

10-27-19 SEEKING FIRST THINGS FIRST

This is missions month. This whole month is focused on trying to encourage you to consider getting behind the commandment of our Lord to spread the gospel throughout the world. We have what is called a faith promise missions giving fund that we encourage you to invest in.

I believe the Lord will bless you for doing what He has told you to do. Believing God will bless you for your obedience. What do we lose by trusting God? We are all under this spiritual law, “the wages of sin is death..”. Meaning we are all surely going to die and have to face God someday. Do we really risk anything by trusting God and serving Him and putting Him first? It is only reasonable that we put God first. This morning I want to challenge you to “SEEK TO PUT GOD FIRST IN YOUR LIFE..”

The only reason we do not put God first is because we want to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Why will we trade the eternal for the temporal? Everything we can obtain in this temporal world we are going to lose. God promises to take care of you if you put Him first:

Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

This morning I want to talk to you about how we should seek to put God first in our lives. Exactly how should we put God first in our lives?

SEEK FIRST THINGS FIRST.

- I. SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD.***
- II. SEEK FIRST TO LOVE GOD.***
- III. SEEK FIRST TO GIVE TO GOD.***
- IV. SEEK FIRST TO GIVE GOD YOUR REASONABLE SERVICE.***
- V. SEEK FIRST THE THINGS THAT ARE JESUS CHRIST'S.***
- VI. SEEK FIRST TO WIN THE LOST.***

SEEKING FIRST THING FIRST.

Consider, how do you put God first in your life? You do it by obeying these principles that I am going to share this morning and then tonight.

I. SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Matthew 6:31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

Matthew 6:32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Jesus, when he taught his disciples to pray, said that the one of the first things that should be in our prayers is to seek first the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Matthew 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Jesus said, before we pray for our job or employment, our health, our finances, our needs, our bills, our desires, our daily concerns.

PRAY FOR GOD'S KINGDOM TO COME TO EARTH.

We talked a little about this in our Wednesday night service when we talked about the power of God in prayer. That power is given to those who are doing God's business. His business revolves around His Kingdom. God is seeking to bring His Kingdom down to earth.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. God is seeking to advance His Kingdom on earth. That involves two things. His Church which is a foolish nation and the restoration of His nation Israel which will take place someday in the tribulation period. In the day we live God is recruiting citizens for His kingdom. This is what we are doing.

It is amazing how few people really have a heart for God's work. Today the Kingdom business is Church business. We are gathered together as children of God's kingdom.

The Church is a training ground for citizens of the Kingdom.

To seek the welfare and advancement of the church is to seek first the Kingdom of God.

The Bible says:

SEEK YE FIRST _____ WHAT???? THE KINGDOM OF GOD..

What is God's Kingdom plan for the day in which we live?

In I Cor. chapter 6 Paul makes an argument for how the church should exercise itself in Kingdom business. That business is higher than earthly business and government.

If Christ is King, and His church is His foolish nation in the day that we live, then the business of the church is God's business. The Bible says we should seek first the Kingdom of God. Paul in this Chapter rebukes the church at Corinth for going to the world for their inferior judgment.

I Corinthians 6:1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

I Corinthians 6:2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

I Corinthians 6:3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

I Corinthians 6:4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

I Corinthians 6:5 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?

I Corinthians 6:6 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.

I Corinthians 6:7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?

I Corinthians 6:8 Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.

I Corinthians 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters,

nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,
I Corinthians 6:10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers,
nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

I Corinthians 6:11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Kingdom business is supreme business. Church business is Kingdom business.

1CO 4:19 But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.

1CO 4:20 For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

The Bible says, seek ye first the Kingdom of God.

Let me ask you? What priority do you give to God's church business?

I see a lot of People who actually look at the church as Pastor Bissol's business. NO IT IS CHRIST'S KINGDOM BUSINESS. It is not deacons business or trustee business or certain church leaders business. It is God's business.

Some people look at the church as some kind of club or earthly organization.

THE CHURCH IS GOD'S PROGRAM FOR THIS DAY THAT WE LIVE IN. IT IS SUPPOSE TO BE THE MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM TO PEOPLE OF THIS EARTH.

WE ARE TO BE HIS LIGHT.
WE ARE TO BE HIS NEW COVENANT PEOPLE.

What priority do you give to His Church, which is His Kingdom?

Every Kingdom has citizens, are you a citizen of his Kingdom?

There is a lot of controversy about people who come into this country who are not citizens. There are those who say, well that's not important. Why is citizenship important? It is important because it gives you a right to vote, it makes you responsible, it shows that you are abiding by the laws of the land.

