

alive
magazine
November '23

Don't Give Up Your
Birthrights



Support

**Alive to God is brought to you by YOU!
And other generous readers such as yourself**

BANKING DETAILS

Account Name: Alive to God

Bank: Standard Bank

Account Number: 411338196

(Cheque/transmission)

Branch: Menlyn

Reference: Your email address

DEBIT ORDERS

You can give regularly by means of a debit order. If you would like to make use of this option, please email us at:

andrew@alivetogod.com

www.AliveToGod.com/donate-support

<https://pavpal.com/webapps/mop/send-monev-online>

Contents

+ featured articles

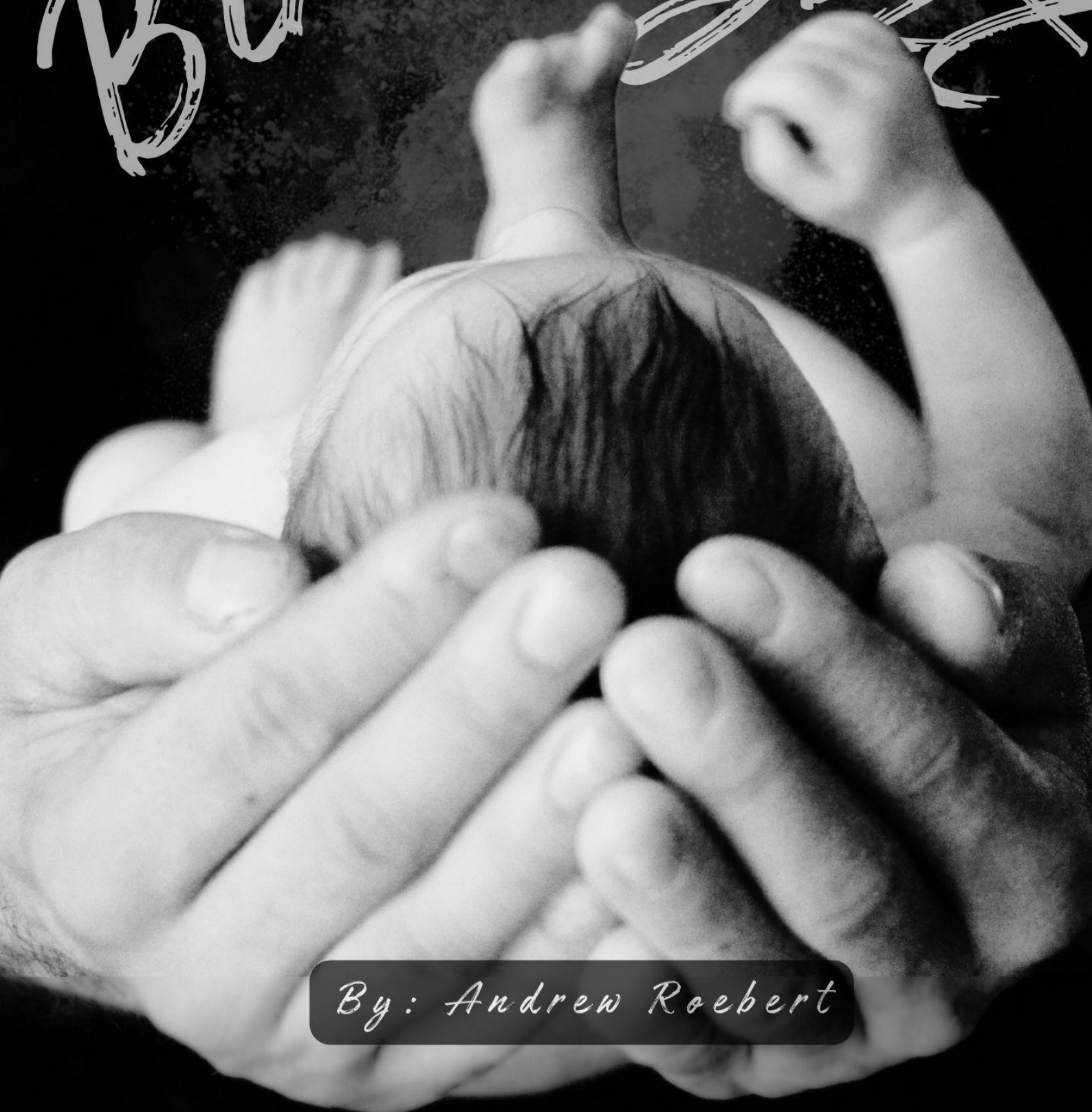
4 **DON'T GIVE UP YOUR BIRTHRIGHT**
- Andrew Roebert –

