

**Pastor Paul Bawden  
Grace Evangelical Church  
Sunday, June 7, 2009  
Communion Sunday  
"Attitude Check"  
Romans 12:10b; Philippians 2:1-4; I Peter 2:17**

What gives value to an object? What gives value to life itself?

Gary Smalley in one of his videos talks about this very subject.

To emphasize the value of an object he shows his audience a violin. The violin is not just anyone's violin. It is a Stradivarius violin.

**Antonio Stradivari was born in 1644 and set up his shop in Cremona, Italy, where he made violins and other stringed instruments (harps, guitars, violas and cellos) until his death in 1737. He took a basic concept for the violin and refined its geometry and design to produce an instrument which has served violin makers ever since as *the* standard to strive for.**

**His violins *sang* as none had before them, with a clearer voice and greater volume, and with a pureness of tone which made them seem almost alive in the hands of a great violinist. His was one of three great families of violin makers in Cremona during the 1700s and 1800s, but Stradivari's violins have been judged by history to be the best. Two of Stradivari's sons continued his work after his death.**

**Every Strad was made entirely by hand, with a painstaking care devoted to the selection of woods and even the texture of the finishing varnishes. This was no assembly-line operation, and the best estimates have Antonio producing no more than around 1,100 instruments, including the violins, in his entire lifetime. Of these, an estimated 630 to 650 still survive the more than 275-300 years since they were made. 512 of these survivors are violins. Many others were destroyed in fires or other accidents, were lost at sea or in floods, and some were destroyed by the fire-bombing of Dresden in World War II. *Virtually none are unaccounted for.* Today a genuine Strad is worth two to three million dollars.**

The name "Stradivarius" has also become a superlative applied to designate excellence. To be called "the Stradivari" of any field is to be deemed the finest there is.

What gives value to the Stradivarius violin?

- The designer,
- The design of the violin,
- The purpose of the violin – to produce great music
- The musician- the one who knows how to play the Stradivarius violin so it can present the music for which it was designed.

Let's take this physical object, the Stradivarius Violin, which has incredible material value, and ask the same question about each of us. What gives us value?

## **I. Our Designer**

### **1. What gives our lives value physically, that is in our bodies?**

#### **(1) The popular world view.**

When we look to the public arena in our public education system, we discover that, if we have any value it seems to be that since we are humans we should try to take care of one another and show respect for one another. But if we start trying to find out anything about our origin, we discover that we are only an extension of the animal world, a higher form of the evolutionary theory. For us to be who we are today has taken millions of year.

This really means that we have no way of determining if we have value or not. If so it is only man made. Which of course, leads to the breakdown in relationships in our society today and the immorality we see promoted in our culture as well.

To base one's value just on humanity, which is finite, and here today and gone tomorrow is really lethal, for man would eventually destroy himself unless God stepped in.

## **(2) The biblical world view.**

The Bible says just the opposite of the popular world view. The first 2 chapters in Genesis tell us specifically that the eternal omnipotent God created the world and humans, our first parents, Adam and Eve.

We are told, then, that we are made physically by the very creative power of the biblical God. God created Adam's body out of the dust of the ground and Eve from one of Adam's rib.

**At Sunday School they were teaching how God created everything, including human beings. Little Johnny seemed especially intent when they told him how Eve was created out of one of Adam's ribs.**

**Later in the week his mother noticed him lying down as though he were ill, and she said, 'Johnny, what is the matter?' Little Johnny responded, 'I have pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife.'**

Yes, God created supernaturally and suddenly - At one time there was no light, and the next second there was light. God also created with the appearance of age – look at Adam and Eve, created as adults. They looked like they had age, if one had seen them immediately after being created by the biblical God, but it wasn't so. They just came into the world as adults.

What a sharp contrast between, the popular view set forth in the public arena today and the biblical eternal Creator God.

Man's view – Man and woman came into being over a long, long period of time, from lower forms of life, but not sure how that all happened although various theories have been set forth. No

The biblical world view is that God is the DESIGNER of our physical bodies. He made us male and female. He did that SUPERNATURALLY, SUDDENLY, and with the SUPERFICIAL APPEARANCE OF AGE. He did not need millions of years to make it happen. He spoke and it was done.

Since the biblical eternal personal God is our Creator physically, that means we have eternal value in our physical bodies.

