

SEEKING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

MATTHEW 6:33 • TV067B

A television broadcast sermon delivered
SUNDAY, JUNE 11TH, 1978

By
HENRY T. MAHAN

Transcribed, edited and published
DECEMBER 20TH, 2017

HENRY T. MAHAN TAPE LIBRARY

Zebulon Baptist Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
Pikeville, KY 41501
PH: 606-631-9053

Matthew 6:33

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

I’m going to speak to you on the subject: **“SEEKING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.”**

Now, in **Matthew 6:31 and 32** our Lord condemns anxious worry and care concerning the material things of this world. He condemns it. He tells us this: *“Therefore, take no thought, (now this is anxious thought, take no anxious thought, unusual care and worry) saying, what shall I eat? What shall I drink? Wherewithal shall I be clothed? Your heavenly Father knows you have need of these things.”* He knows you need them so don’t you worry about it. Don’t take any anxious thought about these things because it’s needless, absolutely needless.

“If God so clothe the lily of the field which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven and burnt up, if God feeds a sparrow which is not worth but very little, how much more shall he clothe you, you His child? How much more shall He feed and care for you?”

He said, *“If you being evil know how to give good things to your children, if your child asks for bread would you give him a stone? If he asked for meat would you give him a serpent? And if you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall the heavenly Father (who is infinitely more merciful than we are) give good things to them that ask Him?”*

SEEKING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

MATTHEW 6:33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

So, worry on the part of a believer is needless. Now, I'm not talking to all people, the sinner has much to worry about. He has much to be concerned about. The wrath of God is upon him. *"He that believeth not on the Son, the wrath of God abideth on him."*

He needs to be concerned about tomorrow. He needs to be concerned about the next day and every day, but not the believer. It's needless for the believer to worry and not only needless but it's useless.

Our Lord said, *"Which of you by taking thought (or anxious care) can add one cubit to your stature (one year to your life)? Can the farmer by worrying make it rain? Can he preserve his crops by pacing the floor?"*

It's in the hands of God. God's the Lord of the harvest. He's the sower, He's the seed, and He's the Lord of the harvest. And it's useless for us to worry about these things, and not only needless and useless, but pagan; that's right pagan.

Our Lord said, *"After all these things do the Gentiles seek."* He's speaking to the Jewish people. The Gentiles were the heathen. They were the pagans. And our Lord is saying now, if you have anxious care and worry and thought about what you're going to eat, drink, and wear, like the Gentiles, like the heathen; that's all they're concerned about.

They're not concerned about spiritual things; they are concerned about material things only. They have no God. They have no providence. They have no God of purpose who says, *"All things work together for good to them who love God, who are the called according to His purpose."*

So, the heathen has no God, so he worries. He has no purpose so he's concerned; he has no providential care to look after him and watch over him, so he's got to be concerned. But not you; you have a heavenly Father.

Now remember this: *"You can't serve two masters."* Christ says that in **verse 24 of Matthew 6**: *"No man can serve two masters."* Either materialism is your Lord or Christ is your Lord, but not both!

You can't divide your life into half of this world and half for God. You've got to bow to one or the other, serve one or the other, be obedient to one or the other, and be concerned about one or the other.

So Christ is saying, "Don't take anxious thoughts, saying what shall we eat and what shall we drink, what shall we wear, wherewithal shall we be clothed, where shall we sleep, what about tomorrow, who's going to take care of me in my old age?"

Will I have security? Will a storm come? Will Russia take over? Will the world be destroyed? Don't worry about these things. They're in the hands of the heavenly Father.

SEEKING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

MATTHEW 6:33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Now then, in **verse 33** He does tell us something to be concerned about, that's right; He tells every one of us something to desire and to seek and to seek with diligence and deep sincerity and concern.

He said, "*But seek ye first before all things the kingdom of God and His righteousness.*" Now this is worthy of concern. This is worthy of deep desire. This is worthy of sincere anxiety to seek the kingdom of God.

