

Seek First the Kingdom

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Jesus forever settles where God's church, the kingdom on earth, should come in one's list of values: "But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness" (Mat. 6:33). But when and under what circumstances should we do this? One is correct in saying, "All of the time and under all circumstances." However, such an answer is too general to have much meaning for most of us. Let us ask, and answer, more specifically, "When should one seek the kingdom first?"

When one marries. If one is interested in serving God and going to Heaven, it is only reasonable that he or she should choose a companion who will have this interest. It is one of the world's great tragedies to see a fine, dedicated-to-Christ young person fall in love with someone who has no interest at all in spiritual things and never will. At best the faithful Christian must shoulder all the spiritual burden of the home and at worst many are drawn away by their companions and lose their souls.

When one chooses his or her life's work. If the kingdom is at the top of our list in life, we will never consider any sort of business or employment that would weaken us spiritually, tarnish our reputation, or contribute to evil forces (even if said forces are legal).

When one rears and educates one's children. What do we want most for our children? Do we care more about their social and physical needs than their spiritual needs? Is our driving ambition that they may be popular at all costs, or faithful Christians? If we are really seeking the kingdom first, we will want our children to have the education that will help preserve and strengthen their faith for many years of Christian service that will end in Heaven.

When one makes "big" decisions. What is the main factor in governing our big decisions, such as changing jobs, moving, or buying a house.? How much financial gain, whether we will like the climate, what the living conditions will be, and such like., must all be considered. But, for the Christian, the important question is, "Will this enable me to serve the Lord better, or will it hinder my spiritual development and service?" In any big decision, we ought to pray, "Thy will be done."

When one has financial success. If we lay up treasures only on earth, we are fools; if we lavishly spend them on pleasures, forgetting the Lord's kingdom, we are fools twice over. If the kingdom is not first financially, how is it first at all?

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