

SEEKING KINGDOM | PART 3

Summary:

The Kingdom of God is no longer a future hope but a present reality that we are called to enter. We enter as we are born again by the Spirit of God — a supernatural work we submit to, not something we achieve. We enter as we do the will of God, not to earn our way in, but because doing His will is the natural behaviour of those born again. And we enter as we receive it like a little child, with complete dependence, reliance, and unwavering belief that God is who He says He is and will do what He said He would do.

In the middle of His mountainside sermon, after teaching on prayer and priorities, Jesus wraps up His teaching on worry



by giving us the one thing we are to be concerned about and consumed with: “Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.” So many things compete for our attention and affection, wanting to be number one in our lives. But we are called to do more than just seek His Kingdom — we are to seek it first, as the highest priority, before everything else.

Seeking is not casual looking, like a child who glances around for a lost toy. It is deliberate, passionate, no-holds-barred pursuit — like tearing apart a home searching for a lost wedding ring. Jesus didn’t say “look first” — He said “seek first.” We are to pursue the Kingdom with a level of desire and deliberateness like it’s

everything to us, because it is everything to us, because He is everything to us.

In Matthew’s parable, a man found treasure hidden in a field and joyfully sold everything he had to buy that field. The point is not that we can purchase the Kingdom, but that if it costs us everything, it’s worth it. Fellowship of Jesus does cost us everything — denying ourselves, taking up our cross, and giving all we are and all we have. But in giving everything, we lose nothing and gain everything. Seeking first means an all-in, holding-nothing-back posture that says, “I’m not giving up until I get what I’m after” — because the Kingdom of God is worth it all.

Key Scriptures:

Mark 1:15, John 3:3–8, Matthew 7:21, Mark 10:14–15, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 13:44, Matthew 16:24–25

Transcript:

Over the last two studies we’ve looked at the fact that the Kingdom of God is no longer the soon-coming Kingdom — it is Kingdom Now!

“The time has come. The kingdom of God has come near.” — Mark 1:15 NIV

No more waiting. The time has come, the King is here. The Kingdom is now. But how are we to enter the Kingdom? Firstly, we enter the Kingdom of God as we are born again, brought to new life in and by the Spirit of God.

“Jesus replied, ‘Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.’ ‘How can someone be born when they are old?’ Nicodemus asked. ‘Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!’ Jesus answered, ‘Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, “You must be born again.” The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.’” — John 3:3–8 NIV

Our ability to enter is not dependent on our ability to enter. It is a supernatural work of the Spirit of God that we submit to, to become born again by the Spirit of God.

Secondly, we enter the Kingdom as we do the will of God.

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.” — Matthew 7:21 NIV

Only those who do the will of God will enter the Kingdom. Works, however, are not the price of admission or what we have to do to earn our way in (because we can never do enough). Rather, doing the will of God is the behaviour of those who have been born again of the Spirit of God. It's not an earning — it is, however, how we enter.

Thirdly, we enter the Kingdom of God as we receive it as a little child.

“When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.’” — Mark 10:14–15 NIV

We enter the Kingdom as we, like little children, have a complete dependence and reliance upon — and an unwavering belief in — Father God that He is who He says He is and will do what He said He would do.

The Kingdom is now. We enter it as we become born again, doing the will of God, coming as a little child, and as we seek it first. Seeking Kingdom.

In Jesus' famous mountainside sermon, just after that instruction on how and what to pray — the Lord's Prayer — and following on from a call to get our priorities right (treasures in heaven over treasures on earth), right in the middle of Jesus' acknowledgment that there's always so much to worry about, He says, “Don't worry about it. That's not your concern. I've got it.” He wraps it all up by saying: This is what you are to be concerned about. This is the only thing you are to be concerned about and consumed with.

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.” — Matthew 6:33 NIV

There are so many things vying for our attention and affection, looking to be number one in our lives. But we are to do more than just seek His Kingdom — we are to seek first. Number one. The highest priority. Before all the other stuff. We are to seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness. Whether or not we grasp that “first,” we do at least get the order and the priority. We understand what Jesus is saying here: this pursuing of Kingdom is to be before everything else. But what does it look like to seek?

I've told the story recently about the vast number of times that one or another of my daughters has come to me saying they've lost something. You ask, “Have you looked?” and they say, “Yeah,

everywhere.” So you get up and look, and there it is — in one of the first places you look.

One of the times I lost my wedding ring — yes, I said one of the times; it has happened more than once — this time I didn't really lose it. One of my daughters hid it, then forgot where she hid it. Kelly and I tore that home up. Books off bookshelves to see if it fell behind.

Couch cushions off the couch, digging through that gross, funky stuff that builds up in the cracks of the couch. Even scrounging through the rubbish bin.

Here's the Kingdom of God reality: we're not called to look for the Kingdom of God like one of my daughters looked for their lost toy. It is to be the number one thing that we deliberately, passionately, no-holds-barred go after.

We are to seek, to pursue, to go after it like it's the only thing I am doing right now — like it's the only thing that matters. We are to seek out, to go hard after it like that lost wedding ring. Jesus didn't say “look first.” Jesus said “seek first.”

We are to pursue the Kingdom of God with a level of desire and deliberateness like it's everything to us — because it is everything to us, because He is everything to us.

In the Gospel according to Matthew, which has the most references to the Kingdom, Jesus tells a parable to explain what the kingdom of heaven is like:

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.” — Matthew 13:44 NIV

He sold all that he had to buy this treasure. But the point is not that any of us could ever purchase or earn the Kingdom with efforts, works, or finances. The point is this: if it costs you everything, it's worth it. With joy he gave everything upon finding the Kingdom. When he found the only

thing, he willingly gave everything. And fellowship of Yeshua — the seeking of Kingdom — does cost us everything. Jesus said:

“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.” — Matthew 16:24–25 NIV



This is the entry point to following the King. This is the entry to Kingdom: by giving all we are and all we have to get Him, to get Kingdom. But in giving everything, we've lost nothing — and gained everything.

Of course I'd sell all that I have for that field — do you see what's in it? That's what it looks like to seek first.

Because it is everything, because He is everything, we willingly and joyfully give everything we have and everything we are to it and for it.

Seeking is an all-in, holding-nothing-back, deliberate, priority-altering posture that says, "I'm not giving up or going anywhere until I get what I'm after, until I reckon upon the Kingdom." And that is to be first. That is to be number one.

That we would seek first the Kingdom of God.

