

# Bible Studies

## Seek ye first

*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*  
*Matthew 6:33*

This is one of the well known verses of the Gospels.

### **What is the context in which it is written?**

This part of the Bible is called the 'Sermon on the Mount'. It is one complete teaching that Jesus gave while on a hillside near the sea of Galilee, it covers 3 chapters (5-7). It contains an ethical basis for how Christians should live.

In this section Jesus is warning us not to worry.

### **What is the opposite of worry?**

I guess you would have to say trusting, I don't think you would say seeking. So why does Jesus say the antidote for worry, is to seek God's kingdom?

### **What kind of things does Jesus say we should not be worried about?**

These are material needs, in fact the basic human needs, clothes, food, health. Jesus says we are not to run after these things.

### **What is a pagan? v32**

Jesus is saying that our lives do not need to be centred around our needs or our possessions.

Consider the following verses.

*Luke 12:15*

*Matthew 6:20*

*Mark 4:19*

### **If a man's life is not the total of his possessions, what is it?**

### **How do you store treasure in heaven?**

### **What effect does a desire of material things have on faith?**

Jesus is telling us that a desire for God's kingdom must come before our own needs.

### **What is the Kingdom of God?**

That is probably an unfair question, many people have come up with many different answers. So we will go with a simple one, God's kingdom is where God is ruling, or, where people are submitting to God's rule.

### **Are you part of God's kingdom?**

### **Is the Church part of God's kingdom?**

### **Is an unbeliever part of God's kingdom?**

The kingdom of God is not visible, Jesus said. "*Nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you.*" *Luke 17:21*, In the future it will be a physical kingdom.

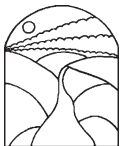
If we are to seek first God's kingdom, that implies that there are other 'kingdoms' that would like to take priority in our lives. Kingdom is not a word we often use. Lets say that a kingdom is where ever someone exercises authority. Or, where there are expectations and responsibilities put upon us.

### **What other kingdoms can you think of?**

The most obvious is the **Kingdom of Darkness**, Satan's rule. Col 1:13

But it is not the only one, next in significance is the **Kingdom of Self**. Us, our rule, our desires, ambitions and opinions. We rule our own lives.

S  
T  
R  
E  
A  
M  
S  
  
I  
N  
  
T  
H  
E  
  
D  
E  
S  
E  
R  
T



**Waiuku AG**  
**Ray Moxham**

[www.wag.org.nz](http://www.wag.org.nz)

WaiukuAG  
@Maxnet.co.nz

In addition, there is our country, Romans 13:1, even our job. Then there are the responsibilities we have to our children, partner, family and friends. When you start to look at it this way, it is almost like we are surrounded by different people and groups, all of them are pulling at us, demanding our time, loyalty and obedience. Sometimes they pull in one direction, but most of the time they seem to pull different ways and we get stretched in the middle.

### **Did Jesus say seek only His kingdom?**

It is not a question of exclusive obedience to God's kingdom. But that His kingdom comes first. We have responsibilities to our country, employer and family. The Bible tells us that we must fulfil these obligations.

The real area of conflict is between the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Darkness and the Kingdom of Self.

### **If God want's you to do one thing and you want to do another, which comes first? If your boss says "I want you to work every Sunday", what do you do?**

#### **How often do these Kingdoms conflict?**

#### **Can you think of some examples?**

#### **Where does all this leave our selfishness?**

If our Christianity consists of only ever doing what we want, when we want, then in reality it counts for very little.

The verse says not only to seek His kingdom but also his righteousness,

#### **What does righteousness have to do with obeying God?**

There are two aspects of salvation; Jesus as our Saviour, and, Jesus as our Lord.

#### **Which one does 'Seeking first his Kingdom' pertain to?**

#### **Which one does 'Seeking His righteousness' pertain to?**

So the conclusion is, that we must put God first in our lives.

This sounds like a big ask, **but God's will is always for our best.**

#### **What is the promise that goes along with this command? v32b**

I think there are two other things that you can find in the verse.



**Firstly**, Seek is an active word. I think Jesus is telling us that we need to develop our spiritual life. To know more about God and to weld ourselves deeper into His kingdom.

#### **How do you do this?**

*But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.*

*Jude 1:20*

#### **How does this fit in with seeking God's righteousness?**

We are not told to seek our own righteousness (by works) we are told to seek His righteousness, ie the righteousness that comes by faith. Rom 4:13, Phil 3:9



**Secondly**, I think He is calling us to the expansion of His kingdom. To be active in reaching out to the world around us. And to do things that help to build the Church.

Paul writes a damning assessment of Christians of his day, saying;

*For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. Phil 2:21*

#### **What does this verse mean?**

#### **Do you think it is true of us?**

#### **What can we do to look out for the interests of Christ?**