10 **FIRST THINGS FIRST! - KEYS TO
SUCCESS (KEY 7)**
- Andrew Roebert –

16 **PRAYING FOR YOUR
UNBELIEVING SPOUSE**
- MarriageMissions.com–



Don't Give Up Your
Birthright



By: Andrew Roebert

SCRIPTURE READING:

Genesis 25:33

But Jacob said, 'First you must swear that your birthright is mine.' So Esau swore an oath, thereby selling all his rights as the firstborn to his brother, Jacob. (NLT)

WHAT IS A BIRTHRIGHT?

Every person is born with a birthright. There are things that each individual is entitled to simply because they were born. The word 'BIRTHRIGHT' is made up of two words: 'Birth' and 'right'. In its simplest form it means the rights you are entitled to because you were born. In the story in Genesis, Esau was the first born and as the first born he was entitled to the inheritance from his father Isaac. So, a birthright is a right you have because you were born into a position, a family, a place, or because it is a right of all people. As a child of your parents, you are entitled to a birthright. From the moment of birth, you have the right to their family name. You have the right to be named by your parents and to carry their name. When I was born my parents named me Andrew and I was entitled to carry my father's family name Roebert (Pronounced: Ray-bert). Perhaps a surname with

an easier spelling and pronunciation would have been better, but this was my birthright. This right had nothing to do with how I behaved. I hope I wasn't a big burden to my parents as a baby, but my mother says I was an angel - I don't think she remembers every detail. There is a huge difference between a birthright and behaviour rights. The basis for a birthright is simply a matter of birth, but a behaviour right is based on the perceived conduct and/or situation, and these two rights are not connected. One of the most devastating challenges anyone can face in life is disinheritance. Sometimes people get confused between a birthright and behaviour rights and choose to disinherit their family or a particular member/s of their family. The results are usually destructive and crushing and people seldom, if ever, get over such a scenario. The reason for this is that within each individual there is an innate knowledge



of their birthright and when they lose this birthright they experience it as the ultimate form of rejection and because the person who made the decision is now deceased, there is nothing that can be done about the situation. This leaves people feeling robbed and it can take many years to overcome this type of injustice. As children of God, we are also entitled to a birthright, and we can also enjoy the benefits of our birthright. This birthright comes into being when we are born into the family of God. Just think about it, we can carry His Name and be called Christians, after the Name of Christ. As we read the story in Genesis we can see that it is possible to give up or sell our birthright. You are the only person who can give up your birthright. We should never consider such an option. We should step forward and stand in line to receive the birthright that God has for us. Don't let the evil one convince you otherwise. Let us look at some aspects of the birthright we are entitled to as children of God.

OUR BIRTHRIGHT

INCLUDES FORGIVENESS

When we were born as infants, we came into this world with a clean slate. We did not arrive with bad habits and evil intents. But from the moment of birth, we were exposed to all manner of things that human beings are capable of. During the course of our development and in the process of life we made our own mistakes and sinned along the way. A problem came into the picture – we were no longer pure and innocent, but we became tainted because of what we had done and because of what had been done to us. This is what I call the 'sin problem'.

Romans 3:23

'For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.'

However, as children of God, we have a birthright to forgiveness.

1 John 1:9

'But if we confess our sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. (unrighteousness)'

In Christ we have access to this wonderful birthright that gives us the right to be forgiven and to know the awesome gift of His forgiveness in our lives.

Romans 6:23

'For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.'

Forgiveness is perhaps one of the greatest gifts we can ever receive and it is also one of the greatest gifts we can give to others. God extends forgiveness to us and He expects that we would follow His example and extend it to others.

Luke 11:4

'Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.'

We have this birthright of forgiveness that is available to us. Why would we give up or sell this birthright and exchange it for bitterness and hatred when we can be free to receive forgiveness and give forgiveness?

