

What am I worth? (6)

Beware of false worth!



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We have been pondering over True Worth, and today we will go on to the sixth message on the subject, "What am I worth?"

In the last message, we sought to appreciate God's sovereignty in relation to true worth. And we saw that God understands our heart, and if we truly want to develop quality in our being, He will help us in spite of our weaknesses and failures, and He will sovereignly undertake to teach us, to bring us through situations to help us grow and develop, and to benefit from His grace. We also saw that God in His sovereignty will assign to us whatever responsibility, position or place that is suitable in His kingdom.

God's sovereign working: elaboration

It is helpful for us to appreciate that if we truly love God, then no matter what situation that may arise, whatever we may need to go through, God will bring about a meaningful and good outcome in our lives, if we are prepared to walk with Him and do His will.

God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God... For those who truly love God, the degree of active working of God varies in different situations.

God is actively working in our lives. He does bring us through many situations to help us, but these situations may arise in different ways. At times, He actively seeks to bring about a situation for us to go through. At times, He allows situations to develop, and He also helps us to go through meaningfully.

God is morally perfect, and He will never do anything that is morally evil, but He does sovereignly allow moral beings to make choices that include moral evil.

God can actively bring us through times of spiritual attack, and channel evil intentions and activities towards positive purposes. Even the wiles of the evil one can be channelled for our good if we learn to respond well.

In such situations, God helps us by teaching us to discern between what is morally good and what is morally evil, and He also teaches us to take our stand against what is morally evil in spite of pain and suffering, and deepen in our commitment to what is morally good.

For those who truly love God, He will help us such that if we choose well, then all events of all kinds will help us to grow in the quality of our being, and in our service in His kingdom.

Let us go on to consider further questions arising from the example of the two disciples of the Lord Jesus, James and John, as recorded in **Mark 10: 35-45**.

False worth and wrong assessment

In **Mark 10: 39-41**, we read:

- 39 And they said to Him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you shall drink; and you shall be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized.
- 40 "But to sit on My right or on My left, this is not Mine to give; but it is for those for whom it has been prepared."
- 41 And hearing this, the ten began to feel indignant with James and John.

Why did the ten disciples feel indignant with James and John?

As we look at the context, as we ponder over their lives, as we see the response of the Lord Jesus, we can see that it is likely that they were unhappy with James and John for their selfish attitude in choosing the most special places for themselves, and therefore leaving them out.

Yes, they could see that their asking to sit on the right and on the left of the Lord Jesus was not a meaningful course of action. They were unhappy with their request.

However, as we look at the context, we see that they were guilty of the same spirit when they were preoccupied with seeking to be the greatest among them.

On the one hand, they were indignant with James and John. On the other hand, they themselves also would like to have a special position. They longed to be great. This was not a temporary issue, a momentary desire, but a long-term problem within their heart.

Mark 9: 33-35

- 33 And they came to Capernaum; and when He was in the house, He *began* to question them, "What were you discussing on the way?"
- 34 But they kept silent, for on the way they had discussed with one another which *of them was* the greatest.
- 35 And sitting down, He called the twelve and said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all."

Notice that this is in **Mark chapter 9**, just prior to the record in **Mark chapter 10**. The disciples had discussed with one another which *of them* was the greatest, but when the Lord Jesus questioned them, “What were you discussing on the way?” we notice they kept silent.

They knew that it was not right. They knew that it would be displeasing to the Lord. They were ashamed to report that they were discussing which *of them* was the greatest. So it was a problem not just for James and John but for the rest as well.

We see a similar record in **Luke 9: 46**

And an argument arose among them as to which of them might be the greatest.

It is a similar description: an argument arose among them as to which of them might be the greatest. This is in **Luke chapter 9**. We go down quite a number of **chapters** to **Luke 22: 24**

And there arose also a dispute among them *as to* which one of them was regarded to be greatest.

So it was not a one-time occasion. This problem was there for a long time. Even at **Luke 22** we read: There arose also a dispute among them *as to* which one of them was regarded to be greatest. The word translated as “dispute” can also be translated as “a strife” or “quarrelsomeness”. There was strife among them. There was quarrelsomeness because of the desire to be regarded as the greatest.

We see then that instead of a humble and contrite spirit, and recognizing that they too were failing in this regard, the ten disciples were indignant with James and John in a manner that implied that they regarded themselves as of better quality, of greater worth, in comparison.

They themselves had the same problem, same failure. Instead of seeing in James and John their own failure, acknowledging it, and seeking to help one another to overcome their problem, they were indignant.

