



By Dr. Richard Youngblood

Question: I used to be able to meditate and pray, but now other things have taken that time. How can I get some of it back without penalizing others around me?

Setting aside time for prayer and spiritual mediation is difficult for those of us living the fast-paced, highly-demanding and competitive American lifestyle. The pressure seems constant to excel, to increase the profit margin, to see that our children have all the advantages of every other child in the neighborhood and to keep up with the latest movies, TV shows or sports events. That's only a partial list. No wonder we have so little time for a spiritual relationship with the unseen God.

However, I believe Jesus would say that it is a matter of priorities. We must decide what is of greatest importance in our lives. We need to re-evaluate what we are doing with our time and energy. For example, we need to ask ourselves if what we are doing now will matter one hundred years from now. Will it matter that a person was or was not a top producer in his company? Who in this world will even know about it then? Will it matter in a hundred years that one did or did not have the largest house or most beautiful lawn in the neighborhood? Will it matter that a person did not always wear the latest style clothes or that he never attended another sports event or watched another TV show? But whether one did or did not have an eternal relationship with his maker will matter!

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught us to lay up treasure in heaven instead of on earth where it will rust, rot or be stolen. He said we should first seek the kingdom of God and things like food, clothes and shelter will be provided. We can trust the God who feeds and clothes the birds and flowers of the field. Jesus also said we should learn to live one day at a time (Matthew 6:25-34). According to Jesus, the Father knows what we need even before we do. If we seek his kingdom first, he will provide all we need in life.

After taking time to re-evaluate our priorities, we may need to sacrifice some of the things we are now doing as well as some of our possessions and reorganize our time accordingly. But we will be surprised at how blessed we will become in almost every way. Most importantly, by re-arranging our priorities, we should have time to develop a meaningful relationship with God that will last far longer than one hundred years. The apostle

Paul wrote, “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9 NIV).

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