***OUR BIRTHRIGHT
INCLUDES
KNOWING WE
ARE LOVED BY
GOD***

Another great privilege that we can enjoy is the knowledge that as children of God we can know that He loves us. Right now, wherever you may find yourself, His love is reaching out to you. Other people may dislike, despise or even hate you, but He will never be like that towards you.

Jeremiah 31:3

'I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.'

John 3:16

'For God so loved the world (this includes you – specifically and intentionally) that He gave His one and only Son...'

Romans 8:38-39

'For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

Nothing can separate you from His great love for you – that is your birthright.





OUR BIRTHRIGHT IS TO KNOW THE SAVING POWER OF JESUS

The salvation that Christ offers us and the joy of being in right-standing with God is a birthright, available to us all. This great benefit or birthright opens the door to us being able to know God and to experience His gift (our birthright) of eternal life.

John 3:16

'For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.'

His saving power is available to you today. His love is reaching out to you to save you. If you have never given your life to God, now is the time. This is your appointed moment. He is knocking at your heart's door and waiting for you to open the door to your heart and life so that He can come and live within you. If you are seriously considering this and want to take ownership of your birthright then here is a prayer you can pray to settle this matter once and for all.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know I have sinned in my thoughts, words and actions.

There are so many good things I have not done.

There are so many sinful things I have done.

I am sorry for my sins and turn from everything I know to be wrong.

I know You gave Your life upon the cross for me.

Gratefully I give my life back to You.

Now I ask You to come into my life.

Come in as my Saviour to cleanse me,

Come in as my Lord to control me,

Come in as my Friend to be with me,

and by Your grace, I will serve You all the years of my life in obedience.

In Your precious Name, Amen.

If you prayed this prayer I would love to hear from you. Just send me an email to andrew@alivetogod.com and just say: 'I prayed the prayer!'

YOUR BIRTHRIGHT – THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

You are no longer alone – God is with you. You are His child and as His child you have access to His Holy Spirit as your birthright.

John 14:16

‘And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever.’

The Comforter is the Holy Spirit and He was sent to be your comforter, advocate and counsellor. He was not just sent to the early church and then withdrawn. He was sent to all humanity for all time and to be with each one of His children forever. (This includes you!) If you will give the Holy Spirit the right of way in your life, you will find that He will gently and graciously prompt and lead you as you grow in your relationship with God.

John 14:26

‘But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My Name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have told you.’

The choice between receiving our birthright and giving it up is constantly being presented to us. Don’t give up your birthright, don’t sell your birthright for temporary pleasures. It’s yours and you can take hold of it today and make it yours for eternity.



FIRST THINGS FIRST!



KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL LIFE (KEY 7)

BY: ANDREW ROEBERT

The ability and the willingness to put first things first is one of the greatest keys to success in life. It starts as we develop the skill to be able to determine what is more important and what should receive the major focus, but it does not end there. Once we have determined what the importance is, we have to begin to give that aspect focus and attention. It is this that leads to success.

Matthew 6:33

Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 6:33

But seek (aim at and strive after) first of all His kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right), and then all these things taken together will be given you besides. (Amplified Bible)

THINGS BECOME TOO IMPORTANT

We begin to lose the battle when within our hearts things (physical things) begin to take over. Things get to the point where they have the rule over our lives and take the place of God. We are so busy and consumed with the things in our lives that God is no longer on the throne of our lives. If we will ensure that our priorities are in order then we can enjoy the reward of giving God His place in our lives - PEACE. Because we have allowed things to have priority, we lose the peace. Many times the things that we allow to dominate our heart are the gifts and blessings that God has given us. Our talents (careers) our bodies, our families, our resources. The whole course of nature is upset when we substitute things for the place of priority that belongs to God.





Matthew 6:31-33

So don't worry at all about having enough food and clothing. Why be like the heathen? For they take pride in all these things and are deeply concerned about them.

