

Professional Perspectives for Christian Senior Officers

The **Priorities** of a Christian Senior Officer

Your priorities as a Christian senior officer are unchanged from those of a junior officer, or any other person in the family of God. But the complexity and ambiguity of your environment and duties can quickly skew your priorities out of balance if you do not maintain a godly perspective.

Priority #1: Your relationship with God

Matthew 6:33 – Your most important relationship is how you stand as an individual before God. This relationship provides the basis and perspective for all your other relationships. God’s Word provides several very clear commands that you are to *practice* in order to maintain a right relationship with Him.

Psalm 1 – As a senior leader, you will be given much advice and counsel. Psalm 1 sets out a clear contrast between how to be righteous or wicked. The first word of the psalm is “blessed,” the last word is “perish.” The difference between the two is delight in and meditation on God’s Word.

As a military Christian, you will be involved in spiritual warfare. We understand combat. A military force has specific needs to succeed on the battlefield. You also have spiritual warfare needs:

Psalm 119:105 – You need light—the ability to “see.”

1 Peter 1:23-25, 2:2 – You need food—energy to perform.

Ephesians 6:10-17 – You need protection and weapons.

Ephesians 5:19 and 6:18-19 – You need to communicate—up, down, and laterally. (See also Luke 22:39-46 and John 17.) Continue each day to read God’s word and to commit your circumstances to God through prayer. Find a Christian peer to whom you can be accountable, and to whom you can turn for counsel, even if you must do this by long distance communications.

Priority #2: Your Relationship with Your Spouse

Genesis 2:24 (Also quoted by Paul in Ephesians 5:31) – Upon marriage, God looks at husband and wife as one flesh. This is the next most important relationship after your relationship with God. Marriage partners should continually reflect on the dimensions of 1) leaving, 2) cleaving, and 3) being one flesh. This relationship needs constant attention in the demanding environment of senior leadership.

Ephesians 5:21-33 – How are we to love our spouses?

- Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ (verse 21)
- Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the Church (verse 25)
- Husbands, love your wives as you do your own bodies (verse 28)
- Husbands, nourish, care for and sanctify your wives “by the washing of the Word” (verses 26-29)
- Wives, submit (Greek: *hupotasso*) yourselves to your husbands (verses 22-24)
- Wives, respect your husbands (verse 33)

1 Peter 3:7 – Husbands live with your wives with understanding so your prayers will not be hindered.

Priority #3: Your Relationship with Your Children

Psalm 127:3-5 – Children are a special gift from God. We have a special responsibility to care for and train our children.

3 John 4 – “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.” John is speaking of spiritual children, but God’s word continually uses family examples that should also be happening spiritually.

1 Timothy 3:4-5 – One of the qualifications for responsibility outside of the family is to have family business—that which God says is important—in proper order.

Joshua 24:15 – Family priorities include more than simply paying attention to and ministering to your spouse and children. Your family exists to serve and to minister as a unit.

Priority #4: Your Relationship with Your Ministry and Work

Ephesians 4:11-16 – If the church is to be effective in doing what God expects—worshipping Him and reaching out to society—it must be healthy. Its members must be doing what God has gifted them to do where He has placed them.

Colossians 3:23 and Romans 12:11 – Your work has intrinsic value to God. He expects you to *do your best* in your work (not necessarily to *be the best* among your peers).

CONFLICTING PRIORITIES

These priorities will often seem to compete for your time and attention. There will be a time when your work will place extremely stressful and lengthy demands on you. You may have only a limited time to spend with God, family, or spiritual activities. Consider these three points:

- Your relationship with God is preeminent. You should never forsake it or slight it. It is the most powerful resource that you can take with you into the stress and intensity of senior leadership duties. It enables you to have a ministry even when most of your time and energy is devoted to military responsibilities, such as during a field exercise, a deployment, or in combat.
- You will have to spend time away from your family. That is the nature of the military profession. Show your family, by your concern and your actions when you *are* home, that they are more important than career success or promotion. Then they will have the strength to endure periodic demands that shorten your time with them.
- By itself, your work will leave you unfulfilled, regardless of how senior you become. Seeing your work as an offering to God and as your ministry field, and taking opportunities for ministry as He presents them, will leave you fulfilled *regardless* of how high you are promoted.

What is your sense of priorities as a Christian Officer?

... to God? ... to your family? ... to your duties?

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Priority 1 _____.

Matthew 6:33

Psalm 1

Psalm 119:105

1 Peter 1:23-25, 2:2

Ephesians 6:10-17

Ephesians 5:19 and 6:18-19

Priority 2 _____.

Genesis 2:24

Ephesians 5:21-33

1 Peter 3:7

Priority 3 _____.

Psalm 127:3-5

3 John 4

1 Timothy 3:4-5

Joshua 24:15

Priority 4 _____.

Ephesians 4:11-16

Colossians 3:23 and Romans 12:11

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