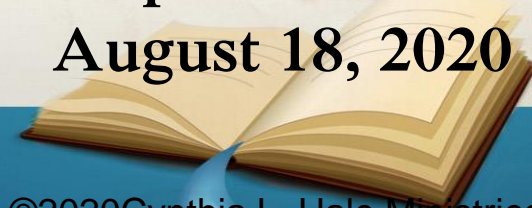


Priorities for Prosperity in the Pandemic and Beyond

Making Me The Priority

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Ray of Hope Christian Church
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Matthew 22:34-40



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**And the second is like it:
Love your neighbor as
you love yourself.**



Jesus
Others
You



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Expound on God's Priorities for our Lives as Believers.



**Our number one priority is
to love God wholeheartedly,
with all that we are and
all that we have.**



**Make God first
and everything else
will fall in place!**



**Jesus' answer to the expert
in the law was taken from
Deuteronomy 6:5, part of the
Shema, the credo of Judaism,
and the law in Leviticus 19:18.**



**Do not seek revenge
or bear a grudge against one
of your people; but love your
neighbor as yourself.**

Leviticus 19:18



**God's priority is love and
all the other laws center on
loving God, loving yourself
and loving others.**



Ephesians 5:25-29



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The reality is the Bible rarely uses the word “self” in the sense of self love. In the Bible, we are told to “deny ourselves” in Mark 8:34.



The old “self” is often called the flesh by Paul in Roman 6:6 and is devoted to self-interest.



The new-self talks about our being raised to newness of life with Christ and is devoted to self-fulfillment and the realization of one's deepest longings and eternal joy through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 4:23ff)



II Timothy 3:1-5



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This self-love is possible because we are loved by God (I John 4:19) called to the knowledge of God and have received his benefits and grace.

Origen



**Self-love as a love of self
which is participation in
Christ's own love for us.**

Bernhard Haring



**There are cases, however,
when we are to love others more
than ourselves and be willing
to sacrifice for them just
as Christ has done.**



John 15:12-14



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Philippians 2:3



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**But we dare not “lose”
ourselves in another.**



Song of Songs 1:5-7



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**There is obviously a loving
balance that has to be achieved
so that we can love others
as we love ourselves.**



**Loving one's self is knowing
one's self, accepting one's self
unconditionally. It is esteeming
and affirming one's self.**



**To know one's self
is to be able to say,
I am who and what I am.**



**To know one's self
is to know that you can exist
as a person independently
of other's affirmation,
approval or opinions.**



**This self is about being,
not doing. It is about who
you are on the inside,
the core of your being.**



The sense of self is actually developed in us, first of all, in our relationship with our parents where there is an atmosphere of unconditional love and acceptance.



**Our need for love and belonging
can be so strong that it blinds us
to the most valuable talents
and qualities that we have.**



**It is important for us
to discern our true selves,
which is a lifetime journey.**



**The search to discover the
true self requires space,
time and the opportunity
for quiet stillness.**



**Making yourself a priority
is taking the time
to discover you.**



Four sources from which we get our sense of self.

- **The outer world or our earliest systems of relationships.**



Four sources from which we get our sense of self.

- **The world within us or the physical, emotional and spiritual equipment that we bring with us into the world.**



Four sources from which we get our sense of self.

- Satan who uses inferiority, inadequacy and belittling to deflate us. Satan doesn't want us to realize who we are and our full potential as God's sons and daughters. He uses lies – John 8:44, accusations – Rev. 12:10 and attempts to blind our minds to the truth – II Corinthians 4:4



**Four sources from which we get
our sense of self.**

- The fourth source of our
self-identity and concept is God.**



**Those who love God may
also know themselves.**

J. A. Bengal



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Psalm 139



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1. Making ourselves a priority is allowing God and God's word to strip away the false beliefs you have about yourself and affirm what is true about you.



2. Making yourself a priority is loving yourself the way you are called to love God and others: unconditionally, affectionally, sacrificially and unreservedly.



3. Making yourself a priority is loving and caring for the total you, physically, emotionally, intellectually and relationally.



Discussion:

1. Do you know who you are?
2. Do you love yourself unconditionally?
3. What do you love most about yourself?
What do you love least?
4. What keeps you from loving yourself wholeheartedly? What are you going to do about it?

