



FAMILY STUDY

Pilgrim's Progress: God First!

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"Pilgrim's Progress: God First!"

Putting God First!

Have you considered how our choices in how we spend our time often reflect our priorities? Often times, we get distracted by worldly pursuits that take our focus off of Christ. For example, some get so caught up in athletic events that they skip church to watch the big game, or participate in an event. That doesn't mean that missing church occasionally is a sin. One may say that missing one day of church is okay, but what is your real reason? Is watching a football game more important than spending time with Christ? Does skipping church so your child won't miss his or her soccer game send the message that soccer is more important than worship? Although athletics and sporting events are not wrong in and of themselves, when they become more of a priority than Christ, these pursuits can become sinful.

Another example to consider is how we spend our money. Many people will go and spend hundreds of dollars at the mall or at an amusement park, but when it comes to giving money for Christ, there never seems to be money for an offering to the Lord. Once again, spending money at the mall or an amusement park is not wrong. But spending money while neglecting to give to Christ is wrong.

What about sleep? How many people skip church so they can sleep in? Or, when it comes to having a quiet time, getting up early may mean losing precious sleep. So the alarm goes off, and the snooze button is pushed over and over, until it's too late to spend time with God and get to work on time.

As parents, it's important to train your children in setting godly priorities. But first, you should look at your life and consider your priorities. Does Christ come first? Can your children see this in your life, or do they see someone consumed with the pursuit of wealth, material gain, sports, social activities, cars, jobs, hobbies, and other things? Before you train your children in setting priorities, make sure your priorities are in line with God's Word.

In this Family Study, we have included some ideas for setting godly priorities. These are only suggestions which may or may not work for your family. We have also included several Scripture passages that show us where our time and energy should be focused. We encourage you to go over these verses with your children as you discuss as a family what priorities you would like to set in your family. God bless you as you train your children in the Lord!

Suggested Family Priority List

1. Worship Attendance

As a family, we will not miss church except for illness. Sporting events and activities, school and extra curricular activities, and jobs (if it is at all possible) that come in conflict with worship attendance will be missed or rescheduled in order to not miss out on attending church.

2. Family and Personal Devotions

As a family, we will set aside a specific time everyday where we gather together for a few minutes of Bible reading and prayer. This can include Bible

games, sharing things we have learned or seen God do, and planning ways to reach out to others with the love of Christ. We will also make a commitment to spend time with the Lord individually in order to grow in Him.

3. Family versus Career

We as a family will try to make sure that we spend time together on a daily basis if it is at all possible. If a career goal conflicts with strengthening the family or hinders the family, attempts will be taken to find another job or career that allows for family time together.

4. Giving Time and Attention to Your Spouse

As a family, we know that it is important for family health that a good relationship exists between husband and wife. With this in mind, we will make every effort to spend time alone on a consistent basis to continue strengthening the marriage relationship in order to better strengthen the family.

Scripture Study

With your family priority list in mind, we encourage you to look up, study, and discuss the Scripture passages below. These Scriptures will further define the need to set godly priorities in your life and in your family.

Seeking God with All Your Heart

Deuteronomy 4:29 Matthew 6:33
Psalm 105:4 Luke 11:10
Isaiah 55:6 Acts 17:27
Jeremiah 29:13

Putting Christ First in Your Life

Psalm 27:4 Mark 10:28
Psalm 63:1 Luke 14:33
Psalm 73:25 Luke 18:29-30
Psalm 119:20 Acts 20:24
 Philippians 3:8

Pursuing Godliness and Spiritual Things

Luke 13:24 Philippians 3:13-14
1 Corinthians 9:24 2 Timothy 2:15

Warning Against Worldly Pursuits and Priorities

Matthew 16:26 Luke 21:34
Romans 12:2 Ephesians 4:17
Colossians 3:2 Titus 1:15-16
Titus 2:12 James 4:4
1 John 2:15-17

Conclusion

Every family has a different situation and not every idea will work for everyone. The important thing is to try and make God the top priority in your family. All that we have, whether time or money was given to us by God. Doesn't He deserve to have a little bit given back to Him? Don't give God your leftovers! Give Him your firstfruits, and watch how your life improves!