



Applied Faith Men's Bible Study

South Hills Baptist Church

7350 Granbury Rd.

Fort Worth, TX 76123

Priorities

Lesson #2

Overall Lesson #41

Priority # 3 – The Church

So up till now we have established that Biblically speaking God is our first priority and our family is our second priority. While service to God does not always equal service to the Church – sometimes it does.

God calls us to serve our families as we have just discussed. Later we will discuss that God calls us to serve our employers and even the needs of our community and our country. But sometimes we can use these other God given priorities to make excuses for our neglect of the priority of service to God's Church.

Not all of us can be Pastors, Deacons or Sunday school teachers. But God wants us all to serve his local Church in some capacity. For

some their service may be more financial than time based. For others who have little to give financially, they have much more to give in the way of time or talents. But while we all serve God's Church in different ways, the call to serve God's Church is for every believer in Christ.

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all....

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ...

Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

I Corinthians 12:4-6 & 12 & 27 (KJV)

"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." – Ephesians 3:21 (KJV)

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" – Hebrews 10:23-25 (KJV)

The Scriptures are clear that God wants us to make his Church and the local assembling of believers together a priority for ourselves and our families as men of God. For some of us it may be no more than bringing our families faithfully to services each week to worship God and here the preaching and teaching of his Word and the giving of financial contributions to his work.

For others it may go beyond that in making meals for the church or driving a church bus. For others it may be teaching a Sunday school class or leading a youth group. Some are called to be Deacons to support the Pastor and weekly needs of the Church building and membership. Some are called to full time Christian service as Pastors who lead the local churches of God. We all have different callings, different gifts and different amounts of time or money available. But regardless of these differences – we are all called to make the Church of God a priority in our lives.

Having established that our local church should be a priority in our lives, I want to reiterate though that our service to God is not strictly through our local church. Many Christians serve God outside of the official ministries of their local church whether it is working in homeless shelters, Christian colleges and Universities and other evangelistic programs. I consider this blog to be a ministry for God even though it is not done as an official ministry under the direction of my church.

But my point is that I do not believe it would be right for me to only serve God outside his Church while neglecting his Church. It is not an either-or proposition, it is both.

“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” – Galatians 6:10 (KJV)

Priority # 4 – Country

Despite the beliefs of some Christians, God says there is a time for war.

“A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.” – Ecclesiastes 3:8 (KJV)

“The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name.” – Exodus 15:3 (KJV)

“Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.” – Proverbs 20:18 (KJV)

“And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.” – Nehemiah 4:14(KJV)

God has given men in general the ability to wage war and some men he gave a special ability in this area as he did King David:

“Blessed be the Lord my strength which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight:” – Psalm 144:1 (KJV)

This is why some men are simply called to be soldiers like King David was. This “warrior spirit” is something that should never be discouraged in young men. Rather it should be encouraged and channeled in positive ways.

Other men while not being called to be soldiers may still have this “warrior spirit” which calls them into law enforcement positions, again this is something that we should be encouraging when we see this in our young men.

Some men are called to lead their communities, their cities, their states or even their countries. Countries need these types of men in order to maintain peaceful and orderly societies.

But all of us as men even if we don't have the "warrior spirit" or the drive to serve in public office are should be willing to answer the call of our country. During times of peace our service may be limited to voting – which all Christians should do. In times of crisis it might mean we are called to go to war to defend our nation. If there is a natural disaster that strikes our community, then we as men should be the first to step up and assist in our communities.

Priority #5 – Work

The Bible tells us as men that we were created to be workers. Our minds and bodies as men are specifically built for work. Some of us men are built for physically based labor while others are built for more intellectually based labor. But no matter our talents and abilities – we as men are built for work.

“And the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.” – Genesis 3:15 (KJV)

God built and designed man for work and the first thing he did after creating him was assign him to work and keep the Garden of Eden.

The scriptures tell us that as men of God we ought to dedicate ourselves to our work and find joy in our labor.

“Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.” – Psalm 104:23 (KJV)

“Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion...”
Ecclesiastes 3:22 (KJV)

“Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works. Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment. Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” – Ecclesiastes 9:7-10 (KJV)

“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;” – Colossians 3:23 (KJV)

“And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.” – Psalm 90:17 (KJV)

Men – the world is literally yours to command

“What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. “- Psalm 8:4-8 (KJV)

When we farm, we fish, we build and when we organize in all our conquests whatever they may be – this what God built us as men to desire, to strive for and to do.

I like what Dr. Emerson Eggerichs said about men and their work:

“The first question a man usually asks another man when they meet for the first time is, “What do you do?” ... most men identify themselves by their work. God created men to “do” something in the field. Watch young boys as they pick up sticks and turn them into imaginary guns or tools. Recently a mother told us she had prevented her son from having any toy guns or using sticks as pretend rifles, but when he made his cheese sandwich into the form of a pistol and was shooting a friend, she cried out in exasperation, “I give up”.

Mothers should never give up because this is simply part of a boy’s nature. He is called to be a hunter, a worker, a doer. He wants to make his conquest in the field of life. The academic term for this is the “instrumentality of the male”. From childhood there is something in a male that makes him like adventure and conquest. He wants to go into the field to hunt or to work some way.”

Dr. Emerson Eggerichs, Pg. 168 “Love and Respect”

Work is not an option for a man

“Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.” – Ephesians 4:28 (KJV)

“...but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more; And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; That ye may

walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.” – I Thessalonians 4:10-12(KJV)

I know that we are all sinners and we each struggle with different sins more than others. Often, I talk about how I believe it is the most unnatural thing in the world for a mother to drop her child off with strangers for 9 to 10 hours a day so she can pursue a more “fulfilling life” rather than caring for her child.

But I believe in the same way that it grieves the heart of God every time a mother hands her infant child off to a daycare worker by her own choice (rather than out of economic necessity) it also grieves the heart of God when a healthy able-bodied man does not want to work. This goes against the very core of a man’s design when he does not want work.

Conclusion

We have shown here that God has given Christian men the five priorities of God, Family, Church, Country and Work. The first feat is just figuring out what our priorities should be – that we have done here. But for many of us the larger feat is figuring out how to order or really “juggle” these priorities that God has given us as Christian men. In my next article “What should a Christian Man’s highest priority be?” we will talk about this “juggling act” that all of us as Christian men are called to.

Application/Activity

After two weeks of studying our priorities it is time to put them into action. In class we have listed one personal priority dealing with each of the five priorities that we discussed. Take each one of those priorities and place them into action this week. If that seems too much, then take your #1 priority that you can apply and do it! Example, for me, putting God first and how I want to do a better job of it. I want to begin each day this week by waking up and within 15 minutes of waking I want to have my Bible out and reading it, whether at home or at the fire station. I want to follow that Bible reading with a prayer for the people I love. Look at your list and put as many of those wanted changes into action this week!!!