

What Comes First ?

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Standing at the bus stop and wondering : "Will the first bus be the one I want ?"—who hasn't done this ? A bus appears in the distance and there's an eager craning of necks ; 'Is it...? Can it be...?' Then the bus comes nearer and there's a surge—then relaxation—it's only going to the depot. One or two people mount the steps,...and you continue to wait.

Do you always catch the first bus that comes along ? "It all depends on where I want to go", you reply, "It's no help to catch the first bus, if it's not going to the right place !" This is commonsense. But are we always so careful about other aspects of life. So often we tend to catch the wrong bus !

There's the bus labelled "Good Times" for instance, It's easy to get on this bus, and there's a lot of good natured laughter and always something new to see. But after a while one tires of the view. There's plenty to see but no sign of the destination. And some of the passengers seem so boring and others prove unreliable. And money doesn't seem to stay long in your pocket. It's an expensive ride is this !

Then there is the "Overseas" bus. Quite crowded but luxurious accommodation. Titbits of news are passed down—letters from friends who caught the same bus last week. Reports are varied. Some have arrived, 'Saving plenty', '...fabulous clothes...'. 'It's hard work but experience is respected'. Others find it tough, 'people inhospitable', 'just as must tension here, and much more selfishness.' '...glad I've got a return ticket...' (But is there a Return Ticket ?).

There is another bus labelled "Promotion". Always a queue for this—but often spoilt by queue jumping...and what a mixture ! There are the brainy types who are pleasant enough, but there are the others, the keen people who are so officious and objectionable. Many other buses come along, too. Some are for the Young Set, others for fashionable.

One is even marked 'Marriage'. But which bus to catch ? Where do you want to go ? Where will satisfaction really be found ?

It seems to me basically a question of what we consider to be most important. One business man who seems quite successful has a system of daily priorities. He makes a daily list of things to do, phone calls to be made, letters to be written, also he has a list of long-term objectives, targets to be achieved and ways to reach them. The daily list helps to achieve the long-term aims.

How about trying it ? To make such a list first ask yourself a few questions :

What are the best values in life ?
How shall I preserve them ?
How shall I promote them ?
How shall I share them ?

What gives greater satisfaction—always getting—always giving—or somehow balancing the process of getting by also giving ?

Does my life need balance ?
Wherein is true efficiency ?
What has caused me dissatisfaction ?
Does this indicate wrong priorities in life ?
Do I expect God to help me in my life ?
Do I let God help me in my life ?
Do I realise God is at work in His world ?
Does my daily life link up effectively with His purposes ?
Now think about this quote from a poet, Robert Browning :
God has conceded two sights to a man—
One, of men's whole work,—Time's completed plan,—
The other, of the Minute's work, man's first step to the plan's completeness.

So today's step along the path of life can be in step with God's priority...putting first obedience to His rule and His righteousness.