**Prioritized Seeking**

*Matthew 6:33*

**Introduction**

1. In discussing the problem of worrying, and allowing focus to shift another direction, Jesus commanded that our priority be the spiritual **(cf. Matthew 6:33).**
2. ***“seek first”*** – Priority!
   1. **(vv. 22-23)** – Double vision is unacceptable, and dangerous.
      1. ***“if therefore thine eye be single” (KJV)*** – single.
      2. **The vision must be single, not split. Must be on the spiritual, not material/worldly.**
      3. Otherwise, the darkness will take over.
   2. **(v. 24)** – In the same way, you cannot have two masters. **One will always be neglected, and God deserves and demands our full attention and effort**.
3. It is God’s design that Jesus have the preeminence **(cf. Colossians 1:18).** This means He is FIRST in ALL THINGS.
4. **We must make sure this is true of our lives.**
5. Seek First
6. His Kingdom
   1. **Seek initial citizenship** – ***“Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10)*** – When this sermon was preached, the kingdom had not yet come.
      1. **Matthew 5:3** – poor in spirit – humble – in need of Christ.
      2. **Cf. Revelation 3:17** – as opposed to the mindset of the Laodiceans.
      3. **Colossians 1:13-14** – In the kingdom of Christ, i.e. under His rule, there is forgiveness 🡪
      4. ***“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:29-30)***.
   2. **Seek upstanding citizenship** – not settling for simple addition to the Lord’s body, but growth and contribution!
      1. **1 Peter 2:4-5** – Kingdom of priests (As was Israel as a type of that which was to come, **cf. Exodus 19:6** – The antitype is Christ’s kingdom.).
         1. **Living stones** – given life from Christ, through Christ.
         2. **Sacrifices** – **spiritual** (*from the heart*), **acceptable to God** (*from the truth, or revelation of the Spirit*).
         3. **We are to dedicate our lives to serving God in the kingdom.**
      2. **Under Christ’s rule we are directed in service to God, but must submit to His rule to be acceptable.**
   3. *Such naturally brings us to seeking His righteousness 🡪*
7. His Righteousness
   1. **Seek to be righteous before Him** – **cf. 2 Peter 3:14** – Seek to be found blameless, or righteous – Justified before Him in the end.
   2. **1 Peter 2:11-12** – Righteousness must be sought and maintained before God and all people.
   3. **Romans 1:16-17** – However, God defines righteousness. HIS righteousness.
      1. The gospel reveals what God constitutes as righteous.
      2. Namely, that is LIVING BY FAITH.
      3. **Cf. Romans 10:17** – Growing in the word by hearing, believing, and doing.
8. **These are to be the Christian’s priority! Not these 🡪**
9. Before Seeking

*Prioritizing does not mean to the exclusion of all else. Rather, the emphasis of our lives is overwhelmingly on the spiritual (kingdom of God and His righteousness). Nothing should ever surpass this. Including these things 🡪*

