



+ This week at Magdalen Rd we continued our topical New Year series considering what it means to be created in the Image of God.

We initially considered the nature of our society in finding value in our performance and usefulness and comparing ourselves with one another (by considering Max Lucado's series based on the character Punchinello).

We also recapped a number of the introductory thoughts from last week - specifically Our Western society's Judaeo Christian roots have historically meant that individuals (regardless of ability, ethnicity, age etc) have an intrinsic dignity, value and worth. Since God has been turned from, there's now a huge confusion as to why (and whether) people have intrinsic worth. The news is full of stories highlighting the inequality of dignity. The unchanging message of the bible (rooted in Gen 1:26-28) is that everyone has a dignity and worth because they are made in Gods image but the battle is not to find our dignity and worth in our performance or social standing etc...

We had 2 points from the sermon:

Our value come from our creation (Psalm 8)

Here we noted the incredible privilege humanity has in being given the task of overseeing Gods amazing creation. We have been delegated the responsibility, being made a little lower than the angels but with everything under our feet.

This Psalm applies to all of humanity. Whereas for the Christian there's a specific value that comes from being renewed and recreated in Christ.

Our value comes from our re-creation (Gal 2:20)

This verse is a very countercultural way of thinking about value and worth. It highlights various aspects of the framework we ought to have and where we ought to look (but very often do not).

We noted the initial offence (and privilege) that Jesus gives himself for us - no amount of effort on our part could deal with the problem of our sin. From there a godly self-image begins with knowing that we are dead (crucified with Christ) the old has gone but the new has come. As Jesus was raised so have we been and each day is living by faith in him. Why did he do this? Because he loves us. Which means we can go to him with our insecurities and sin and with our finding worth in the wrong place because he loves us.

Some questions - as always tweak for your group and your context.

Where do we see examples in our country of people valuing some individuals less than others?

Where do we (wrongly) look for value and worth outside of being made in Gods image? What are the struggles for you? Why them do you think?

Turn to Psalm 8. Read it as a group - explain it - what feelings and emotions does it provoke? Why? How does it affect your (feelings of) self-worth and value?

Turn to Gal 2:20. Read it as a group - explain it - what feelings and emotions does it provoke? Why? How does it affect your (feelings of) self-worth and value?

How can we be a church community that helps one another to finds out value and worth in the right place?

Pray for each other as we all struggle with this