

TOP OF THE LIST

1. What is the absolute, number one, biggest, **most important priority** in your life?
2. Imagine for a minute that your life priorities could not exceed a certain point value. You, as a teenager, have 50 points total. How will you use them? Pick the items from the list below for a total of 50 points.

Six points each—

- Having a job
- Being a disciple of Christ
- Having a good time
- Improving my looks
- Wearing the right clothes
- Studying hard
- Spending time on the Internet
- Owning a car
- Being a leader in the church

Five points each—

- Attending church regularly
- Consistently participating in youth group
- Telling others about Christ
- Volunteering to help others
- Staying active in sports
- Regularly studying the Bible
- Having a boyfriend or girlfriend

Four points each—

- Watching music videos
- Turning homework in on time
- Helping other teenagers
- Buying music CDs
- Working on musical talent
- Playing video or computer games
- Participating in extracurricular activities

Three points each—

- Keeping a best friend
- Going out on Saturday nights
- Getting along with parents
- Spending time with friends
- Staying in shape
- Seeing the latest movies

Two points each—

- Remaining alcohol and drug free
- Having Christian friends
- Praying every day

One point each—

- Watching television
- Getting to class on time
- Reading magazines



3. How do you think your priorities will change in the **next two years**?
4. Which do you think is worse—God not being a priority in someone's life or God being a low priority in someone's life?
 - God not a priority at all
 - God low on the priority list
5. Check out these verses and finish these statements in your own words.
 - Proverbs 3:6 When your priorities recognize God, then—
 - Titus 1:16 My actions reflect that my priority is—
 - Revelation 3:14-18 Choose God's priorities because otherwise—

THIS WEEK

This TalkSheet takes an honest look at young people's priorities. In a culture that pulls young people in all directions, take time to help your kids see why God needs to be in the center of their lives and priorities.

OPENER

To start, give you kids a list of different tasks they may have to do on a given day. You can either hand this list out to individual groups or write the list on a whiteboard or poster board. A few examples can include things like—

- Going to bed on time (getting enough sleep)
- Taking a shower or bath
- Eating three meals a day
- Helping your mom or dad out around the house
- Doing your homework
- Going to basketball (or whatever sport) practice
- Spending some time with God
- Talking with your boyfriend or girlfriend
- Getting up on time in the morning
- Hanging with your friends
- Exercising to keep yourself healthy
- Checking your e-mail or surfing the Internet
- Going shopping for new clothes or other stuff

Go ahead and add whatever other things you'd like to add. Now ask your kids to prioritize this list from 1 to 12 (12 being the most important thing on this list). If you split your group into smaller groups, ask each group to share their prioritized list. Then, come to a consensus with the whole group. How did your kids decide which was most important? Least important? How might these priorities change as they get older? What priorities may be added in the future? Use this activity as a springboard for discussion on priorities.

THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. What's on the absolute top of your students' lists? You may want to make a list of them for the group to see. Challenge the students to look at what they really like to spend their time doing.
2. Ask several group members to describe the priorities they selected with their 50 points. Concentrate the discussion on which priorities most kids picked and how they made their choices. Ask if the relative point values given to the various priorities were accurate—which would they have assigned more points? Or fewer points?
3. Begin the discussion of this item by first examining how the students' priorities have changed in the last two years. Include a review of where they placed God in their priorities. Then examine the

upcoming two years, again including where God will fit into their future priorities. Get very specific with examples from kids' lives.

4. Some young people may say that this is not a fair question, but it is a reality. Which statement hits home closest to your kids? How can God can be moved from a low priority to a number one priority?
5. This activity contrasts the world's view of priorities with God's view. Each passage views God as the beginning and the end of priorities. Point out the sharp contrast between what the Bible says and what the world says. Have the students share their completed sentences.

THE CLOSE

Point out to your group that priorities can be easy to set but hard to live out. But what's most important is what's on their hearts—what really matters to them and what God puts on their hearts. Matthew 6:21 says "For where your priorities are, there your heart will be also" (author's paraphrase). As your kids live their daily priorities out, these priorities will become etched on their hearts. And God will work in their hearts to show them what's really important. Challenge your kids to examine their priorities. What would honor and serve God the most? How can your kids being to re-prioritize their lives? How can being close to God make it easier to figure out their priorities? Close with a time of prayer, asking God to show you and your kids his priorities for them.

MORE

- Have a New Year's in July—or whatever month you are using this TalkSheet! Break the young people up into groups of three or four. Ask them to write down some resolutions in the form of priorities they would like to keep. Have them share their lists with those in their group for the purpose of accountability in the coming weeks and months.
- What does society say about priorities? You may want to have your kids pay attention to the media this week—particularly TV advertisements, commercials, and magazine ads. What do these ads say about prioritizing and getting what you want? What do TV shows say about what's most important? Take some time to talk about these with your group and have them bring in some examples. Then ask them this question—how does the media influence our priorities? And what can they do to keep their priorities straight when the media says different things?