

(The Supreme Priorities) 1. a Proper Sense of Values

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having a proper sense of values, prioritizing eternal things over temporal ones, and the need for re-evaluation of priorities in a corrupting world.

Scripture: Matthew 16:26, 2 Corinthians 4:18, Revelation 3:17

Topics: "Spiritual Priorities", "True Values"

Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the critical need for a proper sense of values in life, illustrating how many, like a blind man or a child, often prioritize worthless things over what truly matters. He warns that spiritual blindness leads to wasted lives, even among believers who may be saved but lack the right priorities. Poonen highlights that true values are found in eternal rather than temporal pursuits, urging listeners to reassess their priorities in light of Jesus' teachings. He calls for a re-evaluation of what is deemed important, as many are unaware of their spiritual bankruptcy. Ultimately, he encourages believers to seek the light of the Bible to guide their understanding of true values.

Transcript

The blind man throws away a cheque for one hundred rupees and clings on to a valueless piece of glazed paper, considering the latter more desirable because it is smoother to his touch. He lacks a proper sense of values because he is blind. Like him, the two-year old child also prefers a cheap toy to the cheque. He too is ignorant of real values, because he is immature.

However, multitudes of intelligent men and women throughout the world are doing exactly the same thing today. And they are doing it without even realizing it! Do you have a proper sense of values? A mistaken idea of true values can lead any one of us to a wasted life; and the greatest tragedy in the world today is wasted human lives. Nor is this wastage peculiar to the irreligious, one finds it among the religious as well.

Man is born spiritually blind. He is unable therefore to assess the relative values of the things of time when compared with the things of eternity. As a result, he spends his time and energies in seeking the wealth, the honour and the pleasures that this world can give him. Little does he realize that "the things that are seen are (all of them) temporal," whereas "the things that are not seen (and they alone) are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:18). Jesus challenged the wrong sense of values held by even religious people of His day when He told them that a man would profit nothing who gained the whole world if in doing so he lost his

soul. If a man is not rightly related to God through Jesus Christ then he will discover, in the day that he stands before his Creator, that all he has achieved and acquired on earth is utterly valueless.

There are multitudes of believers, too, whose "sins are all forgiven" and who are "on their way to heaven," yet whose values are no less confused. In the day of judgment they will find to their surprise that, though their souls may have been saved, their lives have been wasted. They have sat as spectators on the side-lines, content with their salvation, happily singing choruses, watching others being used of God but unaware that He wants them on the field as well. Occasionally they may wonder why the power and joy and fruitfulness that mark the lives of other Christians are not their portion too. They may attend many Christian meetings to stimulate their spiritual life, but their inner man remains always weak and sickly. Once in a while they may have ambitions to attain a higher level of Christian living, but soon they fall back to where they started from - and sometimes even lower. What is the reason for this? Usually it is quite simple: they have not got their priorities right. Like the blind man and the child in the illustrations above, they have again and again in their ignorance thrown away the true spiritual riches and clung to what is worthless. Thus they have remained spiritual bankrupts, whereas God intended them to be rich.

Jesus was forever seeking to remove this blindness from the eyes of those who came to Him. He taught them what the supreme priorities of life really are. To Martha He said, "One thing is needful." To a rich young man He said, "One thing thou lackest." With these words He threw into emphasis the thing that should take first place in each of their lives. Or again in Old Testament times, of David alone was it said that he was "a man after God's own heart" - and he certainly had his priorities right! "One thing," he said, "have I desired." Paul too, the greatest apostle of Christianity, succeeded in putting the right thing first. "One thing I do," he cried; and with that as his theme he lived out the most effective life (from the standpoint of eternity) that this world has seen since Jesus of Nazareth ascended on high.

The atmosphere of the world today gives to all of us without exception a perverted sense of values. Under its influence we tend to get life's priorities wrong. For that influence is immensely powerful. Faster than ever before in the history of mankind the world is sinking into the gutter of moral decay and corruption. The darkness deepens until the night is black around us. In such conditions Jesus wanted His church to be the salt of this earth and the light of this world. But the salt has largely lost its savour and the light its brightness. Corruption and darkness have found their way into the very household of faith. And because the Pharisaic leaven of hypocrisy has penetrated so deeply into the church it is neither aware of, nor willing to face its true condition. Only those who have quickened ears can hear the Spirit of God speaking, calling even today for a re-evaluation of existing priorities.

In this great darkness the only light that you and I are offered is to be found in the Bible. Let us turn to it then, and seek to discover for ourselves what the prior claims upon the Christian really are. What we read there may at first hurt and even offend us, for the Bible penetrates behind our disguises. But let us take courage from the wise remarks of a twentieth century servant of God:

"The words of Jesus hurt and offend until there is nothing left to hurt or offend (cf. Matthew 11:6). If we have never been hurt by a statement of Jesus, it is questionable whether we have ever really heard Him speak. Jesus Christ has no tenderness whatever towards anything that is ultimately going to ruin a man for the service of God. If the Spirit of God brings to our mind a word of the Lord that hurts, we may be perfectly certain there is something He wants to hurt, even to death." (Oswald Chambers in *So Send I You*).

"Thou sayestI have need of nothing; but knowest not that thou artblind; I counsel theeto anoint thine eyes with eyesalve that thou mayest seeHe that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Revelation 3:17-22).

"Open my ears that I may hear

Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;

And while the wave-notes fall on my ear,

Everything false will disappear.

Silently now I wait for Thee,

Ready my God, Thy will to see,

Open my eyes, illumine me,

Spirit Divine."

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/the-supreme-priorities-1-a-proper-sense-of-values/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net