

Is respecting and appreciating time, a respect and appreciation of God and man?

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Almost 10 months ago, we learned about the blessed visit of his holiness Pope Tawadros to our church that was scheduled for September 10, 2014. In preparation for this blessed visit, lots of great work was in place to make our church ready including some renovations, paintings, completion of icons and bosom of the Father, parking lot resurfacing, etc.

Many people were kind enough to sacrifice their time and efforts to make the church ready in a timely fashion. They forgot about themselves and their bodily need of rest and even nutrition for the sake of making the church presentable inside out. They used to come from work to church without taking any time out. They also went out of their way to shop for the best materials to offer to the house of God.

On the day of this historic visit, I remarkably found the church full of people from as early as 5 AM. This made my heart full of joy with the great family of St. Bishoy that is warm, loving and so passionate.

As much as I am happy with this indescribable feeling, I pray that God keeps and protects His church forever. I pray that we continue this great job, and do much more for God to bring forth more heavenly fruits; as He said:

✠ “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit” (John 15:1-2)

These heavenly fruits can easily come if we sit back, relax and review our relation with God, in light of what we did for his holiness’ visit. For example:

- Do i prepare my spiritual church (our soul and body, the temple of God) to meet with God, as I prepared my physical church for the pope?
- Do we prepare ourselves for eternity by renovating (fixing) the path of our life?
- Do I come to church early awaiting the coming of the King, making Him happy to see me at His reception into my church and my heart? Or do I come after His arrival despising Him and His reign over my heart, mind and soul?
- Do I respect God and His church services that He offered me to get to know Him and love Him more, e.g., liturgies, bible study, service meetings, etc.? Or do I despise Him and prefer other worldly meetings that take me away from Him?
- Do I offer Him the best I ever have, or do I hardly give Him the leftovers and even criticize Him, His church, His servants and all His people?
- And the list goes on and on...

These questions show how that our priorities are not set up straight. God is always at the end (that is if we care or remember His presence in our lives). God is no longer our top priority, although He taught us saying:

✠ “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:33)

This verse shows that God knows of all our needs. He only wants us to prioritize and organize our life, our needs and our time having Him all the way at the very top. Simple because, if we do, He will reward us and add all things to us with His blessings.

He gave us many examples of how to organize the days, seasons and times of our life; all the way from the very beginning of creation. For example, God said:

✠ “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years” (Genesis 1:14)

To show this marvelous work of organization, He created the sun to shine upon us during the day to help us see, work, eat, drink, etc. He also gave us the moon to turn off that bright light so we can calmly enjoy the night, rest and sleep:

✠ “Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. So the evening and the morning were the fourth day” (Genesis 1:14)

To assure the meaning of resting and sleeping at night, St. Paul said:

✠ “For those who sleep, sleep at night” (1 Thessalonians 5:7)

You see, if God created the universe in such a perfect and organized manner; shouldn't we, who are created on His image and likeness, do the same? Shouldn't we organize and respect our meetings with God to show Him our love and respect?

I learned in my life that respecting meeting times, visitation times, appointments, etc., show our respect to the person we are meeting with. If it is not so, why do we set up a time for liturgy, visitation, bible study, doctor appointment, work start and end time, even mechanic time to fix our car or change oil with some car dealers?

Time is important and God knew that and determined time for everything under the sun. For example, God waited for so long until the fullness of time to save humanity. He waited for the perfect, holy and humble virgin to be born, the Lady of us all, the holy Theotokos Saint Mary. He came in a time where there is no computer, Photoshop or internet to change or ruin facts of life and salvation.

To show His respect for time, when Saint Mary asked Him at the wedding of Cana to help the family since they finished what they used to offer in weddings, He said:

✠ “My hour has not yet come” (John 2:4)

Also, when His brethren (cousins used to be called brethren) asked Him to go to Judea saying:

✠ “Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing” (John 7:3)

The Lord answered saying:

✠ “My time has not yet come” (John 7:6)

People then understood God’s teaching about respecting time; as evidenced from their answer to His question about the bad vinedressers:

✠ “They said to Him: He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons” (Matthew 21:41)

Also, when the right time came for crucifixion of the Lord and salvation of humanity, St. Paul said:

✠ “For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly” (Romans 5:6)

Similarly, when the right time came for preaching the message of salvation, the apostles went out in due time; as the Bible says:

✠ “But has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior” (Titus 1:3)

The Lord explained more about having time for everything, even His patience with Satan and evil doers; where He just gave them time to justify His final judgment:

✠ “Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time. Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent” (Revelation 12:12-14)

Satan and his angels understood this timing issue; as shown when God cast out demons from the man country of the Gergesenes where:

✠ “Suddenly they cried out, saying: What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?” (Matthew 8:29)

So, if the Lord has set up time for everything with such great precision and management, shouldn’t we manage our time and do the best we can to offer respect and reverence to God, His church and His people?

