

Matthew 6:33-34

Living for today

Text

“³³ But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. ³⁴ “Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. {Each} day has enough trouble of its own.””

Observations

1. God's kingdom and righteousness touch every area of life.

- a. Peace and Justice start with the cross and **personal redemption**.
 - The way I respond to the Cross in the face of my sin will be a reflection of the priority of God's Kingdom in my life.
 - The degree to which I recognize my own spiritual poverty and embrace the riches of grace in Christ will be a reflection of the priority of God's Kingdom in me.
- b. Peace and Justice extend to **personal piety** and holiness.
 - The way I discipline my thought life will be a reflection of the priority of God's Kingdom in my life.
 - My willingness to have a loose hold on things as a demonstration of trust in God will be a reflection of the priority of God's Kingdom in my life.
- c. Peace and Justice encompass **social relationships**.
 - The way I respond to others, especially when they hurt me will be a reflection of the priority of God's Kingdom in my life.
 - My willingness to show God's love to those in need by giving will be a reflection of the priority of God's Kingdom in my life.
- d. Some **Conservatives** tend to put a lot of emphasis on Personal Salvation (#a), less emphasis on Personal Ethics (#b), and little emphasis on Social ethics (#c).
- e. Some **Liberals** tend to reduce the Kingdom to Social Ethics in the world outside the covenant community while neglecting personal salvation and ethics. Liberal Christians relate “peace and justice” to political and economic redistribution of power and money while seldom think of it in terms of personal piety and salvation.
- f. The **Biblical emphasis** gives a lot of attention to social justice and ethics but in the context of the covenant community of faith (not the non believing world).
- g. Some interpreters have noted that the ethical instructions of the Bible are shaped by and for traditional culture. They must be modified or even altered when applied to some of the challenges of modern culture. For example – Slavery is tolerated in the Biblical world but not in ours.

2. “All these things” may have a broader meaning than just food and clothing and also may be tied to the degree to which the Kingdom is realized.
 - a. We have yet to experience the fullness of the coming Kingdom.
 - b. **Rom.8:22-25** “For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope, for why does one also hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.”
3. Seeking “first” suggests that there are other things that we are expected to seek.
 - a. Dr. Larry Crabb speaks of three levels of “longings” and “seeking.”
 1. **The Causal level** – where we seek the most superficial things of this world like – money, comfort, and power.
 2. **The Critical level** – where we seek the deeper things that make life rich and meaningful like – loving relationships.
 3. **The Crucial level** – where we seek the longings of our heart for peace with God.
 - b. While it is only natural to seek even the superficial things of life we must be careful never to let the casual and even the critical issues supplant the most important part of our heart’s desire.
4. The point of this text has to do with living in the “present” not the past or future.
 - a. Satan would have us live in the past with shame or in the future with fear rather than the present.
 - b. Spiritual warfare (conflict) is most common in the temptation to resist grace for the past, and repress faith for the future.
5. “Anxious” and “care” are the same Greek word suggesting that tomorrow will need attention but not now.
6. “Trouble” is an expected part of life in the present.
 - a. The Greek word for “trouble” (KOKOS) in this verse is not often translated “evil” and is used to describe things that are “unfair”, “bad”, and “useless.”
 - b. It “Trouble” and “provision” are both to be expected.
 - c. **1 Peter 1** “, seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.”

Conclusions

1. How should we prepare for tomorrow?
 - a. Expect both trouble and grace.

- b. Relax as you exercise faith.
- c. Make common sense provisions.
 - 1. Insurance policies should not be viewed as a reflection of a weak faith but rather as a way of sharing a burden.
 - 2. Preparation for retirement should be viewed as a responsible way of removing a burden from others.
 - 3. When we know that we will have basic needs it is better often to prepare for them by saving as opposed to borrowing in the future.

2. Do we have a right to expect that God will give us what we want as we obey Him?

- a. **Psalm 37:4** “Delight yourself in the Lord and **he will give you the desires of your heart.**” The deepest desire of our heart is to know the peace and love of God. It is not the superficial stuff that we wrongly think will give us a high quality of life.
- b. **2 Corinthians 8:9** “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, **so that you through his poverty might become rich.**” The riches in this verse are not material but spiritual as indicated in 2 Cor.6:10.
- c. While the Kingdom is realized (in part) in this age, it has not fully come. For this reason, the promises are not fully realized in this age.