
3. He stressed that it is impossible to serve two masters — God and wealth.
4. The Pharisees, a ruling party among the Jews, did not like what Jesus had to say because, as Luke points out, they were "lovers of money" (v. 14).
5. As a result they "were scoffing at Him," they "ridiculed Him" (ESV).
6. Paul warned the evangelist Timothy that "the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs" (2 Timothy 6:10, NASB95).
7. As Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21), and wherever our heart may be is where we invest our time and our energy.

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### **B. WORSHIP SELF**

"And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God." (Luke 16:15, NASB95)

1. How many of us have justified a position we have held or a course of action we have pursued at some point in our lives.

2. Back in Luke 10, a lawyer put Jesus to the test by asking Him, “what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” (v. 25).
3. Jesus asked the lawyer what he understood the law to say.
4. The lawyer responded, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself” (Luke 10:27, NASB95).
5. Jesus said to him, “You have answered correctly; do this and you will live” (Luke 10:28).
6. Luke then writes, “But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29).
7. Why do we seek to justify ourselves?
  - a. It goes back to a matter of the heart — we care about what others think of us.
  - b. We want those around us to “admire” us, to “value” us.
8. Jesus, however, said that God “knows your hearts” and that what is “highly esteemed (valued) among men is detestable in the sight of God” (v. 15) — it stinks to Him.

[If cherishing God’s values means that we do not serve wealth or worship self, what does it mean?]

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## **II. Cherishing God’s Values Means That We . . .**

### **A. SEEK TO ENTER HIS KINGDOM**

“The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John; since that time the gospel of the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it. But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one

stroke of a letter of the Law to fail.” (Luke 16:16–17, NASB95)

1. John the Baptist marked the end of the old era.
2. He came to announce the arrival of Jesus.
3. Isaiah the prophet spoke of John when he called him, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness” who would declare, “Make ready the way of the Lord, make His paths straight”” (Luke 3:4; Isaiah 40:3).
4. Jesus was the one who came preaching the kingdom of God (Mark 1:15).

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1:15, NASB95)

“Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom . . .” (Matthew 4:23, NASB95)

5. The last half of verse 16 has given translators and commentators difficulty for centuries — “since that time the gospel of the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it” (v. 16b).
6. The Greek word βιάζεται, which is translated as “is forcing” can also mean “to urge”.
7. For this reason, the HCSB translates it as “the good news of the kingdom of God has been proclaimed, and everyone is strongly urged to enter it.”
8. This fits well with two parables which Luke has recently recorded Jesus telling:
  - a. The host of the banquet — “And the master said to the slave, ‘Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and **compel them** to come in, so that my house may be filled.’” (Luke 14:23, NASB95)
  - b. The father of the two sons — “But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began **pleading with him**.” (Luke

15:28, NASB95)

9. Jesus is constantly placing before His hearers the opportunity to enter the kingdom of God.
10. He does not fail to tell them of the risk they face of being eternally separated from God if they fail to respond.
11. Having said this Jesus makes a powerful point to the Pharisees who are lovers of the law — it is a truth which neither they nor we can afford to miss.

“But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter or the Law to fail” (v. 17).

12. If they are to keep the Law, they must embrace Jesus’ kingdom message to which the Law points.

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.” (Genesis 3:15, NASB95)

“. . . in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.” (Genesis 12:3b, NASB95)

“The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him.” (Deuteronomy 18:15, NASB95)

13. It is no different for us today, Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s Law.
14. It is only in Him that you and I can be declared righteous before God.
15. To reject Jesus is to forever be lost, separated from God.

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### **B. HONOR OUR COMMITMENTS TO GOD AND OUR SPOUSES**

“Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery.” (Luke

16:18, NASB95)

1. Marriage and divorce were contested issues in Jesus day, even as they are in ours.
2. There was a well-known debate going around about the proper grounds of divorce.
3. Both went back to the teaching of Moses, in Deuteronomy 24:1, "When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house . . ." (Deuteronomy 24:1, NASB95).
4. One rabbi by the name of Shammai taught that the only allowable grounds for divorce was immorality (adultery).
5. Another rabbi, Hillel, focused on the statement "he has found some indecency [uncleanness] in her" allowed divorce for a for a variety of reasons, including something as trivial as the way she prepared the meal.
6. Such a sliding scale of permissiveness would most likely have resulted in frequent divorce in Jesus day, much like our present day "no fault divorce" or divorce on the grounds of "irreconcilable differences."
7. Jesus, however, went back beyond Moses to God's original intent.  

"For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).
8. He sets out the basic principle, not every scenario.
9. He lays out the standard, and in effect says,
  - a. "If you make a vow to marry and be faithful to your spouse before God,
  - b. But then you break vow and enter into another marital union  
 . . . this second union can be called adultery because the original vow was not kept" (Brock,1356).
10. Marriage is a three-way covenant between God, the husband and the wife.

11. Divorce is the violation of that covenant — if we are faithful to God and our spouse, we keep our vows.
12. What Jesus wants us to know is that the essence of righteousness is integrity — the essence of sin is violating the promises we make to God.
13. Living in God's kingdom means keeping our commitments to Him and others — even when it is not convenient, even when it is difficult.

## **Conclusion**

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1. What is it that you value today?
  - a. Your wealth and possessions?
  - b. Yourself, your standing in this community?
2. Remember, Jesus said that where our treasure is there we will also find our heart.
3. God calls upon us to first and foremost see His kingdom and His righteousness.
4. Commit your life to Him first — love Him with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, all your mind.
5. Honor the commitments you have made before God to others:
  - a. Husbands, wives stand by your word, keep the commitment you made to your to love, honor and cherish your spouse and — to keep yourself to that person as long as you live.
  - b. Be committed to your children. Make the sacrifices necessary to help them reach their heavenly home.
6. If you are not a Christian today, make the greatest commitment of all by giving your life to Jesus Christ in obedient faith.
7. Value what God values and pursue that which is life indeed.