

Life of Christ

A study of the life and teachings of Jesus

The Value of One

by Nate King

Every person who has experienced God's incredible grace flood their life knows what it's like to be the Valued One. The parables Jesus told in Luke 15 highlight the importance placed on you when you were far from God. They serve as an incredible reminder of just why he went through all that he did. Because you were valued, you are valued.

I love the idea of the Host of Heaven rejoicing at the moment of salvation—a celebration like none other! And if you have become a follower of Christ, there are still echoes of rejoicing reverberating amidst the halls of eternity from the day you declared Christ your Lord.

One of my favorite things to learn about someone who shares my faith is how they came about it. The stories are as different and varied as the people I meet and ask. I've met people compelled to find God after reaching their biggest dream, which came up empty. I've known others who watched all they had ever loved go down the drain because of their reckless choices—and at rock bottom, they looked up to see that Jesus had been searching for just such an opportunity to show them his love.

Jesus is always looking for the next one who will accept His love, waiting and ready for the story of one life to make the most dramatic and amazing turn possible. Because only when we step into the loving relationship God most wants for us do we begin to live out the potential that was always there waiting.

It's not instant. It's a start. I wonder if Heaven isn't rejoicing at the good things that will come from the great thing taking place when a lost son or daughter comes home to our Good Father.

I grew up in church and was no stranger to Jesus as a kid. But one week before my twelfth birthday, I went forward to receive Christ at the end of a service my community had thrown on our local high school football field.

Now, I've never played a single down of football in my life. I was younger and smaller than everyone growing up. But Jesus said it. We've read it. Heaven rejoices when someone lost is found. When a Valued One comes into the most important of relationships. On a Tuesday night in a small town end zone, I knelt and prayed. Heaven rejoiced! It's the closest thing I've ever come to a touchdown.

Everyone who has experienced the love of Christ in their life has a moment in their story, just like mine—a moment when Heaven gasped in excitement and celebrated in full. But not every day feels like a party, even with Jesus.

In the twenty-nine years since that day, I've lived through all of my life's worst days—days filled with heartache, pain, loss, sin, destructive habits, reckless choices, and a litany of bad things that chose me. None of them felt like a party.

If you've lived through hard things, you probably know the feeling. It's the tension between swinging for the home run and striking out, like running out of gas when you're on your way to the most important appointment of the day.

On days like those, it's easy for me to be my worst critic. But it's essential for me to remember my value. It's vital to remember who values me.

You are loved. You are wanted. You are cherished. You were grafted into Heaven's family by the work of the cross and the blood of the Son of God. Who you are is summed up by whose you are—and you're more than enough.

On those days when it doesn't seem so, or when something says otherwise, the voice telling you that you're loved, you're forgiven, and you're a Child of God can be hard to hear. Still your heart and your soul. Turn off the cell phone. Go for a short drive. Maybe just take a walk.

When everything gets quiet, remember this phrase, "I am celebrated. I am loved. I am His." Why? Because your life, your soul, and your purpose carry value before God.