How do you become a citizen of the Kingdom of God? Let me submit to you that it is by you being saved, baptized and becoming a member of his Church.

There are a lot of people trying to come in another way. There is no other way. God makes no exceptions. Do it by the Book.

II. SEEK FIRST TO LOVE GOD

Matthew 22:36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

Matthew 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

Matthew 22:38 This is the first and great commandment.

Let's put first things first.

The greatest commandment for any person is to love God with all their heart, soul, and mind.

The Lord comes first.

When I used to have family devotions with my children. We would gather together and I would read them a Bible story, we would pray, we would sing, and the I would end would this: Who do you love the most in all the world? I would say who comes first, and I would have them say. JESUS. then I say who comes second and they would say, Daddy, Mommy, etc,

Look, if your children love Jesus more than you, then you will keep your children. I want my wife to love Jesus more than me.

A wife was talking to another preacher, and she said, "when I ask my husband if he loves me, he says of course I love you. When I ask why do

you love me. Every time he says, because Jesus told me to love you.” She said, to the other preacher, "You know that really doesn't move me.." The other preacher wisely answered, “maybe not but I guarantee you it will keep him from moving.”

Men, never fear if your wife loves Jesus more than you.
Wives, never fear if your husband loves Jesus more than you.
Parents, never fear if your children love Jesus more than you.

First things first. LOVE GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART!

When you wake up in the morning, cry out to Him and say oh Jesus I love you with all my heart.

When you go to bed at night cry out and say, Oh Jesus I love you with all my heart.

When pray before a meal pray oh Jesus help us to love and honor you in all our heart. LOVE HIM FIRST.

Love Him more than Mother.
Love Him more than Father.
Love Him more than Brother or sister.
Love him more than your own life.

Now what is the proof you love Him?

Jesus said,

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

WHICH?

III. SEEK FIRST TO GIVE TO GOD

Matthew 6:19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

Matthew 6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Your giving to God is the greatest evidence that you love Him.

There are different forms of giving,

I believe God ordained the giving of a tithe to sustain His church. In the old Testament it was the temple, in the New Testament it is that foolish nation called the Church.

Malachi rebukes the nation for robbing Him of the tithe.

Malachi 3:8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

Malachi 3:9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

Malachi 3:10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Malachi 3:11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

Malachi 3:12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

If you love God you will want to obey His commandments, You may ask which?

What has he commanded you.

Luke 6:46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

Words are cheap. You can say Lord I love you all day and do nothing He says for you to do and I submit to you that you are a liar.

I had a Roadie in our band that used to go into a McDonalds and look up at the girl at the register and say, you got the most beautiful eyes, I think I love you. I would want to vomit on the spot. He didn't love her, he just

wanted something from her. Now do you think you can fool God by saying you love Him and you don't do a thing He says? You don't love Him you just want something from Him. Prove **you love Him OBEY HIM!**

Now you have not given to God anything by giving the tithe, all you did is give Him what was His.

The minimum that God asks in return is for you to give him back a tenth of what He gave to you.

A Parable of Life

Life is like another parable from another land. A blind Indian beggar sat beside a road, fingering the rice in his little bowl. Wearing only a loin cloth, he sat in poverty beside a road that stretched into nowhere both ways. The scarce travelers occasionally gave him a little rice. One day he heard the thunder of a chariot in the distance. It was the grand entourage of the maharajah. This was a moment that had never come before. Surely the great one would stop and give him baskets of rice.

Indeed, the golden chariot of the maharajah stopped before the poor beggar. The great one stepped down and the beggar fell before him. Then the sky seemed to fall in. "Give me your rice," said the great one. A fearful, hateful, scowl masked the face of the beggar. He reached into his bowl and thrust one grain of rice toward the maharajah. "Is that all?" said the great one. The beggar spat on the ground, cursed, and threw him one more grain of rice. The great one turned, entered his chariot, and was gone.

The beggar-angry, empty, and crushed-fingered the remaining rice he had hoarded in his bowl. He felt something hard, different from the rice. He pulled it out. It was one grain of gold. He poured out his rice, caring nothing for it now. He found one other grain of gold. Had he trusted the great one, he could have had a grain of gold for every grain of rice. We rob ourselves because we do not want God to get our rice, and all along He is ready to pour out more that we can contain.(E-Sword)

Give to Live: The more of your rice you give, the greater the Master can make you live.

No matter how rich you are in this life, you are like that beggar, afraid to give to God but someday you will have regrets.

