

Seeking the Kingdom First

Thesis: To motivate God's children to put Christ in their lives first and foremost.

- I. Introduction:
 - a. **(Matt 6:33)** "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
 - i. During Jesus' discourse on the mount, He told His listeners that they are not to worry about where and if they would get their next meal or where will they find clothing, shelter, or essential things, but that the heathen worried about things like this. He told them to seek first the kingdom of God, and God's righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.
 - ii. What does it mean to seek the kingdom first?
- II. The Contrast in this Scripture
 - a. Seek kingdom and righteousness – Food, Clothing, Shelter shall be added to us – what's the difference between these two groups?
 - b. The difference is that one side is spiritual in nature and the other side is carnally minded in nature - Physical.
 - i. Carnally minded things – Food, clothing, shelter
 1. Needed for survival – perhaps call this "Physical Salvation"
 2. Needed for happiness in standard of living
 3. Must provide these things for our family
 - a. **(1 Tim 5:8)** "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."
 - b. **(2 Thess 3:10)** "...if any would not work, neither should he eat."
 - ii. Spiritual things – Kingdom and His Righteousness
 1. Needed for Spiritual Salvation
 2. Righteousness is found in Christ's Gospel
 - a. **(Rom 1:16, 17) (Mark 16:15, 16)**
 3. Kingdom is found within you
 - a. **(Luke 17:21)** "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."
 - b. The Kingdom is the collection of those that found God's righteousness
 - i. **(Acts 2:41, 47)**
 - iii. Spiritual things outweigh the Physical things – More Important
 1. **(John 6:49-50)** "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die."

2. **(John 4:13-14)** “Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

III. Seek the Kingdom and Righteousness First

- a. What does it mean to Seek First
 - i. Seek – Verb, Active, Imperative, Present – Seek actively, right now
 1. “of "seeking" the kingdom of God and His righteousness, in the sense of coveting earnestly, striving after, Matt 6:33” (Vine’s)
 2. Kingdom and Righteousness = Discipleship
 - ii. First – Adverb – in order, time, place,
- b. We are to have Spiritual matters first and before all else
 - i. Before Self
 1. **(Luke 9:57-62)** – Me First!
 2. Must Deny Self
 - a. **(Matt 10:38)** “And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.”
 - b. **(Mark 8:34)** “Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”
 - c. **(Luke 9:23)** “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.”
 - d. **(Luke 14:27)** “And whosoever doth not *bear his cross*, and come after me, **cannot** be my **disciple**.”
 - i. Bearing your cross is synonymous with the burdens of discipleship. – Must deny our will for Christ’s – He is our master!
 3. Are we letting ourselves get in our way of service to God?
 - ii. Before Family
 1. **(Matt 10:37)** “He that *loveth* father or mother *more* than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is **not worthy of me**.”
 2. **(Luke 14:26)** “If any man come to me, and *hate* not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he **cannot** be my **disciple**.”
 3. We are to provide for the needs of our families, but we must not let their vanities get in the way of our service to God!
 - a. Are we letting our family’s vain wants get in our way of our service to God?
 - iii. Before Anything Else

1. **(Luke 14:33)** “So likewise, whosoever he be of you that *forsaketh not all* that he hath, he **cannot** be my **disciple**.”

IV. Discipleship

a. We are disciples of Christ!

- i. Disciple – “One who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another as a convinced adherent of a school or individual.” (Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary)
- ii. “A "disciple" was not only a pupil, but an **adherent**; hence they are spoken of as imitators of their teacher.” (Vine’s)
 1. **(John 8:31-32)** “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”
 2. **(John 15:8)** “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.”
 3. **(Luke 6:40)** “The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.”
 - a. This Discipleship can be Seen

V. Imitators of the Master

a. Love – Genuine Love

- i. Look at Christ’s love for you
 1. **(John 3:16-17)** “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”
 2. **(John 15:13-14)** “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

ii. We are to love one another likewise

1. **(John 13:34-35)** “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”
2. **(1 John 3:16-17)** “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?”
3. Do we truly love the brotherhood enough to lay down our lives for one another? – if so then can we not have patience, endurance and strengthen one another?

b. Service

i. Look at Christ’s example of service

1. **(John 13:12-15)** “So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said

unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

- ii. Christ first concern was of a spiritual nature
 - 1. His mission in His own words:
 - a. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (**Luke 19:10**)
- iii. Our first concern is of a spiritual nature
 - 1. We too are commissioned to Seek and Save that which was Lost
 - a. (**Matt 28:18, 19**) (**Mark 16:15, 16**)

VI. Conclusion

- a. Seeking the Kingdom First is True Discipleship
- b. Must deny ourselves, family, material possessions, and anything else.
- c. Must set our minds to God first and foremost
- d. Must be Imitators of our Master
 - i. Love
 - ii. Service
- e. Spiritual Matters far out weigh Physical Matters
 - i. Hell is real – the Threat of Hell is not a threat at all, it's a promise.
 - 1. God cannot lie – Do you believe in a Heaven? Believe in a hell also
 - 2. Many are Complacent – not thinking that their in any trouble – Christ said "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (**Matt 7:13-14**)
 - a. Somebody is going to be lost – eternally lost – and it is going to be more than will be save!
 - b. Look around you – Why are we not teaching our friends and neighbors? Why are we looking helplessly waiting for someone else to teach?
 - c. You have the truth! – Find a way to teach, and teach it.
 - ii. Speed of Growth in the Early Church
 - 1. Acts 2:41 – 3000 souls
 - 2. Acts 4:4 – 5000 souls
 - 3. How? – Acts 5:42 "Daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."