

HOW TO RECEIVE FROM GOD **SEEK THE KINGDOM OF GOD FIRST**

If God is our source, then we must be able to **receive** from Him. In this series we will be examining the various ways we can apprehend the blessings of God. Here is the first:

"Seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" - Matthew 6:33. The Jews were greatly mistaken in respect to the nature of the kingdom which their Messiah was going to set up. They expected a kingdom like the kingdoms of this world, infused with earthly splendor. But Jesus sought to change their view. He told them that His kingdom did not come with outward visibility - that it existed **within** men. He wanted them to understand that it was spiritual, and not temporal.

The simple idea of this kingdom is that Christ himself reigns in the hearts of his people, securing the perfect submission of the human will, and the setting apart of every power to Himself. Therefore, His kingdom is **within**; it is invisible. It puts on no outward expression. In the hearts of men God writes His laws (by his Spirit), and consequently rules over them to translate them into His glorious kingdom of peace and love.

The subjects of this Kingdom abide in no particular location. Each residing where Christ has met with him, where he has become a legitimate member of this **invisible** kingdom. The Lord rules and reigns over us so that we may truly be subjects and citizens of the kingdom of God. It is this kingdom that we are all required to **seek**. The kingdom that exists **within**!

To **seek**, implies that we are; (a) to strive to belong to it; (b) to search to discover Christ's will and to do it; (c) to seek to be recognized by Christ as one of His subjects; and (d) to seek to promote the interests of this kingdom - as all true subjects of any kingdom purpose to do. Anyone who truly seeks **first** the kingdom of God, actually seeks to be as perfectly governed by Christ now, as the angels are in heaven. All Christians should have Christ living and reigning **within** so that every thought is brought into obedience. Jesus must be made Lord of all!

We are required, not only to **seek** the kingdom of God, but also **"His righteousness."** The original word here rendered righteousness, is sometimes rendered justification. This quite radical idea is simply this - "to seek to be **right** with God" - coming into a state of acceptance with Him. The command to **"seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness first,"** requires us to treat this activity as being of absolute and supreme importance. It must become the 'great business' of our lives. Nothing else should be allowed to have any practical or spiritual importance compared with this.

To **seek God's kingdom first**, implies that we seek it **first** at any point in time. It should be the first thing we attend to. It is not merely to be admitted as being of first importance, but should actually be put **first** during any moment of time. Your first thoughts of each morning should be given to it. And when ever God's word impresses upon your mind the requirements or moral conduct of this kingdom, you are to remember that now is the accepted time. That is, **first** in order of preference. Before any thing else, let the concerns of your soul be with the kingdom of God (always giving it **first** place).

This verse also implies that we seek this kingdom with **intense conviction**. This means being fully involved and immersed in kingdom matters. We are required to enter in at the straight and narrow gate, and to press hard for entry with supreme earnestness. So let your soul genuinely and fervently make sure of your admission 'first off' into the kingdom of God - in order to obtain the wonderful treasure that's held within.

It is also implied that we seek the kingdom of God with great **perseverance**. We must press on until we obtain it. This is the great business of everyday life - to move out of rebellion and into obedience - from a state of rejection to a state of complete acceptance, where we are truly sons and daughters of the Almighty God. Therefore, let us persevere in **seeking** the whole of this challenge until it's fully achieved. The very nature of such change demands endurance and perseverance. And the blessings within our reach are too great and precious to be lost for lack of *perseverance* in their pursuit.

What's more, the kingdom of God should be the object of **supreme interest and attention**. You must bring all your powers into play. Your intellect must be thoroughly awake and aware, your understanding of the truth must be alive, and your will must act with inflexible decision. Your whole mind must be aroused to its absolute limit, focused totally on this one cause. Nothing should distract you from seeking the kingdom **first!**

Still again, Christ's command implies that everything else must be **postponed** (put off) in order for you to do this. It demands that everything else be shifted into the background, and this single mission be placed as your main priority.

