

The song “I Only Have Eyes for You” was composed in 1934 by Harry Warren and Al Dubin. It has been recorded by numerous musicians, including Peggy Lee, Frank Sinatra, and Art Garfunkel. Rolling Stone ranks the Flamingo’s version of the song #175 in their list of the 500 Greatest Songs of All Time.

“I Only Have Eyes for You.” The Lord has His own version of this golden oldie: “you are valuable in My eyes.” The you in our text is singular, not plural. It’s you not you all. Singular you denotes a focus that is individual and intimate, particular and personal. The same specific concern for you comes in Isaiah 43:1 where God says, “I have called you by name, you are Mine.” His care is cosmic and universal, to be sure, but to emphasize the value God places on you, He employs twenty-five second person word forms in Isaiah 43:1-7. Over and over again it is you, you, you . . . you! “You are valuable in My eyes.”

Those who first received these words were far away from home. These Israelites were in Babylon, and Babylon said, “You are nothing in my eyes.” Babylon was distant, aloof, cold, and calculating. It called Judean exiles state slaves and prisoners, cogs in their vast and ever-growing political machine.

THE QUESTION OF THE DAY: Where do I find my value?

To get at this, let me ask you: have any of you been in one of those fun houses that have all those weird mirrors? Some mirrors make you look tall and skinny. Others make you look short and fat. And still others make you look ugly and creepy. None of them reflect who you really are or what you really look like.

And neither do the mirrors that surround us. Just turn on the TV, surf the net, go to a mall, pick up a magazine. There we see perfect people with perfect families and perfect marriages delighting in perfect jobs. And when these images seductively summon us, what do we see? We see that we do not measure up. You name it--we do not have it. Addicted to how the world sees us, we begin feeling tall and skinny, short and fat, ugly and creepy. If we look into these mirrors long enough, we begin to languish, lose heart, and feel worthless.

And when we feel worthless, we not only discount ourselves, we begin discounting everybody else. We start to discount our spouse, child, colleague, parent, boss. When we feel like nothing, we treat other people like nothing. We sell each other off for cut-rate prices, slashing and burning reputations. Obsessed with what we do not have, we get stuck in the game of gossip, the silent stares, and the jungle of judgment.

Let me be as clear as possible. How you stack up in the eyes of others does not reflect your true value. Your value comes from the Lord, and He says, “You are valuable in My eyes.” It is the same you-- singular, not plural. Specific, reserved, and exact. It is you! And you are incredibly valuable. The Hebrew word here, translated “valuable,” denotes significance, stature, and substance. You are prized, priceless, preferred, and precious.

Let me explain. Value is based on ownership. A car owned by Elvis Presley is worth a lot more than my Honda Pilot, which has been dented, damaged, and dinged! My car’s worth is connected to the fame of its owner (or lack thereof); which means not a whole lot! I am sure that it could be sold for a couple of bucks, but it is probably worth more as scrap at this point.

So value is based on ownership? The Lord says in Isaiah 43:6-7, “Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the end of the earth. All upon whom My name is called, and whom I created for My glory, whom I formed and whom I made.” God has created and claimed, fashioned and formed us. We are His sons and His daughters. And value is based on how much someone is willing to pay? God says in Isaiah 43:4, “And I will give people in exchange for you, and nations in exchange for your life.” When Israel passed through the Red Sea, the Lord paid for it with the life of Egyptians. Now Israel is about to leave their captivity through the Persian

King Cyrus and God will pay for it with the life of Babylonians. Our God is willing to lay down people's lives for us.

But why trust the Lord to place value on us? Just who is this God anyway? Isaiah 40:26 says that He calls every star by name. The Milky Way is estimated to be 100,000 to 200,000 light years across and about 1,000 light years thick and it is estimated to contain 100-400 billion stars. To count them one by one would take a person over 3,000 years. According to the probings of the Hubble and James Webb Space Telescopes, there are an estimated 2 trillion galaxies in the universe! These numbers boggle the mind! And this God calls each of them by name! This is the God who says in Isaiah 43:1, "I have redeemed you, I have called you by name, " and in verse 4, "You are valuable in My eyes."

But wait, there's more. Isaiah 40:8 says His Word is everlasting; Isaiah 51:8 says His righteousness is everlasting; Isaiah 54:8 says His love is everlasting; Isaiah 55:3 says His covenant is everlasting. No wonder Isaiah 40:28 states, "He is the everlasting God." This is the One who says, "I only have eyes for you."

Who? You. Still you, just you, always you, forever and ever . . . you! Are what? You are valuable, cherished, of infinite worth. Where? Not in the eyes of Babylon, not in the eyes of the world. There we are nameless

numbers and state-owned statistics. Where are we valuable? Not in our eyes. When our eyes are wide open, we see our duplicity, dishonesty, idolatry, and ongoing sin.

So where are we valuable? God says, “In My eyes!” To quote Luther, “Although in supreme trials you seem nothing in your own eyes and are condemned as one cast off by the world, in My eyes you are glorious. Therefore you may be vile in your own eyes, in the eyes of the world, and even in those of your brothers. Fear not. In My eyes I regard you as a precious jewel.”

But wait, there’s more! In the baptismal flood, God claimed you as His own; and on a hill called Calvary, He paid for you with His Son, Jesus. This means God has more than just eyes for you. He has hands and feet for you, nailed to a cross. He has a head for you, crowned with thorns. He has a side for you, thrust through by a spear.

But wait, there’s more. God has a heart for you. Jesus says, “As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you” (John 15:9). God has ears for you. Jesus says, “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you” (Matthew 7:7). And God has body and blood for you. Jesus says, “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of your sins” (cf. Mark 14:23).

Isaiah testifies to this one indisputable fact. Our God loves these lyrics:
“The moon may be high, but I can’t see a thing in the sky. I only have eyes
for you.” Amen.