Now I'd be concerned about that because blessed is the man who's King and God is the Lord. Blessed is the man who with Thomas can say sincerely and truthfully, Christ is "*My Lord and my God.*"

Materialism is not my God. Popularity is not my God. This world is not my God. Self is not my God; Christ is my God. And blessed is that man who is clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

"Seek ye first, (first before all things, I mean before family care, I mean before personal care, I mean before physical health, I mean before all things; that's what Christ is saying) Seek ye first, the kingdom of God and His righteousness."

Now, that's something to be concerned about. Your concern for material things is condemned. Your concern for spiritual matters is commanded. Your concern for the things of this world is condemned. Your concern for the world to come is commanded and not only commanded but accompanied with a promise.

He said, "*You seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.*" These things that you have previously been concerned about, what shall I eat, what shall I drink, wherewithal shall I be clothed; these will be added to you in God's own time.

You may not have the abundance that you think you deserve or you'd like to have but it'll be added in God's good time, eternal health, eternal wealth, eternal joy, eternal care, eternal glory; that's the main thing anyway.

It's not how I fair in this life but how I fair in eternity. That's what's really important, isn't it? "*So you seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you.*"

Now in **Matthew 13:44** our Lord illustrates this seeking of the kingdom of heaven. Now He has condemned materialism. He has condemned what is so prevalent today and it's all around you, greed, grasping, going forth for all the things of this world.

We're never satisfied are we? We always want a little more of the things of this world, not just necessities but luxuries, and all of these things. Christ condemns that. He tells us to give our care and concern and diligence to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

SEEKING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

MATTHEW 6:33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

I know a little bit about what Paul was talking about in **Philippians 3** when he said; “*O that I may win Christ. O that I may win Christ and be found in Him. O that I may know Him and the power of His resurrected life.*”

Our Lord said, “*What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?*” To hear Christ say to him in that day, “*Depart from me I never knew you.*”

If a man has Christ he has everything. He has wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. He has acceptance with God. He has forgiveness of sin. He has eternal life. He’s a joint-heir with Jesus Christ. He’s an heir of God. Christ said, “All things are yours whether in life or death, and they’re all yours.”

Now our Lord illustrates this seeking of the kingdom of God. And I want to be quite plain, and in being plain I believe that I’m dealing honestly with myself and with you from God’s Word. This thing of seeking the kingdom of God is a lot more than having a nominal interest in religion.

Now this is what we are plagued with on every hand today, a nominal interest in religion. People dress up and go to church on Sunday and that’s about the end of it until next Sunday morning.

Many dress up and go to church on Easter, Mother’s Day, Christmas, Lent, or some special Memorial Day service, or some special resurrection service. They just have a nominal interest in religion.

They’re really not possessed with it. They’re not really; they don’t want to be fanatical you know and radical and after all they say, “I’m not really religious. I’m no saint, you know.” They have just a nominal interest in religion. That’s not what we’re talking about. That’s not seeking the kingdom of God.

And this thing of seeking the kingdom of God is not just getting fixed up for heaven. And as they say, “He made his peace with God; everything’s all right, you know; he’s ready to die.” That’s not seeking the kingdom of God. That’s not what our Lord’s talking about at all. You’re going to see that in a moment.

And then this thing of seeking the kingdom of God is not just erasing the fear of death. “Well I’m not afraid to die.” No, most people aren’t because most people have some kind of refuge, false or otherwise.

“I’m not afraid of the Judgment. I just want justice.” Well, I don’t think you do, really. You might want justice from men but the justice of God is quite severe, “*Who spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all.*” Who was made sin for us, who bear our sin in His own body, (who was made guilty by imputation not by His actual transgression).

And they say, “I’m not afraid of Him.” Most people aren’t. They’ve never seen Him and they don’t fear what they haven’t seen. But this thing of seeking the kingdom of God is a whole lot

SEEKING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

MATTHEW 6:33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

more than just erasing the fear of death, judgment, and hell. And it's a whole lot more than reformation of life.

