

Prayer List

Gene
Veda
Wallace
Sheila
Ophelia

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 9:50 a.m.
Assembly 1:30 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Pinole Tidings

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For Building Up Things Truly Precious

Brent Lewis

There is a television show that is watched by those who are interested in antiques (my wife being one of them) in which people bring their family treasures and heirlooms and have them appraised by the experts. Many of the items have very little value other than sentimental to their owners, but some of them are found to be quite valuable—occasionally astoundingly so—to their owners. I guess the appeal of the show is the surprise and reaction one makes to finding out he or she possesses something very valuable.

Value is sometimes hard to determine. How much do you think you are worth? It has been estimated that a person of average size and weight has in his/her body enough carbon to make 9,000 pencils, enough phosphorus to make 2,200 match heads, enough fat to make 7 bars of soap, enough water to fill a ten-gallon bucket, and enough iron to make one 2" nail. A person is not really worth very much. But, of course, price is not to be confused with value. While something may not be worth very much in monetary terms, it can still be extremely valuable and precious. Let's look together at some of the truly "precious things" of the Bible.

This Week's Question:

What people were, in the time of Joshua, cursed to be Israel's servants?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Bihah and Zilpah - Genesis 30

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1. God's love is precious. In Psalm 36:7, the psalmist exclaims: "How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God!" The precious, steadfast love of God surely must be the most precious commodity of all. The term "lovingkindness" in this passage has variously been translated as His covenant love, His faithfulness, His committed love, His constant, unfluctuating grace and mercy to His people. God's love for man includes both the origination and continuation of every blessing we have, and every blessing we will ever have. His love is totally and infinitely unlike the love of this world. We will have cause to fall upon God's precious, steadfast love every day of our life on this earth! As Jude says, "... keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 21).

2. Jesus Christ's blood is precious. The apostle Peter writes, "... knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold ... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18–19). The blood of our Lord is indeed infinite in that it was able to purchase such a great multitude of souls—all of God's redeemed throughout the ages. Paul spoke to the Ephesian elders about "the church of God which He purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28). Christ's blood owes its preciousness and efficacy to the fact that it is the blood of no less than God's divine Son, the Word made flesh. Think of its potency, power, and price, and then contemplate how precious it is to the believer. Through His shed blood at Calvary we have innumerable blessings: pardon, peace, justification, reconciliation and redemption. No wonder the song of heaven is a song which continues Peter's "precious" theme. "For you were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood" (Revelation 5:9).

3. God's promises are precious. In 2 Peter 1:4 we read that God has "given to us exceedingly great and precious promises." How do we know that we are saved from our sins and acceptable in God's sight? Because He has promised us salvation in His Word. Could any promises be more valuable

than God's promises? His Word promises eternal life to all who will believe in and obey Jesus. In the Bible we have the blessed "hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began" (Titus 1:2).

4. Every believer's faith is precious. In 2 Peter 1:1, the apostle writes, "To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ." The bond of a common faith between believers is most likely better experienced than described. The faith of the Lord Jesus Christ has a corporate as well as an individual aspect to it. Salvation brings us into fellowship with all the people of God as well as with God Himself. The bond of faith destroys all the man-made barriers of race, class, nationality, color, age, and occupation. How deeply we should value our like precious faith and do all we can to further the harmony of God's church. "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love, The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above."

5. Even death is precious to God's saints. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints" (Psalm 116:15). May it ever be so. God's saints, His "set apart ones," were chosen by Him for glory before time began. God sent His Son to die to save these chosen people. One day, in God's own time, He will call each of His chosen ones "away from the body and at home with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8, NIV). To be in the Lord's immediate presence will be the most precious experience—one which will never be surpassed, and one which according to this passage will be equally precious to God!

In a valueless world then, here are some precious things of the Bible: God's love is precious; our Savior's blood is precious; the promises of God are precious; our common faith is precious; and the day of our death is especially precious to Him. Praise God! (Christianity Magazine, September–October 1998, Volume 15 Number 9/10)