- So, how can we manage our time?
- How can we show respect to God and His creation?

- How can managing time help us live in peace and harmony?
- How can managing time make us enjoy our life on earth and in heaven?

First: Truthfulness and Wisdom

St. Paul said:

✠ “See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:15-16)

St. Paul is asking us not only to “walk circumspectly”, i.e., truthfully and carefully, but also to use wisdom in all our dealings. One way of acting wisely is “redeeming the time”, meaning to wake up and watch for our eternity since we may run out of time in our life that is always occupied with work and endless efforts to have fun. This may lead us to losing the chance of repentance and returning to God. Why? Simply “because the days are evil”. Satan is so smart to keep us away from God with the excuse of being **BUSY** (which is easily translated to: **Being Under Satan’s Yoke**).

So, we must redeem the time and understand how important it is to use it wisely and investing it in making all good deeds, in prayers and in fasting. We must work hard not to lose any little opportunity in serving God and His people; as St. Paul said:

✠ “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:10)

The Bible provides many examples where God always visit us with His love and mercy to the extent of weeping and crying out loud to return us back to Him and help us know the time of our visitation; as He expressed it in His talk about Jerusalem (which represents our soul):

✠ “Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying: If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation” (Luke 19:41-44)

Why God does all of this? Because He gave us free will and He wants us to return to Him freely. Sadly, we ignore all of these opportunities and run after our own lusts and desires. Here are some questions for you to consider:

- How many opportunities did you waste while the Lord wanted to see you at His house, His church, face to face, to speak with you and give you His Body and His Blood to abide in Him and He abides in you, but you ignored His calling?
- How many times did you prefer sleeping at home over making the effort to go and visit with God, making the excuse of needing rest?
- How many times are you called by friends to see them and socialize with them or have fun and party with them and you get yourself up so early to make sure you

- spend more time with them; while always going late to church; as if God is not even at the level of a little friend?
- How many times do you check out weather conditions before going to church to find an excuse of not going, while you never care about it on work days?
 - How many times do you challenge God and take His people away from Him by inviting them to your house during service times?
 - How many times do you explain to people your personal interpretation of the Bible without returning back to the church or the writing of the church fathers? Isn't that the reason for schism and creation of false teachings, heresies and non-Christian denominations?
 - How many times did you not humble yourself before God and His church and give Him all thanks for you to be alive today, using the opportunity of life and health to offer repentance and sit at the feet of your father of confession to tell him:
 - ✠ “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you” (Luke 15:18)

Let me give you a wonderful example of humbleness and sitting at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ, and let us see the results of being meek and humble. Let us read this part from Luke 10:

- ✠ “Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said: Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me. And Jesus answered and said to her: Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her” (Luke 10:38-42)

Do you see Mary’s great reward of sitting at the Lord’s feet? She received the “good part, which will not be taken away from her”. Compare that to what Martha did and how worried she was about preparing food, etc. The Lord told her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed”.

Does that mean we should not care about preparing food for the family? It means that our use of time and opportunity is not right. We should set our priorities straight. When I have the opportunity to meet with the Lord face to face, I must leave everything behind and never care or worry about anything other than meeting with God. I will not make any excuse of rest or work or food to stay away from God. I will run to sit at His feet and get that good part as Mary did.

The Lord showed how much we should care about our priorities and do the work of God; as long as we are still alive. We should not go around the opportunity of life where it may be too late for the work for our salvation in my life. We must work diligently; as the Lord said:

- ✠ “I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work” (John 9:4)

Second: Organization and Management

The Bible teaches us a great way of organizing and managing our time. It says:

✠ “To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die. A time to plant, and a time to pluck what is planted. A time to kill, and a time to heal. A time to break down, and a time to build up. A time to weep, and a time to laugh. A time to mourn, and a time to dance. A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones. A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing. A time to gain, and a time to lose. A time to keep, and a time to throw away. A time to tear, and a time to sew. A time to keep silence, and a time to speak. A time to love, and a time to hate, A time of war, and a time of peace” (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)

- So, are we faithful during work time to give it all our attention and sincere efforts?
- Are we faithful at home to give our family and children all the time it takes to feel our warm love and passion of the Christian family; not getting distracted and wasting time watching TV, games, computer, and inappropriate movies.
- Are we faithful in the street to present the true image and likeness of God in us through patience and friendly help and smile to all.
- Are we faithful with our friends to keep them away from drinking, dancing, smoking, going to inappropriate places or judging others, while reminding them that there is only One judge, the Lord Jesus Christ who will judge us all?