## **2. What gives us value spiritually – in our personalities, that which is what makes each of us an individual?**

### **(1) The popular world view.**

There is talk today about the spiritual in various world religions and cults and occult, for a god of some kind is believed in. Some spiritual talk is mixed with some kind of biblical flavor, but in the main it is based upon man's limited ideas and philosophies.

It has no eternal basis, and as a result, man is led into all kinds of different ideas spiritually since his thinking is based upon himself, which is here today and gone tomorrow.

The idea is that you can believe what you want and you will somehow get to the good place after this life, if there is such a place, for one can't really be sure that one will arrive there.

### **(2) The biblical world view.**

Again Genesis 1 and 2 give us the answer we need.

Genesis 1:26-28 tell us that we are made in the image of God, that is we have a spiritual make up like God with a mind, an emotion, and a will. We have a physical body made by God and we are also given a spiritual make-up like unto God's spiritual make-up.

Genesis 2:7 tells us that after God formed man out of the dust of the ground, He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being. Now the phrase living being is also used of animals in Genesis 1:21 & 24, but the difference is that man was made in the image of God – having a mind, emotion, and will like God does.

Our first parents were uniquely designed by the eternal and personal God, completely distinct from the animal world, not an extension of the animal world.

Since we are the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve that unique design of God is stamped upon our lives as well. Since the biblical God is our Designer, He knew how to create us – He knows how to design.

## II. Our Design

### 1. What gives value to the design of the human body physically.

**Shakespeare acknowledged through Hamlet the amazing being of man when he penned,** “ What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god!”

#### (1) The popular world view.

Certainly, the human body is taken seriously today. The money spent on medical research, the treatment available for the human body, the development of medical equipment, and the emphasis upon good health, tell us that there is a recognition of the value of the human body. I have been in a number of hospitals in this country in my years of ministry and I am always amazed at the superb medical care that is available in our different hospitals. We are a blessed country in this regard.

But when it comes to keeping the body pure regarding morality, there is a breakdown that causes all kinds of challenges for our culture.

**The reason, being, that many individuals feel that they are their own god and can do what they want regardless of the consequences. Let’s do away with the distinctions of male and female. Let’s live according to our feelings.**

**The evolutionary theory breaks down the idea that there is no God to whom someone is accountable to.**

**The body, then, has some kind of value in its own right, in man’s thinking, but that is only from a human viewpoint. It has nothing to do with being designed or created by the biblical God.**

#### (2) The biblical world view.

##### Again, the Bible has a completely different viewpoint.

David, the king of Israel understood something of God’s construction of the human body as he penned in Psalm 139, “For you formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother’s womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made . . . Your eyes have seen my unformed substance (referring to the embryo); and in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them”

Yes, both male and female are fearfully and wonderfully made, created by the DESIGNER Himself.

**They are different, yet designed for each other, designed to compliment each other, so that in the diversity of how they respond, make decisions, and carry them out can create a unity in the marriage relationship.**

### 2. What gives value to the design of the body spiritually?

#### (1) The popular world view.

**Since the popular world view is that man just evolved from some lower form of animal over an extended period of time, he has trouble with the spiritual side of man if there is such a thing. Yes, he has all kinds of pursuits in areas of what is called religion, but those who deny there is a God, the atheists, do not accept the spiritual part of man that needs to find its rest in his Creator.**

## **(2) The biblical world view.**

**On the other hand, again, in stark contrast, the Designer, the biblical God, has not only designed the physical bodies of the man and woman, God designed the spiritual make up the man and woman to have an un-going relationship with Him first of all.**

**Made in the image of God with a spiritual mind, emotion, and will, now each person can think God's thoughts, love God, and obey God. Each individual can communicate with God spiritually and God can communicate with that person. Of course, that's why He has given us His Word today in its completeness.**

**No matter what the ideas are in our world today, the biblical God has made us for Himself, to fellowship with Him and to enjoy Him forever.**

**God meant before the fall, the sin of Adam and Eve ,to have them live forever and enjoy Him forever. For after they disobeyed God by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, what did God say, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" (Genesis 2:22).**

**Of course, Adam and Eve had to leave the beautiful Garden of Eden, and enter a world that was plagued now by sin, and they themselves having a sin nature, they must work by the sweat of their brow and deal with weeds and thistles.**

**But what was the real purpose of God creating man and woman.**

## **III. The Designers purpose for us, His design.**

### **1.The popular world view.**

The popular world view is that man should live for himself, yes, help out humanity as he can. He eats, drinks, and is merry, and tomorrow he dies. There is a lot of mix in that philosophy, for there are a lot of religious people in the world today. Much is done for humanitarian reasons in this great country. But when one has evolved from some lower form of animal, having no true origin, he has no lasting purpose in life – life is here and gone tomorrow. Everything he does is only done in time which is fleeting away.

