

Kingdom Living Includes Kingdom Giving

Matthew 6

This is part eight in the Steps of a Disciple series.

#1 - Setting The Standard, Matthew 6:1

Jesus sets the bar very high, right at the beginning of this section of the Sermon on the Mount. He's talking about MOTIVATION in what you do. What motivates you in how you live your life? More importantly, what motivates you in how you act as a Christian?

What I do and how I do it must be done to please God and not men. Remember, we learn a very important lesson from the pages of the Old Testament where it tells us:

“for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” (1 Samuel 16:7b)

The motivation for our acts of faith must be done to please God and not to be noticed by men. With Setting The Standard, now firmly established, Jesus moves on to how that standard gets played out in our acts of faith as His followers.

#2 - Kingdom Living Through My Giving, Matthew 6:2-4

“Jesus teaches that it is important to give, not to be known to give.” (Morris, L. (1992). The Gospel according to Matthew (p. 136). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.)

Now, Jesus moves on to speak about Kingdom Living which includes Kingdom Prayer and Fasting, in the following paragraphs. Earlier in this sermon series, we looked directly at part of this section of Scripture. But, Jesus returns to the idea of money, giving and possessions in the rest of this chapter. So, let's understand Kingdom Living Includes Kingdom Money.

#3 - Kingdom Living Through My Possessions, Matthew 6:19-24

Summary of this paragraph of Jesus' teaching is:

- Think and act with eternity in mind, not on the here and now. Invest in God's kingdom, not yours!
- Wealth is a powerful indicator of your focus (verse 21)
- Allegiance is what's at stake here: Money is your god, or God is your god. You cannot straddle the fence.

#4 - Kingdom Living Through My Trust, Matthew 6:25-34

Even in Jesus' day, people were wrapped-up in the meeting of daily needs. They, like us, put a lot of energy and thought into life's essentials like daily food and clothing. Jesus says to His followers, "don't let those things worry you," (vs. 25 & 34).

Worrying shows that one has "little faith" in what God can do (v. 30; cf. you of little faith in 8:26; 14:31; 16:8). **As a disciple cares each day for the things God has trusted to him, God, his heavenly Father (6:26, 32), cares for his daily needs.** (Barbieri, L. A., Jr. (1985). Matthew. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 33). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.)

Disciples are to seek as their first priority, not the things they would like to have or even the things they are sure they need, but God's kingdom and righteousness. First does not here mean "first in time" but "of first importance"; the kingdom is not one among many competing aims for the disciples, but that which comes first of all.