It was as if they were all right but James and John were the problem.

We see that this is a manifestation of false worth associated with wrong understanding and assessment of oneself arising from a wrong spirit of self-seeking in wanting to be greater than others.

The response of the ten disciples brings forth this aspect of false worth that is associated with wrong understanding and assessment of oneself. They thought there was true worth in their being, but they were mistaken. When they criticized James and John when they were indignant, it was a manifestation of a wrong assessment of themselves.

This was because there was a wrong spirit of self-seeking in wanting to be greater than others. They disputed, they argued, they discussed who was the greatest, and they would tend to think that they themselves were the greatest.

It is not true that we should not be indignant at any time.

The apostle Paul was very indignant on many occasions, but it was very different. The apostle Paul was indignant with the Corinthians. He said: ...you are still fleshly. He was indignant with the Galatians. He said: You foolish Galatians...

But when the apostle Paul rebuked the Corinthians and the Galatians for their fleshly ways, his spirit was very different from that of these ten disciples. He did so out of genuine love and concern for their well-being, and not in a spirit of superiority and condemnation.

This is a very important principle for us to learn if we want to develop true worth.

We need to learn from the apostle Paul, to be indignant about the right things, and in the right way.

The apostle Paul was often very distressed, angry, concerned, but it was out of love – love for others, for their well-being; love for God and His kingdom.

It is easy for us to see the faults in others. It is easy for us to criticize.

When we do that, it is important for us to come before God that He may search our hearts, and if we ourselves are also guilty of the same thing, we need to be more careful in the way that we respond to what we see as wrong and not good in the kingdom of God.

Yes, we should help one another, we should correct one another, but we should do so in a spirit of gentleness, of love, of genuine concern for the well-being of others.

Let us go on to the next question.

Mark 10: 42-44

- 42 And calling them to Himself, Jesus said to them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them.
- 43 "But it is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant;
- 44 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all.

Why did the Lord Jesus refer to rulers of the Gentiles and the ones regarded as great men among the Gentiles?

The world's idea of greatness

The Lord Jesus was seeking to teach the disciples what is of true value, of true worth.

He referred to the rulers of the Gentiles to help us understand the wrong concept of greatness that we should avoid. We must not follow the world in their idea of greatness, in their pursuit of greatness.

The Lord Jesus said: "You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them." Those who are regarded as great among the Gentiles are those who lord it over them, who exercise authority over them – position, power, status, authority, these are what constitute greatness in the eyes of the world.

But the Lord Jesus said, "But it is not so among you..." True greatness in the kingdom of God is not to be found in seeking for positions of honour, of power, of authority...

The apostle John tells us in **1 John 2: 16**

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

"The boastful pride of life": it can also be translated as "the boastful pride of this earthly existence – the natural temporal life on earth".

People in this world take pride in what they are, what they can be, the status they have, in the context of their earthly existence, in the realm of the natural, temporal life on earth.

To them, greatness has to do with power, authority, positions, status, ability in this world, and they can boast of what they have and what they can do.

The Lord Jesus tells us: “It is not so among you...” – we are not to be like that.

However, it is a problem that can continue in the life of a Christian long after he has repented and come to the Lord Jesus for forgiveness.

If we have this longing in our heart to be great in this kind of sense before we were Christians, we need to be careful because this longing and desire can carry on for many years after we have become Christians.

If we do not totally reject the spirit of the world and what the world system offers us, then the boastful pride of life can easily become the basis of our seeking for spiritual glory and worth in our lives.

We may now be pursuing spiritual worth and glory. We may want to grow in the kingdom of God, but we may still be thinking along the lines of how the world sees greatness.

We can in fact be following the world in its ideas and understanding of greatness while seeking spiritual worth.

Our terms may have changed, our objectives may have moved, but the spirit may still be rather similar – we may still want to be great in the wrong kind of way.

Luke 16: 14-15

- 14 Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things, and they were scoffing at Him.
- 15 And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.

When we read about the Pharisees, we have a certain concept of them, that they are very negative people.

So it is easy for us to think that we are not like them – we are very different from the Pharisees; we are Christians who have repented, who are born again, who have the Holy Spirit in our hearts; we do not think like them.

This may be true to a significant degree. However, the underlying principles with regard to how the Pharisees sought for what they wanted in life may very well apply to us as well.

The Lord said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men...” It is very easy for us to be very concerned about the opinions of men – what people think of us. Even as Christians, it can still be true to a very significant degree.

