

Worthy or Worthless:  
A Biblical Theology of  
Human Value

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Does our human worth come from being desirable and lovable to others?

**Example:**

**Matt Chandler's  
Story**

Does our human value come from what others say about us?

Do we get to decide the value of other people or ourselves?

Does our human value come from our performance?

From our moral behavior—good or bad?

From our job and skills?



Robert McGee:

Author of

*The Search for Significance*

Self-Worth = Performance + Others' Opinions



# Defining the Terms

June Hunt:  
**Biblical  
Counselor**

Worth: the value, merit, or significance of a person or thing

Self-worth: the belief that your life has value and significance

*--Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology and Counseling*

How do I know that I matter?



- Believing the Biblical truth about our value kills people pleasing, pride, envy, and other sins, ultimately leading to greater holiness and love for God and others, for we worship whatever we believe to be the source of our value.



# 1. God alone has self-worth. Human worth is derivative.

Self-worth: the belief that your life has value and significance

**Self-Worth = Performance + Others' Opinions**



## 2. Humans are important/have derivative value because they were created by God.

Genesis 1:31, “And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good.”

Creation of God

God

“Self-Made” Human

???



“We walked out with only one path ahead. Life. We didn’t need more tests, more counseling, or more information. Levi deserved life, not primarily because of the joy he could bring us nor his potential quality of life, but supremely because God says his life has value, worth, and purpose. Period.”

“We knew our son was a living human being (Job 31:15), given life by God (Job 12:10), created in God’s image (Genesis 1:27) with a purpose (Proverbs 16:4), intricately formed by God (Psalms 139:13) with no mistakes (Exodus 4:11) and made for God’s glory (Romans 11:36).”

--- Jared Mulvihill





### 3. Humans have greater worth than all else in creation because they are made in the image of God.

Genesis 1:27, “So God created man in His own image, in the image of God, He created him; male and female He created them.”

United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed in the UN General Assembly in 1948,

“recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world...All human beings...should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood...Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.”



4. Sin never takes away human value because our value doesn't come from our behavior or faith but from being created by God in His image.

**A. Christ's Life:** Jesus's love for societal outcasts and sinners like the woman at the well (John 4), ten lepers (Luke 17), and Zacchaeus (Luke 19) confirms that we have value regardless of what we do or say.

Hebrews 1:3, “He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, and He upholds the universe by the word of His power.”



**B. Christ's Death:** Jesus's love for sinners demonstrates that human beings are exceedingly precious to God.

Romans 5:8, “But God demonstrates His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 4:10, “In this is love, not that we have love God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”



Worth: the value, merit, or significance of a person or thing

“Now the cross doesn’t show that I deserved His gift of eternal life—His death for me to save me. I didn’t deserve it. But the cross does show me He loves me immensely. He died to save me after all. And my value is found in His love.”

---John Piper



“Two wonders here that I confess  
My worth and my unworthiness  
My value fixed, my ransom paid  
At the cross”

-- “My Worth is Not in What I Own”

We didn't lose our value at the Fall. The cross demonstrates God the Father's determination to rescue and adopt orphans into His family.



5. Christians know they matter because they are children dearly loved by their Heavenly Father. This love is free, abundant, unchanging, perfect, and everlasting.

Ephesians 1:5-6, “In love He predestined us for adoption to Himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace, with which He has blessed us in the Beloved.”

John 15:9, “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.”

Jeremiah 31:3, “I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore, I have continued my faithfulness to you.”



## Summary

- Human value is derivative. People are not qualified to determine their own personal value or that of others.
- Humans are priceless because God created us, and we are made in His image.
- Human value is not based on our behavior. This is clearly demonstrated in Christ's love for sinners and His death on the cross.
- Christians know they have value because they are unconditionally loved and accepted by God their Father through Christ.



## Application

- All efforts to undermine human value or favor some people over others should be passionately, thoughtfully, and prayerfully resisted. Ex. sex-trafficking, euthanasia, abortion, racial discrimination, sexism, and discrimination of disabled people.
- Godly families need to be encouraged, for children who grow up in broken homes statistically struggle more to believe in their inherent worth/value, leading to a host of problems.
- Christians desperately need to meditate on the gospel, God's character, and their identity in Christ to know that their value is not in what people say or in their own performance but rooted in what God says in His Word and in His boundless, unchanging love for them.





“Your value is not found in what you can do, or the things you accomplish and win.  
It is found in how you were made, precious girl—created and cherished by Him.  
Your worth cannot fade; it will not go away; it is not changed a bit by what happens today.  
No one and nothing can make you worth less. Just what is your value? You don’t have to guess.  
No one has power to change what God’s done, and He says you’re worth everything, even His Son.  
Worth all the pain, worth great sacrifice, worth leaving heaven, worth giving His life.



How much, how much are you worth, precious girl?

How much is a little girl worth?

Worth so much more than all my words could say—

No one and nothing can take that away.”

---Rachael Denhollander