Third: Family Altar

The best time management ever is the time you spend with your family in a godly setting as a holy family altar. I always ask: when was the last time you sat with your family to remind them of how much God loves them and did great things with them, singing with David this part of the psalm:

✠ “The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad” (Psalm 126:3)

How much time do you spend with your children to get to know about their friends, where do they go during breaks, after school, after church, etc.? This is not interrogation as some smart children use the term to trick their parents. It is love, teaching and blessing; as God blessed those who walk away from the ungodly:

✠ “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful” (Psalm 1:1)

Imagine what would happen if you don't dedicate time to your family altar? How many surprises and shocking stories will you hear about your family members while you are absent from their life and not providing love and personal care and attention? Who

will be blamed for these shocking stories? To answer these questions, let us read what the Bible says about those who do not provide for their families:

† “If anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Timothy 5:8)

How about spiritual time with the family? Do you spend time with the family to pray together, read the bible together, and answer any of their spiritual questions? Do you, at the very least, encourage your family to pray during the day, at any time and at all times, using the Lord Jesus as your best example?

- † “Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed” (Mark 1:35)
- † “Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them” (Luke 4:42)
- † “And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there” (Matthew 14:23)
- † “Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God” (Luke 6:12)

This is what David the prophet did; as he explained very clearly saying:

† “Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice” (Psalm 55:17)

And what will you gain from praying? The Lord answers saying:

† “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you” (Matthew 7:17, Luke 11:9)

Fourth: Planning and Commitment

I really admire and praise people who plan and commit to all their plans in life, including, but not limited to the following:

1. When taking a doctor appointment, they plan to go much earlier than their scheduled time to make sure they get to see the doctor and not lose their appointment that may result in another waiting time that could take months.
2. When the doctor recommends special diet and, for example, abstaining from dairy products or sweets, we commit to the doctor’s instructions; as if it came down from heaven.
3. When the doctor recommends taking medication on specific times during the day, we follow instructions and plan these times carefully using our phones, alarms, reminders and whatever it takes to make sure that we take our medicine on time. We care so much about our physical health and avoid any influence that may result from delay or side effects of medications.
4. On a work day, we make sure that we wake up so early and plan for the time it takes to drive to work plus any unexpected time due to heavy traffic on the way. We do all what it takes to get to work before scheduled start time.

5. On our way to work, we follow all traffic rules, laws and instructions; not breaking any rule; e.g., red light, etc.

Isn't that great. It really is. I salute this committed spirit in planning and management of time in all of what you do for your physical well being. But, wait a minute! How about your spiritual well being? Let me help you answer this question, one point at a time:

1. When you take an appointment with God to meet with Him at the church face to face, do you plan to go before scheduled starting time, or at the very least to be on time? How about confession times, bible study and all other church services? Do you plan for not losing the opportunity that may be your last one for repentance, and may not come again in life, or do you despise God's goodness and forbearance? Let's read this Bible's warning:
✠ "Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?" (Romans 2:4)
2. What would you do when the church recommends special diet during fasting? Do you follow instruction from day one, as you do with your doctor, for your spiritual health and well being, or do you just ignore it. Sadly, you never argue with your doctor about his recommended diet restrictions, but you give your church so much of hard time to not fast, or just fast your way and your diet, or may be fast for just the last few days. You keep arguing about where does it say in the Bible that fasting should of vegetarian? Where does it say that we should fast specific dates? Etc...etc.

Well, here are just a few examples from the Bible about specific types of food and specific dates:

- ✠ "Take also unto yourself wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentils, and millet, and spelt, and put them in one vessel, and make yourself bread thereof; according to the number of the days that you shall lie upon your side, even three hundred and ninety days, you shall eat thereof" (Ezekiel 4:9)
- ✠ "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink" (Daniel 1:12)
- ✠ "I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled" (Daniel 3:10)

Is there any spiritual benefit to this type of fasting? How can we fast? The Bible always have an answer for you:

- ✠ "Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and You have not seen? Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?' "In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, and exploit all your laborers. Indeed you fast for strife and debate, And to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as you do this day, to make your voice heard on high. Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD. Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the

- heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke. Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh” (Isaiah 58:3-7)
- ✠ “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors--not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God” (Romans 8:5-14)
3. As you take your medications in specific times, why do you object to prayers and fasting in specific times? Don't you care about your spiritual well being, as you care about your physical well being? If you truly and faithfully and sincerely believe in God and His Bible, didn't the Bible tell you that there are always times for everything? Let me give you just a few examples:
- ✠ “Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly; gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God, and cry out to the Lord...Blow the trumpet in Zion, consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly” (Joel 1:14, 2:15)
- ✠ “Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai: Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish” (Esther 4:15-16)
- ✠ “Thus says the Lord of hosts: The fast of the fourth month, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh, And the fast of the tenth, shall be joy and gladness and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah. Therefore love truth and peace” (Zachariah 8:19)
- ✠ “Seven times a day I praise You, Because of Your righteous judgments” (Psalm 119:164)
- ✠ “Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days” (Daniel 6:10)
- ✠ “Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed” (Mark 1:35)

