

# Scriptural Truths

## E-Mail Meditations

The Lord May Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

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### Prioritizing For Me

#### Introduction

In the last newsletter we considered the Lord's priority was the glory of God, and that required Him living with God as all in all (1 Cor. 15:28). That theme leads to other considerations:

- a) "What are the priorities in my life? Is the goal of my living the glory of God as Paul exhorts us: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"? (1 Cor. 10:31)
- b) To what extent is God "all in all" in this life? They are very pertinent questions that when considering the Judgment Seat, demand careful consideration.

God has given commands what man's priority ought to be: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength and with all thy mind" (Lk. 10:27). Universally man ought to have the priority of glorifying God for he is created for the pleasure (will) of God (Rev. 4:11). Ideally the saint should have the goal of doing all for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31), and by the enablement of the Holy Spirit, outlive the resurrected life of Christ (Gal. 2:20; Phil. 3:10)

#### Questioning

In Romans the Lord comes as a physician asking questions as He seeks to compel individuals to stop and evaluate where they are spiritually. This is different from Revelation when the Lord does not ask questions, but tells the saints their condition (Rev. chs. 2-3). Questioning is a principle of God's teaching for He asked Adam: "Where art thou?" (Gen. 3:9); and Job was asked eighty-four questions (Job 38:1-41:12). When our Lord was here He also asked questions, one of which is relevant to our meditation: "What think ye of Christ?" (Matt. 22:42-46). Since God has given Christ preeminence (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:18) what is my responsibility? The Holy Spirit led James to ask: "For what is your life?" (Jam. 4:14).

We humans have inherited pride which makes us put on a good front. It is very easy to give the right answers, but in reality, when in the presence of God the question is asked: "What do I think of Christ?" Is He worthy of having preeminence in this life? If not then: "What is my life?" One could respond: "I have a nice car and home, a dollar in my pocket, go to meetings on Sunday and during the week, and spend about 10 minutes in prayer a day". Is that all that life is, sleep, work, get and fulfill a few religious obligations? I have just read of a man on death row who, seven days before the execution, had the "dry run". He said: "Suddenly everything changed, things which seemed so important suddenly did not matter anymore". The man had gotten right priorities. I remember seeing the streets of New York immediately after

the planes crashed into the twin towers. There were business papers covered with dust and dirt, but what did it matter, priorities were suddenly changed.

### Real life illustrations of people who had ideal and less than ideal priorities

The Lord said: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness." (Matt. 6:33)

This principle was outlived in:

- a) The recorded story of the widow with the cruse of oil (1 Kgs. 17:14)
- b) The three Hebrew servants (Dan. 3:10-23)
- c) Daniel when he prayed (Dan. 6:8-11)
- d) The widow who cast in the two mites (Mk. 12:42)
- e) Paul who said: "neither count I my life dear unto myself" (Acts 20:24)
- f) Barnabas and Paul men who hazarded their lives (Acts 15:25-26)
- g) Onesiphorus who sought Paul very diligently (2 Tim. 1:16)

Principle not outlived:

- a) Jonah had to have his priorities readjusted (Jon. 1-4)
- b) Eve's priority was wrong, as was Adams (Gen. 3:6)
- c) Abraham's for his priority was saving his own life instead of believing God (Gen. 12:10-13)
- d) Demas who began well failed to have right priorities (2 Tim. 4:10)

It is not only individuals which can have wrong priorities, for the church in Ephesus left their first love. They became all truth and no love (Rev. 2:4); Thyatira also failed to have right priorities for they were the only assembly commended for their love, but there was a toleration of that which should have been hated (Rev. 3:19-21); and Laodicea had failed to correctly prioritize for they were lukewarm (Rev. 3:15-16).

Therefore, individuals and assemblies can fail to have right priorities. Let it be understood that when Ephesus left their first love it was not the euphoria of the first days after salvation, it was the loving of truth more than love for the Lord.

### The Conflict

It must be understood that spiritual prioritizing will not come automatically. It is an ongoing fight to the death. First one has to be very honest and acknowledge spiritual things are not a priority, and not making excuses as to why that is! That is very difficult, and when that is known it is the beginning of an understanding that this is a battle. Satan does not want spiritual things to be a priority in our lives.

