Google the word VALUE and you get:

the regard that something is held to deserve;

the importance, worth, or usefulness of something.

OR

a person's principles or standards of behavior;

one's judgment of what is important in life.

There has been all sorts of buzz around the subject of values for decades. I remember studying education 30 years ago and part of what was in vogue was values clarification. More recently businesses have worked on "Mission, Vision and Values." Marketers teach us to articulate our "Unique Value Proposition." All of these are worthy endeavors. I daresay that the process of sitting down and doing the work can prove at times more valuable than what actually ends up "on paper." Teams benefit from doing the work. For a time organizations move forward as they come out of these "sessions" focusing on values.

BUT, in the end, what makes

VALUES valuable?

I'd like to share just two thoughts on this question. The first comes from Travis Boersma, who, along with his brother Dane, started the largest private coffee chain in America, Dutch Bros. Coming from a dairy farm, the two brothers set out to "do their deal" and, because they were of Dutch heritage and they were brothers came up with their company name. Starting in Grants Pass, Oregon, in 1992, Travis (older brother Dane is now deceased) and company have grown Dutch Bros to a current 233 locations throughout multiple western states.

Travis was interviewed in an Entre Leadership podcast (one of Dave Ramsey's organizations ventures) on hiring and firing. He made an interesting statement:

I'm more interested in our employees lives outside work

than their lives at work.

He went on to say that he wants to know if an employee's values line up with those of the company, because if they don't, life at work will be miserable. And if life at work is miserable, life will suck…So, no values alignment, no work…

Find a company whose values

align with your own.

Look closely at any Dutch Bros location and you will find displayed the Dutch Bros Creed.

This leads me to my second point. Not just at Dutch Bros, but for any person, enterprise, family, church or organization:

Values are what we practice.

No matter the time we spend on values clarification or writing down the values to which we aspire, the proof is in the pudding. I can say I value people. But if a client watches me mistreat an employee, what I say doesn't matter. It's what I practice that counts. So, spend time thinking about this the next time you or your team go to work on your values. Putting something in print lets the cat out of the bag. Am I/are you willing to let the cat out of the bag? If I am, my integrity is on the line.

Do my words match my actions?

Do my actions match my words?