

# Principles That Produce Proper Priorities

## Proverbs 3:5-6

### Introduction

What people, places, or things are most important to you? A person's priorities can be identified by examining the calendar and the checkbook. The things that are most important to us are the things in which we invest the most time and money.

What would the entries on your calendar or in your check book reveal about your priorities? That question probably makes most of us uncomfortable. It is easy to avoid answering that question today. But, it can't be avoided forever. "For we must all appear before the tribunal of Christ, so that each may be repaid for what he has done in the body, whether good or worthless." (2 Corinthians 5:10) Someday we will all have to deal with the issue of our priorities.

Today, I don't want to tell anyone what your priorities should be. I am not interested in trying to guilt or manipulate anyone into a certain set of priorities. I simply want to preach timeless principles that produce proper priorities.

### Proper Priorities Begin with God

*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding; think about Him in all your ways, and He will guide you on the right paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6)*

There must be surrender. To "trust in the Lord with all your heart" requires a decision to surrender all control to the Lord because you believe that He is God. If He is God, He is eternal. If He is God, He is all-knowing. If He is God, He is all-powerful. If He is God, He is unchanging. If He is God, He is sovereign. If He is God, He has ultimate control of my life anyway so I may as well surrender to Him!

There must be self-awareness. We often think that we understand situations and circumstances best. We often see things the way we think they are instead of as they really are. We rely on our own understanding. But, the Scripture says, "...do not rely on your own understanding." In other words, be aware that He is God; be aware that you are not!

Seek His counsel. "Think about Him in all your ways..." If He is God and you are not, then it makes sense to seek His counsel in everything you do. Seek His counsel through His Word. The Bible is a wealth of wisdom and insight and it is the guide for determining priorities. Seek His counsel through prayer. Take the time to ask the Lord to direct you in every decision. By the way, God will never contradict what He says in His Word with what He says to you in prayer. If He says it to you in prayer He will confirm it in Scripture.

There will be stability. "...and He will guide you on the right paths." Surrender control of your life to Him. Be self-aware; He is God and you are not. Seek His counsel. And He will make the direction of your life stable and sure.

### Proper Priorities Grow Out of Consistent Dependence on God

*"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you." (Matthew 6:33)*

You are God's most precious creation. God care more for you than He does all of the creatures in the animal kingdom. (vs. 25-27) God cares more for you than he does the entire plant kingdom. (vs. 28-32) God is fully aware of all of your needs and He has made it His priority to provide for you. So, relax, depend on Him; trust Him.

You are God's most precious creation! He has made your provision His priority; now, make His kingdom your priority. This means that the things that are important to Him must be important to you! What things are important to Him?

Faith is important to Him. *"Now without faith it is impossible to please God, for the one who draws near to Him must believe that he exists and rewards those who seek Him."* (Hebrews 11:6) It is important to God that you have faith in His provision for you in Jesus Christ. It is important to God that you have faith in His promises made to you through Jesus Christ.

Faithfulness is important to Him. The apostle Paul told Timothy that faithfulness is so important to God that *"if we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself."* (2 Timothy 2:13) If faithfulness is that important to God it ought to be important to us. How does one demonstrate faithfulness to God? A good place to start is in your relationship with Him. Be faithful in developing your relationship with Him. Another way to demonstrate faithfulness to God is in your relationship with your family. Be faithful to your family for the glory of God! Demonstrate faithfulness to God in your relationship with His church. Be faithful to His church for the glory of God!

Depend on God consistently and His priorities will become your priorities.

### **Proper Priorities Grow Out of Obedience to Christ**

*"But Jesus told him, 'Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead.'" (Matthew 8:22)*

In this encounter Jesus teaches that complete obedience doesn't make excuses. I really don't believe that Jesus would have objected to the disciple burying his father. Jesus objected to the disciple making an excuse for not immediately and completely obeying Him. Remember, Jesus sees past our excuses to our heart.

Excuses don't help a student to learn, hard work and studying does. Excuses don't help an athlete to win, hard work and practicing does. Excuses don't help a child of God develop the right priorities, obedience does. The depth of your faith will never grow past your excuses.

### **Conclusion**

What are your priorities? Do you think the Lord is pleased with your priorities? Proper priorities begin with God; proper priorities grow out of consistent dependence on God and obedience to Christ. Maybe it's time you ask God to help you establish new priorities.