



Following Christ Together Through the Prayer Action Plan

WHERE DOES JESUS RANK?

Try something for me. Make a quick list of the top five things that you are committed to. Now, a quick definition of commitment is to put time and energy into something that you care about.

Ok, so what was on your list? You may have had your job, family, sports, school, friends, spouse, yourself, and yes, you may have had Jesus on there as well. Now, do one more thing. In your list of five, rank them from 1-5, 1 being the one you are most committed to and 5 being the one least committed to, based on the definition above. Don't worry, no one will see your ranks so you can be honest.

So, where did Jesus rank in your list? Some may have Him as numero uno, others may have Him, when they're honest, a tad lower, and still others may not have Him in their top five. No matter where Jesus was on your list, the Bible helps us to understand that there is really only one right answer to the question, "Where should Jesus rank in our lives?" And that is, ABOVE EVERYTHING ELSE!

GOD'S WORD

"Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience. ¹²We are not commanding ourselves to you again but giving you cause to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast about outward appearance and not about what is in the heart. ¹³For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. ¹⁴For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; ¹⁵and he died for all, that those who live might not no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. - 2 Corinthians 5:11-15 (ESV)

This passage gives all of us, even those who may have had Jesus ranked number one, a lot to think about. First off, what does our commitment to Jesus look like? Because even if we give Jesus a great deal of our time and energy we may still be missing out on what He wants to give us and do through us. Do you spend time and energy, because of your great awe and respect for God, persuading others? Or are you more concerned with just the outward appearances of Christianity?

By that I mean you go to church, you don't drink, you don't curse, you're in a connection group or other Bible study group, etc., which are all AWESOME things, and things we should be concerned about. However, if it's all we're doing and we're content with this, we're missing something HUGE.

This passage also gives us insights into why Jesus may be lower in your ranking, or not there at all. Does the love of Christ control you? If not, why? Do you still doubt His love for you? Do you know He loves you, but you've never experienced it in real, powerful ways? Have you forgotten about it because you've neglected worshipping Him and spending time in His Word, which is His love letter to you!

Jesus not only says He loves you, but He proved it! He died for you! He rose from the dead to make you His! Guess what, your job didn't do that. That sport you love didn't do that. Your family and spouse didn't do that either. Only Christ did! He alone loved you so much that He died to take your sin and the punishment that your sin deserves. And He alone rose from the dead to allow you to enter into a loving relationship with the Holy God of the universe! When that truth is something that you live in everyday, your life will change in ways you can't imagine!

APPLY THE WORD

Our actions directly show what we care about. Take a quick look at those things you are committed to again. Now answer the question, why is Jesus not number one? What are those things that have taken His rightful place?

Ask yourself if you've begun believing the lie that it's ok to have Jesus as just part of your life? What are the reasons you've believed that? Has your relationship grown stale? Has your life with Jesus become boring? Do you no longer believe Jesus can change your life? I recently heard a pastor say that if your Christianity has become stale or boring or ineffective then you're doing it wrong. He's right!!

When was the last time you stepped out in faith and said "yes" to something that you felt God prompting you to do? When was the last time you had a conversation about Jesus with someone who doesn't already know Him? When the love of Christ controls us these will be regular things we do with our lives.

PRAY

Confess anything that is keeping you from being fully committed to Jesus and ask Him to remind you of just how much He loves you! Ask Him for the boldness and courage to be obedient to the call to go and "persuade others".

Everyone a Disciple. Everyone a Disciple Maker.