### **2. The biblical world view.**

Again, the biblical world view is entirely different from the popular world view. Obviously, God created man to fellowship with Him, and in tilling the Garden of Eden, he would be enjoying and glorifying God in whatever he did for Him. Certainly, Adam and Even were truly satisfied in their relationship with their Creator.

As John Piper has said, "God is most glorified, when we are most satisfied in Him."

Of course sin disrupted this ultimate purpose of man to glorify Him, to have worship as a life-style. God intervened and provided forgiveness through the animals slain to make coverings for Adam and Eve. This was a picture of the coming Christ, who came and through His death, burial, and bodily resurrection for us, in our place to pay the penalty for our breaking God's law, provided us eternal life and forgiveness through faith in Him.

Now through faith in Christ, the believer in Jesus can glorify the Lord in whatever he or she does, whether one eats or drinks, one can do all to the glory of God. We should never get over that amazing reality. The believer in Jesus Christ can glorify, or show God off, even in eating and drinking as he lives in the power of the Holy Spirit.

But there is one more area here. The musician necessary to bring music out of the Stradivarius violin.- out of the instrument that has been designed.

## **IV. The Designer's gift to the designee so he or she can play (display) the Lord's music – glorify Him.**

### **1. The popular world's view.**

Has no understanding of this gift. The natural mind does not understand the things given to us by God. He has to live in his own little world with no concept of an eternal purpose.

## 2. The biblical world view.

### (1) The believer in Christ knows who He is.

He has eternal value – his body and spirit have been created by the eternal God. He has been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ through faith in Him, and he has His new life, a new nature, and some day He will get a new body like Christ's glorified body when He returns.

### (2) The believer in Christ knows who He has.

The believer in Jesus Christ knows who God's gift is to Him, God, the Holy Spirit. He knows that He is indwelt, is a temple of the Holy Spirit. He is also aware that the Holy Spirit empowers Him to glorify God – the believer is to walk in the Spirit – to be controlled by the Holy Spirit – (Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 5:18ff).

The believer knows that he or she is eternally valuable, sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption.

### (3) The believer knows who others are, and treats them with respect and honor.

#### 1. Other believers.

They too are made physically and spiritually by the eternal God. They too have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and have a new nature. They too are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. They too are to glorify God in all that they think, do, and say.

That's why our text tells in Romans 12:10b read,  
"Give preference to one another in honor."

The verse reads literally, "In honor, in respect to one another, keep giving preference or taking the lead."

Perhaps it could say, "Be one who is a leader in respecting, in giving value and worth to one another as believers."

Paul puts in another way in Philippians 2:1-4,

"Make my joy complete by being of the same mind (the mind of Christ), maintaining the same love (agape love – Calvary love – unconditional love) united in spirit (in the Holy Spirit), intent on one purpose (glorifying God), Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind (understand who you are in the sight of God – one needing His mercy, and then understanding who God is, the holy, eternal God who has ultimate grace and mercy), regard one another as more important than yourselves ----

What's God telling us here? To put ourselves down, and minimize who we are in the sight of God? No, for we are as we have said, are all created in the image of God with a body created by God. Through faith in Christ we have been redeemed by His precious blood, we are eternally valuable before God and before others.

**What Paul is saying when he pens, "but with humility regard one another more important than yourselves," the text could better read, "have a humble mind toward one another without a superior attitude among yourselves."**

**Paul is saying respect each other, honor each other in the same way, all believers are brothers and sisters in the Lord created by Him and redeemed by Him. No one is superior to the other, and no believer should give off that attitude. It is not Christ-like, as the example of Christ is given in the following verses.**

The text continues with, Know who you are and take care of your own needs, but also respect and take care of others who have different needs. Treat each other with honor and dignity.

### (1) Do we honor each other individually?

It's easy to say things in a derogatory manner, or with sarcastic humor to take a dig at someone. Sometimes we don't say anything, but we sure think some negative thoughts toward someone who has slighted us.

## **(2) Do we honor each other in our relationships as husbands and wives, yes, in our families with our children?**

It's easy to say, "What's the matter with you? Can't you ever be happy?  
Rather than say, "Have I done something to hurt you?"