Voltaire, the French infidel and prolific writer, attempted to destroy Christianity with ink. During his life, he bragged, "In twenty years, Christianity will be no more. My single hand shall destroy the edifice it took twelve apostles to rear." According to the physician who was with him, Voltaire cried as he died, "I am abandoned by God and man! I will give you half of what I am worth if you will give me six months of life. Then I shall go to hell, and you will go with me. O Christ! O Jesus Christ!" The nurse who attended him said, "For all the wealth in Europe I would

not see another infidel die.” Not long after his death, the house in which he printed his blasphemous literature became the headquarters of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

How sad it is that we are afraid to give to God. If you are child of God you should want to please God and one way you can do that is to give to His work.

After you give the Lord the tithe, what you choose to give above that is up to you.

Malachi 3:8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

What you give above the tithe is what you give out of a heart of love for the Lord.

II Corinthians 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

The tithe goes to supporting the bills and upkeep of the local church. Our offerings are what we choose to give above the tithe.

We have Faith promise missions giving to help support missionaries around the world. Our local church does not get any monetary benefit from this money. We encourage people to give above the tithe to missions. We don't mandate this, we ask you to pray about it. If you love the Lord you will want to show Him. This is one way you can prove you love him. You prove you love Him by tithing, you prove you love Him by giving your offerings. If you don't love the Lord giving will be grievous to you. You will be like that beggar clinging to your little grains of rice.

The Lord commanded his people to tithe.

Deuteronomy 14:22 Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year.

We don't force anyone to tithe. If you love God you will want to tithe.
John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

We don't force anyone to give an offering. If you love God you will want to give.

Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Where is your heart? Where is your treasure?

Malachi 3:10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Malachi 3:11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

God promises to rebuke the devourer in your life if you obey him in giving the tithe. There are very few commands in the Bible that are accompanied with a promise. God never promises to give a special blessing if you do not kill, you are just to obey,

Go to a police officer and ask for a reward for keeping the speed limit and see what he says to you. Most times when a law is written and you disobey it there is a punishment. There is a punishment associated with not tithing, that punishment is that God will let the devil take from you. He is called the devourer, He will devour your health, your wealth, and anything else he can devour. Your only protection against the devourer is God. People think the government is what helps the economy. No, all the government can do is hinder the economy by making laws that punish people. Rom. 13 says the job of government is to bear the sword and punish those who do evil. Every law written must have a corresponding penalty.

God's law concerning tithing is the only law that says when you do this I will reward you.

Under the O.T. law, God told his people if they tithed He would reward them.

Under the New Testament God says, when you give He will reward you. He loves a cheerful giver.

Now according to Malachi 3:10-11, with the command to tithe comes a promise of a blessing.

Malachi 3:10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Malachi 3:11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

Seek first things first:

- I. SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD.
- II. SEEK FIRST TO LOVE GOD.
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Seek first things first.

Jim Elliot, a young missionary who was martyred for his faith, encouraged others to serve when he said: "He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

SERMON
SEEK TO PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST
PART II

SEEK FIRST THINGS FIRST

We have said,

- I. SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD.***
- II. SEEK FIRST TO LOVE GOD.***
- III. SEEK FIRST TO GIVE TO GOD.***

Now consider:

- IV. SEEK FIRST TO GIVE GOD YOUR REASONABLE SERVICE.***

V. SEEK FIRST THE THINGS THAT ARE JESUS CHRIST'S.

VI. SEEK FIRST TO WIN THE LOST.

IV. SEEK FIRST TO GIVE GOD YOUR REASONABLE SERVICE.

II Corinthians 8:1 Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

II Corinthians 8:2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

II Corinthians 8:3 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;

II Corinthians 8:4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

II Corinthians 8:5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

It is one thing to give your money but even better is to give of yourself and to give your body as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is only your reasonable service. Didn't Peter say he had something better to give than silver and gold? We can give such as we have.

Do you give or do you take?

Do you serve or are you one who looks to be served?

The Lord does not save people just for them to go to Heaven. He bought you and died for you and now it is only reasonable that you serve Him.

What service do you do for the Lord?

Notice Paul commended the saints at Macedonia because they first gave of themselves.

This reminds me of the message I preached at Selwyn Schmitt's funeral At his funeral I was bragging on Selwyn and all that he did for the Lord's church. Since I wrote out the sermon, I have a record of what I said, here is what I said about this dear brother, Sept 5th 1989

... everywhere you look Selwyn had a part. Look at our new pews, he was here when we installed them. You're sitting on wood he tightened down. You're walking on rug he helped get. You're looking at lights he ran wire for.