- † “Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them” (Luke 4:42)
 - † “And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there” (Matthew 14:23)
 - † “Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God” (Luke 6:12)
 - † “Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour” (Acts 3:1)
 - † “The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance” (Acts 3:10)
 - † “As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said: Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away” (Acts 13:2-3)
 - † “So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed” (Acts 14:23)
 - † “In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings” (2 Corinthians 6:5)
 - † “In weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness” (2 Corinthians 11:27)
4. As you wake up so early in the morning to get to work on time, planning for traffic and any unexpected delay on the way, do you also plan to arrive early to church before liturgies and church services? Why do you give God your lowest priority ever? Isn't He more important than your doctor or your friends, to say the least? Do you know what God says about those who come early?
- † “I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently will find me” (Proverbs 8:19)

Can you for once sing with David saying:

- † “My voice You shall hear in the morning, O Lord. In the morning I will direct it to You, and I will look up” (Psalm 5:3)
- † “As for me, I will call upon God, and the Lord shall save me. Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice” (Psalm 55:16-17)
- † “O God, You are my God; early will I seek You. My soul thirsts for You. My flesh longs for You, in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water” (Psalm 63:1)
- † “I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word I do hope. My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning. Yes, more than those who watch for the morning” (Psalm 130:5-6)

5. We are so good in following instructions and obeying the law of the land. I commend you for that. But, how about God's instructions and laws and rules and

regulation, etc. Do you obey them and submit to the church of God; as He commanded? Do you humbly and peacefully follow God's order? Or do you want to cause confusion in the church and among people that could lead to serious division? How would answer God about the confusion you caused? What makes you so sure that you did what is right? Did you check with your father of confession and did he agree to all of your destruction to the church and the loss of its peace? Let me share with you these important messages from the Lord your God:

- ✠ “For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints” (1 Corinthians 14:33)
- ✠ “Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40)
- ✠ “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8)
- ✠ “For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there” (James 3:16)

And what will happen if you don't give serious attention to these message, please listen to what St. Paul is telling you:

- ✠ “For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults” (2 Corinthians 12:20)

So, keep on planning and manage your time, but as you do for your physical well being, do not forget about your spiritual well being.

Fifth: Appreciation and Respect of People's Time

Sometime we forget God's objective of creating us and giving us this wonderful and blessed gift of life. Sometime, I ask people: How are you doing? I mostly hear the answer: “still alive”! This means we don't really know or appreciate this great gift of life. If we know that each moment of our life is so precious that God wants us to use it wisely and enjoy every second of it with Him, His church and His people, we wouldn't have wasted a moment in non-fruitful things.

God created us to glorify Him in every moment of our life and to enjoy living with Him gloriously and with honor and respect, delivering the message of His love and salvation to all humanity. This is what God said:

- ✠ “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10)

And How can I enjoy life abundantly? St. Paul answers the question for us saying:

- ✠ “Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead” (Philippians 3:13)

So to enjoy every moment of your life, forget the past and reach forward to the good things that await you in life on earth and in heaven. Here are few steps to help you out:

a) Follow God earnestly and live according to His will, not yours:

✠ “Jesus said to them: My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work” (John 4:34)

b) Respect God, His church, His priests, and all His people, young and old. Show that respect by respecting all service and visitation times.

✠ “Do not touch My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm” (1 Chronicles 16:22)

✠ “Do not touch My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm” (Psalm 105:15)

✠ “Let the priests who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine” (1 Timothy 5:17)

c) Never interfere in people’s business or ask or inquire about their personal life or private information:

✠ “Debate your case with your neighbor, and do not disclose the secret to another” (Proverbs 25:9)

✠ “Seldom set foot in your neighbor’s house, lest he become weary of you and hate you” (Proverbs 25:9)

✠ “But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people’s matters” (1 Peter 4:15)

d) Respect people’s will and never impose your views and way of life on them; that could affect their life at home, school or work. Remember that the Lord respects your free will and never impose on you, not even His good gifts; as He said:

✠ “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you” (Matthew 7:7, Luke 11:9)

✠ “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” (Revelation 3:20)

e) Judge no one because God will never forget that you are taking His place.

✠ “Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause, for would you deceive with your lips” (Proverbs 24:28)

✠ “Judge not, that you be not judged, for with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you” (Matthew 7:1-2)

✠ “Who are you to judge another’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand” (Romans 14:4)

Finally, what will be your reward if you follow all of the above commandments?

✠ “The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His

calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints”
(Ephesians 1:17-18)