

Priorities



Getting Started

What are the most important things in your life? We only have a limited amount of time each day. How do we know which things we should put first? God, our family, friends, schoolwork, jobs, health needs, other interests? Sometimes it's difficult to decide. We may have trouble choosing which things need our attention most. So how can we develop the right priorities?

Improving Your Vocabulary

priority (n) - someone or something that has great importance or needs immediate attention

pay close attention (v phr) - look and listen very carefully

insight (n) - understanding and wisdom

reverence (n) - deep respect or devotion

store up (v phr) - to save and put away for later use

despise (v) - hate; dislike very much

be concerned above everything else with (v phr) - view something as more important than anything

Reading God's Word

Proverbs 3:3-7, 11-14, 21-22

3 Never let go of loyalty and faithfulness. Tie them around your neck; write them on your heart. **4** If you do this, both God and people will be pleased with you.

5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Never rely on what you think you know.

6 Remember the Lord in everything you do, and he will show you the right way.

7 Never let yourself think that you are wiser than you are, simply obey the Lord and refuse to do wrong.

11 My child, when the Lord corrects you, pay close attention and take it as a warning. **12** The Lord corrects those he loves, as parents correct a child of whom they are proud. **13** Happy is anyone who becomes wise – who comes to have understanding. **14** There is more profit in it than there is in silver; it is worth more to you than gold.

21 My child, hold on to your wisdom and insight. Never let them get away from you. **22** They will provide you with life – a pleasant and happy life.

Proverbs 23:4-5, 17, 22-23

4 Be wise enough not to wear yourself out trying to get rich. **5** Your money can be gone in a flash, as if it had grown wings and flown away like an eagle.

17 Don't be envious of sinful people; let reverence for the Lord be the concern of your life.

22 Listen to your father; without him you would not exist. When your mother is old show her appreciation. **23** Truth, wisdom, learning, and good sense – these are worth paying for, but too valuable for you to sell.

This section comes from Jesus' famous Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 6: 19-21, 24-25, 31-33

19 Do not store up riches for yourselves here on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and robbers break in and steal. **20** Instead, store up riches for yourselves in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and robbers cannot break in and steal. **21** For your heart will always be where your riches are. **24** You cannot be a slave of two masters; you will hate one and love the other; you will be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. **25** Do not be worried about the food and drink you need in order to stay alive, or about clothes for your body. After all isn't life worth more than food? And isn't the body worth more than clothes? **31** So do not start worrying: Where will my food come from? Or my drink? Or my clothes? **32** Your Father in heaven knows that you need all these things. **33** Instead, be concerned above everything else with the Kingdom of God and with what he requires of you, and he will provide you with all these other things.

For further study, see Proverbs 2:1-8; Proverbs 15:16-16:8.

Taking a Closer Look

1. What are some things that we should put first (view as very important) in our lives? (Proverbs 3:3-7)

2. Who do you think we should be loyal and faithful to? (Proverbs 3:3)

3. How can we become wise? Why is wisdom so important? (Proverbs 23)

4. What does Jesus say about riches? What should we not worry about? (Matthew 6:19-21; 24-25; 31-33)

5. What does it mean to store up riches in heaven? (Matthew 6:20)

6. How can we make the Kingdom of God our first concern or priority? (Matthew 6:33)

Taking Action

1. What's important to you in your life? What do you make time for? Evaluate if your priorities are what God says they should be.
2. Is there anything that gets between you and a relationship with God?
3. Seek to make God first priority in your life.
4. Make time each day for Bible reading and prayer. Find a church or group where you can worship God together with other believers. Look for ways to serve God and help others.

Memory Verse: Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Never rely on what you think you know. Remember the Lord in everything you do, and he will show you the right way.

Review the Vocabulary

Fill in the blanks with the correct vocabulary words.

1. You should _____ to what the teacher says or you won't know what to do.
2. Many parents feel that their kids should _____ their education.
3. Why do you _____ him? Did he do something to hurt you?
4. They began to _____ food and supplies in case of an emergency.
5. Make this job a _____. Do it first then do the other things later.



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