

# Question: “What does it mean to seek first the kingdom of God?”

**Answer:** Jesus said to seek first the [kingdom of God](#) in His Sermon on the Mount ([Matthew 6:33](#)). The verse’s meaning is as direct as it sounds. We are to seek the things of God as a priority over the things of the world. Primarily, it means we are to seek the salvation that is inherent in the kingdom of God because it is of greater value than all the world’s riches. Does this mean that we should neglect the reasonable and daily duties that help sustain our lives? Certainly not. But for the Christian, there should be a difference in attitude toward them. If we are taking care of God’s business as a priority—seeking His salvation, living in obedience to Him, and sharing the good news of the kingdom with others—then He will take care of our business as He promised—and if that’s the arrangement, where is worrying?

But how do we know if we’re truly seeking God’s kingdom first? There are questions we can ask ourselves. “Where do I primarily spend my energies? Is all my time and money spent on goods and activities that will certainly perish, or in the services of God—the results of which live on for eternity?” Believers who have learned to truly put God first may then rest in this holy dynamic: “...and all these things will be given to you as well.”

God has promised to provide for His own, supplying every need (Philippians 4:19), but His idea of what we need is often different from ours, and His timing will only occasionally meet our expectations. For example, we may see our need as riches or advancement, but perhaps God knows that what truly we need is a time of poverty, loss or solitude. When this happens, we are in good company. God loved both Job and Elijah, but He allowed Satan to absolutely pound Job (all under His watchful eye), and He let that evil woman, Jezebel, break the spirit of His own prophet Elijah (Job 1–2; 1 Kings 18–19). In both cases, God followed these trials with restoration and sustenance.

These “negative” aspects of the kingdom run counter to a heresy which is gaining ground around the world, the so-called “prosperity” gospel. A growing number of false teachers are gathering followers under the message “God wants you to be rich!” But that philosophy is not the counsel of the Bible—and it is certainly not the counsel of Matthew 6:33, which is not a formula for gaining wealth. It is a description of how God works. Jesus taught that our focus should be away from this world—its status and its lying allurements—and placed upon the things of God’s kingdom.