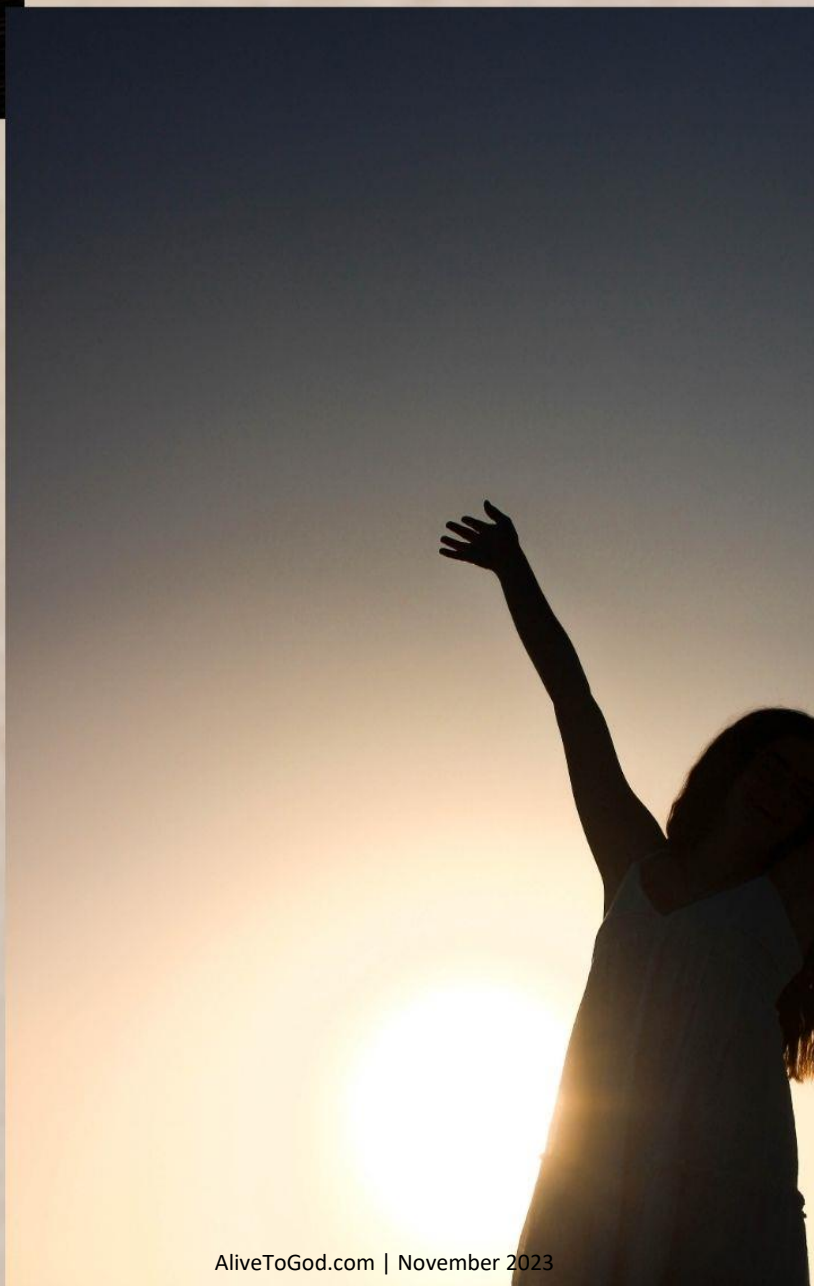
THE URGENT VERSUS THE IMPORTANT

I have discovered that this aspect is the aspect that causes most people to lose sight of what is really important. Have you ever had one of those days when you knew you had some important things to do only to discover at the end of the day that you rushed around doing so many things and what really needed to be accomplished was not? The urgent things are

always demanding our attention and our immediate action and often the important things are sacrificed. Let me give you an example; I have seen men pursue careers and rush from meeting to meeting and in the process neglect their families only to discover at the end that they have lost their families. You and I must determine what is important and that we will not allow the urgent to derail our purpose and consume our lives.

PRIORITIES

Priorities are things we focus on and the things we give attention to. Priorities are the things that are important. Our priorities are the things we aim for and strive after. Certain things are more important and get more attention as a result. Priorities are our orders of ascendancy. Priorities indicate a sense of order. How we order our lives indicates our priorities. How we spend our money is a good indicator of our priorities.

