

What Is It Worth To You?

In my American literature class we are looking at writings of Kate Chopin. Chopin examined a view of women that was not popular in her time. In our stories there were two women spoken of, one who was loyal to her husband and one who was not so loyal. Within the stories of these women, one had the self control not to give up what she and her husband had for simple attraction.

A principle that was brought up in class was of a 80/20 split in the individuals with which you have a special relationship. When we look at those of whom we consider for marriage, one potential mate may have 80% of what you are looking for and 20% of what you are not looking for, and vice versa. The situation mentioned above applied to this idea. The woman who was loyal to her husband had a desire for another man. The man she desired had only 20% of what she wanted and her husband had 80% of what she wanted. The decision she had to make was this, was she going to give up the 80% for the 20%? Was the desire of the moment worth giving up all that she had with her husband?

The story continues with the her not giving into that temptation, and this story makes me consider things in our own lives. In Matthew 16:26, Jesus says, *"For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"* When I see this woman, I see her as one that compared her present situation with the desire that was put before her. She looked at the value she had in her husband and was unwilling to give it up for something of lesser value. This is similar to what Jesus says in Matthew 16. Jesus is saying that when you look at all the world has to offer, considering the value of it, if it does not amount to the value of your soul then it is not worth pursuing. Jesus is encouraging us to do exactly what that woman did: count the cost (Lk. 14:26-33) and see if what we are having to give up is worth it in the end.

A great example of all of this is Moses. In Hebrews 11:24-26, Moses sits down and considered what truly mattered, and what was his conclusion? *"He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward."* He realized his life didn't consist of the abundance of the things he possessed (Lk. 12:15). He esteemed (put more value in) the reproach of Christ more than the treasures of Egypt! Just like the woman we discussed earlier, he saw the 20% and compared it to the 80% and said, "You know what? It's not really worth it."

That is exactly what Jesus is saying: when you compare anything to the value of your soul, it automatically loses its value and is like salt without flavor. It should be cast out and walked upon (Mt. 5:13). We must look at our lives and find what is truly valuable and put our heart there (Mt. 6:21). May we strive to compare every temptation of this world to that eternal habitation with the Lord and choose to follow the Lord because what He offers is so much better!

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