



WOW: Word Of the Week

Value

February 8, 2023

Ever feel like sparrow #5?

In Matt. 10:29, Jesus assures his followers that the Father sees everyone and everything, even the sparrows that are sold two for a penny. His point? Do not fear, you are of more value than many sparrows.

In Luke 12:6, Jesus says that God remembers even the sparrows that are sold five for two pennies! What happened? It looks like the seller threw in one more sparrow to make the deal! Normally two for a penny, but here is a buyer seeking a bargain, "OK, I'll throw in an extra sparrow!"

Do you ever feel like sparrow #5? Your life doesn't matter. No one notices. No one appreciates you. Without value, without worth. My mother was fond of saying, "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." In parallel, value is in the eye of the beholder.

Jan and I own a grandfather clock that she inherited from her parents. They gave it to us about 35 years ago. They had bought it at a farm sale, I think for \$25. The case was not ornate, the clock face was tarnished beyond repair, the clock did not chime correctly.

We brought it home, cleaned it up a bit, polished the wood, and managed to get it working, chiming and counting the hour, but it would not run more than a day or two. A few years later, we found a man who said he could fix it. He tinkered with it; we brought it home; it worked better than before; but it still wasn't right. Across the next 15 years, we took the clock to several different clock repair shops. Even though it did not work right, once we were offered \$75.

Fifteen years ago, we had just moved to a new work in the university. Our new home had just the right place for the clock. We decided to try to get it fixed one more time. We took it to a repair shop. The repairman said he was behind and it would be several weeks, perhaps a couple of months, before he could get to our clock. Four days later, he called and said he was ready to bring the clock to our home and set it up for us! We arranged for him to come the next morning!

We asked him why he had repaired the clock so quickly. He explained to us that he took time to look at our clock after we dropped it off. He became so intrigued that he just kept working on it, even spending a couple of long evenings after the shop closed. It turned out that the clock is very old, from the 1800s, and most likely from the Civil War era. He explained that the age could be determined from the way the clock was designed on the inside. He showed us all kinds of unique features. He estimated that the clock had a value of \$1000-1500, perhaps more.

Same plain case, same tarnished face, not outwardly impressive. The clock plays only the traditional Westminster chime. Its value? \$25? No, three times that--\$75. \$75? No, 20 times that! Why the difference? The difference was the place—a farm sale, an inexperienced repair shop, an expert. The difference was the person seeing the value.

You are of infinite worth to God, so valuable that he sent his son for you. But in daily life and in your spiritual life, you are not worth anything if you are not in the right place. If you are not appreciated, do not become angry. That means you are not yet in the right place. "Don't stay in a place where your value is not seen."

Spiritual lessons! May we see every person through God's eyes. See value, communicate value, build value. May the church be a place where people are convinced of their true worth—even the least, the most unlovable, the most needy, the most unlikely. That is the church I want to be part of.