



The Biblical Priorities of Life

“Gently lifting hands to heaven,
softened by the sweetest hush,
a Father sings over his children,
loving them so very much.”

—Five Iron Frenzy, “Dandelions”

Part 2 — “Our Relationship with Christ”— 8/15/21

Introduction: Rightly Ordered Relationships & Loves

- The story of humanity in the Bible after Genesis 3 is one of broken relationships and disordered loves. Our relationship with God is broken and we therefore tend towards idolatry, loving the creation rather than the Creator. Our relationships with one another are broken and therefore we tend towards a love of self that is willing to blame, abuse, and exploit others.
- God’s instructions to Israel in The Decalogue (*10 Commandments*) recognize these consequences of human sin and address them directly, calling the people to forsake idolatry and to be rightly related to God (Exod. 20:1-11) and one another (Exod. 20:12-17). During His earthly life and ministry, Jesus reiterated to His followers the importance of having these relationships and loves rightly ordered, calling them to love God first, and their neighbor second (Matt. 22:35-40).

Key Point: If our lesser relationships and loves are to be rightly ordered, we must recognize that our relationship with Jesus Christ is to be _____ and foremost.

The Primary Relationship of Life: Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is Our Savior

- Because of our sin, we are _____ from our Creator and stand personally _____ before Him.

Isa. 59:2-3—²but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear. ³For your hands are defiled with blood and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies; your tongue mutters wickedness.

Psa. 51:3-4—³For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. ⁴Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.

- Through Christ, we are _____ to God and our sins are _____ for.

Rom. 3:23-25a—²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.

“Propitiation comes from a Greek concept meaning “to appease or atone” and stresses that the holiness of God was fully satisfied, His wrath was appeased, and His righteous demands were met through the atoning death of Jesus.”

—The Moody Handbook of Theology

2 Cor. 5:18—All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation;

Key Point: To know Jesus as Savior means that the _____ has a central place within our hearts and minds.

Jesus Christ is Our Sovereign (Lord)

- Jesus is the _____ that we look to in order that we might know what it means to live as His people.

Eph. 4:1-6—¹I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

- Jesus is the one who _____ us and cares for us throughout the days of our lives.

1Pet. 2:24-25—²⁴He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Key Point: To know Jesus as Lord means that we recognize that we are called, set apart, and led by Him to _____ others in the world that He has made.

Jesus Christ is Our Source of Life.

- The ability to faithfully serve the Lord Jesus comes not from _____, but from _____.

John 15:1-17 — Observations:

1. The imagery of cultivation/fruitfulness is central to the teaching of Jesus in this passage.
2. The work of cultivation and the resulting fruitfulness are both actively accomplished by God Himself.

John 15:2—*Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.*

John 15:4—*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.*

3. The “work” of the branches is that of dependance upon the vine and vine-dresser.

“abide”—μένω (*menō*)— Used of one who does not leave a certain realm or sphere (*remain, continue, abide*)

“Without the vine the branch can do nothing. To the vine it owes its right of place in the vineyard, its life and its fruitfulness. And so the Lord says, “Without me ye can do nothing.” The believer can each day be pleasing to God only in that which he does through the power of Christ dwelling in him. The daily inflowing of the life-sap of the Holy Spirit is his only power to bring forth fruit. He lives alone in Him and is for each moment dependent on Him alone.” —Andrew Murray, *Abide in Christ*

⇒ Our relationship to the Word of God and prayer is indicative of our level of dependance upon the Lord Jesus.

John 15:7— *If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.*

⇒ Our obedience to the Lord Jesus, our joy in Him, and our love for one another are each indicative of our level of dependance upon Him.

John 15:9-12—⁹ *As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.* ¹⁰ *If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.* ¹¹ *These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.* ¹² *“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.*

4. Jesus has purposed that the “fruit” of our relationship with Him should manifest in our relationships with one another.

John 15:16-17—¹⁶ *You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.* ¹⁷ *These things I command you, so that you will love one another.*

“Without the branch the vine can also do nothing. A vine without branches can bear no fruit. No less indispensable than the vine to the branch, is the branch to the vine. Such is the wonderful condescension of the grace of Jesus, that just as His people are dependent on Him, He has made Himself dependent on them. Without His disciples He cannot dispense His blessing to the world; He cannot offer sinners the grapes of the heavenly Canaan. Marvel not! It is His own appointment; and this is the high honour to which He has called His redeemed ones, that as indispensable as He is to them in heaven, that from Him their fruit may be found, so indispensable are they to Him on earth, that through them His fruit may be found. Believers, meditate on this, until your soul bows to worship in presence of the mystery of the perfect union between Christ and the believer.” —Andrew Murray, *Abide in Christ*

Key Point: To know Jesus as our source of life means benefitting from the spiritual _____ that we have with Him.

Eph. 5:31-32—³¹ *“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”* ³² *This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.*

Concluding Thought

- The fruit that is born in our lives is the result of _____ or _____ we are dependent upon.

Rom. 6:12-14—¹² *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions.* ¹³ *Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.* ¹⁴ *For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.*