

WE PRESS ON, LAYING HOLD OF THE PRIZE

GOD FIRST: FINANCE, FAMILY AND OUR FUTURE

Bianca Ndlovu

I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. (Philippians 3:14, NLT)

Press on. To pursue; to run swiftly in order to catch a person or thing; to run after. To seek after eagerly; earnestly endeavour to acquire.

Let us consider affect that will have on those around us; they are the ones that see our true sacrifices.

Family and Future

Acts 16:31–34

They replied, “*Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.*”

God desires for our whole families to be saved. He doesn’t want us to be divided and walking in different directions. It’s really the work of the enemy that divides us because unity means strength and power. Families divided in their beliefs and faiths is something that we see all too often.

...But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” (Joshua 24:15, NLT)

From a young age I knew I wanted to have a household that served the Lord together where biblical teachings and prayer were not left to one parent.

(Genesis 6:5–12, Genesis 6:17–18, Genesis 6:21–22)

Clearly Noah was doing all the right things in order to be regarded so highly in the Lords eyes.

Genesis 7:1

Hebrews 11:7

Noah is a great example of how a man/woman putting God first can benefit their family. The Bible says Noah was *‘the only blameless person living on earth at the time and he walked in close fellowship with God’*.

What about Noah’s family? Were they blameless?

Be encouraged that if you are the only member of your family who is walking in close fellowship with God, the fact that you are putting God first can save your family and those around you. Don’t give up and don’t grow weary of serving God, keep pressing on.

If you continue to put God first and it will impact those around you, family, friends, colleagues and neighbours.

A few questions to ask ourselves:

- What decisions are we making?
- Are we putting God first?
- What changes do we need to make in order to put God first in our lives again?

Some practical things we can do:

- 1) Attend Church with your family. That's a lot easier at the moment; we don't even have to leave the house.

(Psalm 84:4, Hebrews 10: 24-25, Psalm 122:1)

- 2) Let God be in your conversations as a family; brothers and sister, husbands and wives, cousins and friends.

(Ephesians 5:18-20, Psalm 71:5-8, Psalm 145:4)

- 3) Serve God as a family. If you know someone is struggling in this area encourage them to serve.

(Joshua 24:15)

- 4) Let your prayer times go beyond blessing the food.

(Philippians 4:6)

Let the generations after you; say without a doubt that you put God first in all things.

Finance and Future

How can we put God first in our finances?

Tithes, First fruits and Offering

(Exodus 35:4–5 and Exodus 35:20-22)

How you spend your time shows what's important to you and in the same way how you spend your money shows what's important to you.

When you value something, you will spend money on it. When we come into God's house, we should come prepared to give because this house matters to us.

The money we give to church helps to build God's house and makes the work stretch further. It won't just be for our generation but the many generations after us.

A Call For Gods' People To Build His House

Haggai 1:2–11

Anything you place as a priority above God will never give the satisfaction and fulfilment we find in God.

When we build His house, He will take pleasure in it and be honoured. (Haggai 1:8)

Respond with obedience. (Haggai 1:12–13)

As a result of their obedience, before they even finished God's work, He began to speak blessings over them. (Haggai 2:18)

It's the Lord that causes the works of our hands to be blessed; He causes our seed to become a harvest that we can reap. Without Him our produce withers away.

What should I do? Continue to be faithful in your giving.