

## Kingdom Growth Divine Priority

God is looking for Kingdom possessed people.

For Kingdom possessed people, all of life is about the kingdom of God. To be kingdom possessed means to have the Kingdom of God as our sole priority for the kingdom priority demands an exclusive claim on our lives.

- a. Matthew 6:24 - “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

All the priorities that we recognize as essential or beneficial to life will be satisfied when we set our hearts to seek first the kingdom of God.

Luke 9:57-60 - 3 Encounters

- a. The man in this passage made a rash promise to follow Jesus wherever he went.
- b. Jesus tested the man’s commitment. He wanted to see how far this man truly was willing to go.
  - a. We are not told how the man responded, but that is not important. What is important to understand is that although seeking first the kingdom of God results in the most fulfilling and rewarding life possible, this doesn’t mean it is always easy. The cost of seeking the Kingdom is great.
- c. The man who appeared to be willing to follow Him but the man wanted to wait until after he buried his Father.
- d. Understanding Jewish culture that to dishonor one’s parents was a gross sin exceeded only by the sin of dishonoring God.
  - a. Jesus responds to the man’s request and say’s; let the dead bury the dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God. Jesus was not being dismissive of the commandment or insensitive to the man’s sense of duty and responsibility. He was saying that NO priority takes precedence over the priority of the Kingdom.
  - b. The Kingdom is more important than family, friend, career, or personal ambitions.
- e. The third man, wanted to follow Jesus, but later on his own terms, after taking leave of his family.
  - a. His whole heart was not in it. He would follow, but would keep looking back to what he had left behind. Those who are “fit for service in the kingdom of God” have laid aside all other priorities in life except for the Kingdom priority.

Notice that in each of the encounters the response was; Lord, first...

- a. The word lord means owner or master. WE cannot call Christ Lord, and then say, but first let me do such and such.
- b. Either he owns us or he does not. Either He is our master or He is not.

## The Test of Kingdom Priority

Luke 18:18-27

- a. Here we have a wealthy, law abiding and upright man, the kind of person that anyone would like to be associated with. He was religiously devout, careful to observe and obey all the commandments.
  - a. However, Jesus saw that he was serving both God and money. And he responds like this; “You still lack one thing”
    - i. Jesus tells him; “Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.
    - ii. The man believed that all his wealth belonged to him.
    - iii. Unfortunately, he was so bound by his earthly treasure that he was unwilling to let it go. He failed the test of the Kingdom
  - b. A spirit of ownership is perhaps the greatest external sign that someone is not in the kingdom or not yet walking in the priority of Kingdom first.
- b. The word “enter” as Jesus used it in this passage, means to “experience the true effect of.”
- c. In other words, it is hard for a rich man to experience the true effect of what Kingdom living is like because his wealth is his prison.
- d. The meaning of the eye of the needle:
  - a. He did not have a sewing needle in mind. The eye of the needle refers to two wooden posts that are planted vertically in the ground close enough together so that a camel can squeeze between them only with difficulty. Because of the sand and the dryness of that desert environment, camels can become very dirty very quickly. The eye of the needle is used to help clean dirty camels.
  - b. Jesus was saying; that although it is difficult for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, it is not impossible. A spirit of ownership can keep us out, but God can help us let go of that spirit.

v.28-30

Jesus says that no one who gives up everything for the Kingdom of God has really lost anything, because they will receive many times as much in this age, not to mention eternal life in the age to come. Nothing that we give up for the sake of the Kingdom of God do we lose.

God wants us to have “all these things” but he does not want all these things to have us.