

## How to Prayer in Power Part 10: The Power of Contentment

November 19, 2023

Matthew 6:25-34

The passage in Matt. 6:25-34 is a challenging standard for the disciple of Christ, yet Jesus delivered it so gently and easy to understand.

### **Part 1: The Text.**

V25: "For this reason," refers back to V19-24, teaching us where to put our treasure and not serve wealth. God describes the basics of life down to food and clothing.

V26: Our "heavenly Father" feeds the birds. He will certainly feed us. It is irrational to think that God won't supply for His children.

V27: Worrying can't add even a small amount of time to our lives.

V25: Life is more than food. God is the source of life and also the source of the smallest of things.

V26: Are we worth more than the birds? God feeds the birds. He will feed His people.

V27: God is sovereign over life and death. He determines our days, Ps. 139:16.

V28: God deals with the basics of clothing. He clothes the lilies (generally: wildflowers).

V29: 1 Kings 3:13, Solomon in all his beauty isn't as beautiful as the clothing God adorns with.

V30: The grass is eventually burned for fuel; will not God care for His kingdom citizens?

V26, God cares about the sowing and reaping, and V28, the work of toiling and spinning.

V31: Jesus summarizes His teaching. V32: Your needs are already known by God.

V33: First be concerned with God's kingdom and righteousness.

V34: Tomorrow is personified. We allow "Tomorrow" to be worried about its own things.

### **Part 2: (4) Principles of Contentment**

1. **Contentment Resists Practical Atheism:** V32, the Gentiles seek to appease their gods. Matt. 5:47, they do good to those who are their brethren. God is capable of caring for all our needs.
2. **Contentment Responds to Direct Commands:** this is covenant obedience. Two commands given: (1) V25, "don't worry about your life," this is don't be anxious (Phil. 4:16). (2) V33, "but seek first His kingdom and righteousness." To finish V33, you are seeking, and God has already added these things to your lives. These commands are from master to slave.
3. **Contentment Refuses Forbidden Questions:** V31, Jesus is telling us questions we shouldn't ask as they display a sinful heart towards God and not one that is trusting the Father. We must not have a "me" centered view of Christian faith. Ex: What will God do for me? How will God help me? My first priority is that I'm His slave. He provides while I am here.
4. **Contentment Reflects Right Priorities:** What is seeking first His kingdom and righteousness? The context is a future coming Kingdom of God. (1) "Seeking first His kingdom," devote serious effort, strive, aim at & try to obtain. What is the effort: being salt and light to the lost who need the Gospel, Matt. 5:13-16. (2) "His righteousness," this is not the righteousness of salvation (2 Cor. 5:21), but it refers to the "breastplate of righteousness" in Eph. 6:14. Seeking first His kingdom and His righteousness is the active participation in covenant activities to further God's plans to make kingdom souls and active obedience to the Law of Christ.

**Seeking First His Kingdom** from 1 Thessalonians:

>>1:2-3, 8: "labor of love, work of faith."

>>2:14: "became imitators, suffered."

>>3:8: "stand fast in the Lord."

>>4:11: "quiet life, mind own, work."

>>5:13: regard those who labor, live at peace with one another.

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### Seeking His Righteousness

>>3:12, "increase," and abound in love.

>>4:1, excel, "abound more and more."

>>4:3, abstain from sexual immorality.

>>4:7, called us to holiness.

>>4:9-10, love for one another, excel more.

>>5:14-15, warn the unruly, do not render evil for evil, pursue what is good.

>>5:16-22, rejoice, pray, give thanks, don't quench the Spirit, despise prophecies, etc.

**Connection of Kingdom and Righteousness:** >>1 Thess. 5:23: "sanctify," "at His coming."

>>3:13, "establish you blameless," "at His coming." >>2:12, "walk worthy," "who calls you into His own kingdom and glory." >>1:9, "turned from idols," "serve the living God."

### **Further Discussion and Application**

We will have everything that we need until our last moment. Matt. 5:9-10 is seeking the King and His Kingdom. V12 is seeking His righteousness by living free of guilt and shame before God and with others. V11, is sandwiched in the middle is God providing enough for each day. When did you learn and know that God provides all we need for everything? How did your life change from that time on? How did contentment fill your life? What more can you still progress in this life to be more trusting of God?

Matt. 6:25-34 contains the answer to every sinful form of anxiety. Every sharp response, idolatrous desire for wealth, desired control of others, emotional comfort, sexual immorality, drunkenness, idolatry of other things, all result from a life not lived in obedience to God or as commanded for believers seeking His kingdom and righteousness. What activities should the believer's life be filled with? What acts of righteousness should be pursued by believers? How is putting off the old man and removing sin required in sanctification? What are the blessings of this process in our walk?

We also have great joy in our Christian life. Share the joys of being in the body of Christ. Share the joy of a quiet life, living with your spouse, having a heart of thankfulness for how God has provided, and discipling men and women to be faithful to the Lord and their families.

What is your initial reaction to Ps. 139:16? Is this terrifying or comforting? What are the implications of this truth of God's sovereignty?

Read Ps. 16:11. What are the blessings of pursuing God and His righteousness? Why is their great peace in knowing you are pleasing God and not man? How does Jesus exemplify the perfect life lived for God and His kingdom? Which of His ways do we desire to emulate?