

# THE KINGDOM-DRIVEN LIFE #16

## The Book of Matthew

### God's Total Answer for Our Total Need

So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you.

Matthew 6:31-33 NLT

#### I. God's Total Answer for Man's Total Need

##### A. An Amazing Promise of Provision

1. Jesus has been warning His followers of the sins of worry and fear, especially about material needs. Matthew 6:33 is an amplification of God's changeless promise to take care of those who put Him first in all things.

Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart's desires.

Psalm 37:4

2. The climax of His point is: "Don't worry about anything except seeking the Kingdom of God first and foremost above all other things, and God will give you everything you need!"

"The Kingdom of God is God's total answer for our total need."

E. Stanley Jones, *The Unshakable Kingdom and the Unchanging Christ*

##### B. What's Driving Me?

1. The fundamental presupposition of life is that "**something**" is driving every "**someone**".

- Possessions
- Pleasure
- Position

2. Am I consciously aware of what it is that's driving me?

We've been learning how worry, anxiety and fear are our alarm clock to wake us up to the fact that we're not serving God, but things!

3. Jesus' call is to a "Kingdom-Driven" life, is to a devoted, intentional *pursuit* of God's will being done "on earth as it is in heaven."

The term "seek" is a very strong word in the original Greek text which implies diligent, consistent activity. The verb has a "continuing" sense to it, much like "Ask", "Seek" and "Knock" in Matthew 7:7, where the idea is "ask...and keep on asking", "seek...and keep on seeking"...etc..

4. So what IS the Kingdom? Jesus told us in the "Lord's Prayer" just a few verses ago.

**Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Matthew 6:10 KJV**

**SO...**

***The "Kingdom" is God's will being done on earth!***

## **II. Putting God's Will into Action**

### **A. What the Kingdom is NOT**

1. Before the Apostle Paul defines what the Kingdom is, He tells us that it is not about "things", not about legalistic rules and regulations about what to eat or drink.

**"...the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.**

**Romans 14:17 KJV**

2. Just as Jesus warned about filling our minds with fearful thoughts about "things", so Paul says the Kingdom of God is not about endless debates over diets, dresses and doo-dads.

3. The Kingdom of God is not "heaven".

The prayer is that God's will, which is being done in heaven, would be done "on earth" as well; that the kingdom "come" to earth as it has already come in the very presence of God (heaven)

4. The Kingdom of God is not (limited to) the future; it is not the "Second Coming".

This is a common error based on failure to recognize that the gospels all consistently reveal that the “first coming” of Jesus was actually the inauguration of the Kingdom—and that although we do not see it yet in fullness and completion, the Kingdom is already “at hand”, or “within our reach.”

5. The Kingdom of God is not the nation of Israel.

This was the confusion of Jesus’ first disciples, who had limited the idea of the Kingdom to the nation of Israel and its manifestation to the enthronement of the Messiah in Jerusalem! (Acts 1:6-8)

6. All these “counterfeit” ideas of the Kingdom have Christ-followers looking for the wrong thing! No wonder there’s so little peace and joy in the church world!

If you don’t know what you’re looking for, how are you going to know when you see it?\*

\*Last Friday I had lunch with a friend. Afterward, I walked him to his car, the opposite direction from where I had parked. He invited me to hop in and let him drive me to where I had parked. We circled the area to no avail. I knew he had an appointment, and I was getting embarrassed that I couldn’t find my own car. Then I realized I had not come to the lunch in my own car...I had driven Elizabeth’s car so I could fill it with gas and get it washed for her. As soon as I knew what I was looking for...boom! There it was! So it is with the Kingdom!

***The Kingdom of God is the presence of God. It’s the expression of the will of God being done in everyday life!***

## **B. What the Kingdom IS: Signposts the Kingdom Has Come**

1. The core of the Kingdom is the LORDSHIP of Jesus.

2. “Kingdom” is a governmental term; so first and foremost, the Kingdom of God is about authority, about “who is in charge”. Ultimately, kingdom issues are **Lordship** issues.\*

**\*The debate about Jesus’ roles as Savior and/or Lord continue to rage in the halls of seminaries and theology books. Believe it or not, there is a large section of American Christianity that really believes that one can receive Jesus as Savior and not as “Lord”; that salvation consists of trusting Christ by faith alone without any subsequent evidence of salvation manifested in the life of the so-called “believer”!**

To “seek” the Kingdom then, is to consider first what God has to say about everything in life: money, sex, ethics, morality and how we spend our time—and then to place HIS word about the matter above any other “word” or opinion on the matter—including your own!

