

“Jesus Teaches About Priorities”

Matthew 6:33

There are three important things that determine a person's happiness in life more than anything else. 1. Attitude – how we view life, God, ourselves and other people will determine altitude as to how high we will get in life. 2. Relationships – the ability to get along with self, family, neighbors; no matter how gifted or intelligent, if we don't have the ability to establish good relationships with others, we will not go far in this life. 3. Priorities – unless we know what is important and what really brings the greatest return for the investments we have, we could work hard all our life and not accomplish much. 95% of achieving anything is knowing, what you want and paying the price to get it as it becomes the purpose in your life. Notice! In February of 1978 after 102 years the Chicago Daily News ceased to publish a daily newspaper. The question was asked, “After 102 years what caused the Chicago Daily News to die?” Without any hesitation the editor said, “We lost our purpose, we forgot where we had come from and what our reason for existence was and had no idea where we were going.” If this can happen to a great establishment like the C.D.N., it can certainly happen to an individual or even to a church. Another illustration is found in the life of Oliver Wendell Holmes who traveled frequently by train and one day he boarded the train and when the conductor came by to collect the tickets Holmes could not find his. The conductor recognized Holmes and told him just to send the ticket in what he found it. Holmes looked at the conductor and said, “I'm not worried about finding the ticket, I need to know where I'm going.” We have come more than half way through this year, have our priorities been such that we know where we are going? In (Matthew 6:33), Jesus teaches about priorities – “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” Three things he mentions:

1. Know what is important. (vs. 33). The word BUT tells us there are other options beside the one Jesus gives that a person may prioritize in their life. In (Matthew 6: 19 – 32) we find these options that we could choose when deciding what our priorities in life might be. If we are storing up treasure here on earth we have a strong chance of being disappointed at some time in life for these things could be taken away. On the other hand if we are storing up treasure in heaven it can never be lost or stolen. Jesus said, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” It is a human trait to follow after the things we determine to be important to us. In (vs. 33), the word “seek” is in the present tense which means “continual seeking” every moment every day. This then will determine what kind of decisions we make, what our priorities are in life.
 - A. How to make a spiritual decision. To make a spiritual decision, ask yourself three questions: (1.) Will it last? Will it have consequences beyond this world? (2.) Will it bring light? Will it have a positive effect and will it make those around you better? (3.) Is it of faith? Not faith in self or things in general, but faith in God?
 - B. Keep it simple. Christian stewardship of life begins when we settle the issue of Lordship. Jesus is Lord of all, yes, but that is not the real issue, rather, is

he the Lord of your life? The more we understand our purpose and priorities, the more successfully we deal with our everyday life.

2. **Seek what is important. (vs. 33).** Seek continually, desire greatly God's best for your life. The key to success is desire. People who want something badly enough can usually find the will to achieve it. We must understand that the decisions we make today will determine the happiness or sadness in the days to come. So how do we make this type of decisions? (1.) Choose – we are not what we are by accident. Even if we choose not to choose, we choose not to choose and we are either a victim or beneficiary of that choice. (2.) Withdraw – To make good spiritual decision we must withdraw from the world system or it will draw us in. If we are not careful the world will force us into a mold that is not spiritual. (3.) Pray – If the son of God felt the need to pray as he made decisions, how about us as mere mortals? (4.) Obey – Jesus said, "To obey the Father is like eating food." (5.) Declare – Tell others of your decision so you can be held accountable.
3. **Receive everything you need. (vs. 33).** Not everything you want. God is not of the Santa Claus type. He says, seek me – get under the umbrella of priority protection and I will certainly take care of your every need. In essence, the Apostle Paul tells us in (Philippians 2: 5 – 11) that Jesus gave up everything to become nothing so that we who are nothing could become everything.

Jesus certainly lived out the principle of priorities that he wants us to follow as he sought God's kingdom first. And so he says:

Know what is important;

Seek what is important, and in so doing;

Receive everything you need!

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