

SEEK YE FIRST

Mark 4:18-19 (AMP) **18***And the ones sown among the thorns are others who hear the Word;*

19*Then the cares and anxieties of the world and distractions of the age, and the pleasure and delight and false glamour and deceitfulness of riches, and the craving and passionate desire for other things creep in and choke and suffocate the Word, and it becomes fruitless.*

As we reflect on the level of importance the Word of God holds in our lives, we must also reflect on the level of priority we give to it. No one would dispute the fact that keeping our jobs is important and that school is important. However, we must also remember, as Christians, that all these "vital" things are secondary to the One who gave us the life to do these things. We set great importance to mundane matters - "Oh, I must clean the car, do the laundry, and take the children to swimming, ballet, volleyball, cricket, as well as music lessons. I must also get my hair and nails done".

We make the time to do all these things and then complain that we are worn out! We take on so much that at the end of it all we are worn out to the point that we have to seek medical help for exhaustion and then the medication we are given cause side effects that make us really physically ill! Not only that, but we become so irritable and short-tempered that the very relationships that mean most to us suffer.

Vacations in many instances are just as bad. We take a trip and end up coming back more exhausted than when we left because we pack so much activity in that there is no room for enjoyment and relaxation!

When will we stop the rollercoaster we call living and find the focal point that our entire existence revolves around? That focal point that strengthens and brings direction, that focal point that addresses the mishaps that occur when we go off course and that brings restoration. That focal point revives and heals and brings joy and energy for daily life. That focal point is the Word of God and the time spent in His presence.

A day started in this way will set us on course with energy and the ability to handle anything because we know that we do not have to rely on our own strength or wisdom to function. When adversity comes, we face it in the power of the Most High God behind us. Not only that, but He will show you in that time spent with Him things that

will occur and how to get around them, thus saving you time that would otherwise be spent in looking for solutions!

Here we have the key to victorious living, but we must take the time to build our foundations and learn how to speak the Word of God in every situation. All of us are defeated not only because of circumstances, but because of our words.

We must remember that being a Christian is not a denomination, it is not a religion - **it is a way of life** - a life that revolves around God, not ourselves. Our lifestyle and our speech must reflect our faith, for without faith it is impossible to please Him, and without works, faith is dead. The first way our faith finds expression is through our words for "out of the heart the mouth speaks".

Monitor your words - are they in line with God's Word, or do they even hint at doubt, vanity, selfishness, profanity or anything negative? When we talk to or of others are our words condemning and critical? If our mouths are full of the Word of God, it will be difficult for anything else to find its way out!

We will delve deeper into the importance of the Word of God later, but now the question is: - "Do we make time for God and the study of the Word, to meditate and make it a part of us?"

Suppose Jesus had said, "Father, I'm sorry, but I don't think I can take the time to go to earth, I'm far too busy running the universe!" That may sound ridiculous, but it is no less ridiculous from God's point of view to hear us say, "Sorry, I can't go to church today, I promised the children to take them to the beach then we promised the Jones family we would come around for their barbeque. We must have some family time you know!"

What is wrong with that picture? Worship time is family time. Who provided the very breath we breathe, (not to mention the car, clothes and jobs) to do all the other stuff?

Yes, we must never neglect our families, and yes, we must work an honest day's work for our employer, but should the Provider not have priority time? If we lost them all, only He could bring restoration! The problem with most of us is that we are so afraid of offending men, or being criticized by men for our faith. On the other hand, we think little of hurting God. Don't we see that in putting other things and people before Him that we hurt Him?

If God were natural man, He would suffer all the effects a psychologist could dream up that come as a result of rejection!

Let's turn things around- get back to basics- get back to the source of life. Examine your schedule and your family activities from the point of view of whether or not it detracts from time that should be spent with

God. There may be things one enjoys, but remember we are not on earth for our pleasure. We are here to do the will of God and we will derive pleasure from doing His will. Talk to Him, see what He will have you do or not do. He will show you because 'every good thing is not a God thing'.

Pay God a visit every day. Read His love-letter to you - the Bible. Meditate on it and apply it to your life. Act on it, and I guarantee the life you have today will pale in comparison to the life you will live later. A God-centered individual will engender a God-centered family which will in turn engender a God-centered community and in turn a God-centered nation.

Make a decision to be God-centered.

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you (Luke 12:31) KJV

Mark 10:29-30 (NASB)

Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life."