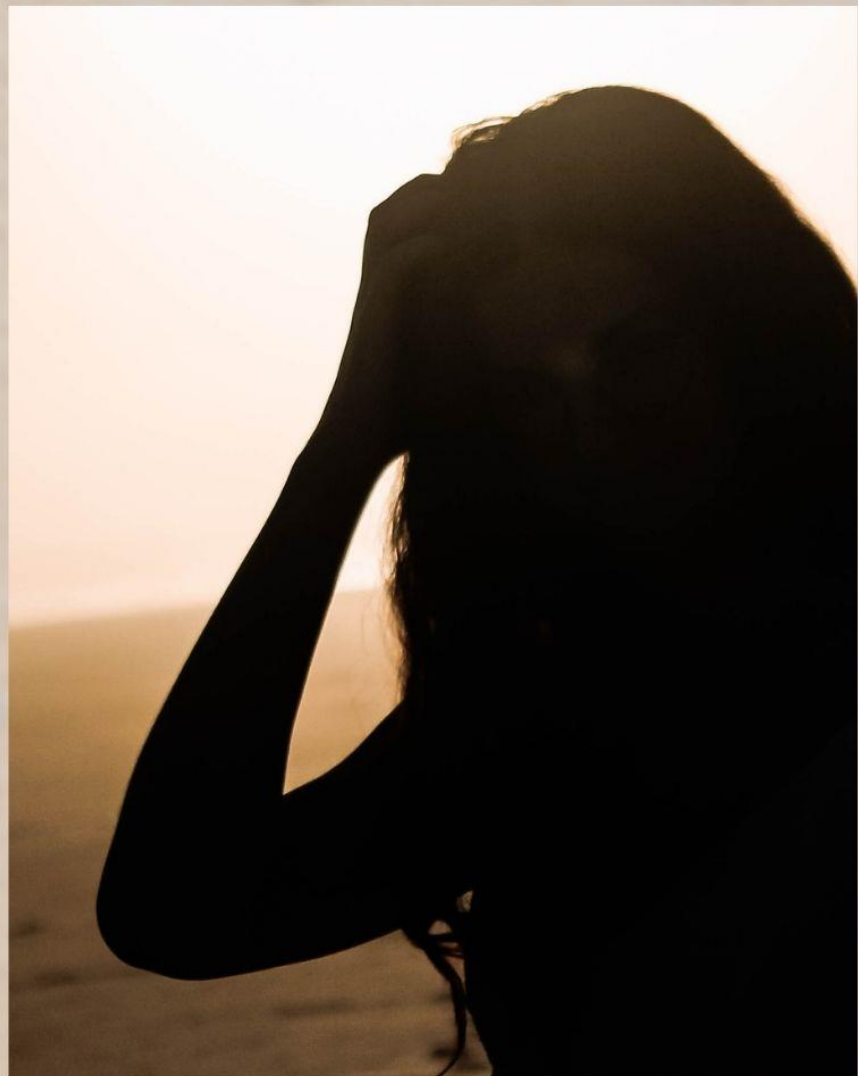


IT STARTS WITH OUR HEARTS

This is what God is looking at. Are our hearts full of things that place demands on us? Or are our hearts free from things and longing for God. The possessive clinging to the things of life is one of the most destructive habits in life. Because it is natural, most times we do not even recognise it. But it can devastate our lives. Everything we commit to God is safe. What is not committed to God is not safe.

1 Corinthians 4:7

What are you so puffed up about? What do you have that God hasn't given you? And if all you have is from God, why act as though you are so great, and as though you have accomplished something on your own?



God is after first place in our hearts.

GOD WANTS FIRST PLACE IN OUR LIVES

Many things demand our hearts and lives. But we need to get our priorities right. God first and everything else secondary. Imagine how this would change our lives. I believe that God is calling us back to this style of life.

Matthew 6:31-33

So don't worry at all about having enough food and clothing. Why be like the heathen? For they take pride in all these things and are deeply concerned about them. But your heavenly Father already knows perfectly well that you need them, 33and he will give them to you if you give him first place in your life and live as he wants you to.

God wants to add everything that we need, if only we would place Him first.



