

SEEK THE KINGDOM FIRST

In contrast to the unsaved Gentiles who are preoccupied with making a living as if that is their ultimate purpose, in contrast we, as God's people, are to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV)

33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

This is a matter of FIRST PRIORITY. Keep God first! The kingdom is to be the top priority. The emphasis here is living in light of eternity. Ultimately, we are headed for the kingdom and should therefore live accordingly. It is kingdom truth that will endure forever.

There are really only two things that you take with you (so to speak) into the kingdom. Souls that are won are going to go with you into the kingdom. Why did Jesus come? To save souls who can live forever in the kingdom. What is our mission? To see souls saved who will live forever in the kingdom.

Seeking the KINGDOM FIRST means making God's kingdom priority of souls, your priority.

The other thing you can take with you is your reward for faithful, righteous living. This is the treasure Christ spoke about laying up in heaven in verse 20. The righteousness in view here is ethical righteousness related to right living (Rom. 14:17).

Romans 14:17–18 (NKJV)

17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

18 For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men.

In salvation, there is POSITIONAL righteousness acquired at the moment of saving faith, and there is PRACTICAL righteousness which relates to our walk.

POSITIONAL RIGHTEOUSNESS...

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)

21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the **righteousness of God in Him.**

Romans 4:4–5 (NKJV)

4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

5 But to him who **does not work but believes** on Him who justifies the ungodly, **his faith is accounted for righteousness**,

PRACTICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS

1 Timothy 6:11 (NKJV)

11 But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue **righteousness**, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.

1 Peter 1:15 (NKJV)

15 but as He who called you is holy, you also **be holy in all your conduct**,

In view here in Matt. 6:33 is practical righteousness. We are to ever be seeking to apply God's righteousness to our lives.

As fishers of men seeking the kingdom first means as a PRIORITY seeking to win souls for the kingdom, and seeking to lay up kingdom treasure by way of righteous living.

A Spirit-filled Christian works hard to make a living, but in the process, his heart is really sold out to God and His purposes. He makes a living, but it is not his life. He doesn't live for it – he lives for God! The difference is found in the HEART!

I have a friend who is a worker in a closed country. He has a job that serves as a cover for him. One day, one of the natives told him, ***"I know that you sell this stuff, but really your heart is about serving God."*** Now, my friend had never told him this, but as this native observed him, he came to see where the real passion of his heart was at.

This is the heart (pun intended) of the matter. What is the passion of your life? What is the priority of your life? God wants it to be His kingdom and His righteousness.

And the exhortation to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness first comes with a promise. Jesus says as we do this, "all these things shall be added to you." "All these things" are the necessities of life.

As you make God your priority, He will take care of your needs in keeping with His will and purpose for your life.

Notice, contrary to what prosperity gospel teachers claim, Jesus does not say God will provide luxury items. He doesn't promise you wealth, but rather to meet your basic NEEDS. What we eat, drink, and wear apply to the basic necessities of life – the basic essentials.

“In the end, just as there are only two kinds of piety, the self-centered and the God-centered, so there are only two kinds of ambition: one can be ambitious either for oneself or for God.” – ***D.A. Carson***

Here is the MAIN point in this section. Jesus calls for His disciples to seek God FIRST in their lives. God is to be our number ONE PRIORITY.