

Messenger of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

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## **Priorities**

"God first; others second; I am third." – Anonymous

"Good things happen when you get your priorities straight." – Scott Caan

"In all planning you make a list and you set priorities." – Alan Lakein

"The key is not to prioritize what's on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities." – Stephen Covey

In defining the word *priority*, Webster says, "Something that is more important than other things and that needs to be done or dealt with first." Of course, the hard part of this is determining what we need to prioritize over other matters.

Scripture certainly emphasizes that we should give special consideration to those things which are spiritual in nature. "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat' or 'What shall we drink' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matt. 6:31-33). "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:1-2).

What is surprising is the number of Christians who don't see the importance of putting spiritual matters first. This is highly evident with the age old problem of attendance of worship services. It certainly is a good barometer of priorities. What is sad is to see how devalued Sunday evening services have become. God has been replaced by a sporting event, a family outing, or just vegetating in front of the television.

If we would but learn that God must always come first, it is amazing how quickly our pattern of living will change, and that for the better. We will feel better about ourselves knowing that we are striving to please God. We will influence our neighbors around us as they see how we prioritize spiritual matters before worldly events.

The Bible stresses priorities over and over. The children of Israel were encouraged to give of their first fruits (Exod. 23:19). The early church met upon the first day of every week. It is on that day, designated, "the Lord's Day" (Rev. 1:10), that the church gathered to worship the true and living God. Christ is the first fruits paving the way for our resurrection (1 Cor. 15:21-23).

As we contemplate these things, what is the greatest priority in your life? Many folks would say, "My spouse, or my children," but sadly don't mention God. But perhaps the greatest test even for yourself is how you manifest your priorities in your daily living. Is God first in your life?