

How Much Are You Worth?

How much are you worth? Some will scurry to their financial accounts and add up the assets to provide the answer. Others look to their educational degrees, company position, and professional accomplishments to determine the price tag. If your sick neighbor was asked that question about you, what would his answer be? What if your pastor was asked? Your spouse? Your children? In today's Templates of Truth, we discover there are more important things that define personal worth, than that which is so often imposed.

When referring to Timothy in his letter to the Christians at Philippi, Paul said, *you know of his proven worth* (2:22). No mention is made of Timothy's financial portfolio, his educational degrees, the professional associations he was a member with, or the bulleted accomplishments on his resume. Paul simply noted the man's genuine compassion and loyal service to God and the church. In Paul's eyes, that exclusively defined Timothy's *proven worth*, even though he appears to have been a partner with Paul in the tent-making business.

We tend to place a high degree of importance on how much we are worth to the company because the world view has convinced us if we are not a corporate asset, we are likely to lose our job security when measures of downsizing are applied. How much you have sacrificed for the company, how loyal and dependable you have proven yourself to be, or the diligence you have demonstrated in your ability to proficiently do the job are, unfortunately, not always the key elements taken into account when it comes to who goes and who stays.

Corporate worth is defined in units of profit. If you are evaluated as having contributed to the bottom line, you are deemed a company asset with proven worth regardless of what else might define your character, reputation and professional ethics. If your position cannot be measured in tangible terms, it and you are simply expendable. Many of the authorities making those decisions hold little regard (if any) for your godly character, your Biblical work ethic, or your personal integrity & credibility as a believer, not to mention your diligence in developing skill & ability. It is all about the bottom line – *they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus* (2:21). What rarely factors into the equation is your intrinsic value as a person of worth. Hence, many valuable workers are thrust into the unemployed sector of society every day. What the company has left is not always as valuable as their standards of measure first suggested. Intrinsic value is that which always defines proven worth, and that which ultimately enhances profits. Corporate America just doesn't get it! With all their Harvard and Yale business degrees at work, many still come to the point of begging for federal bailouts.

As believers, we cannot allow the world view to rob us of our self-esteem. Our personal worth is not defined by our job, our bank account, the certificates framed on our walls, or the accolades announced with our corporate recognitions. Our personal worth is not even defined by what our supervisor or boss thinks of us, the condition reports in our personnel file, the stats on a spreadsheet, or the fact we were passed over for the most recent promotion. Paul reminds us that

God defines personal worth in quite different terms. He tells these believers to *prove themselves* (2:15). How? By being *blameless and innocent children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life* (2:15-16). That's all about faith, not finances. It's all about character, not credentials. It's about spiritual service, not societal success. It confronts us with whether we desire most to be a corporate leaguer or a consecrated light.

If loyal & faithful service to God and His church were the litmus test applied to the value of your personal worth, what would it prove? God does not expect you to neglect the responsibilities you have to your employer in order to serve Him faithfully. Neither does God approve of investing all of your time, energy and resources pleasing the company to the exclusion of Him and his will for your life. The Bible teaches balance where *holding fast the word* will keep you effectively faithful to all the obligations of your life, whether it is to your family, your church, your sick neighbor or your career. So, just how much are you worth?

That's today's Templates of Truth. This is your Bible teacher, Rick Smith, reminding you to attend church this Sunday for Bible study and worship, pray for one another, and always strive to abide in Christ. Until next time, have a blessed and glorious day in the Lord Jesus.

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