

IMPORTANT TO US OR TO GOD?

1 Corinthians 1:17-2:2 Isaiah 66:1-2

Introduction: So much of what we think is important, of value, is opposite of what God thinks. After observing all that is done in the "name of God" (money raised and spent, buildings built, works performed, programs and activities maintained, rituals and ceremonies, creeds, confessions and laws imposed on people in the name of God, we might need to ask ourselves the question, which is more important, what we think or what God thinks? What is really important to God?

I. GOD HAS THINGS MORE IMPORTANT THAN OUR:

1. Church buildings, ornate cathedrals, and so called "houses of worship." God said, ***"The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; where is the house that ye build unto me?" (Acts 17:24)***
 - Crosses, altars, stained glass and crystal cathedrals impress people, but religious buildings and things don't impress the omnipresent, eternal God.
2. Tithes, offerings and sacrifices we bring to Him. ***"To what purpose is the multitude of sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts and I delight not in the blood of bullocks or of lambs, or of the goats." (Isaiah 1:11)***
 - Which of us has ever made a sacrifice that got God's attention?
 - God has no need of our "human" gifts.
 - It is a blessing of grace that He allows us to give, stoops to receive our gifts, and condescends to use them.
 - But the Almighty, Self-sufficient God doesn't need and is not impressed by our puny gifts.
3. Rituals, ceremonies, appointed special days, holy days, sabbath keepings, special seasons. ***"Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity; even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them." (Isaiah 1:13-14)***
"Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days." (Colossians 2:16)
4. Fancy, long, often repeated, wordy prayers. ***"And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea when you make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood." (Isaiah 1:15)***
 - True prayer is more than words. It is the voice of the heart seeking God's mercy, God's will, God's glory, and God's Son.
5. Works of righteousness. ***"I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:20***

- Our righteousness is as filthy rags in God's sight. God calls them "dead works" to be repented of and forsaken.

6. Strictly kept and observed legal religion.

- Religions full of "do's and don'ts" those who would impose upon God's Children the yoke and bondage of Moses' law, pervert both the law and the gospel. ***"By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified." (Romans 6:14)***
"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."
(Romans 10:4)
- Either we are under the whole law to do it all, or we are not under the law at all.
- All laws, customs, traditions, rules of religion invented and imposed by people are utterly contemptible to God.
- God almighty, who made Adam and Eve naked in the garden and gave them everything He had made to use and enjoy as they saw fit, is not impressed by what we, the fallen sons and daughters of Adam wear or do not wear, eat and drink or do not eat or drink.

7. Even our preachers. ***"Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?' (Matthew 7:22)***

- Orators, big, verbal, eloquent speakers, preachers impress people and themselves, but God is not impressed.

So, if our buildings, sacrifices, prayers, ceremonies, gifts, righteousness or our preaching are not as important to God as to us, just what then is important to God?

II. WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO GOD IS:

1. His Word. ***"To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." (Isaiah 66:2)***

- The world was created by the WORD of God.
- Heaven and earth are preserved and held in tact by the WORD of God.
- Christ is revealed by the WORD of God.
- Men and women are convicted of their sin by the WORD of God.
- Faith is given by the WORD of God.
- Comfort is administered by the WORD of God.
- Saints are motivated, edified, protected, and ruled by the WORD of God.
- The Word of God is the seed of spiritual life by which chosen, redeemed sinners are born again.
- The solitary basis of our faith is the Word of God.
- The Word of God is the foundation of our hope.
- The Word of God will be the basis of judgment at the bar of God in the last day.
- The Word of God shall stand forever.

2. His Grace (the undeserved favor of God). ***"Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." "The law came by Moses, but grace and truth come by Jesus Christ." "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)***
 - God's grace established and made for us the covenant of grace.
 - God's grace chose us in Jesus Christ.
 - God's grace sent Jesus Christ into the world to redeem and save His chosen, covenant people.
 - God's grace called us from death unto life.
 - God's grace keeps us.
 - God's grace shall finish and complete what His grace began.

3. His Son. ***"And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father in that in him should all fullness dwell." (Colossians 1:18-19) "For in him dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And yea re complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power." (Colossians 2:9-10)***
 - All grace is in the Son.
 - All conversion is in the Son.
 - All life is in the Son.
 - All Salvation is in the Son.

4. His People.
 - God created all things for us.
 - God sent His Son, Jesus to die for us.
 - God sacrifices people and nations of people for us.
 - God rules all things for us.
 - God upholds and preserves the world for us.
 - God will judge the world for us.
 - God will bestow all the glory of heaven upon us.
 - God loves us as He loves His own dear Son who is our Savior and Redeemer.

5. The thing of utmost importance to God is HIS GLORY!
 - God's Glory is unspeakable.
 - God's Glory is unsearchable.
 - God's Glory is unchangeable.
 - God's Glory is indescribable.
 - God's Glory is independent.
 - The heavens declare the glory of God. The angels sing ***"Glory to God in the Highest."***
 The Son said to the Father, ***"Glorify thy son that thy Son also may glorify thee."***
 The Holy Spirit has come to ***"glorify Christ for the glory of the triune God.***
 All the redeemed in heaven sing, ***"Thou art worthy, O Lord to receive glory, honor, and power."***
 - If we want to be in harmony with God's creation, the holy angels, the Son of God, the Holy Spirit, the redeemed already in heaven, and the purpose of God Himself, then whatever

we do in word or in deed must be done for His Glory.

CONCLUSION:

1. What is really the most important - what we think is important or what God thinks is important?
2. Take an inventory of your values, things that you think are important. How do they compare to what God thinks?
3. What is important to God must be of supreme importance to us, His Children, as well.
4. What is really important to God?
 - His Word, His Grace, His Son, His People (us), His Glory.