

THE ADVENTURE OF JOINING GOD IN HIS WORK

Lesson 6

The Adventure of Juggling Priorities

Grow in...

- (1) Expanding your understanding regarding the tension of competing priorities
- (2) Expressing your identity in Christ in every area of responsibility
- (3) Discerning what needs more focus

*“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do,
do all things for the glory of God.”*

1 Corinthians 10:31

“Competing Priorities” Exercise

Think about a time when you were frustrated with competing priorities.

- A well-known priorities formula is JOY:
First= Jesus/ Second= Others/ Third= You
Have you found there are times when this formula does not best fit the reality of your life?
- Do you believe the Bible gives us a sequence (or a hierarchy) of priorities when it comes to church, home, work, etc.?

Priorities According to Jesus---not _____, but _____ i

And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets. Matt. 22: 37-40

- **Jesus’ Unique Response**
Takes 2 commands-- Duet. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18--which were separated in the minds of the Pharisees--and _____ them together:
- _____ **wants us to break Jesus’ foundation**
by deceiving us that we can _____ loving God from loving people.
- **Jesus clarifies:**
Love God with _____ The basis of an integrated life
Love your neighbor _____ Why is this so important?

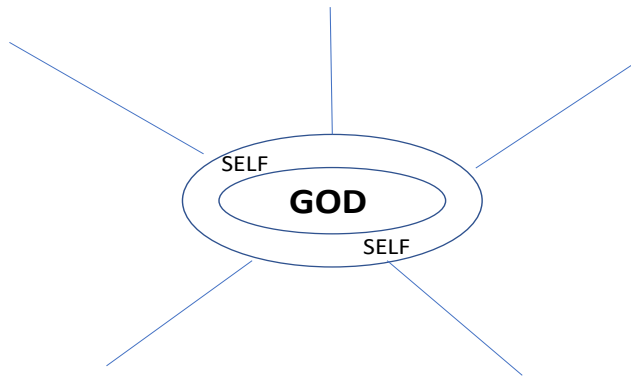
Loving yourself the right way is vital to balancing priorities in your life.

***If we don’t love ourselves rightly,
then there is malformation in setting our priorities w/ self, others, and God.***

When you love yourself well, you _____ for yourself well. HOW?

- _____ **God’s gifts** of your body, mind, emotions by prioritizing
rest, shalom, exercise, diet, emotional care.
- _____ **your limitations.** Understand that it doesn’t all depend upon you.
You are not God. (You need to confront yourself!)
- _____ **the “I am not enough” mindset by _____ your self-worth.**
I am unconditionally loved,
and in Christ I am complete.

- _____ **can block us from loving ourselves the right way.**
- **Priorities: The Great AHA---**It all boils down to _____.



A wholistic life is not a _____.
One piece of the pie is not necessarily fixed as always deserving more time than another item.

A Wholistic Model

- It's Jesus, others, and you *in integration-as an intertwined whole*.
- It's waking around the circle, maybe hopping back and forth across the circle, with the only constant being what is in the _____.
- Self is wrapped around _____, yet it is touching all of these responsibilities *as we encounter them*.

"...in Him all things hold together"

Colossians 1:17

**Express your _____ in every area of responsibility-
using _____ and remembering there are "_____" in life.**

Breakout Exercise Juggling Priorities

Use the following prompts as a jump start for discussing your experience with juggling priorities. Along the way share insights/tips you have gained.

- A fixed list can be comforting, but it can also be misleading b/c that is not the way life comes at us. Maturity is being able to juggle our responsibilities and discern what needs more focus according to the season of life we are in. **When was a time in your life when you had to, possibly unexpectedly, shift a priority, maybe between family needs and church ministry demands? How did you handle the challenge?**
- Putting God in our center gives us security b/c we know that He holds the circle of responsibilities together and covers our fumbling with his grace. He also can give us perspective on the value of responsibilities we might disdain. **Can you think of a time when the Lord has given you perspective on a "mundane" task that you resented doing?**
- What we put in the center will touch every area in our life. **If our limited self is in the center, what might be the consequences which filter outward?**
- Over time, we grow in the skill of balancing responsibilities and acquire tips or strategies which help us in dealing with the tension of competing priorities. **Share "tips" you have acquired in this area.**

Traits of a Wise Juggler--Quiz

Take the following quiz and see if you are developing the mindsets and habits of someone who wisely juggles competing priorities.

- 1) Instead of reinforcing a pattern of panic, am I growing in _____?
What feels urgent might not always be the deeper priority. This is a habit, and a habit needs cultivation so that emotions will not rule the day.
- 2) Do I have a strategy which regularly helps me _____ & _____ what needs more attention or accountability or correction?
Do I have my own version of a “red book” strategy?
- 3) Do I value _____?
Am I the kind of person who embraces the “helps” God brings into my life? Even those that confront me?.
- 4) Do I preach _____ myself-
to my emotional, physical, mental needs?
- 5) Do I confront _____ & what is at its source: _____ & _____?
Am I confronting my _____?
- 6) Do I really understand/accept that the “_____” I can give will vary according to the _____ in my life?
- 7) Am I cultivating _____ (and inner stability) in order to acknowledge when something is “_____” according to the circumstance?
- 8) Do I truly believe that God is glorified not just by what I _____ but also by how I _____ him with the process?
- 9) Do I resize my “giants” through the filter of God’s _____ & _____?
- 10) Is my primary goal to please _____ or to please _____?

Case Study

We daily face competing priorities, and as Christians it is important to know our biblical responsibilities in each area.¹ When we understand Scriptural truth about each area of our lives, we can be more in tune with the Holy Spirit in the discernment process & more agile when we need to refocus time and resources amidst the tension of competing priorities. In our case study, we will focus on one area, marriage. (If you are not married, look for principles about healthy relationships and balancing priorities.)

The Marriage Box: God's Definition of Marriage ⁱⁱ (Genesis 2:18,21-25)

"Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him...' ²¹ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. ²² And the LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man and brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said, 'At last this is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman because she was taken out of man.' ²⁴ For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined [cleave] to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵ And the man and his wife were both naked, but they were not ashamed."

One man and one woman brought together before God
to fulfill five responsibilities

Object Lessons

1. Receive your mate as a _____ (Genesis 2:22-23).
2. Leave your _____ (Genesis 2:24a).
3. _____ to your mate (Genesis 2:24b).
4. Become _____ (Genesis 2:24c).
5. Practice _____ (Genesis 2:25).

"Marriage Box" Exercise

- Can you remember the 5 components without looking?
- How does knowing God's definition of marriage help one fulfill their responsibilities amidst the tensions of competing demands in life?
- Which component seems most important to you right now?

Adventure Workouts for Lesson 6

1. **Memorize** 1 Corinthians 10:31; *"Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all things for the glory of God."*
2. **Develop a plan** to keep track of your competing priorities including a weekly evaluation of your progress. (*Atomic Habits* by James Clear is a helpful resource, full of wisdom on cultivating habits and managing life responsibilities.)
3. On a note card, jot whatever "tips" will help you better develop the habit of wise discernment in a tension you are facing with your own competing responsibilities. **Brainstorm with someone you trust about steps you need to take.**
4. **Make yourself accountable** to someone on a regular basis.

ⁱ *Balancing Life's Demands-A New Perspective on Priorities*, J. Grant Howard

ⁱⁱ <https://www.cherrydale.org/grow/sermons/marriage-series-2/> - a message by Steve King on *God's Definition of Marriage*.
