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*Saint Mark's Church
Sunday School*

Priorities
Code 12/SO/2

1. General Aims of the unit

To deal with contemporary issues which affect our life on earth

2. Special aims of the lesson

1. To direct the teens to define the goals of their life
2. To help them to prioritize them to get the maximum benefits of their lives
3. To lead them to feel the ultimate importance of *ETERNAL LIFE* as the main priority of our life.

3.Outcomes : By the end of this session , the teens are able to:

1. Recognise the main directions and groups of goals of any teenager.
2. Define their personal goals in life, and prioritize them.
3. Master the outcomes (rewards and penalties) of each goal.
4. Accept that Jesus Christ is the ultimate goal of our life.
5. Assign the needed resources to fulfill the requirements of his/her goals.
6. Fill the priority sheet and abide by it .

4. Verses : 1) Prov. 3:6 ; 6:23 ; 3 John 2 ; Luke 14:28-29 ; 16:8

5. References : **Attached Notes**

Notes to the servant:

1. The goals may be categorized as:
 - ❖ Goals related to the world(refer to John 2:16)
 1. Desires (lusts) of flesh, which may include all the forms of sexual uncleanness , and bad friendships [life of x-rated fun, sexual relation outside marriage , night clubs ,]
 2. Desires (lusts) of eyes , which include all types of the ego and show off.[using the body as a sort of attraction , unacceptable fashion , arrogant behaviour]
 3. The pride of life, which include the deadly desire for more possessions and becoming rich. [fond of new cars , ...]
 - ❖ Goals related to the spirit (refer to Rom. 8)
 1. Love God from all the heart and follow His commandments as written in the bible and practiced in the church.[pray regularly with the Agbia , daily reading and contemplation in the word of God, live ascetic life , steadfast in the life of sacraments ,obey strictly the parents , serve them if they are in need ,...]
 2. Eager to spread the kingdom of heaven through serving the body of Christ and declaring His light to everyone.[serve any need in the church , serve any member of the church, lead others in the way of kingdom, mission work ,.....]
 - ❖ Goals related the person himself (refer to 3John 2)
 1. Prosperity in the gifts and/or the career the person has from God.[be brilliant in the study , advanced in work ,looking for a better career ,.....]
 2. Marriage and family [wife and children ,...]
 - ❖ Goals related to the others and the whole society (1John 3:17,18)
 1. Help the poor , sick , needy ,orphans, and whoever in a disaster situation in the community around us and in the other countries of the world.[share in community work , collecting for the needy ,]
2. Goals may be a mixture between more than one category.
3. For every goal there are commitments , rewards or bad consequences . For example to follow the commandment of the bible and worship God only , Daniel and the three young men were tortured by the den of Lions and the burning fire . But the result was that they were saved and the name of God was exalted and glorified among the Gentiles.
4. When we study thoroughly any character mentioned in the holy history or in the church history ,we can easily define the priorities of their goals , the struggle ,and the reward. For example :

- ❖ Abraham and Lot ; it is clear that Lot’s goal was the richness in this world. This was his first priority in choosing the land. He choose Sodom and Gomorrah regardless of the sin in that land . He suffered the consequences of his decision as suffering oppression from the filthy conduct of the wicked [refer to 2Pet.2:7] ,and finally he lost everything even his wife [refer to Geneses 19]..On the contrary Abraham because his main goal in life is to wait for the city whose builder and maker is God[refer to Heb. 11:9-10], he left the choice of the land to Lot “.... if you go to right ,then I will go to left....” [Gen.13:7]. The reward was the complete blessing [refer to Gen. 13:14-18]
- ❖ Joseph in the house of his Egyptian master. His first goal -regardless of his slavery and hardship – is to live according to the traditions of his father i.e. to worship Yahweh the true God. So he refused to sin with the woman [refer to Gen. 39]. Although he suffered a lot for obeying his God ,yet at the end he was crowned as the second in all Egypt [Gen. 41]
- ❖ King Solomon ,his first priority was an “understanding heart to judge the people of the kingdom of Israel” [1Kings 3:3-15]. God granted him his desire and all the riches of the kings which he did not ask for.
- ❖ Judah Iscariot , his first priority was to collect money. He was one of the twelve disciples of Jesus and the treasurer of the group , yet he was a thief [refer to John 12:6] and used to take what was put in the money box. He worked hard for his goal even to betray his master , but the reward was horrendous . He went and hanged himself [refer to Matt. 27:3-5] and lost everything.
- ❖ Saint Athanasios , his priority is to keep the faith of the fathers in the divinity of Christ. He stood firm against the whole world. He suffered tremendously , exiled five times from his seat. His reward is “the true faith he struggled for is still the faith of all the Christian till now”.

5. To put the priority goals in practice ,it need resources. The resources allocated are : time , will , environment .

6. The time is a very crucial element. Some principals of time management are:

- ❖ All men are created equal with respect to time . Everyone has 24 hours in a day. The difference is in how we use the time.
- ❖ We will always have enough time to do God’s will
- ❖ Time is lost on the smaller things first. It is said we lose minutes before we loose hours , days before we loose weeks. Often time is lost in the gaps between activities doing unproductive things. Make a habit of keeping work with you to fill these gaps.
- ❖ Relaxation is not a wasted time. Rest for our bodies is essential to get back into an optimal state. Sabbath in the O.T. is an example of this.

7. The will need to be encouraged to be strong . The grace of God is the essential factor to strengthen the weak will. Being near to God through prayers , obedience to the commandment , practicing the sacraments ,...is a practical cry to the grace of God to work and support the will.
8. The effect of the environment where we put ourselves in may change our priorities . Peter mingling with the servants during the trail of Jesus Christ lead him to denial.[refer to Matt. 26:69-75] .
9. The priorities may be changed for the same person from time to time depending on how strict , open minded , moody , accept the peer pressure , or environment pressure .Demas is an example of how a co-worker of Saint Paul changed and loved the world.[refer to Phil. 23 ,2Tim. 4:10]

Lesson Delivery

- 1) It is preferable to deliver this lesson in a form of workshop where the class may be divided into small groups of 4-6 teens . Each group is equipped with butcher papers , A-4 sheets , markers , pens. Sticky tape , Priority list form (a copy attached)
- 2) “Priority Puzzle” from the ‘TALK SHEET’ may be used partially as an introductory to the lesson.
- 3) Discuss with them the main categories of goals of their life. Let each group go through the details of each category and record them in the butcher sheet and report it to the group. This will create an encouraging environment to explore on the good goals to encourage the teens and on the bad goals to deter them from (use stories from the bible , the church history or the actual life as an evidence) .
- 4) Let everyone in the class raise his /her heart to the Lord in prayer ,then fills the priority list . Writes the goals in order , how they would be maintained , the expected sacrifices and the guaranteed rewards. Then fills the declaration.
- 5) Ask each one to keep this sheet and to check it weekly or daily to assess his/ her success.
- 6) Conclude the session by reminding them about the blessings they will gain when God is the priority of their aims.

References:

- 1) Talk Sheets
- 2) Working by priorities and not Activities
www.inspiredchristian.org/cyber/111300jf.html
- 3)Christian Teen Ezine
www.wolfeborrrrrrobible.com/ctcezine3.html
- 4)Goals and priority