It may be that we are not so concerned whether they think we are rich or not, but we are concerned whether they think we are spiritual or not. We are concerned whether people think we are effective as Christians or not, whether we are faithful to God or not. We may therefore do things with such a motive: justifying ourselves in the sight of men.

But the Lord Jesus says: “God knows your hearts...” What is more important is to recognize that God knows our hearts. People may or may not perceive, recognize, what is truly in our hearts. Even if we can impress other people, it is of no use because God knows our hearts. He knows what we are.

And the Lord Jesus says: “...for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.” If our self-esteem is based on how the people of the world view us, we are in danger of pursuing a path that is detestable to God.

The values of this world: do they form the basis of our concerns? Is that what we want in our lives – to be highly regarded in this world?

We should be concerned as to how God esteems us. How does God regard us? Does He view us as precious, meaningful, to Him? Do we bring joy to His heart?

False worth and wrong understanding

The Lord Jesus wanted to teach the disciples to beware of the manifestation of false worth that is associated with wrong understanding of the meaning of greatness, arising from a wrong spirit of self-seeking in wanting recognition, position, and power.

We can have a problem in false worth in the way we assess ourselves, thinking that there is worth when there is not. We can also be involved in the problem of false worth when we have a wrong understanding of the meaning of true greatness. And this wrong understanding easily arises when there is a wrong spirit of self-seeking, when we long for recognition, position, and power.

This is particularly important because such a wrong direction can take place in our hearts even when we desire spiritual meaning and value. Such a problem can be present in serious Christians who pursue God and want to honour Him in their lives.

We see this in these disciples of the Lord Jesus. They were serious men who wanted to pursue things of eternity. They left all to follow the Lord Jesus. They wanted that which was of value in eternity, yet in their hearts there was still present this wrong direction associated with the wrong understanding of the meaning of greatness. James and John thought that to sit on the right and on the left would mean that they were great.

The Lord Jesus wants to help us to understand that we must approach the subject of greatness very carefully.

True worth is not easily developed, but it is very, very precious. This problem of the wrong direction can be readily present in all who do not deeply deal with the self-seeking spirit in their hearts.

As long as the self-seeking spirit is still active within us, this problem can easily arise.

It may at times not be very obvious, but at times it can manifest in very ugly forms.

Example of Simon the magician

Let us consider an example recorded in the Scriptures.

Acts 8: 9-10

- 9 Now there was a certain man named Simon, who formerly was practicing magic in the city, and astonishing the people of Samaria, claiming to be someone great;
10 and they all, from smallest to greatest, were giving attention to him, saying, "This man is what is called the Great Power of God."

Simon practised magic because he wanted to be regarded as someone great. He was very happy when people gave attention to him, and called him "the Great Power of God". He had this longing for greatness in his heart.

Acts 8: 13

And even Simon himself believed; and after being baptized, he continued on with Philip; and as he observed signs and great miracles taking place, he was constantly amazed.

The Scriptures tell us that in the midst of the ministry of Philip, even Simon the magician believed, and he was baptized, and he continued on with Philip.

However, **Acts 8: 18-23** shows to us that the desire for greatness was not removed from his heart.

Acts 8: 18-23

- 18 Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money,
19 saying, "Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."
20 But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!
21 "You have no part or portion in this matter, for your heart is not right before God.
22 "Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you.
23 "For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity."

When Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he was excited. Here was a means to experience power again. Now that he believed, he did not want to practise magic, but he wanted this power. "Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

Could it be that Simon wanted to contribute in service? Could it be that he thought that if people received the Holy Spirit, it would be good for them, and he wanted to be part of it?

This is possible, but the spirit was not right. While it is possible that he may have sought to serve and to contribute, there was the underlying desire for greatness, for power, for authority.

Peter rebuked him: "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!" This may seem to imply that there was no true repentance in Simon.

This is also possible – he seemed to have believed, but deep in his heart, repentance was not deep enough.

Whichever way it is, the record is not very clear as to what actually went on within him.

Seeking greatness in service

What is important is to recognize that Simon had now transferred his desire for greatness from the practice of magic to that of serving the Lord, and this principle can easily be at work in the Christian world.

People who have been involved with the occult, with black magic, may sometimes profess faith in the Lord, sometimes genuinely, sometimes not. But the desire for such experiences of power may continue in their hearts, and this is very dangerous.

The apostle Peter said: "...your heart is not right before God. Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity." As long as we have this wrong desire for greatness, we are in bondage. We are not truly free to genuinely serve the Lord.

So while this may be true of Simon, and it may be that he was not truly converted, yet the principle is true even for those who are genuinely converted.

