

# CHALLENGING QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

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Lesson 2 w/answers

Seeking the Kingdom of God

This week we'll continue our study I've titled "Challenging Questions People Ask". In our lesson last week we learned that it's difficult to study and understand the Bible, but God makes it possible for us by sending us a helper. We also learned that sometimes changing our approach to studying scripture can also help us.

This week we'll examine another question that I'm sure many of us have asked in one form or another. If we seriously consider it, I'm sure that many of us will agree that it is sometimes difficult, if not impossible, to do.

**Our question for this week:**

"Every few nights or so (not every night), I go to bed and think "Seek ye first the kingdom of God". Then I realize that I have failed to do this. Some days I don't even say the phrase. I need to raise my 'batting average' on this. Any suggestions?"

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*Let's search for and consider some of the solutions for our struggles with this particular issue.*

As we grow in Christ, He teaches us that our first goal should be to seek the Kingdom of God above all other things. In Matthew 6:33, Jesus tells us that we should not be worried or concerned about what to wear, or what to eat, or where these things will come from. Instead, He teaches us that God, our Father in heaven, knows we need all these things already; therefore, we should not spend time worrying over them, but rather spend our time seeking God's Kingdom.

1. So, why would Jesus teach us to not worry about what we'll eat, or what we'll wear, but to seek God's Kingdom first?

ANSWER: Because if we find the Kingdom of God, we won't worry about our needs because God will provide them for us. Furthermore, if we're living in God's Kingdom, we will see things as He does, we will know His will, and we will live our lives carrying out God's will and reflecting His glory -- we can't do these things outside of His kingdom.

As we seek His kingdom we should realize that God's Kingdom is both physical and spiritual. As you study the questions that follow, you'll come to see that God has a very real kingdom and that it's not just a metaphor. In fact, we know that when Christ returns He will set up an earthly throne and Kingdom and will reign over that kingdom for a thousand years. But even today God's Kingdom is real and exists, and it accomplishes His sovereign will throughout the heavens and the earth.

Before we look more closely at this kingdom, let's consider the other piece of the question -- it being that we try and sometimes fail, and in fact we sometimes fail to even try to seek His kingdom. All of us do from time to time and often find ourselves bowing before God and asking for forgiveness for our failure.

2. As I thought through this, I realized that many others have also failed -- Can you think of some in the New Testament who failed to do as Jesus taught? Consider, for example, the Apostles and list below those who were not always trying to seek God's kingdom first, even though they were being taught by Christ and lived and worked with him everyday. How many can you list?

ANSWER: Just to mention a few instances, we can cite Peter's denial of Christ three times, Peter's hypocritical behavior with the converted Gentiles that Paul had to call him out on, and James and John and their argument over who will sit at Christ's right hand.

So let's look at God's Kingdom and what it means to seek it. Let's look at what the Kingdom of God is, where it is, who enters the Kingdom, what the "gospel of the Kingdom" is, and what the "mystery" or secret of the Kingdom of God is.

3. What is the Kingdom of God? Read Romans 14:17-18 and note what it tells you about God's Kingdom.

ANSWER: God's Kingdom is living in the Holy Spirit. It lives within us when we accept Christ as our savior and God sends His Holy Spirit to live in us. Everyone who has the Holy Spirit living in them is living in God's Kingdom. Our responsibility then is to live a life that reflects the kingdom within which we live, reflecting God's glory in all that we do and constantly seeking to do His will.

4. Where is the Kingdom of God? Read the following and note what they tell us about where the Kingdom of God is:

a. Luke 17:20-21

ANSWER: It's within each of us who have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, all who have been saved through accepting Christ as their savior have the Kingdom living within them.

b. Daniel 2:44

ANSWER: It will be a physical kingdom established over the whole earth.

c. Matthew 12:28

ANSWER: It is with Christ.

5. Who will enter God's Kingdom? Read the following and note what they tell us about this:

a. Matthew 21:28-32

ANSWER: Those who repent of their sins and accept Christ as their savior.

b. Luke 18:15-17

ANSWER: Only those with faith like a child will enter the Kingdom.

c. John 3:36

ANSWER: Whoever believes that Jesus is the only son of God.

6. What is the Gospel of the Kingdom of God?

a. Mark 1:14-15

ANSWER: The Kingdom of God is near, repent and believe.

b. Matthew 4:17

ANSWER: The Kingdom of God is near, repent and believe.

7. What is the “secret” or “mystery” of the Kingdom of God?

a. Mark 4:1-20

ANSWER: That only some will hear the Gospel and believe and go on to bear fruit.

b. Mark 4:21-25

ANSWER: That nothing is done in secret, that everything is to be brought to light, that we have responsibilities within the kingdom, and that we will be accountable for how we carried them out.

c. Mark 4:26-29

ANSWER: That the Kingdom of God is a growing Kingdom. It began small, but when all the seed that's planted is fully grown a harvest will come.

d. Mark 4:30-32

ANSWER: That the Kingdom of God, though starting from a small seed, will grow larger and larger until it is the largest Kingdom.

8. How can we tell when person is nearing the Kingdom of God?

a. Mark 12:28-34

ANSWER: When they begin to understand scripture and are nearly ready to accept Jesus as the Christ who died for their sins.

We can see from our study this week that's God's Kingdom is real and that we as born again followers of Christ are eternal citizens of that Kingdom. However, if you've ever traveled to a foreign country I'm sure you came across native born citizens of that country who represented their country well and others who did not. Our challenge is to live as citizens who represent the kingdom well, and we can do this by beginning each day seeking God's Kingdom – that is seeking to do His will and seeking to glorify Him in all that we do. By relying on our Sovereign King and Savior for all our needs and by relying on Him for direction and help in all that we do we live out our kingdom lives in a way that honors God.

As kingdom citizens, we have many responsibilities. Among them is finding the lost and bringing them into the Kingdom; another is ministering to the needs of those who enter the kingdom. Let's commit this week to pray for God's kingdom as Jesus did -- "Your kingdom come" -- and to live out our lives as God's children, living in His eternal care and grace.

Living the Christian life is not always easy, Christ told us this would be so. But it's also a life of peace, joy and blessing. We should live our life each day celebrating the peace and joy Jesus brings to our lives and seeking to do His will -- seeking His Kingdom, even though it can be difficult. What better kingdom is there?

Have a great week everyone and thanks for studying with us.

In Christ,

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