

# Proper Priorities

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Definition of priorities – Definition: “2 : a preferential rating; especially : one that allocates rights to goods and services usually in limited supply <that project has top priority> 3 : something given or meriting attention before competing alternatives” (Merriam-Webster Online, [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com))
- B. Priorities are those things within a person’s life which he rates as possessing a greater level of importance.
- C. Let’s try a little exercise. Use the following four lines to list the four most important elements within your life.
  - 1. \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2. \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3. \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4. \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Consider your list and place an X in the box of the element that you feel to be least important.
  - b. Of your three remaining top three elements of your life, select another one to remove from the list by placing an X in the box.
  - c. Finally, pick one of the remaining two priorities to mark off by placing an X in the box.
  - d. Give consideration to what remains as the most important thing in your life. Now, consider your life and ask yourself if your academic choice matches your real life choices.
- B. Let us give consideration as to why God must take priority in your life.

## I. WHY MUST GOD TAKE PRIORITY IN YOUR LIFE?

- A. To better understand the concept of priority, consider the illustration of the wagon wheel.
  - 1. The center of the wagon wheel represents your heart, your love, and your desires. Whatever is at the center of your life, at the center of your heart, will be the center point around which everything else in your life will revolve. That which lies at the

center of the wagon wheel will take a position of priority within your life.

Whenever there are conflicts between the various elements of your life, that which is most important to you will win the conflict.

- B. How does a person establish his priorities?
  - 1. A person's priorities may be determined by what he or she finds most important.
    - a. Family - kids, spouse, parents
    - b. Recreation - golf, fishing, football, etc.
    - c. Anything that a person lives for or has strong desires toward.
  - 2. A person's priorities could also be established upon what will benefit him the most.
    - a. Job - money, promotions, social status, lifestyle
    - b. Lifestyle - social status, certain friends or acquaintances
- C. In the end, a person's priorities will reflect what is in his heart. (Proverbs 4:23; 23:7; Matthew 6:19-21)
- D. When a Christian places God at the center of his life, he will make everything within his life revolve around God. This is the only outcome possible when a person truly loves the Lord God. (Mark 12:29-30)
- E. Consider the challenge which Jesus issued to His disciples as recorded by both Matthew and Luke. (Matthew 10:37-38; Luke 14:26-27)

## **II. HOW DO YOU CHANGE TO GIVE GOD PRIORITY IN YOUR LIFE?**

- A. To answer this question, consider two main thoughts seen in Proverbs 4:20-27.
  - 1. **Step One:** A person must put the word of God in his heart. If a person will place instructions, the words of wisdom, even the words of God within his heart, then that person will have life and will live his life in a wise and godly manner. (verses 20-23)
  - 2. **Step Two:** A person must put away all ungodly thoughts and actions. If a person will put away all deceitfulness and perverseness, then his attention will be focused on following the path that he must follow. (verses 24-27) In order to follow the proper path of godliness and righteousness, consider the following instructions from Proverbs 4:24-27.
- B. The person who follows the above principles taught in Proverbs 4:20-27 will be the

individual who allows his life to be guided by God's will.

1. He will not allow himself to be led astray by the ungodly ways of the world.
2. His every thought, motive, word, and action will be within the guidelines established in the scriptures.
3. He will keep his life within the realm of the authority of Jesus Christ. (Colossians 3:16-17)

C. A Christian who follows these principles will change his life, giving God the ultimate position of priority within his life.

### **III. HOW WILL PLACING GOD FIRST CHANGE ONE'S LIFE?**

A. A person who gives God ultimate priority within his life will affect change within his life.

Consider the following examples:

1. Giving God priority will affect one's activities on the first day of the week. This person will set aside the time to assemble with the saints and to worship his heavenly Father. (Hebrews 10:24-25)
2. Giving God priority will affect change in one's speech or conversations. (Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 3:8-10)
3. Giving God priority will affect change in the type of clothing one wears.
  - a. Paul told women to adorn themselves in modest apparel. (1 Timothy 2:9-10)
  - b. It is wrong to cause a person to sin. (Luke 17:1-2)
  - c. It is wrong to cause someone to lust after you. (Matthew 5:28)
4. Giving God priority will affect change in regards to the type of people with whom one chooses to have association. (1 Corinthians 15:33; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18)
5. Giving God priority will affect change in how often one studies the word of God. (2 Timothy 2:15; 1 Peter 2:2)

B. In other words, when a person gives God priority within his life, he will keep every word and every action within the guidelines of the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the apostle Paul wrote, "*And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*" (Colossians 3:17)

### **CONCLUSION.**

A. In His sermon on the mount, Jesus said, "*But seek first the kingdom of God and His*

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*righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*” (Matthew 6:33) This attitude of seeking God first will enable a person to faithfully serve the Lord in every area of his life.

- B. Every Christian should do an honest examination of his life, looking to see if God truly holds the place of top priority within his life.