Notice, to this command Christ has added a **promise**. And this should get our attention! But remember, the condition attached to this promise is, "**Seek first the kingdom of God.**" It's as if Jesus had said, *"If you will seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, you shall have all these earthly things of which I have been speaking. You shall be fed as surely as I feed the ravens, and clothed as well as I clothe the lilies. And you need not be anxious for any of these things, because it is My business to provide them. Have you noticed the lilies of the field; how they grow? They do not struggle and they are never anxious; yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed like one of these. And if I so gloriously clothe the grass which grows only for a day, and is burnt tomorrow, will I not clothe you that much more? Oh you of little faith!"*

*"Therefore, do not be anxious about these earthly things (the bare necessities of life). Let the Gentiles who know not their Father in Heaven, seek after these things anxiously. But be assured that your Father knows your wants and will take care to supply all your needs. Only, seek **first** the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. And consider also that any worries and anxieties about such things can do you no good. Which of you through worry and anxiety can add an inch to his stature?" - (Matthew 6:25-34)*

We are to understand this **promise** as including all that is necessary for us live an abundant life. This promise shows that Christ always had a principal plan to make provision for our earthly needs. He knows exactly what our needs are, and He shall supply a full measure *according to His riches in glory.*

After all, He formed the constitution that created all things. And He understands how strong the tendencies of our minds are to excessive worry and anxiety about our essential needs. This is why He gave us His word to stand on. Implying....

*“I will take away from you any excuse for neglecting the things of My kingdom. You shall have no reason for not making My cause the primary thing. Let it be your **first** business - the **first** at any point in time - the **first** in your adoration - the **first** in the earnestness with which you seek it. And thereafter, simply trust Me to make up and supply all the other things that you need. Do My business and I will do yours! Take care of My kingdom, by throwing your whole soul into its interests, and I will supply all your physical needs. Do your duty as I have commanded, and I will be responsible for these lesser things. I will never let you down - you have My word on it.”*

So refuse to be diverted or distracted from ‘God's business’ by worldly cares and give your whole heart to the Lord. This is the only way to make sure of earthly prosperity (in all matters of life). If any of you wants to make absolutely sure of getting whatever earthy provision you need, “seek **first** the kingdom of God and His righteousness.” Then you will have a promise which is infinitely more secure than any stocks or deposits in the world system. It is safe to trust God! He who makes the rain and the sunshine; He who clothes the lilies and feeds the young sparrows, knows exactly how to meet your needs and fulfill His own **promises**. And He does not lack either the resources or the will!

So now, it's up to you.....

You alone can decide to seek **first** the kingdom of God, and when you do, you'll not only have these other things promised, but you will have attained the kingdom of God too. Certainly our Lord Jesus meant to imply that we should have the very thing we **seek** first. It is ours to seek and to find!

If you choose to obey this command, it should manifest in all affairs of common life. For instance, if you're a businessman who obeys this command, you will never take upon yourself any business that crowds out 'kingdom' matters. You will see that in all your arrangements, you make provision for God's business as well as you make provision for eating your daily meals. When did you ever see a businessman lay out his affairs so as to deliberately neglect making time each day to eat and sleep? Go into his house and you will find a kitchen and a bedroom - isn't this making full provision for eating and sleeping?

Therefore, anyone who means to seek **first** the kingdom of God, whatever principle activity he or she may have, must see that arrangements are made appropriately. If the kingdom of God really comes **first**, you cannot make arrangements that leave this 'primary business' unprovided for. Everything you do must be shaped accordingly. You should no sooner fail to do this than fail to make arrangements to eat or sleep!

Many people hold this truth in theory but deny it in practice. Almost every one of you will admit that we ought to seek God's kingdom **first**, and that His business is top priority, but almost constantly it is denied in practice. It's up to you..... The promise of total provision depends on your response!