

SELF PRESERVATION

The Bible is very clear about what our priorities are to be – the kingdom is to be our first priority, even above our own desire; even possibly above our concerns for our own safety (Matthew 6:33). That’s why the devil will try to keep us focused on the natural and what we think is most important for us – especially protecting ourselves because we have been hurt or abused in the past. This is what is described in John 12 and is termed self-preservation.

John 12:23-25

“And Jesus answered them, saying, ‘The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal.”

Self preservation will cause people to pull away rather than being relational and involved in the church and kingdom business. Their concern for themselves overrides obedience and makes them see everything through the eyes of how it will affect them – in other words, it’s all about them. This tendency to isolate is addressed in Proverbs, most clearly in the amplified and NAS versions.

Proverbs 18:1

“He who separates himself seeks {his own} desire, He quarrels against all sound wisdom.”
(NAS)

Because of hurtful past circumstances, the tendency is to look at present and future events through the eyes of the past. In accordance with Luke 9:62, this makes one not fit (translated in the Greek not in place or ready for use) for the kingdom of God.

Luke 9:62

“But Jesus said to him, ‘No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

Self preservation will keep one from being open and trusting anyone. This prevents healthy relationships and hinders spiritual growth and ministering to others. They won’t be able to encourage (Hebrews 10:24-25), function in their gifts (1 Corinthians 12:7), nor be the asset to the body of Christ they were designed to be.

Ephesians 4:16

“from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”