

THE FIRST 15

Wednesday, June 19, 2024

Today is Wednesday, June 19 and we are studying what the Bible says about contentment.

OPENING PRAYER

In the quiet stillness of a dawning day, I seek the Lord who loves me. I calm my restless thoughts, slow my breathing and center myself upon God's holy presence. Come, Holy Spirit, teach me to rest in your loving kindness. Help me discover the secret of contentment and peace in this earthly life. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

“Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” Matthew 6:26-33

REFLECTION

I am a seed sower. I take stock of what I have in my hands, what I have to give to the world - my time, money, material resources, my gifts, talents and abilities. I know that these are given to me by God for a reason. Kingdom reasons. I am to pour into the lives of my family members, invest in the lives of others and contribute to the work of the church. There are many things to seek in life and I must decide what I am going to seek first. There is a window of opportunity and I must ensure my priorities are in the right order. God wants me to use my time wisely, understand what is of true value, seek his kingdom and generously sow seeds. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, “Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.”

The Greek word translated in English as “seek” is *zeteo*. It means to strive after, aim for, try to obtain, crave or even demand to have. I consider what I am striving after. What am I aiming for? What am I trying to obtain? Have I set my mind on God and the things of God or have I set my mind on the things of this world? Jesus tells me to put God and the things of God as my first and foremost priority. Jesus promises me that if I do this, everything else will follow. That is an extraordinary promise.

When I put Jesus Christ first in my life, I trust God to provide for me and supply my needs without concern over the future. When I make Jesus my Lord and Shepherd, I can rest confidently in his loving care for me. When I am about God's business and operating out of God's vision for me, I have no room for worry. I have placed myself in God's hands and I am

assured that God will not abandon me, leave me without resources or withdraw support. I begin to see God as an intimate, caring parent. Like a beloved child, I can trust him completely. He is my help in times of trouble, my comfort and strength, my shield and defense, my provider, protector, deliverer and uplifter. He is my God.

Ask: Am I seeking the kingdom of God first in my life? When am I worrying about worldly things and when am I trusting God to provide?

Pause and Pray

CLOSING PRAYER

Forgive me, Lord Jesus, for worrying about my life. I spend too much of my time thinking about the time I will spend, the food I will eat, the drinks I will drink and the clothes I will wear. Teach me what it means to seek God's kingdom first, strive after righteousness, aim for holiness, and run after goodness. I put you first in my life and seek your kingdom before anything else. Help me learn to trust in your faithful provision and rest securely in your abundant love. Amen.