The flesh continues in the midst of our striving to walk by the Spirit.

The apostle Paul warned the Galatians not to pursue the life of the flesh although they had tasted of the power of the Holy Spirit. So too for many Christians: After having experienced the life and the power of God, it is still possible for us to continue walking in the flesh.

Such a wrong spirit can be present even in serious Christians sincerely seeking to help others and serve God, if a desire for greatness of the wrong kind is still active within the heart. Even if we genuinely love others, want to help them, seek to serve God, there can still be present such a wrong spirit if a desire for greatness of the wrong kind is still active within the heart.

True greatness

Greatness in the eyes of the world is very, very different from greatness in the eyes of God, in the kingdom of heaven.

A truly great person is not one who exalts himself but one who is truly humble. This is a primary issue when we are converted.

If we want to be truly great, we must genuinely want to serve, to give, to help, in whatever position and status that is meaningful before God, willing to be a slave or a servant because of love.

True moral greatness is not attained by seeking for recognition, positions and abilities, but in developing moral goodness of the heart, when true worth is developed in the spirit.

Matthew 18: 1-4

- 1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"
- 2 And He called a child to Himself and set him before them,
- 3 and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.
- 4 "Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

The Lord Jesus responded to the question of the disciples, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" They were preoccupied with this subject, of who is the greatest.

The Lord Jesus told them: "You must be converted and become like children if you want to be truly great."

We may say, "We are converted", but how deeply converted are we? In what way have we turned away from the wrong path? In what way are we truly following the Lord?

The Lord Jesus says: "Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Does this mean that all children who show humility are truly great? We all know that many humble children grow up to be very proud adults.

What is the problem?

The issue is that it is easy to be humble as a child, but not so easy to be humble as an adult.

When we are young and we recognize that we know little, we can do little, we have hardly any position or status, it is easy to be humble.

When we grow, we become more able, we are recognized, we contribute, and we begin to think that we are great. We lose that sense of humility as we grow in our knowledge and ability.

The Lord Jesus wanted His disciples to know that they, as adults, must develop that kind of spirit that is present in children who are humble, that is to say, we must continue to be humble throughout our lives, no matter how much we have grown, whatever we have learnt, whatever we have attained, however much God may have taught us.

True humility must continue to adulthood and in eternity.

The Lord Jesus tells us that to be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven is not by seeking for positions. It is to develop quality in the being.

When we are truly good, then we become truly great.

When our hearts are pure, we will become great in the moral sense of true worth, and God will appreciate us.

Luke 14: 11: the Lord Jesus said:

"For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted."

If we exalt ourselves, God will humble us. If we humble ourselves, God will exalt us, but it is not humbling ourselves in the outward form.

There are many people who may do things that outwardly appear very humble. They are prepared to serve, they are prepared to do things like a servant, but in their heart, they want to be regarded as humble; they want to be regarded as great. That is not true humility.

True humility is of the heart: We are humble because it is right and it is good, not because we want to be recognized as humble.

Satan and false worth

Let us bear in mind that desire for greatness of the wrong kind is prevalent, deep-seated, and very dangerous. This is a problem that is very great and extensive, deep-seated, prevalent, and very dangerous.

The fall of Satan was directly associated with wrong desire in his heart in wanting to be great in a self-seeking spirit. We need to beware of this danger.

Satan was created powerful, capable, wise, and of great beauty, by God, but he longed to be great in a self-seeking way, and he became the most evil moral being that we know of.

Isaiah 14: 12-15

- 12 "How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations!
- 13 "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north.
- 14 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'

15 "Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit.

In this context, we can see from **Isaiah 14: 3-4**, God was addressing the king of Babylon, and we know that the king of Babylon WAS proud.

Nebuchadnezzar was very proud of his achievements, and God humbled him. Belshazzar his descendant was also proud, and he was slain. In **Daniel 5: 22**, Daniel rebuked Belshazzar, and said that he had not humbled his heart: "You have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this..." Belshazzar knew about Nebuchadnezzar, but he did not humble his heart. **Daniel 5: 23** says: "...but you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven..."

So in this context there was a reference to the king of Babylon who exalted himself, but **Isaiah 14: 12-15** tells us that underlying such a spirit was the power of the evil one at work influencing such people in that direction, and God addressed Satan more directly.

The rulers of the Gentiles who sought to exalt themselves to be like God were following the evil one in his desire when he fell from heaven.

"How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn!"

