

As applied to values, some things are valuable in themselves; other things are valuable only in relation to the needs, requirements, desires, preferences, or tastes of other persons or things.

For example, a thing that has little intrinsic value, such as a large steel bolt costing ten dollars, may have great extrinsic value, such as in holding together key girders in a multimillion dollar structure.

It may be helpful, in attempting to distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic value, to run through the following exercise, and to label the items below with either "I" (intrinsic) or "E" (extrinsic). The question is "Does this have intrinsic or extrinsic value?"

- () a flawless forty carat blue sapphire
- () a human being in India, China, Iran, or Somalia that you do not know personally
- () a beloved pet animal
- () a new car
- () an edifying sermon
- () a godly person you know
- () an original painting by Rembrandt
- () an autographed first edition of David Copperfield
- () a twenty million dollar lottery jackpot
- () a tried and tested promise in the Bible
- () your mother's recipe for deep-dish custard apple pie
- () an antidote for a deadly snake bite
- () an old photograph (the only one you have) of your best teenage friend
- () peace with God
- () the love of someone you esteem very highly
- () the only copy of the manuscript of a book you've spent five years writing
- () God's smile on you
- () good health
- () cold water in the middle of a burning desert
- () a box of matches during an electrical power failure