FIRST THINGS FIRST



HOW CAN WE GET OUR PRIORITIES RIGHT

We can begin to get our priorities right as we carefully evaluate what is important and what aspects should receive what degree of attention. Draw up a list and rate the things on the list in order of importance. If family is the most important on your list, then you need to ask yourself if they are receiving the right proportion of attention. To be able to enjoy success this evaluation cannot just be done once. Each day and with every decision and choice we have to make we have to evaluate it in the light of our priorities. I once knew a man who did not know how to say no. He had his own business and was good at his work. As a result he got lots of orders and he kept saying yes to every job. Eventually he had far more work than he could cope with. He started running between jobs, never completing one job on time or to the satisfaction of the clients. People began to get angry with him and eventually the message got out that he was unreliable. As a result people stopped asking him to do work and things did not go well. Eventually he had to move into another line of work. The issue is that putting first things first is a daily choice. It is something we have to decide about every day and moment for moment.



HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO GIVE GOD FIRST PLACE

1. Don't be defensive, or make excuses.
2. Be serious about putting God first.
3. Come to God determined to be heard!
4. Be specific about the things that have taken the place of priority in your life.
5. Ask God to forgive you!
6. By a decisive action, place Him on the throne of your life.
7. Start pursuing God.

THE TESTING OF OUR PRIORITIES

Just like with Abraham, God tests our hearts. Sooner or later He will bring us to this test. If Abraham had not passed the test, the whole of history, as we know it today would have been different. But Abraham passed the test! So can we! When we come to the point of testing we don't have many options. Just one and an alternative. Lets pass the test and go for the only option. God Himself!

FIRST THINGS FIRST

A romantic photograph of a couple in wedding attire. The groom, on the left, is wearing a dark suit jacket and blue jeans. The bride, on the right, is wearing a dark, off-the-shoulder wedding dress and holding a large, vibrant bouquet of flowers in shades of orange, red, and white. They are standing under a black umbrella, and the groom is gently kissing the bride's cheek. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with trees and fallen leaves on the ground.

PRAYING FOR

YOUR

UNBELIEVING

SPOUSE

BY: [MARRIAGEMISSIONS.COM](https://marriagemissions.com)

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other, and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

(Colossians 3:13-14)

(Also read: Colossians 3:1-17 for the whole context.)

Valerie and John used to attend church together when they first married, but as the years went by, he found other things to do on Sundays and preferred to stay at home while she went alone.



FOUND FAITH BY PRAYING

This led to increasing friction between them; for while John became less and less interested in spiritual issues, Valerie found that her faith was growing and God was becoming more important to her. Their problems only got worse whenever they tried to discuss issues of significance.

One day it dawned on Valerie how much she resented and even disliked John. The more she thought about it, the more she worried as to where her feelings could lead. Wisely, she decided to talk to a church counselor. This person showed her that, as far possible, she needed to understand, love, and respect her husband —despite their different priorities.



TOLERANCE AND ACCEPTANCE

The counselor reminded Valerie that one of the great strengths of Christianity is that, with God's help, Christians can display a tolerance and acceptance of those who irritate them. Jesus' love is such a powerful resource that we can respond with dignity and respect. This is what Jesus did when he was opposed.

If there is one thing that eventually may bring John to Jesus Christ, it will be Valerie's respect and love for him. This is especially admirable when he least deserves it. However, in the meantime, Valerie needs to be patient and faithful for as long as it takes.

Suggested Prayer:

"Although I sometimes find it hard to be tolerant, Lord, help me today to appreciate the good things about my husband, and to respect his views—even if I cannot agree with them. Help me to become more like Jesus."

A QUESTION TO ANSWER:



If Jesus lived in your house, how do you think he would handle your husband's feelings about him and the church?

This devotional thought came from the book, *Praying for Your Unbelieving Husband ...120 Reflections, Prayers, and Action Steps* -by Michael and Diane Fanstone. Reverend Fanstone is senior pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Gravesend, England. He is the author of *Unbelieving Husbands and the Wives Who Love Them* and *The Sheep That Got Away*. Diane Fanstone is actively involved with her husband's ministry. They have two children. This is their first book together, which unfortunately, is no longer being published.

Whether you have an unbelieving husband or an unbelieving wife, you can always take the pronouns in the following posted prayers and change them to fit the needs of the spouse you are praying for. And then even add some that come to mind as you are copying these.

Here is a prayer that was formerly posted on the Internet, written by an "Everyday Mom." She is praying for her unbelieving husband. We hope that you may find inspirational as you pray for your unbelieving spouse. (Change the pronouns if it applies.)