The Lord Jesus in **Luke 10: 17-20** told His disciples "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning..." Satan fell from heaven. He was at one time a bright star in the kingdom of God, but he fell because he said in his heart: "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."

But God says: "Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit."

Revelation 20: 1-3 tells us that in the last days Satan will be thrust into the pit. We are told that the angel laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the abyss, and shut *it* and sealed *it* over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed...

Satan's power will not continue. God will deal with him... so too for the kings of the earth who seek to glorify themselves against God.

Ezekiel 28: 11-15 is a similar passage where the words are directed against the king of Tyre, but God refers to the evil one more directly: Thus says the Lord GOD, "You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God..." In **verse 14**, He says: "You were the anointed cherub who covers". **Verse 15**: "You were blameless in your ways From the day you were created, Until unrighteousness was found in you."

This is more appropriately a description of Satan, but the king of Tyre had similar kinds of desires in his heart. He longed to be great, and God would deal with him.

Satan is actively at work in this world, influencing people in the direction of his own wickedness, his own desire for self-glory.

We need to be careful that we do not follow his influences.

In the New Testament, we see in **Mark 8: 31-33** the Lord Jesus rebuking the apostle Peter. The Lord Jesus was teaching His disciples that He would suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And He was stating the matter plainly. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter, and said, "Get behind Me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

Satan was at work in that situation. Peter was influenced. The Lord Jesus addressed Satan directly: "Get behind Me, Satan..." But He was rebuking Peter.

So we see that the evil one can be actively at work in the lives of people, and in very significant ways. We must learn to keep close to God, to understand His ways and to follow Him.

We are told that in the last days this wrong spirit of self-exaltation will be manifested in an extreme form in the man of lawlessness, in the context of the activity of Satan.

When you read **2 Thessalonians chapter 2**, you can see the description of this man: the man of lawlessness; he is also described as the son of destruction; he exalts himself and he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. In **verses 8-10**, he is described as that lawless one... whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish...

He will exalt himself. He is a man, but this man will be very evil, because he co-operates very deeply with Satan.

We must beware of the great danger of actually pursuing false worth without realizing it. This can take place easily if we have not totally given up our desire for personal greatness arising from a spirit of self-seeking.

We may wonder: Why is it so attractive to pursue false worth?

Basically, it is because it feels good.

It feels good to be great, it feels good to be recognized as great, it feels good to be regarded as better than others, and it feels good to exert authority over others. The self-seeking life seeks for enjoyment for the self, and self-exaltation is one form of enjoyment that is very attractive.

We should instead pursue that which is truly great in the eyes of God.

1 Corinthians 13: 13

But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

The greatest is love

The greatest is love. If we want to be truly great, we must appreciate what true love is, and develop that quality in our heart.

If love that is pure and self-giving is not abundantly present in our hearts, then all other aspects of our lives will have little or no value.

The apostle Paul tells us very clearly in **1 Corinthians 13: 1-3**, if we do not have love, our lives will be worthless:

- 1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.
- 2 And if I have *the gift of prophecy*, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.
- 3 And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

So we cannot develop true worth in our being if the love in our heart is not pure. On the other hand, when love is pure in our hearts, we will no longer seek to exalt ourselves. We would have learnt to be genuinely humble, because our concern will not be our position, or recognition by others: our concern will only be what is truly good and what is truly meaningful before God.

The apostle John tells us in **1 John 4: 8**

The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

The greatest characteristic of God is love, a manifestation of His moral and spiritual perfection: love that is pure, love that is wise, love that is powerful, love that is truly good.

If we want to develop true quality in our being, we must learn the principle of love.

1 John 4: 16

And we have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

Whatever else we may have developed, learnt, or attained, if this quality of love is not truly deep in our hearts, then God is not truly abiding in us.

So then let us beware of all that does not arise from love that is pure, and all that does not arise from a humble spirit of self-giving in pursuing moral and spiritual excellence in the kingdom of God.

Beware of false worth!

In summary, we must beware of false worth: a false worth in that we have a false sense of worth when we have not developed true worth, and pursuit of false worth where we follow the ways of the world in desiring to be great, in a spirit of self-seeking.

Instead, let us learn to develop love that is pure, and a truly humble spirit, which seeks to give because it loves.

Let us then ask the Lord to help us understand what is true greatness, true worth.

Let us ask Him to search our hearts so that if there is any wrong desire in us for self-exaltation, self-seeking, to be great like the people of the world, He will help us to repent, to be corrected.

It is only then that we can pursue the path of true worth, and develop genuine and long-lasting quality in our being.