That's right; it's a whole lot more than keeping a few laws and straightening up your life and joining a church and making a decision for Jesus. Our Lord illustrates for us what it is to seek the kingdom of God.

He said, "*You seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you.*" Well what is it? Look at **Matthew 13:44**; let the Saviour's outline be ours. He has three points.

First of all: He says: "*This kingdom of heaven that you're to seek is like a treasure hid in a field to which when a man hath found it and for the joy thereof he goeth and selleth all that he has and buys that field*"

Now that's what the kingdom of heaven is. It's like a treasure hid in a field that a man finds and for the joy in his heart and soul over finding that treasure he goes and sells everything he has and buys that field.

"Interpret that preacher." All right, will you listen to me?

First of all: The treasure, what is it?

The treasure is the Gospel; it's the Gospel. And what a treasure it is. Paul said: "*I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; it is the power of God unto salvation, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*"

What a treasure, that is the power, the dynamite of God Himself to the salvation of both Jew and Gentile. What a treasure is this Gospel that enables a holy God to be just and to justify the ungodly.

What a treasure is this Gospel that lifts a beggar from the dunghill and elevates him to priesthood and to a kingship and makes him a prince to sit among the princes, a beggar on the dunghill. This Gospel; what a treasure!

What a treasure it is that gives sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, legs to the lame, life to the dead, freedom to the captive. That's what Christ said He came to do. This Gospel is the power of God to do that.

What a treasure it is. What a treasure it is that covers all our sins, the great sin, and what we call the little sins of which there is no such thing. All sin, cast into the depths of the sea, cast behind the back of God and blocked out of the memory of God. What a treasure that separates our sin from us "*as far as the east is from the west.*" What a treasure, that's the treasure that the man finds hidden in a field.

SEEKING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

MATTHEW 6:33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

“Well preacher; what does it mean, the Gospel is a treasure hid in a field?” Well, the field may be applied to several things. You know, the Gospel is a mystery. Everybody doesn’t understand the Gospel that thinks they do. Everybody doesn’t preach the Gospel that thinks they do.

Everybody’s not an authority on the Gospel that thinks he is. The Scripture says, *“If our Gospel be hid; (that’s right, **2 Corinthians Chapter 4:3**), it is hid to them who are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded their minds, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine in they should be saved.”*

Matthew 13:35; listen to Christ: *“I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.”* And then over in **Matthew 13:17** He said: *“Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which you see and have not seen them, and to hear those things which you hear, and have not heard them. Blessed are your eyes; they see.”*

Look back at **verse 10**; yea they said, *“Why are you preaching in parables to the multitude?”* He said, *“They have eyes and they can’t see and ears, they don’t hear, and hearts, they don’t understand. That’s why I preach in parables.”*

The Gospel’s hid. It has to be revealed. It’s the reason, *“It’s foolishness to them that perish.”* They don’t understand it. It’s foolishness because they can’t comprehend it. They don’t understand it. They’ve never been given spiritual ears and eyes and hearts to comprehend and to discern that which God has written about His Son, sin, eternal life, and salvation.

Where’s the Gospel hid? Well, it’s hid in the promises of God. Way back yonder in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve fell God came to the serpent and said, *“I’ll put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed,”* (the woman’s seed).

When you read that the first time didn’t you put a question mark over the woman’s seed? Women don’t have a seed, the man has a seed, but the woman’s seed? That’s the virgin born Son of God. That’s the first prophecy of Christ’s coming. He’s right in there, right in that promise. That’s Christ in there.

And He said, *“That woman’s seed is going to destroy your power and crush your head and you’re going to bruise his heel.”* That’s his human nature, crucify Him and make Him bleed and die. But when Christ died, though His human nature, His lower nature suffered; but the power and the government of Satan was destroyed. His head was crushed!

