

Put God First

Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. **—Matthew 10:37**

All relationships must ever be subservient to God's greater glory. No matter how close people get to each other, they must be closer to God. The irony is, the closer people are to God, the more they will love each other. The more they put the voice of God prior to their commitment to each other, the more they really respect each other.

I think of some of my close friends. The dynamic that holds us together is that we love God more than we do each other. If I stopped listening to God and turned away from Him, I would expect my friends to warn me—then lovingly rebuke me if I did not come to my senses.

No friendship or relationship is worth its salt if it does not have an inflexible commitment to God's glory first and to one another second. It would break my heart if I had to break with any of my friends—for any reason. But I would do it if I had to because of my greater love for God's honor.

It is a severe test to one's mettle whether God will always be put first—and obeyed. Today's man or woman must get his or her approval from God only. "How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?" (John 5:44).

It is a way today's servant of Christ must bear the cross. But the more I bear this cross, the more I put God's voice first, and the more I am jealous of God's glory, then the more will I be respected, appreciated, and loved by these friends. That, in fact, is what makes real friendship.

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