

# GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## First Things First

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A relationship with God demands putting Him first. We are to have no other gods before Him. Being a jealous God, Jehovah will not tolerate one to bow down and worship idols, including any object we might covet (Exodus 20:3, Colossians 3:5). The Lord demands putting Him first in our affections, even before family members, if we are to truly be His disciples (Matthew 10:37).

Putting God first, we should also follow His wisdom and do what He says to do first.

Paul instructs Timothy regarding children and grandchildren to “let them learn **first** to show piety towards their own family, and to requite their parents: for this is acceptable in the sight of God” (I Timothy 5:4). Our caring and benevolent heart might inspire us to help many in the world. But we must first make sure we are taking care of the needs of our own parents. Putting God first in no way releases us from this requirement. Jesus points out the incongruity of not taking care of our parents and honoring them, in the context of giving to the Lord: “But ye say,

*Whosoever shall say to this father or his mother, That wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me is given to God, he shall not honor his father” (Matthew 15:5). Meeting the essential needs of our own family comes first, before we branch out to help the world.*

In times of fearing the lack of physical sustenance, the Lord exhorts us to replace distracting anxiety with constructive action: “**But seek ye first His kingdom, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).** Putting first things first demands walking by faith. Raising our eyes above our circumstances, we must first submit our hearts to the rule of God and his standard of righteousness, and God will make sure we are clothed and fed.

We must first manifest faithfulness in the little we have. This is one of the lessons of the Lord’s parable regarding the unrighteous steward. Jesus uses the story to cause his hearers to ponder the following: “*He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your*

*trust the true riches?” (Luke 16:10-11).* Do you daydream about what you would do for the Lord if you had great riches? God answers your question by drawing attention to what you are doing with the little you have now. If you are not properly using the mammon God has blessed you with now, you will not use it to his glory if you had much. We should use the mammon we have in this life wisely in order to secure for ourselves the eternal blessings of Heaven. This is yet another application of taking care of the **first** things.

John reminds us of this principle when it comes to loving our brother. “*If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen” (I John 4:20).* Love for the unseen God is manifested in following His demands to love one another (I Jn. 4:12). It is easy to say I love God, but until I **first** love my brother whom I see, my affectionate claim for the unseen God is merely a lie. Are you doing the Lord’s **first** things?