Look over if you will in **Isaiah 53**: *“He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities.”* That’s Christ. The Ethiopian Eunuch was reading that Scripture, **Isaiah 53** and *“Phillip began at the same scripture and preached Jesus to him.”*

It’s right there all the way through the Old Testament. You see Christ in every promise. Moses said to Israel, *“God will raise up a prophet out of the midst of you, out of the midst of the brethren, just like me. You listen to him.”* That’s Christ in all the promises.

SEEKING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

MATTHEW 6:33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

And Christ is hid in the types. I hear preachers preaching on the Passover and they don't mention Christ. Preaching on the Ark; they don't mention Christ. Preaching on the Tabernacle; they don't mention Christ. Christ is in all these things, the Tabernacle, the Priesthood, and the Passover.

That rock that Moses smote in the wilderness; that rock is Christ. The rock from which they drank is Christ. The Bible says that, Christ is our Passover. The blood on the door, that's Christ. The high priest under the veil into the Holy of Holies; that's Christ. The Gospel's right in there. It appeared also in the message of the apostles.

God gives the means of grace and people worship the means instead of the object. God sends His Son into the world through a woman and they make God out of the woman and ignore the Son. God sends Christ Jesus into the world to die for our sins and people worship the cross instead of the one that died on the cross. That's right!

And Christ left baptism as an ordinance to show our identification with Him and to confess Him and men worship the water and forget all about the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

And He left the Lord's Supper as a memorial feast to show forth His death till He comes and men seek salvation, not in Him who's coming, but in the bread and the wine. How blind we are. The Gospel's hid. It's hid in these things.

But watch it; it says, when a man finds it, when a man by the power of the Holy Spirit has his spiritual eyes opened and the Bible becomes to him more than just a history Book, the history of religion, and it becomes the history of redemption, instead of the history of religion, it's the history of redemption.

When the Bible becomes more than an Almanac and becomes the Word of Life, the Word of Life, when the Bible becomes more than a scrapbook to keep a lock of Momma's hair and a wedding picture and all of these different things you've saved all your life, and shame on you for using your Bible for a scrapbook.

One of these days you'll be sorry that you used it for that instead as a roadmap to point you to Christ and as a compass to direct you to the Son of God and as the Word of God to point you to faith.

The Bible; Christ is the Bible. And when God opens a man's eyes to see that and his ears to hear when the preacher's preaching, not just the preacher's words, but hear God speaking through His Word.

I know there are not many of them preaching God's Word and not many of them preaching for God's glory. But some are; God's never been without a witness. You might have to look a long time to find him but you'll recognize Him when you hear Him.

SEEKING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

MATTHEW 6:33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

He will be glorifying God, not himself. He'll be glorifying Christ, not his denomination. He'll be preaching Christ, not himself. He'll be offering salvation and not some silly record, or book, or trip to the Holy Land or some recognition from you. He won't be dedicating a bunch of songs; he will be preaching Christ. You'll recognize him.

And God will open your ears to hear not just His Word but you'll hear God speak through His Word (oh God speak to our hearts). And when that man's heart is open he finds the Gospel.

You know, one day our Lord preached and about five or six thousand people just walked off. They weren't going to hear that anymore. They said, *"That's a hard saying; who can hear it?"* They wouldn't listen to Him; they left.

And just the twelve disciples were standing there and the Lord turned to the disciples and said, *"Will you also go away?"* And they said; *"To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."*

My friend; the words of eternal life are the words of Christ. We have nowhere else to go. We know, we found it. We found it in a person. We found it in His sacrifice, in His substitutionary work.

Well what does this man do when he finds this Gospel that's hid in the promises, in the prophecies, in the types, in the tabernacle, in the Gospel, and the message of the apostles? What does He do?

He hides it. He holds it to himself. He brings it close in his heart. And then he begins to make arrangements to get rid of all those things that would prevent him from possessing that Gospel.

