How Valuable?

Value is often in the eye of the beholder...A writer reflected an occasion when he learned the truthfulness of this lesson...

“Several years ago I used to heat our house with wood. In addition to cutting wood I used to get the wood scraps from a store called ‘The Wooden Bird.’ They make beautiful hand-carved bird and animal decoys out of wood. Each decoy costs between 50 and 250 dollars, and they are really nice decorative pieces to place on fireplace mantles. Every couple of weeks I would stop in and pick up their leftover wood scraps to burn in my wood burner.

“Right before Thanksgiving one year, I stopped in to pick up a load of scraps. As usual, a man wheeled out two bins to the loading doors and helped me load them in the truck. Usually the donated wood consisted of scraps of pine, but this time it was a bunch of the wooden decoys. I asked him if he was sure that he was giving me the right wood. The man insisted that I had the right stuff and waved goodbye.

I noticed the decoys had a few cracks in them so I figured they were throwing them away because of their imperfections. I took my load of wood and promised that I would bring his carts back soon. I went home and unloaded the decoys in a big pile in the basement. The wood burner was low so I grabbed a handful of decoys and threw them in the furnace. The dry pine burned nice and hot so I threw in a few more to ward of the cold.

“Later that evening after reloading the furnace with more decoys, I took the carts back to the Wooden Bird before the long weekend. When I pulled up in my truck, two men ran out of the building and demanded that I bring back the decoys. I asked why, and with urgency in his voice, the manager told me that I had taken their entire inventory of Christmas decoys — worth tens of thousands of dollars — by mistake!

He went on and on about calling the police and driving around for the last three hours in a panic looking for me. I pointed at the man who gave them to me, and the man, seeking to avoid the accusing spotlight, quickly walked back into the building. The manager asked if I still had the decoys. He explained that they were extremely valuable. Rather stunned I told them that I had burned a few of them but would bring the rest back. I went home and carefully loaded the remaining decoys — several hundred of them — into the bins and brought them back to the Wooden Bird.

The “decoy burner” made this observation: “Value is often in the eye of the beholder. The decoys had no value to me other than a little heat. But to the Wooden Bird, the decoys were worth tens of thousands of dollars.” *

Consider: “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field” (Matthew 13:44).

The exact value of the treasure is not given, but the man considered it so valuable that he sold all that he had in order to obtain it.

The value of the Kingdom (the church) is seen in the price that was paid for it! Jesus, the Son of God, purchased it with His own blood (Acts 20:28). His blood, shed on the cross, purchased the redemption from sin of those who accept His invitation to be a part of His kingdom (see Ephesians 1:7).