

Seeking God's Kingdom First

Matthew 6:25-34

Introduction

God wants to be first. He wants His plans, priorities, and His purposes to be of utmost importance to His people. In order to do this the believer must recognize and operate as though God's Kingdom rules in and over all areas of their lives. God wants our allegiance to Him first and all else second. Because many believers want to *include* God in their lives instead of allowing Him to *rule over* every area of their lives, they do not experience God's full activity and blessing.

What does it mean to put God first? As believers, we should cultivate the practice or habit of prioritizing God's Kingdom by seeking to walk in righteousness by conforming to His standards. How do we know what God's standards are? The practice or habit of reading and meditating on His Word, talking to Him through prayer, and growing in a community of believers provides the avenue for understanding what God requires. The next step in putting God first is to take what has been learned about His standards and use that knowledge to make decisions based on the Word and His revealed will.

The wonderful benefit of putting God first is that we no longer have to worry. As we seek to please God, He makes it His business to take over on our behalf. Said another way? When you take care of God's business, God takes care of yours. While this does not ensure a pain-free or problem-free life, it does ensure that God is involved in your life and God has promised to be a rewarder of those who seek after Him.

Getting Started

1. It's the beginning of a new year and a time where many have made new resolutions? Have you? Share with your group.
2. What about resolutions specifically related to your faith. What would you like to see happen as it relates to your relationship with God and how you walk out your beliefs day to day in 2015?

Let's Get Personal

1. We have just completed Solemn Assembly this week at OCBF where we made a focused effort to spend time with God and be intentional about praying about our own concerns and the concerns of others. Share your Solemn Assembly experience with your group. How was your experience this past week different than your typical experience with God?
2. What would you like to continue as a result of the experience you had this past week in putting God first?
3. What part of putting God first is easy for you? What part is the hardest?
4. Do you have an experience to share with your group of when putting God first alleviated your need to worry? What about how putting God first resulted in God intervening on your behalf?

Take the Next Step

1. Putting God first is a matter of decision but it can also be a matter of habit. What habit would you like to build in the new year as it relates to the discipline of putting God first? (Bible study, Scripture memory, prayer, obedience, church attendance, meeting in community, etc).
2. What is getting in the way of you putting God first? What practical changes can you make in your life that will allow you to prioritize seeking God's kingdom?
3. What is currently high on your list of concerns? What do you worry about? Take a moment to write down or share with your group what you are trusting God to take care of as you seek to put Him first in your life.

Renew Your Mind

But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Matthew 6:33
