

Your Top Priority

John 15:5

What are our biggest priorities in life?

One good way to answer this question is to look at how we spend our time. For example, if we're like most people we probably spend a couple hours each day on the Internet and maybe a few more hours watching television. It doesn't seem like much. But the hours add up over time. At that rate, when we reach the end of our lives, we will have spent nearly 15 years in front of electronic devices.

In contrast, if we go to church twice a week, and spend ten minutes in personal devotions each day, we will reach the end of our lives having devoted about a year and a half to spiritual pursuits.

These sobering statistics remind us of how important it is to have our priorities in order, especially when it comes to our walk with God. It isn't always easy to defeat apathy or resist temptation. We must commit to making Christ our greatest focus and cultivating an ever-growing relationship with Him. That's what He had in mind for us when He gave this powerful command in John 15:5...

I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, He will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

What does it mean to be "in Christ"? Jesus compares us to a branch, living, growing and flourishing only as long as it is connected to the vine. God gives us opportunity to experience a vibrant, fruitful life, but only as long as we're tapped into the Source of that life, Jesus Christ. Without Him we will wither and die spiritually, just as a broken branch will perish when disconnected from the vine.

Many people who've experienced the trauma and destructive power of an addiction, or seen such a tragedy befall a loved one, will wonder if life can ever really be good again. Jesus answered that question in no uncertain terms: He offers new life to all people, life beyond our finest dreams. But to receive that life, we must live "in Him." It starts with a step of faith, a cry to Him for mercy, strength, and restoration. But then it continues as a relationship. And when knowing Him becomes our top priority, He makes—and keeps—all things new.

How is our life changed when we are "in Him"?

Why would an addiction or another negative habit be destructive to our relationship with Christ?

Take a moment to evaluate your priorities? Does any activity, habit, or possession hold too high a place in your life? Explain. How can you make and maintain Christ as your highest priority?