

Week 6: Concerns of the Kingdom-Making the King's concerns our own

Purple text are questions to ask class

Anchoring scriptures

he rebuked Peter and said "Get behind me Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man." Mt 16:23-25 (parallel in Mark 8:33-35)

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Mt 6:33

Intro

What are the King's concerns? What does God care about?

Start with question

What matters to you?

What would others use to gauge what matters to you?

What do you think mattered to Jesus' disciples when they were with him (good and bad)?

Some of their less than proudest moments

Mk 9:34 - Disciples arguing over who was greatest

Mk 10:35-37 - James and John asking that they be seated at the right and left of Jesus in his glory

Other similar examples?

And the one that tops them all

he rebuked Peter and said "Get behind me Satan! For **you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.**" Mt 16:23-25 (parallel in Mark 8:33-35)

Jesus follows this with

"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself...For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

This is a hard saying. **What does it mean to deny yourself, to take up your cross, to lose your life for Christ's sake?**

Let's back up. What does God care about?

US! John 3:16-For God so loved the world

What does he want for/from us?

1. To not perish

He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. 2 Pet. 3:9

2. To love, Him and each other

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Mt. 22:36-40

3. To be holy

but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, You shall be holy, for I am holy. 1 Peter 1:15-16

These 3 are all tied together.

God's eye is on eternity (Daniel 4:3, Jn 18:36). Ours be on eternity too.

How do we keep our eye on eternity, not be turned aside by the temporary?

So break it down.

God wants us to love, Him and each other

If we love Him, we will want to be like him (holy), so we can be with Him.

If we love others, we will not want them to perish

What does this mean in practice?

Be Holy 1 Peter 1:13-14, 17, 22-23 through 2:2

Not want them to perish

“Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; 2 Tim. 4:2

Action Items

1. Practicing holiness: Dig into scripture. Focus on 2 scriptures to commit to memory
2. Loving others: Think of one person whose needs you can help meet
3. Not perish: Think of one person you can speak to about God (this does not have to be direct evangelizing. It could be as simple as giving them a card with a scripture, or checking in on them if they have missed church for a while.)

With all 3 of these begin and continue with prayer!

Teacher Notes

Other scriptures on loving others in practice (serving, putting others before ourselves)

Jesus washing feet of disciples Jn 13:12-14

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though in the form of God...

Phil. 2:3-8

“Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.” Rom 15:1-3

Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. Mt 20:28, Mk 10:45

Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.” Mk 9:35

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. Gal 5:13

If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? 1 Jn 3:17

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10

My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism.

James 2:1

Other scriptures to spark discussion

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God Mt. 4:4, Deut 8:3b

From C.S. Lewis-Mere Christianity

We should cultivate Christian virtue

God is not just concerned with how you behave but what kind of person you are. What matters to God is who you are on the inside. Lewis argues there are three points we should take from this.

1. Motives matter. It is not enough simply to act in the right way, one must do so for the right reasons. To be virtuous, you must pursue virtue for its own sake. For example, if you give to charity for recognition, or help a neighbor to put them in your debt, you have not been virtuous.
2. Every choice matters. God is concerned with every decision you make, large or small, because choices accumulate over time, ultimately shaping the person you become.
3. Effort matters. Lewis writes that God understands the obstacles each of us faces in trying to become virtuous. While God's ultimate standards may be difficult to reach, he welcomes every attempt as a positive step. This does not mean God has different standards for everyone. Rather God expects effort at virtue from everyone no matter their stage of moral development.