



How Much Are You Worth?

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16, NLT)

Do you sometimes feel you are not worth two cents? Perhaps you have even felt you are a failure and that life is not worth living. If such thoughts come, remember what God thinks you are worth. Worth is determined by what someone is willing to pay. God thinks you are worth the price of the life of his Son! Jesus thinks you are worth suffering and dying for so that God can forgive your sins and give you a new life. If you saw the movie, *The Passion of the Christ*, you witnessed a little of the horror of Jesus’ ordeal and the price he paid to set you free from Satan’s kingdom and the power of sin. How precious you are to him! How precious you are to the Father!

One cannot imagine the terrible cost to Jesus and the Father. Although God allows you to glimpse the suffering Jesus experienced in the Garden of Gethsemane, the illegal trials, the humiliation, the mocking and the flogging, the horror of the last three hours on the cross remains hidden. The Bible only says: *“By this time it was noon, and darkness fell across the whole land until three o’clock. The light from the sun was gone ...”* (Luke 23: 44-45, NLT) No explanation. No details. Nothing!

The compassionate servant

Up until this moment, three hours had passed in excruciating pain, yet Jesus, as a servant, had been busy ministering to others.

- He prayed for and forgave those who were crucifying him.
- He forgave the thief and promised him he would be with him in Paradise.
- He put his mother into the hands of John, his beloved disciple.
- He watched the soldiers divide his garments, fulfilling prophecy.
- He listened with compassion to the chief priests criticizing Pilate’s inscription and the scoffers mocking and shouting at him.

To the end, he fulfilled the life of a servant. *“For even I, the Son of Man, came here not to be served but to serve others, and to give my life as a ransom for many.”* (Mark 10:45, NLT) Do you see your role as a servant, too? Do you look for ways to help others?

The darkness

At noon, the Father surrounded his Son with a drapery of darkness. Frightful, dreadful darkness – dark as sin! Later, some would claim the sun eclipsed. However, this was not an ordinary eclipse of the sun, but God displaying his almighty power. It was God’s seal that this was his Son, fulfilling his mission. No human eyes would witness the details of the unbelievable suffering of God’s sinless Son as his Father laid all the sins and guilt of the world upon him – lying, anger, sexual immorality, evil thoughts, hostility, quarrels, jealousy, envy, drunkenness, murder, etc. Imagine the horror of the Father’s wrath and punishment. Blood trickled down his bruised body as he felt the agony of shame and guilt. It was hell! The Bible says, *“He personally carried away our sins in his own body on the cross so we can be dead to sin and live for what is right.”* (1 Peter 2:24, NLT)

Then his Father turned away. He could not look at his Son covered with sin. Hours passed. Can you feel a little of Jesus’ agony when he looked into the darkened heavens and cried out the words of Psalm 22:1: *“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”* (Mark 15:34, NLT) Alone. Abandoned. Jesus experienced this so you would never feel alone or abandoned. *“I will never leave you,”* he promised. (Hebrews 13:5b)

At three o’clock, just when the priests were killing the lamb for Passover at the Temple, Jesus, the real Lamb of God, shouted, *“It is finished!”* (Paid in full). (John 19:30, NLT) Bowing his head, he committed his spirit into the hands of his Father. He had accomplished his Father’s will.

Signs at his death

At that moment, God tore from top to bottom the four-inch thick curtain that hung in front of the Holy of Holies in the Temple, where only the High Priest could enter once a year with blood to atone for the sins of himself and the nation. (Hebrews 9:1-14) The splitting of the curtain symbolized that God had removed the barrier between God and his people. Because of Christ’s sacrifice for sin, now every believer can approach God with confidence through Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 10:19-20) What a special privilege! There was no more need for sacrifices of animals to cover sin. Jesus Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice **to take away your sins.**

The earth shook, rocks split apart and tombs opened. Terrified, the Roman centurion (officer) understood. He testified, *“Truly, this was the Son of God!”* (Mark 15:39, NLT) He knew God had forgiven him. Hadn’t Jesus said, *“Father, forgive these people for they don’t know what they are doing?”* (Luke 23:34, NLT)

The cost of love

For you, Jesus came to earth as a tiny baby. He gave up the glories of heaven, the worship of angels and his rights as God, by taking on the attitude of a humble servant. Although twelve legions of angels could have rescued him, he chose to willingly die a criminal’s death on the

cross, pouring out his blood for you and the world. (Philippians 2:6-8) “*For he has rescued us [you] from the one who rules in the kingdom of darkness, and he has brought us [you] into the Kingdom of his dear Son.*” (Colossians 1:13, NLT) The greatest rescue!

Now, through the Holy Spirit, Jesus lives in you and longs to have an intimate relationship with you. The next time you feel rejected and unloved, remember the cost God paid to bring you into his family. Begin to understand the incredible greatness of his power in you, the same power that raised Christ from the dead! You may fail, but that does not make you a failure. If you base your worth on the price paid for you, you are priceless! What will your response be to such glorious power and love? Paul wrote to the Philippians (4:4, NLT) “*Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again – rejoice!*”

Attitude Check:

- How would you score your attitude of gratitude for what God has done?

Explore:

- Read “A Disciple Takes up His or Her Cross and Follows Christ” (Luke 9:23-25) and “We Put Jesus on the Cross” (in front of the *Student New Testament*.) Write a thank you letter to Jesus in your journal for what he has done for you.

Talking with God:

- Thank you, Father, for sending your Son to die for me. Thank you for your assurance that I am very special.