3. The Kingdom is about RIGHT-LIVING.

**“The kingdom of God is...righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”**

**Romans 14:17**

- a. “Righteousness” here is used in the large sense of the word beyond the forensic righteousness of “justification by faith”, whereby we are made “right” with God by faith in the work of Christ on the Cross.
- b. “Righteousness” here refers to living right, to aligning our everyday plans and deeds in ways that God would call “right”.
- c. This would include many things: how we parent our children; how we perform our tasks at work; how we relate to our neighbors; how we steward what God has given us; etc.
- d. Righteousness also carries with it the idea of JUSTICE. We ought to seek justice for everyone, including those who are not Christians. Wrong-headed ideas of “equality” in our nation have obscured, in some ways, the concept of justice.

**All men are created equal is a core belief in America. But equality does not mean an entitlement of one group over another. Equal pay for equal work is justice. But equal pay for a lazy person over a diligent person because “all...are equal” is injustice masquerading as equality. God is sometimes merciful, but always just. Even when He does not show mercy (as in the final judgment), He will always remain just. In the final judgment some will receive mercy and some will receive condemnation, but no one will receive injustice!**

**R. C. Sproul**

#### 4. The Kingdom brings ORDER.

- a. The Kingdom addresses disorder. (“Dis” at the beginning of a word often will signify the absence of God’s government: dis-ease, dis-comfort, dis-loyalty, dis-array, etc.)
- b. The desire to wash your car, clean out the garage, vacuum the carpets, trim the weeds, dust the furniture is a kingdom-driven desire!

**In the beginning, when God created the universe, the earth was *formless and desolate*\*. The raging ocean that covered everything was engulfed in total darkness, and the power of God was moving over the water. Then God commanded, "Let there be light" — and light appeared.**

**Genesis 1:1-3 Today’s English Version**

**\*The Hebrew words for “without form and void” in the KJV are “tohu” and “bohu” and connote a condition of chaos and upheaval. You can re-read Genesis 1 and the**

**order of creation from the perspective of God “setting creation in order” and capture a good understanding of what the Kingdom does.**

c. When the Kingdom comes...

- to a marriage, the husband is the head of the household.
- to a family, the children are respectful and obedient.
- to personal finances, the first tenth of all income is given as a tithe to the church.
- to a church, the people of God themselves become a model of what the Kingdom looks like!

5. The Kingdom of God always brings PEACE.

a. Since the Kingdom of God is the “law and order” of God, it always produces a condition of peace.

**For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end...”**

**Isaiah 9:6-7 KJV**

b. Many American homes today are “war zones”-husbands and wives fighting, children back-talking and out of control, etc. Wherever there is no peace, there is a *governmental problem!*

c. Many countries of the world are unsafe to travel in: terrorism, corruption, drug cultures, etc. The one common denominator of all these countries is ***bad government!***

d. Jesus said in the Great Commission that the Church is sent to disciple the nations-surely this is what He meant. The fundamental first question is, “Can we govern ourselves (under God)? Are our marriages and families in order? If not, the Kingdom has not come to our own lives yet, so how can we export what we don’t have?”

6. The Kingdom comes when God and His will hold FIRST-PLACE in all the details of life.

- a. Don’t worry about “things”-worry about believing what God says.
- b. Don’t let “things” drive you-be kingdom-driven.
- c. Let the Holy Spirit speak to everything you do, everywhere you go, every thought you think.

### **III. God's Total Answer for Our Total Need**

Jesus has given us one of the most staggering promises in all of scripture. If we get our lives in ORDER, He will make sure we have EVERYTHING we need. This mind-boggling promise is precious, practical and sure.

So where do we start?

(Closing prayer is for the illumination of the Holy Spirit to speak to each of us as to the most pressing Kingdom-seeking need of our lives...)