

READJUSTING OUR PRIORITIES

Text: Genesis 3:9; 18:9; Luke 2:41-52

Key Word: Priorities

Key Thought: Do We Have Any Priorities That We Need to Change?

None of us can doubt that our life gets busy. There are always so many things (and sometimes) people that can captivate our time. It is truly the **tyranny of the urgency**. It stresses us because we understand that these things need to be done – yesterday.

It's throughout the busyness of life that our priorities often get mixed up. We feel somewhat like the apostle Paul when he wrote,

"I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do . . ."

Romans 7:15

The important things of life often have to take the back seat to the critical things which "must be done." Our priorities and plans can take a paradigm shift as our week goes on. These shifts set a new pattern for our lives that will effect our important relationships.

There Are at Least Three Questions We Need to Ask about Concerning Our Priorities.

I. WHERE ARE YOU? (Genesis 3:9)

II. WHERE IS YOUR WIFE/HUSBAND? (Genesis 18:9)

III. WHERE IS YOUR CHILD? (Luke 2:41-52)

I. WHERE ARE YOU? (Genesis 3:9)

"But the LORD God called to the man, 'Where are you?'"

Genesis 3:9

The story of the garden of Eden is probably the most familiar story written in our Bibles. We read of how God created the heavens and the earth. After creating Adam and Eve He gave them a rich paradise to live in for all eternally. Everything was perfect. All was in unity (man, creatures, creation and their Creator).

I. WHERE ARE YOU? (Genesis 3:9) (Contd.)

Shortly though, a deceptive serpent was used to turn the tide. He deceived Eve who in turn through her husband brought sin into our world.

One thing became noticeable immediately. Adam's disobedience caused a separation to take place. Talk about "**a gulf crisis!**" The crisis that began in the garden should be front page news. Millions are dying in their sin every week. Yet our papers are silent of the crisis.

Adam immediately felt separated from God. **Sin is a gulf-maker.** Instead of having an openness before God, they tried to hide from their Maker. Where could they go?

"Where can I go from your spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?"

8. If I go up to the heavens, you are there. If I make my bed in the depths you are there."

Psalm 139:7,8

When God spoke through the prophet Jeremiah He asked,

"'Am I only the God nearby,' declares the LORD, 'and not a God far away?"

24. Can anyone hide in secret places so I cannot see him?' declares the LORD 'Do I not fill the heaven and earth?' declares the LORD."

Jeremiah 23:23,24

Our world does not have a problem losing God. Our problem is that we are not as sensitive to His daily presence as we need to be. It is not God who cuts Himself off from us as much as it is we who cut ourselves off from Him. The corridors of heaven are still echoing with the sound of our Saviour asking,

"Where are You?"

This does not imply that God didn't know where Adam was. The purpose of the question was to encourage Adam to evaluate his position with God. It was because of sin that Adam didn't know where he stood before God. Is there something that is separating you from God? Has something crept into your life that is cutting you off from the presence of God? Do you know where you stand before God?

I. WHERE ARE YOU? (Genesis 3:9) (Contd.)

John Newton's Life Rule:

"I make it a rule of Christian duty never to go to a place where there is not room for my Master as well as myself."

*** Bud Robinson, a well known holiness preacher, was taken by friends to New York and given a tour of the city.

That night in his prayers he said, *"Lord, thank you for letting me see all the sights of New York. And I thank you most of all that I didn't see a thing that I wanted."* ***

Has God had to asked the question ***"Where are You?!!*** Are there areas that require any improvement. I am so thankful that God is concerned with where we are. **Remember that it was God who initiated the move to be reconciled with Adam and Eve.**

II. WHERE IS YOUR WIFE/HUSBAND? (Genesis 18:9)

"Where is your wife Sarah?"

Genesis 18:9

After entering into God's covenant, Abraham relaxed under the tree at Mamre. It was during this time that the LORD visited with him.

Abraham was so overjoyed that he rose up and got his servants involved in preparing a feast for their guests. The place was in a frenzy as Abraham issued all his directives. The patriarch then entered his tent to give orders to his wife Sarah.

"'Quick' he said, 'get three seahs of fine flour and knead it and bake some bread.'"

