

Seek First the Kingdom of God & His Righteousness- Part 1

Introduction:

Mat 6:31 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' **32** "For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. **33** "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. **34** "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

- ❖ You and I can testify that this has become every Christian's favorite phrase, but do we really have a full understanding of what it is that we are seeking and how we are supposed to do so? If we cannot understand what we are seeking for, then we will be ignorant and blind on the how process.
- ❖ Note: We are told to 'seek first' and therefore, what we are seeking has to be the top priority of our daily list as first truly means exactly that. We are seeking what we do not have and so this is yet future and cannot therefore be our eternal salvation as this is the present possession of every believer. This is being said to all the eternally saved and therefore has to do with things beyond our eternal salvation.

- As we look at our verses above, let's remember that there are 2 contrasting actions set side by side in our everyday activity; one that we are not to do and one that we are to do.
 - We are not to worry, to be continually anxious about the present, 'what shall we eat? What shall we drink? What shall we wear?' Verse 32 reckons that doing this is the preoccupation of those who have no hope and would show our focus to be on the things of this world.

Mat. 6:32 "For after all these things the *Gentiles seek*. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

Ephe. 2:11 Therefore remember that you, *once Gentiles in the flesh...12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

- Rather, because of our hope, we are to focus on that which lies ahead of us in the near future – the *coming Kingdom of Christ*. We are therefore to seek in the present, that which is still to come. And the promise is, that if this Kingdom is first and foremost in all that we do, then 'all these things will be added to you'; because our Heavenly Father already knows what we need day by day. It is the Gentiles, the unsaved who are preoccupied with the things of this life, worrying about today and tomorrow. We have a far more important focus that we should not be distracted from – the root meaning of worrying, and yet, no degree of anxiety on our part can change one smallest thing.
- This is the same thought found in;

Phil.4:6 *Be anxious for nothing [stop worrying about even one thing], but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*
- And this is all an issue of faith isn't it? Do we trust the Lord to be true to His Word or are we more confident in taking matters into our own hands?
- Do we lay our schemes and plans for the weeks and years ahead in the false security of our ability to see them through or do we have the correct scriptural perspective on all that we do?

James 4:13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; **14** whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow.

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*For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. **15** Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.” **16** But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.*

- And here in James this is dealt with in a very direct manner. If we plan anything confident in our own ability to see it through, rather than ‘if the Lord wills’, God considers this to be arrogant boasting, and ‘all such boasting is evil’. And this is because ‘you do not know what will happen tomorrow.’
- And all of this brings us back to the basic concept of dying to self and living by faith;
Gal. 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.
- We no longer live our lives to ourselves, but to Christ. We no longer live our lives to please ourselves, but to please the One who loved us and gave Himself for us.
 - ✓ Our experience should be that which Paul describes, ‘I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me...’
 - ✓ And if this is true for us then, ‘the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God’.
 - ✓ Then to go back to where we began this morning, to live by faith in the Son of God requires us to seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness.

Mat. 7:7 “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

- From the outset then, let’s be clear and encouraged, that if **we seek**, we will find. This is guaranteed. And what we will find of course is a position **of ruler ship with Christ in His Kingdom in that coming Day**. There is no doubt about it.
- And let’s also be clear that to seek His Kingdom so as to find it necessitates the seeking of His righteousness also and both must be seen as synonymous.
- In summary, the Lord is not telling us not to work or not to do all these things that we do. All He is saying is that, we should not be distracted from seeking that which ought to be our priority and at the top of our list every day. **FIRST is FIRST!!**
- To highlight a few things from our verses:
 - o Seeking His kingdom and His righteousness then has to do with life in the coming age but not the here and now.
 - o Our Heavenly Father owns it all and He knows that we need all these things
 - o The gentiles seek these things. This is their priority and that’s what occupies their lives- these are the people who do not believe God –the unsaved. It ought to be different with us.
 - o Faith is a key component in the seeking of His kingdom and His righteousness
- ❖ **Seek**- lacking; not yet found, out of reach. We can also say that hope is a part of the seeking of the kingdom because we cannot hope for what we see and hope that is seen is not hope;

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Rom. 8:24 *For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?* **25** *But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.*

In the next few lessons, we will be looking at more details on what the kingdom of God is all about, but before we do so, I would like us to understand all about His righteousness first as we cannot understand one without the other. See you on Saturday God willing!

Questions:

1. How do we understand the word 'seek' within the context of our verses?
 - a. In Mat.7:8, we are told that if we seek, we will find. What is our encouragement as diligent kingdom seekers?
2. Within our Matthew 6 verses 31-34, what are we admonished not to do and why?
 - a. Instead, what should we do?
 - b. Who are the Gentiles and what did we learn about them?
 - c. How are we supposed to differ from them and what should be our focus in the present?
3. How do we understand the word worry or worrying and what are the commentary verses to Matthew 6:31a?
 - a. How did we come to the conclusion that this is an issue of faith?
 - b. Seeking God's kingdom and His righteousness are synonymous. How do we understand this?
4. From our past lessons, can someone tell us how we should understand the kingdom of God? How about His righteousness?