When Praying, Here is a Suggested Outline:

"Father God, once again I come to you for guidance and help. It is my desire to have a husband who fears You, who walk in Your ways.

"Help my husband to see the truth of Your Word. Open up the eyes of his heart. Remove from him a heart of stone and replace it with a heart of flesh. I pray for your Holy Spirit to work on him on his life.

"Give him a sound mind and help him to be faithful to his marriage vows. Create in him a clean heart and renew a right spirit within him.

"I pray that he will shun the very thought of evil, impurity, pornography, adultery, perversion, unfaithfulness from his mind.

"Help him to take charge of his spirit and to resist temptation. May he abhor evil and cling to what is good.

"I pray that he will choose Godly friends and Godly counsels that can influence him in positive ways. Let him not be a man who is unteachable, Father.

"Surround him with Godly friends, I pray.



ALSO

"I pray he can be a good and positive example for his young children. I pray that he can learn self control and be a father that is worthy of respect from his family. As he go out to provide for his family, I pray that you surround him with favor.

"I pray that you protect him from the devise of the wicked.

"Open up doors of opportunity for him Father and increase his working skills to be better in each passing day.

"Take foolishness out of his heart and enable him to quickly recognise error and avoid it.

"Open his eyes to clearly see the consequences of any negative behavior.

"Instruct him as he is sleeping and in the morning may his path follow Your guidance instead of his flesh. The wisdom of this world is foolishness to You Lord. May he not buy into it.

"Keep him as the apple of Your eye. Hide Him under the shadow of your wings. (Psalm 17:8) Amen."

And then here is something else that may help you in praying for your spouse.



PRAYING GOD'S WORD:



And lastly, this is something we posted in an article, written to those who love prodigals. This particular advice comes from the book, *Parents in Pain*, written by Dr John White. Even though it deals with parenting issues, the following can be used in praying for any prodigal —a spouse, as well. [Please note that I divided the advice into bullet points for your praying convenience.]:

- We may ask with every confidence that God will open the eyes of the morally and spiritually blind.
- We may ask that the self-deceptions which sinners hide behind may be burned away in the fierce light of truth,
- that dark caverns may be rent asunder to let the sunlight pour in,
- that self-disguises may be stripped from a man or woman to reveal the horror of their nakedness in the holy light of God.
- We may ask above all that the glory of the face of Christ will shine through the spiritual blindness caused by the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4).

All of this we can ask with every assurance that God will not only hear but will delight to answer.

But we may not ask him to force a man, woman, or child to love and trust him.

WE CAN BE PRAYING:

- To deliver them from overwhelming temptation: yes.
- To give them every opportunity: yes.
- Also, to reveal his beauty, his tenderness, his forgiveness: yes.

But to force a man against his will to bow the knee: not in this life. And to force a man to trust him: never.

Said another way, the Lord will not save a person against his will; but He has a thousand ways of making him more willing. Our prayers unleash the power of God in the life of another individual. We have been granted the privilege of entering into intercessory prayer for our loved ones and of holding their names and faces before the Father. In return, He makes the all-important choices crystal clear to that individual and brings positive influences into his or her life to maximize the probability of doing what is right. Beyond that, He will not go.

Timeless Christian Resources



RoebertMinistries.co.za

FREE DAILY
BIBLE VERSE



HOLY BIBLE

ADDICTION?

THIS LIFE MINISTRY CAN HELP

Contact us for ministry in discipleship, Christian healing and deliverance from addiction

ThisLifeMinistry.co.za | healing@thislifeministry.co.za

062 432 5464 | Pretoria, South Africa

Trevor & Violet

AliveToGod.com

MIDWEEK SPECIAL Santorini in Ballito

FRONT ROW, GROUND FLOOR

SLEEPS 6, 2 BATHROOMS

MONDAY-WEDNESDAY

@R1250 PER NIGHT

GET THURSDAY NIGHT FREE!

AKROTIRI.CO.ZA

AKROTIRI19@AKROTIRI.CO.ZA

Igoda Mouth Resort

**AFFORDABLE SELF-CATERING FAMILY
HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION IN EAST LONDON**

IgodaMouthResort@gmail.com

083 308 0191

IMPACT 103

LET HOPE COME ALIVE

- CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY RADIO STATION -

LISTEN LIVE - ImpactRadio.co.za