

Today I want to discuss a passage that is often quoted, but I don't know if I have ever heard it taught completely. You may have, I don't think that I have.

# What Does Seek First the Kingdom of God Mean?

Mat 6:33 (NASB) "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided to you.

What does He mean when He says seek first His Kingdom.

To understand the **statement** we need to know the **setting**.

The setting has to do with anxiety, worry or fear

Mat 6:25 (NASB) "For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is life not more than food, and the body more than clothing?"

Mat 6:27 (NASB) "And which of you by worrying can add a single day to his life's span?"

Mat 6:28 (NASB) "And why are you worried about clothing? Notice how the lilies of the field grow; they do not labor nor do they spin thread for cloth,

Mat 6:31 (NASB) "Do not worry then, saying, 'What are we to eat?' or 'What are we to drink?' or 'What are we to wear for clothing?'"

Mat 6:34 (NASB) "So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Worry - give way to anxiety, or unease, allow your mind to dwell on troubles or difficulty.

Worry is an issue and Jesus is offering the remedy.

Matt 6:33 is the remedy to worry.

So what is everyone worried about? Security, or lack of it.

Then as now people need security

Everything is about security.

**security** Freedom from risk or danger; safety. Freedom from doubt, anxiety, or fear; confidence. Something that gives or makes feel safe. . (Security Blanket)

- Safe Spaces?
- Financial security
- Online security
- What is Universal Healthcare - security.

Why do we lock our doors at night?

Why do we lock our cars, shut our windows and put passwords on our computers?

Because there are threats everywhere. So we learn to value personal security above anything else.

Jesus values security too. The New Testament does not portray Him as reckless or blind to our reality.

But when He joins us in this painful, insecure world, **He still chooses to live with love for God and others above anything else.**

Is Jesus just a unique hero, like Superman or Spiderman, doing something no one else can? Or is He showing us a way to live on Earth right now?

Jesus is showing us how to live life securely

# Jesus is seeking to lift humanity from anxiety worry and fear into love calm and peace.

He is drawing a contrast between the way the Kingdom of Carnality (world) works and the way the Kingdom of God works - the way “they” live and the way “we” live

Mat 6:8 (NASB) “So do not be like them; ...

When Jesus starts preaching the good news of God’s Kingdom, He envisions the fulfillment of God’s long-standing promise to eradicate corruption and death—to completely renew creation and forever establish a world where you love everyone and you know that everyone loves you.

That’s the Kingdom.

Imagine living in a world where you know that nobody will harm you in any way.

## It’s a world where security is rooted in common love for one another, not protection against one another.

It’s also an abundant world, so there’s no hoarding or competing for resources.

No violence, no threats, no death. No deadbolts, no padlocks, and no passwords.

How would you live differently if you lived every day in a world like this?

Jesus saw Himself bringing this kind of life to our world through what He called “the Kingdom of God,” by teaching people about the good news of God’s Kingdom.

So in Matthew 6:3, when Jesus tells the crowds to continually “seek first the Kingdom and God’s righteousness, and all these things will be added to you,” what is He saying?

- Is Jesus offering a new way to keep our instinctive value for personal security above all else?
- Or is he saying we should stop thinking about securing food, clothing, and shelter altogether because the Kingdom is here?
- Or is he inviting people to see that God’s Kingdom is here and available —teaching us to practice ways of life rooted in strong love for God and others?

### **The Choice of How To Live Secure Lives**

In Genesis 1 and 2, the Bible invites us to see a life-and-death choice that humans have to make. Will we live freely and forever in God’s abundant world (represented by the garden of Eden)

Or will we try to rule according to our own wisdom?

In Genesis 3:1-15, the humans trust their own decision on how the world should work more than they trust God’s wisdom.

They eat from the tree that God specifically told them to avoid, and they immediately experience fear.

They end up outside the good garden, suffering in a world of injury, loss, and death—a place where deadbolts and weapons make sense because life is dangerous and eventually returns to dust.

The Bible reveals man’s search for security - but they almost always look in all the wrong places.

*Psa 20:7-8 (BSB) Some trust in chariots and others in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God. [8] They collapse and fall, but we rise up and stand firm.*

*Isa 31:1 (NAS95) Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help And rely on horses, And trust in chariots because they are many And in horsemen because they are very strong, But they do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the LORD!*

Even the Blessing can be abused by becoming our security blanket.

