

Re-Prioritizing My Priorities

One of the most important concepts in for God Buddies is a need to have our priorities in order. As I can personally attest, when our priorities are out of whack, we will likely crash and burn. But getting our priorities in the proper order will have a dramatic impact on our life.

So let's start with a very important question: What comes to mind when you think about how you want to live your life?

What you ultimately value in life –or at least what you *think* you value, is represented by what you think about most.

Your thoughts represent your priorities in life.

Priorities Defined

Webster's Dictionary defines a Priority as anything that takes precedence in order, rank, or privilege. It's a preferential rating; especially one that allocates rights to goods and services that are usually in limited supply. Like our time!



A priority is also something meriting our attention ahead of all competing alternatives. We make the choice. A priority is a thing that's regarded as more important than another thing.

In other words, a priority is what you think is most important and put ahead of other things.

Thinking with the End in Mind

Dr. Steven R. Covey, author of the book *The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People* suggests Habit #2 as **Begin with the end in mind.**



Photo by Joshua Earle on Unsplash

This means we should begin each day, each task, or each project with a clear vision of the desired direction and destination we want before we begin to make things happen.

One of the best ways to incorporate this habit is to develop a Personal Mission Statement.

Covey says that before you can live a good, meaningful life, you've got to know what the end looks like. He says that when you know how you want people to talk about you at the end of your life, you start taking actions now that will change the current reality. With the end in mind, you know what you need to do day-to-day and week-to-week and year-to-year to make it a reality later. Some suggest it is like writing your own eulogy.

For me, thinking with the end in mind meant thinking more deeply about my faith and the legacy I want to leave behind for my family.

As I wrote in my post on Planning Your Manhood, the Authentic Manhood Plan I developed coming out of a study called *The Quest for Authentic Manhood* required some deep reflection and prayer about three main areas of my life:

1. A Look Back (into your past)
2. A Look at Now (your present self)
3. A Look Ahead (at who you want to be)

Thinking about the Looking Ahead section changed the way I look at things now and how I wanted to live the rest of my life. It meant taking my faith more seriously and living in a way that leaves a legacy that will make my kids proud.

According to Scripture, the end-goal of a life well-lived is to hear the Lord say, *"Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things... Enter into the joy of your Lord."* (Matthew 25:23).

My Early Priorities

At the beginning of my career, my priority on work was much higher than the priority of my health, my family, or my faith. This led to a problem with work-life balance and concerns by my doctor about depression that I wrote about here.

Yes, I had my priorities out of whack!

How We Live Out Priorities

There are two key elements about how we live out of our priorities:

1. What we believe & think about a given situation.
2. How we choose to respond to that situation through actions and attitudes.

In other words, how should I think and act to achieve the desired result?

Our priorities begin with the desired result.

My new priorities began with the end in mind.

Crucial Questions to Ask Yourself



Image by Arek Socha from Pixabay

More than anything else, three questions will help discern your current priorities:

1. What do you **think** about?
 - Do you think about work while on vacation?
 - What are your most frequent daydreams?
 - What comes to mind while you're sitting in church?
2. How do you use your **money**?
 - Take a quick inventory of your "stuff."
 - Think about the last 30 checks you have written.
 - What priorities do those reflect?
3. What do you do with your **time**?
 - Aside from doing the necessities, what do you do with the hours and days that make up your life?
 - What do you do when you have free time?
 - How much time do you spend on the Internet or Facebook or TV every day?

To discover your priorities, simply pay attention to what you are thinking, where you spend your money, and how you invest your time.

The Ultimate Priority-Shifter

Are you curious what God thinks about your priorities and your life?

Well, God really got my attention during my work-life balance struggle. It led to joining a men's group where I discovered that God is continually inviting people to re-think their priorities – about work, about love, about family relationships, about success, and everything else that goes into making an abundant life.

He strongly suggested I check my priorities.

The Proof was “in the Pudding”

After I got my work-life balance back under control, I decided to re-order my priorities and get the proverbial “three-legged stool” of family, faith, and work back into the right balance.

If not, my life would spill over...again!

About the time I attended a PromiseKeepers event, Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls were in the middle of a run of 6 NBA championships. I literally would schedule my evenings

around the Bulls TV schedule so I could watch as many games as possible. MJ and his teammates were the “rock-stars” of the NBA and dominated nearly every game. It was pure basketball fun.

One evening, my wife returned from a committee meeting at church and came over to greet me. She knew when the Bulls game was on, it usually had my sole attention though.

Much to her surprise, I shut off the TV and turned toward her to ask about her day. Not to listen half-heartedly or with one ear still on the game, but to really listen to her.



Photo by Austin Distel on Unsplash

I showed that she was my priority. I wanted to prove it.

God Buddy Principle

In addition to re-prioritizing my family and my faith, I make spending time with my God Buddies a priority. Having some GBs in my life has helped keep me accountable to God's priorities. It helps me become more of the man God desires.

I'm reminded in verse 33 of Matthew: *"Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need."*

When we make God our priority, everything else will fall into place.

Have you re-prioritized your priorities?