

Courageous Prioritization

Scripture used: [Mark 8:36 \(KJV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Today we are blessed with a guest speaker, Sue Warnke, who is a Senior Director at Salesforce.com. Sue became a follower of Jesus only five years ago after being an agnostic for most of her life. In this message, she shares how her daily reflections on the Lord's Prayer ([Matthew 6:9-13](#)) and her background in software development align to help her make prioritized choices in her life so she can make sure that she is living her life in line with God's purpose to the fullest extent possible.

KEY POINTS

- 1. What can seem like a coincidence may be a gift from God.** Sue grew up in a family that was not religious, but surrounded by others who were extremely religious. She was an outsider and exposed to endless conversion attempts, which turned her against all organized religion. She launched her career in tech and had three children. During a health crisis for one of her children, she stumbled upon the difference God could make while reading a medical article, which took on a new meaning for her. Soon after, she received a call from her aunt (who was to pass away soon after), counseling her to seek God. After becoming a Christian, Sue strived to integrate her faith with every part of her life, including her work.
- 2. Being a Christian nudges us to “courageous prioritization.”** [Mark 8:36 \(KJV\)](#) tells us that what we're interested in does not matter if it's the wrong thing. We are called to live in the center of our purpose, expressing our faith and values in all that we do. Taking a page from software development, we can think of all the choices in our lives as Priority 1, 2, 3, or 4, and we should strive to only do the Priority 1s and 2s.
 - a. Priority 1 - True:** This is the clear and obvious “I must do this” scenario. It may be easy or hard, and it demands a resounding “Yes” answer. This is a response to The Lord's Prayer ([Matthew 6:10](#)): “Thy will be done.” Another example from Scripture is [Luke 10:41-42](#): When Martha and Mary hosted Christ for a meal, the contrast between Martha's task-focus and Mary's learning from Jesus illustrates focusing on what is truly important at a given moment. We should strive for 75% of our time to be focused on Priority 1 choices, the things that are most central to our lives!
 - b. Priority 2 - Tough:** “I should do this.” It's hard to do, but we must follow through. It's the 20% of our time and energy we don't think we have, but must find within ourselves (and God provides “daily bread” to do these things) to continue to work on things that are necessary or important - it may be continuous learning/schoolwork, dependent care, chores, etc. Faithfulness in this area will expand our choices and our effectiveness in Priority 1 areas.
 - c. Priority 3 - Tempting:** The Bible talks a lot about temptation - things we “shouldn't do.” These “priorities” are generally alluring (social media, substance dependency, hanging out with the wrong people). We must monitor our temptations and have the courage to say No (and be gentle with ourselves when we fail, as we ask God to “lead us not into temptation”). We should strive for no more than 5% of our time in this area (recognizing that temptations are not always bad in and of themselves), because these things are not fruitful for our good or for God's purposes.
 - d. Priority 4 - Toxic:** These are the choices that are agonizing and deeply harmful to us - and they often occur when we are under the influence of people who are overt or covert narcissists, manipulators, or abusers. We should strive to completely remove toxic options from our lives (“deliver us from evil”). True healing comes from leaving the toxic space, and even if all we can do is a baby step in this direction, we should strive to reach out for help and start the journey of leaving toxicity.
- 3. Our Christian mission is to make disciples.** It can be challenging in Silicon Valley. But we can walk into each day well-prepared, and be a bit more like Jesus, and be bold on behalf of Jesus.

DISCUSSION

- 1) HEAR** - How do you prioritize your day and your goals for this season of life? What is working or not?
- 2) UNDERSTAND** - Read through the Lord's Prayer ([Matthew 6:9-13](#)) and consider the categories that align with the 4 areas of prioritization. Where are your choices most out of sync with God's goodness and purpose? What is one step you can take to adjust your prioritization and to be brave in choosing for what is truly life giving, purposeful, and significant?
- 3) DO** - Thoughtfully prioritize and then courageously act! See you next Sunday!