Another observation is that I need to appreciate why spiritual things should be a priority, and the prime reason for that ought to be "for the glory of God". It means that preparation for the Lord's Supper is not so that I can get up and let the saints know what I know or giving a mini ministry meeting masquerading as a prayer. The lack of spiritual prioritizing is also seen in the ho-hum "worship" in which there is a parrot like repetition of that which has been said oftentimes before.

Finally, I must work with God to make and keep spiritual things as priorities in life, and this is the hardest conflict of all. It will determine what I do, think, and say concerning how they are done, why they are done, and when they are done. This is a battle that is non curtailed and unceasing. There will be victorious living and failures. There will be times when one thinks they have won the battle only to find often times, at a much later date, the same situation will rise again. If we do not prioritize, the results are contentment with spiritual functioning without life, the acceptance of the non activity of the Holy Spirit in personal and assembly life, and a remoteness of consciousness of divine persons.

When I speak of priorities I am not including the care of ones family which is a priority, or of sudden unexpected situations which arise. I know of a case where a brother had to be helped out of the remembrance meeting due to a physical ailment. Three other brethren came to his assistance and missed part of the meeting. Which was the priority, helping the brother, or sitting still to remember the Lord and let him fend for himself?

### Priorities

It seems to me that we need to prioritize in three avenues:

## 1) Daily Priorities

What is meant by priorities? Is it what is the most important responsibility for the day or what needs first to be done? It may be that reading the morning paper gets done before I hear from God. Which is my priority?

I know for myself this is the struggle and I ask myself why? My routine is check our web page, a quick look at the news here and in Ireland, check my emails and then start the spiritual exercises. Which ought to be the priority, sincerely thanking God for the blessings of the past night and committing the day to him, or checking the news? Then why is this change so hard? Satan knows that if the spiritual exercises of prayer and Bible reading are left to later they possibly will not be done at all!

## 2) Weekly Priorities

In my thinking there are three priorities for the week and all interconnected. They are:

- a) Preparation for the Lord's Supper or remembrance meeting
- b) Attendance at the Lord's Supper
- c) Availability at the Lord's supper

Ideally, when ought we to start preparation for the Lord's Supper? A better question is, "When should we not be?" The answer is evident. Our whole lives ought to be the preparation of spiritual material to offer the Lord and the preparation in life to be fit for the Lord's Supper. How precious it is to meet with saints and have the privilege of remembering the Lord. Our Lord said: "remember me" (1 Cor. 11:2), and sadly it seems to me that the meditations are so often on our blessings. When this happens I submit we are out of focus. Can it be that the problem with long silences and repetition of data is not with the smallness of the person, but with the tininess of our appreciation of Him?

Such is our glorious and mighty Victor who, in His earthly sojourn, never had to confess a fault, acknowledge a failure, ask forgiveness, nor offer a sacrifice for His acceptability. His was a life of sterling perfection and untainted labour. Being without sin and incapable of sinning He never knew any deficiencies in any moral excellency. The exercise of His power was never curtailed. His sympathy was always genuine and superior to all others.

I recall my father saying, "We should come to the remembrance meeting prepared, but not determined". That is, we ought to be in such a state spiritually and with suitable material that if the occasion arises we can silently or audibly contribute to the remembrance of the Lord. To come determined to speak no matter what is a demonstration of the flesh. That which is said ought to develop the thoughts already presented, or bring them to a climactic gathering up at the end of the meeting.

## 3) Life Priorities

Again I see life's priorities being interconnected. They are:

- a) Laying hold on eternal life (1 Tim. 6:12)
- b) Getting to know God and Christ by growing in grace (Jn. 17:3; Phil. 3:10; 2 Pet. 3:18)
- c) Being a living example of the Lord to saints and sinners (1 Cor. 11:1; 1 Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7; 1 Pet. 5:3)
- d) Intercession for both saints and sinners (1 Tim. 2:1)

As I lay hold on eternal life I will automatically get to know God and Christ better, all the while growing in grace and being a living example to saints and sinners. Knowing the love and judgment of God I will learn to be an intercessor.

## Conclusion

May the Holy Spirit of God help us to be honest before God, not assuming that we are right when barrenness, weakness, and spiritual death is saturating us as individuals and collective gatherings. May we seek to realign ourselves with God and in these last days have God's priorities.

. . . . Rowan Jennings