OR,

"What have I said this time? Are you ever sensitive!"

RATHER THAN, "I see I've upset you. I think I've said something that hurt. I'm sorry."

OR,

"Now I've done it again. Whatever I try to do, you aren't able to accept it without getting your feelings hurt. Would it help if I stood on my head?"

RATHER THAN, "You've made me see that I hurt you. Is there any way I can make up for my stupidity?"

OR,

"I didn't do all the talking. Besides, you never say anything anyway."

RATHER THAN,

"You're right. It wasn't very kind of me to do all the talking and exclude you."

OR,

"I'll dress the way I want to. You wouldn't know when things match and when they don't anyhow."

RATHER THAN,

"You know, I haven't paid as much attention as I could to dressing neatly. Thanks for calling to my attention the mismatch between my shirt and tie.

OR,

"I'm always putting gas in your car. Once in a while I'd like to use some of it."

RATHER THAN,

"As you say, it was careless of me to overlook putting gas in the car."

Our words are powerful as James tells us. The tongue can give life and it can kill. May we respect and honor each other in our family relationships by seeking to give words of grace that build up rather than words that depreciated and minimize each other.

Also, so we serve each other in our relationships as husband and wife? How about children and youth still at home, do you pitch in and honor your mom and dad by helping spontaneously around the house? Do you as children in the home seek to honor one another rather than try to get even or get the other person in trouble?

## **(3) Do we honor each other in our local family of God, Grace Church?**

It's easy sometimes to be respectful when talking to someone or in a meeting, but then when one is with someone else, one complains or minimizes the other person. God wants us to speak the truth in love and honor each other in the body of Christ.

### **2. Those who are not believers in Jesus Christ (I Peter 2:17a).**

**"Honor all people."**

**Why should believers in Jesus Christ empowered by the Holy Spirit of God honor all people, even unbelievers?**

**Answer? They have been created physically and spiritually by the Creator of the universe, the eternal and personal living God.**

**Regardless of how they act and what they do, all unbelievers should be honored because God created them in His image. Of course, this does not mean condoning what they do.**

**But Jesus said that He came to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance. God so loved the world. Christ loves all sinners, that is why He came to die on the cross, be buried, and rise again from the dead. Christ came not to condemn the world but that the world through faith in Him might be saved, have forgiveness and eternal life.**

**What made the Stradivarius violin valuable? The designer.**

**What makes you and me eternally valuable? The Designer, our Creator and Redeemer.**

**What gives the Stradivarius violin purpose? The Designer – to be able to produce great music.**

**Who gives us purpose? Our Designer, the true and living God that we might glorify Him in all that we do.**

**Who makes the Stradivarius violin show how valuable and worthwhile it is? The maestro – the master who plays it.**

**Who shows how valuable and worthwhile you and I are?**

**The Holy Spirit of God as we let Him produce the life of Christ through us in our thoughts, words, actions, giving each other honor in order to glorify the Lord.**

**What makes all the difference in the violin and our lives as followers of Christ is the "Touch of the Master's Hand."**

Twice battered and scarred, and the auctioneer thought it scarcely worth his while To waste much time on the old violin, But held it up with a smile. "What am I bidden, good folks," he cried, "Who'll start the bidding for me? A dollar, a dollar, then, two! Only two? Two dollars, and who'll make it three? Three dollars, once; three dollars, twice; Going for three . . ." But no, From the room, far back, a grey-haired man Came forward and picked up the bow; Then, wiping the dust from the old violin, And tightening the loose strings, He played a melody pure and sweet As a caroling angel sings. The music ceased, and the auctioneer, With a voice that was quiet and low, said: "What am I bid for the old violin?" And he held it up with the bow. "A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two? "Two thousand! And who'll make it three? "Three thousand, once; three thousand, twice; And going and gone."said he. The people cheered, but some of them cried, "We do not quite understand, what changed its worth?" Swift came the reply: "The Touch Of The Master's Hand." And many a man with life out of tune, And battered and scarred with sin, Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd, Much like the old violin. A 'mess of potage,' a glass of wine; A game - and he travels on. He is 'going' once, and 'going' twice, He's 'going' and almost 'gone'. But the Master comes and the foolish crowd Never can quite understand The worth of a soul and the change that's wrought By the touch of the Master's Hand. **by Myra B. Welch (1877-1959)**

**May God's touch on our lives this week by the Holy Spirit cause us to honor each other in His power so that our lives can glorify our Lord in all that we think, do , and say.**



