



SERMON ON THE MOUNT

THE WAY OF THE KINGDOM

AN INTRODUCTION TO “THE WAY OF THE KINGDOM”

This section serves two purposes. It is the close of Matthew 6:1-21 and introduces our final section (6:25-7:29). Jesus here sums up not only the previous section on spiritual disciplines but really the whole sermon. He teaches us two things: First, there are earthly and heavenly rewards and the heavenly rewards are much better and second, that what really matters (and what dictates which rewards you get) are a matter of the heart.

The eyes are the lamp of the body, so what are you looking at? What catches your gaze? What makes you dream? Jesus makes this important observation and then apparently changes the subject to money, or does he? Is this a non-sequitur or is Jesus pulling a Jesus and revealing what is probably true about us? Jesus spends more time than the average preacher talking about money because (as he says) it is at the root of all kinds of evil.

WEEK FOUR: “Ask, Seek, Knock”

Matthew 7:7-11

Life isn't always clear. It's not uncommon to walk through the day-to-day in a dazed confusion about the world, the purpose of our lives, the struggle of family issues, etc. Living each day in a society that is so highly stimulated with news—good and bad—can stir up lots of cloudiness our hearts and our minds when it comes to staying focused and determined to carry on.

In this passage of scripture, we see Jesus' heart to communicate to us that when we present all that we are to God by asking, seeking, and knocking, He meets us with eagerness to answer our call. There is a sense of urgency in asking God and seeking Him because there is an urgency for us to live in unity with Him.

God loves us dearly. The Bible says that whoever acknowledges their need for Christ's redemption and cleansing from sin is now a child of God. As Christians, we are adopted into God's goodness and given everything we will ever truly need. God wants to engage us on every level that we choose to engage Him on and more, from the smallest concern to the greatest of hardships life throws our way. God is eager for us to ask and to seek Him because He knows that nothing else could ever satisfy our soul's deepest longing to be provided for by His perfect love.

God's empathy demonstrated through Jesus' life as the sacrifice for our sin shows us not only that He wants us to bring these things to Him, but that He is the only one equipped to handle them properly. How we approach God when faced with the everyday stuff of life reveals our understanding not only of how we see God, but how receptive we are of Him as Lord.

- 1. Read Matthew 7:7-11.*
- 2. What can you learn about God's character in these verses?*
- 3. What thoughts frequently grab your attention? What do those thoughts offer you? (tasks to do, comfort, anxiety, control, hope, belonging, accomplishment, etc)*
- 4. In light of your journey with Jesus, how has God displayed His eagerness to come beside you and answer your call?*
- 5. What are the traits of Jesus you have the hardest time believing with all your heart?*
- 6. How does your answer to #5 impact how you pray? (Give others a chance to say what they think this might be.)*
- 7. Take a moment to be still and attentive to what God's Spirit is saying. How might the Spirit of God be leading you to grow in your eagerness to take things to God?*