You'll be sitting at tables that just a few weeks ago he worked on. You'll use water he helped to get to this building. You'll use bathrooms that he did just about all the plumbing for!

There is no doubt in my mind that Selwyn Schmitt loved the Lord and dedicated himself to the service of the Lord. After I preached his funeral message as we were headed to our cars to go to the gravesite, some old lady said to a friend, "Well, he should have done more for himself and not the church.. " She obviously said it loud enough for me to hear. What is sad is that if that lady never repented and got saved she is dead and in hell today wishing she would have taken heed to that message I preached.

I tell you today I believe Selwyn Schmitt is glad he laid up treasure in heaven and not on earth. Now his dear wife Marion Schmitt is with him and soon we all will be with him and what treasures are we laying up in heaven?

I remember one workday a few of us men were in the woods cutting wood for the church. It was freezing rain, only a few of us were there that day and Jack McKeeby, said to me, "Pastor, I want you to know I wouldn't even do this for myself, but for the Lord I will do it.. "

Here we have men who walked among us that offered their bodies a living sacrifice. How about you?

V. SEEK FIRST THE THINGS THAT ARE JESUS CHRIST'S.

Philippians 2:21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

I Corinthians 10:24 Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.

I know that we all have cares and problems we face in this life. I believe that if you seek to put the things of the Lord above your own that in the process God will see to it that you get what you have to do done.

Every Christian should put the things of the Lord first.

Notice we meet the first day of the week. Every Christian ought to give the Lord the first day of the week. I believe if you put God first you will want to put assembling yourself first.

Do you realize there are two reasons you come to Church. One is to get spiritual benefits, but second is to give spiritual benefits.

Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

We need to provoke one another to love and good works. Did you ever think that you just being here may provoke someone in the area of love? Did you ever think that coming to church is an opportunity for you to learn what good works you can do for the Lord? Maybe you find out a brother or sister has a need. Maybe an announcement is given for a need that only you can fulfill.

Get involved, get to work, put the things of the Lord first. Now listen carefully, if what you do is for the Lord, no man can get you to stop doing it. I always hear people that are sour because of some bad experience they have had with some preacher or some church. If some backslidden preacher can offend you enough to keep you from church, you never went to church for the Lord you went for the preacher. If some backslidden deacon could offend you enough to keep you from serving the Lord, you are serving the Lord for men, not for the Lord.

ROM 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,
ROM 8:39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Let me add.. NOR PREACHER, NOR CHURCH MEMBER, NOR MRS. MCGILACUDDY, NOR CHURCH DEACON SO OR SO, SHALL SEPARATE YOU FROM THE LOVE OF GOD.

PSA 119:165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

Be like Timothy of old. Paul said of him,

Philippians 2:20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.

Philippians 2:21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

Philippians 2:22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

Paul said, of Timothy, he was a person that put the things of Christ first in his life.

VI. SEEK FIRST TO WIN THAT WHICH IS LOST.

Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Luke 15:4 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

Luke 15:5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

Luke 15:6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

Luke 15:7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

This is missions month and this month we try to encourage people to have a heart for the great commission. Seeking and winning the lost!

If the Angels of heaven rejoice over one person getting saved, how much more should we rejoice. I remember years ago, I was visiting a fellow's mother who came to our church. The son was there and I was sharing the gospel with his mom. I shared the gospel and she was about to pray and just then the fellow said to everyone, that he was leaving. I rebuked him before everyone. I said, your mom is about to pray and ask Jesus into her heart can't you just stay as she prays.

I don't understand people who say they are saved and have absolutely no heart for lost souls.

Paul the Apostle said,

Romans 9:1 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

Romans 9:2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

Romans 9:3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

Romans 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

Do we have a heart for seeing people come to Christ. Or have we lost our first love?

When I first heard the gospel I said, "What kind of person would I be if these things be true, if I did not try to share this message with everyone I could? This is the logical conclusion of this great message.

Conclusion:

I. SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

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Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Seeking God first is just a matter of priorities in your life. People often say to me I don't know how you do all that you do. The truth is that I do not do very many things. All my life consists of three things and in this order.

The Lord and his business called the Church.

My family.

My earthly business which helps both the church & my family.

This is how I operate.

Reason I don't hunt is because I don't have time to hunt.

Reason I don't follow sports is because I don't have time to follow sports.

The Bible says, redeem the time for the days are evil. There is only so much time that we have in this world. Use your time wisely, invest for eternity.