Remember when God said, You are gonna live in nice big houses that you did not build, and you are going to drink sweet chilled water from wells you did not dig and you are going to eat grapes from vineyards you did not plant - you are gonna be blessed Big Time!

Deu 6:12 (NAS95) then watch yourself, that you do not forget the LORD who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

Jesus weaves this thread from Genesis 3 right to the heart of his teaching. He speaks directly to the deep human instinct for security.

What do I need to own, or whom must I defeat, in order to live another day?

His response to this question sums up the essence of his Sermon on the Mount: “But seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you.”

Notice how Matthew 6:33 begins with the contrasting conjunction “but,” telling us that he’s helping us see a contrast with what came before.

Earlier in Matthew 6, he describes two worlds: one where humans anxiously secure their lives according to their preferences and personal perspectives, and one where humans freely live according to God's wisdom and provision—a world where every person trusts that God ultimately gives people everything they need for life.

Surrounded by poverty, crime, and threats of violence, we rightly sense danger everywhere.

Working to protect “me and mine” at any cost, even if it includes neglecting or harming others, has become normal, even “virtuous” in popular culture.

We’ve got our own problems to deal with, and doing what it takes to generously love each of our neighbors sounds nice but feels unrealistic.

So when we hear Jesus say, “Seek first the Kingdom of God,” it sounds idealistic and impractical if not impossible.

But Jesus resists the temptation to depend on violence of any kind to preserve himself. He rejects every selfish way of gaining personal security, and he becomes the clearest example of what it looks like to live in this new way of life.

He calls us to life here as if it we were already there.

### **Seeking First the Kingdom in a Dangerous World**

The tension we feel when Jesus says "seek first the Kingdom" is related to the fact that this Kingdom is not fully here yet. He is the king. He is on the throne. But not everyone realizes this.

It would be easier to practice loving every neighbor with perfect love in a world where every neighbor loves you back the same way, but it's difficult (even deadly) to practice that way of life in a hostile world.

When danger still exists, **fear can compel us more than love.**

When that happens, listen to me here, we will conform to natural patterns of life that value self security above all else.

### **Possessions, income, and protections help us feel safe.**

But to seek first the Kingdom of God means prioritizing love over survival—something Jesus embodies throughout his life and teaching, especially on the cross.

The story about the early Church in Acts 2 gives us a glimpse of people compelled by love and living in the ways of Jesus.

They're living in God's Kingdom while also surviving in our dangerous world. How?

The story describes them as a community of people choosing to help each other live together in the way of their King.

It's a life marked by selfless giving and freedom from fearful self-preservation.

The New Testament's gospel accounts show us how Jesus encouraged his followers to receive life as an ongoing gift from God and to live as a gift, or grace, toward others.

He never suggests that some violence is needed to stay safe or that some selfishness is necessary for improved comfort or efficiency.

He flips that hostile script and lives according to the promised reality of God's Kingdom becoming just as real on Earth as it is in Heaven.

Living in the way of Jesus sets us free to love our neighbors as generously as he does.

### **Where True Safety and Security Come From**

The Kingdom of Carnality finds security in possessions, positions and power.

But Jesus, the King of God's Kingdom, tells us that security and satisfaction result when we love God and others as we love ourselves.

When Jesus says "all these things will be added to you," he's talking about drink, food, and shelter—all symbols of provision and security.

Mat 6:26 (TPT) "Look at all the birds—do you think they worry about their existence? They don't plant or reap or store up food, yet your heavenly Father provides them each with food. Aren't you much more valuable to your Father than they?"

Well? Aren't you!

Mat 6:28 (NLT) "And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing,

\*that word "work" means to labor to intense exhaustion, weary yourselves. Till there is no joy in your life, no hope in your heart.

If you chase after what the unbelievers chase after - SECURITY IN STUFF it will leave you anxious, worried and wore out.

Trust God!

We'll stop competing with coworkers. We'll stop fretting about others' approval. We'll stop exhausting ourselves to secure a future we cannot control.

The more we practice the ways of Jesus and his Kingdom, the more we enter a kind of freedom that helps us see how we are no longer in danger right now.

God's got us. We are safe, and we are loved.