



"...seek first the kingdom of God
and His righteousness..."

A Study of Priorities - January

Purpose

- To understand that every decision we make is a matter of priorities. Every minute to major decision must be made with a "God-first" mentality.
- This is the first of a series of six lessons entitled "**God First.**" The specific areas of prioritization that we will discuss the first half of this year are: our *time, our jobs, relationships, when we disagree, and our money*. Each lesson stands on its own; however, all the lessons build on and complement one another.
- Our **theme text** is **Mt. 6:19-21, 24-34**. Our **theme verse** is **Mt. 6:33 "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."**

This text will be key. Before the first group meeting everyone needs to have read and be acquainted with this text and it's meaning and application. It is our "theme" text! Each lesson will involve this passage!

Thoughts

- The American Heritage Dictionary defines **priority** as "precedence, especially by importance." Both words have as their root the idea of "going before." "Prior often adds an implication of greater importance."
- Based on those definitions, what does keeping God first REALLY mean? Practically? realistically?
- Why "**God first?**" The short answer, the cross! In Him we live, move, breathe, have our existence! (**Acts 17:24-28**). The cross of Christ, His sacrifice is everything to us. He is THE example. He is THE Savior. And all of that is seen – in the cross. So all that I am, every decision I make, must come from the view of the cross. Meaning – consider Him and what He did and what He would have me do before I make any decision, no matter how minute! (**Heb. 12:3** – consider Him!)
- Understand that anything that comes between you and your relationship with God is an idol! Even if the thing is good in and of itself (for example: work, family, etc.)
- No matter how much one plans or prioritizes there will always be contrary winds over which we have no control. (**Mk. 6:48**) In order to enthrone God (keep Him first) we must first dethrone ourselves. The only way to have an increasing Christ is to have a decreasing self.

Discussion

1. Does God ask for too much?
2. What gives God the right to demand such? (Many have asked this question. Some from spite or bitterness, some from sincerity. How would you answer it?)

3. Anyone who is asked to make a list of their priorities can/will come up with the right list (God, family, church family, work, etc.) What are some practical ways to make this ideal list our real list of priority?
4. What are some practical, day to day activities we can do, thoughts we need to think, that will help us keep God first in our lives?

Some Sample Questions:

Would I quit a job for the Lord?
Would I cancel a vacation for the Lord?
Would I say no to an invitation for the Lord?
Would I forgo attending a prom for the Lord?

5. List some things that get in the way when seeking to keep *God first*. Could these be considered idols?
6. Is it possible to go too far with God first priorities? (Prov. 11:1, Lk. 14:26 vs. Eph. 6:2)
Can “religion” get in the way of/be used to excuse service?