



## Putting First Things First

Adapted from “A Sure Foundation” series by Scott Erickson.

Today, many men seem to live a life with two sets of priorities. Some of the reasons for this could be that we are too busy. Perhaps it is because we are under great stress and pressure. Maybe the reason we live with two sets of priorities is a financial debt or challenge we face. It could be the reason we live with two sets of priorities is because our spiritual life is empty.

To focus on the things we should be focused on is an important life mission. Blogger Jesse Nickles writes:

A few years back, I came across a fascinating perspective on life purpose written by Stephanie Relfe, an Australian-American holistic kinesiologist. Relfe, in turn inspired by Buckminster Fuller and Dr. W. Edwards Deming – two of the most captivating figures of the 20th century – argues that a “straightforward” life purpose usually does not present; rather, by creating something of value for society and pursuing varied long-term roles, a sort of “tangential” life purpose is often discovered: it is possible, just possible, that the honey bee has a life purpose. What would that life purpose be? To pollinate plants, to keep life on earth going. We would exist if it wasn't for honey bees. But do you think the honey bee gets up each morning and say to herself that she has to cross pollinate plants? No. she just has – what goal? To collect nectar to make honey. Precession happens at right angles to the direction of motion. It's a side effect. In the case of the honey bee, the side effect of what? The pollination of plants, and the maintenance of life on earth.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Jesse Nickles, “Life Priorities: Here Are The Ways You Can Prioritize Your Limited Time, Resources, Energy, And Emotions,” *CollegeTimes*, July 6, 2014, <https://collegetimes.co/priorities/> (accessed July 19, 2017).

“Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. May not copy or download more than 500 consecutive verses of the ESV Bible or more than one half of any book of the ESV Bible.”

## COURAGE

**C1:** For one month keep a detailed calendar of everything you do during the day. Keep a detailed record of everything you spend.

**C2:** From your completed calendar and spending spreadsheet, what are four or five observations you can make about your life?

**C3:** On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, how well do you rate the use of your time? Write out a plan to change the use of your time.

## STRENGTH

**S1:** What are some of the struggles people have with staying committed to their priorities?

**S2:** Read and answer the following.

**Psalm 90:10–13 (ESV)**

**Ephesians 5:15–17 (ESV)**

- From these verses, what should we prioritize in our life so we can have peace and power?
- On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate how well you prioritize your time. Write out a plan to give your first and best time to God.

**S3:** Read and answer the following.

**Proverbs 3:9–10 (ESV)**

**Leviticus 27:30 (ESV)**

- From these verses, what should we prioritize in our life so we can have peace and power?
- On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being very well and 4 being not so well, rate how well you prioritize your treasure. Write out a plan to improve making God's treasures a priority in your life.

## ENDURANCE

**E1:** Living with proper priorities requires an ingredient many are not willing to take. Read and answer the following.

**Titus 2:11–12 (ESV)**

**2 Peter 1:5–6 (ESV)**

- From these verses, what can you glean as to the ingredient many are not willing to allow in their life?
- What does discipline or self-control mean to you?
- On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate yourself how disciplined your life is. Write out a plan to improve.

**E2:** You have an enemy who is serious about steering your undisciplined, careless, and compromising life into chaos. Read and answer the following.

**Hebrews 6:10–12 (ESV)**

- From these verses, what are four things the writer warns a believer about the enemy's battle strategy?
- From these verses, what are two patterns and pathways we should follow to ensure a foundation for a successful life?

**E3:** Lasting change requires long-range thinking and short-range action. However, there are positive results if you live daily with clear priorities. Read and answer the following.

**Proverbs 10:4 (ESV)**

**Proverbs 12:24 (ESV)**

**Galatians 6:7–9 (ESV)**

- From these verses, what are two results you will experience if you live with clear priorities?
  
- On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate yourself on how well you live with clear priorities. Write out a plan to improve.