1. Material Essentials
   1. **Matthew 6:25-34** – There are things we NEED in this physical life, but is that all life is about? NO.
      1. **(vv. 25-30)** – God provides for the lowly levels of creation, how much more the pinnacle of His creation?
         1. **(v. 27)** – Worrying accomplishes nothing.
         2. ***“Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?”***
            1. **Life** – Men created ***“so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us” (Acts 17:27).***
            2. **Body** – ***“Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body” (1 Corinthians 6:13).***
      2. (**vv. 31-34)** – Not saying you should not be responsible, and work for such. Rather, should not worry to the end of appropriating these things becoming your life’s priority.
         1. **(v. 32)** – The Gentiles (those who don’t have God) live for THESE things. (To them, this is the totality of life – sad.)
            1. When we worry about these things, allowing them to become priority, we become like the Gentiles.
            2. **We become like a people who don’t have God.**
         2. **(v. 34)** – It is foolish to add to the troubles of the current day with things which are not even certain to begin with.
         3. **(v. 33)** – Our priority should be on the spiritual things.
   2. **(vv. 19-21)** – This is ultimately a concern of our heart’s dwelling place. Our hearts should be set on things above.
2. Pleasure
   1. **1 Timothy 5:3-7** – Discussion of honoring widows (in a monetary sense – taking care of those physically/financially who are REALLY widows).
      1. **REALLY widows** – **(v. 4, 8)** – those who have family to take care of them. (**Also, v. 9-10** – under 60 yrs old, and given to good works.)
      2. **(vv. 5-6)** – Contrast of widows.
         1. **(v. 5)** – Widow (REALLY) whose priority is God, and she has put her TRUST and HOPE FULLY in Him.
            1. **She is spiritually minded. (v. 10 – active in the kingdom)**
            2. Her continuous praying shows her reliance upon God, and her spiritual mindset.
         2. **(v. 6)** – Widow who lives in luxury.
            1. ***“lives in pleasure”*** – LUXURY.
            2. **She is not dead simply because she has wealth, but she is dead because of her focus of life.**
            3. She does not trust in God, but in riches. That is her focus.
      3. **Anyone who lives this way is DEAD WHILE THEY LIVE – dead in sin.**
   2. ***“in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be…lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God” (2 Timothy 3:1, 2, 4)***. **(Pleasure** – not of necessity sinful pleasures, though such is undoubtedly included.)
   3. ***“Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity” (Luke 8:14).***
   4. *Consider: Various forms of recreation. None are to be our focus.*
   5. **Ecclesiastes 2:1-3, 9-11** – Solomon sought contentment in pleasure, but never found it. All he discovered was that such is vain! (**cf. Ecclesiastes 12:13** – what isn’t vain?)
3. Family
   1. **Many in the world have what seems to be the noble idea of FAMILY FIRST. This is against God’s will 🡪**
   2. **Matthew 10:34-39** – The idea is that families will be divided because some will believe, and some will not.
      1. **Find life** – spare familial relationships at the expense of a relationship with God?
      2. **Lose life** – lose familial relationship to gain Christ.
      3. **Luke 14:26 – Hate** – not literally, but in comparison to the love had for God.
      4. Family is supposed to take care of one another in their respective roles, and have love for one another.
      5. **This can only be accomplished to the greatest degree when each puts GOD FIRST.**
   3. **Ephesians 5:22-25** – Husbands and wives cannot fulfill their roles to one another without first loving God.
      1. **Wives** – ***“as to the Lord”*** – foundation of their relationship to husband.
      2. **Husbands** – ***“as Christ also loved the church”*** – foundation of their relationship to wife.
   4. **Ephesians 6:1-4** – Same in regard to children to parents, and parents to children.
      1. You cannot expect to be a good parent if you give your kid the impression that YOU LOVE THEM MORE THAN GOD.
      2. **They will grow to perceive they are more important than serving God if your devotion is more with them than God.**
   5. ***Any familial relationship must come after your relationship with God. IN ANY WAY.***
4. Safety
   1. **Our thought should always be to please God first and foremost, even in the face of danger.**
   2. **Daniel 3:8-18** – Shadrach, Meshack, and Abed-Nego did not worship Nebuchadnezzar’s image, and were willing to die for God in the process.
      1. **(v. 6)** – The decree already stated they would die whoever did not worship the image.
      2. **(vv. 8-15)** – The three Jews were given another opportunity, which ultimately further tested their faith.
      3. **(vv. 16-18)** – They still refused to worship the image, and instead put their trust in God.
         1. We know the rest – furnace heated 7 times more than usual – thrown in – spared by God – Nebuchadnezzar glorifies God because of what happened.
         2. **NOTICE: (v. 18)** – ***“but if not”*** – They trusted in God to deliver them, but had no right to demand that He would.
            1. **Regardless of whether God delivered them, they were choosing Him first.**
            2. **This, even when the other choice was to be delivered from death by worshiping the image.**
   3. ***“We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29 – Peter and other apostles).***
   4. ***“We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22*** – Paul after being stoned). – Seek first the KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

**Conclusion**

1. We must get our priorities straight!
2. What is most important to you? Your actions speak louder than words.
3. We must put our mind on the things of God, rather than the things of this secular life.