Oh there are a lot of things too. There are a lot of things that get in the way. It may cost him his possessions. He may be employed in a job that will not let him continue in that employment and to glorify God and he'll have to go.

He may be running around with people that do not know the Saviour, who do not love the Saviour. And when he comes to know the Saviour he'll have to part with them. They'll part with him too but he'll have to part with them because, *"What fellowship does darkness have with light?"*

"Two can't walk together except they be agreed." They may meet on the street and speak. Their paths may cross and greet one another but they can't walk together. He may be in a church that doesn't preach the Gospel. He'll have to get out!

And, there are just so many things. Christ said, *"If you love mother and father, husband and wife, brother, sister, even your own life more than me; you're not worthy. You're not fit to be my disciple."*

SEEKING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

MATTHEW 6:33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

So this man he finds this treasure, the Gospel. And he finds it hidden in all these things, in the Word and he makes arrangements to get rid of everything; he's got to have that Gospel. He's found the way of life. He's found life, he's found truth and the truth sets men free.

And he's willing to part with everything, everything to possess that Gospel. That's right; that's seeking the kingdom of God.

Notice **verse 45**; our Lord said again, *"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man seeking goodly pearls, who when he had found the one pearl of great price, went out and sold all that he had and bought it."*

What is that pearl? That one pearl of great price is the Lord Jesus Christ. That's right! This merchant man is seeking, he's seeking. He's aroused to seek the kingdom of God. He's aroused to seek the way of life.

He knows his need. He'll never be satisfied with imitation pearl. No, men who know the truth are not satisfied with imitation or counterfeit pearls; they want the real thing. And he finds the one great pearl of great price and that's Christ the Lord.

To the artist, *"He's the altogether lovely one."* To the architect, *"He's the chief cornerstone."* To the baker, *"He's the bread of life."* To the banker, *"He's the unsearchable riches."* To the botanist, *"He's the lily of the valley."* To the builder, *"He's the sure foundation."* To the bride, *"He's the bridegroom."* To the captive, *"He's the Deliverer, (the great emancipator)."*

To the doctor, *"He's the great physician."* To the farmer, *"He's the sower and the seed and the Lord of the harvest."* To the lawyer, *"He's the righteous judge."* To the philosopher, *"He's the wisdom of God."* To the sinner, *"He's the Saviour."* To the soldier, *"He's the captain of our salvation."* To the preacher, *"He's the Word of life."* To the student, *"He's the truth."*

Christ is all! *"He of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."* And this man, this merchant, *"Seeketh goodly pearls"* and he finds it all in one, all in one. Everything he's seeking is in one.

Are you seeking sanctification? It's in Christ. Are you seeking wisdom? It's in Christ. Are you seeking righteousness? It's in Christ. Are you seeking redemption? It's in Christ. Are you seeking eternal life? It's in Christ. Are you seeking God? He's in Christ. Are you seeking heaven? That's in Christ.

He found it all. He was seeking goodly pearls and found it all in one. And what did he do? He made arrangements to buy it. And he sold out. He sold everything he had, everything that got in his way of owning and possessing that pearl, that one pearl of great price. And that is what Christ is saying to him.

SEEKING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

MATTHEW 6:33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

And he came back and he bought it. What is the buying? It's committing to Christ. That's what Paul said, "*I've committed it to Him.*" I've sold out. I've burned my bridges. I cast myself on Christ. Sink or swim I go to Him.

Now last of all, **Matthew 13: verse 47-48**; He said; "*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind, which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.*"

The kingdom of God, like a treasure, a pearl, and now a net. And the sailors cast a net out in the water. And the net is full of fishes, full of fish, and they bring them ashore.

And they open the net. Some are bad and some are good. They throw the bad out and keep the good. That net is the preaching of the Gospel, just what I'm doing right now. And you throw it out and you preach the Gospel and you draw it in, into the church, the visible church.

And some follow Christ for some reasons and some for other reasons, but some because they love him, because they believe on Him. And the others are thrown out and the true believer is kept!