Genesis 18:6

There didn't seem to be any discussion or any opportunity for discussion. **It was a command not a request.** Quick woman -- get the work done! God's here with some of His angels. While you are busy preparing the bread I'll go to personally select the calf we'll eat. When everything was done to detail, Abraham stood under the great tree while his guests ate the prepared meal. **But something/someone was missing.** The question was asked,

"Where is your wife Sarah?"

Genesis 18:9

II. WHERE IS YOUR WIFE/HUSBAND? (Genesis 18:9) (Contd.)

We so often focus this question on her physical location. Yet there was a more important part of the question to be addressed. What about her attitude toward the promises of God? **Our wives often carry the burden of our visions. They can feel neglected as they watch from a distance. They seem to carry all the brunt of the work when we get excited about a new presence and fellowship with God.**

Do they sometimes feel that no promise is being birthed within them? Some have reached a point where it has all become a joke and they begin to laugh outwardly. They believe that somehow God's timing has been missed for what needs to be birthed into them. Their dreams have vanished with the wind. **They become tired waiting for the promise of God to be fulfilled in THEIR lives.**

"Where is your wife/husband?"

Is she still at home while you take time in God's presence? Is she excited about your renewed enthusiasm? **Has her pleasure been replaced by the pain of forgotten promises?** We all need to know where our spouses are! There must be a willingness to hear their non-verbal communication.

"A man who doesn't know what his wife is thinking hasn't been listening."

1556 Carter Urges More Family Time

*** Top White house staff personnel were urged in a handwritten memorandum from their President Jimmy Carter to spend "*adequate amount of time*" with their families to ensure a stable family life.

Written on White House stationery and signed J. Carter, the memorandum said, "*I am concerned about the family of all of you. I want you to spend an adequate amount of time with your husbands, wives, and children, and also to involve them as much as possible in our White House life.*

We are going to be here a long time, and all of you will be more valuable to me and the country with rest and a stable home life. In emergencies we'll all work full time. Let me have your comments." ***

III. WHERE IS YOUR CHILD? (Luke 2:41-52)

The time of the Passover was an exciting event in the life of a Jew. All males were expected to attend the 3 feasts of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. The Passover celebration was the most important of them all. Even the poorest of families would attend.

Jesus was 12 years old when this story took place. This meant He was still considered as a child under the responsibility of His parents. On His next birthday He would celebrate His Bar Mitzvah. It was a time when He would be taught many things by His father Joseph. Many Scriptures would have to be memorized. He would have to learn answers to many important questions.

As this story unfolds we again realize that an important member of the family was overlooked in Jerusalem - "the city of peace." **Joseph and Mary travelled a full day before they recognized their son was missing. They thought He was in their "company."**

How many parents have come to the shocking realization that their children are not in company with them. When they can't be found, the most likely places are checked out (relatives, friends). **Surely they can't be too far.**

Parents sometimes need to leave aside the hustle and bustle of advancement to find their children. If not some will find themselves returning to an empty home.

Since Jesus had been trained properly, He was asking questions and discussing the Scriptures in the "city of Peace." **Our children are really wanting the right answers for their questions.** They also want to be heard. It seemed like Jesus' understanding amazed not only the teachers of the law but also His parents.

Do YOU know where your child is?

What is our normal response when our children astonish us? Do we stand amazed wondering where they learned such a thing? Do we look at ourselves and evaluate our example to them?

Doesn't it bring joy when you see a hunger in the hearts of your children for God. Jesus was simply doing His Father's business. **Never be concerned when your children place their heavenly Father's business over ours (Luke 2:49)?**

When we've taken the time and effort to plant godly values within our children, we must expect the fruit of righteousness to appear.

III. WHERE IS YOUR CHILD? (Luke 2:41-52) (Contd.)

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

10. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially those who belong to the family of believers."

Galatians 6:9,10

May I also add that we should do good to our own family. Every parent here would like to be able to say of their children that they,

"grow in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

Luke 2:52

*** A young boy was frightened one night by a thunderous storm and he called out, *"Daddy, please come. I'm scared!"*

"Son," the father replied, *"God loves you and He'll take care of you."*

"I know God loves me," the boy answered, *"But right now I want somebody who has skin on him."* ***

Our greatest role as a parent is to demonstrate God to our children - with skin on.

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Date: Oct 30/16

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: The Potter's Hand- F

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III. WHERE IS YOUR CHILD? (Luke 2:41-52) - *Galatians 6:9,10; Luke 2:52*