

KEEP SEEKING GOD'S KINGDOM

Note to the speaker:

Cultivate deep appreciation for the counsel in the Sermon on the Mount in which Jesus showed how to seek the Kingdom. We need to listen to these wise words and to exert ourselves to gain the Kingdom

IMPORTANT TO APPRECIATE JEHOVAH'S RULERSHIP (6 min.)

People everywhere long for righteous rulership, government that can really solve their problems

The problems of finding employment, obtaining ample food, safeguarding our environment, eliminating disease, and overcoming barriers that divide mankind require solutions beyond what men offer (Ec 1:15)

Answer lies with our Creator, Jehovah God, and his Kingdom (*w85 11/15 3-5*)

We need to grasp the extent and nature of Jehovah's rulership

His laws control movements of all heavenly bodies as well as natural cycles that make life on earth possible

Some of his laws that operate for our good do so without thought on our part

As man's Creator, he knows what we really need in order to enjoy full health, long life, happiness

His commands regarding our worship and our relations with fellow humans require us to choose, to show whether we want to obey (*lp 98-105*)

God's commands are not oppressive but are for our good (Isa 48:17)

They enrich our life now and help us gain future life (1Ti 4:8)

People of all nations are being given opportunity now to show whether they really want God's rulership in all matters of life; do they want to live under the government of God?

He is the Creator and the almighty God, and his purpose to express his sovereignty through the Kingdom, a government in hands of his Son, Jesus Christ, cannot be thwarted

Our continued enjoyment of life is at stake because it is an unalterable truth that life is dependent on God (Re 4:11)

Will we personally seek God's Kingdom, giving it the place it deserves in our lives?

IN SERMON ON MOUNT, JESUS SHOWED HOW TO SEEK THE KINGDOM (30 min.)

(Invite all to open Bible and follow as texts are read)

Jesus taught disciples to pray for Kingdom, asking for it to "come" with destructive force against wicked system (Mt 6:10; *w78 8/15 5-6; w89 8/15 12-13*)

Warned that not all who profess faith will gain the Kingdom (Mt 7:21-23; *w90 10/1 23-4; w78 12/1 14-15*)

We need to examine our own position, be sure we really are doing the will of the Father

To succeed in getting life in the heavenly Kingdom with Christ or life as its subjects on earth, we must cultivate the qualities that God approves

God views favorably those who are conscious of spiritual need, mild-tempered, hungry for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peaceable (Mt 5:3-9; *w78 2/1 27-9; w78 2/15 8-10; w78 3/1 4-5*)

Happiness results from cultivating these qualities

To get into the Kingdom, one must have deep regard for God's law—all of it (Mt 5:17-20; *w78 4/1 29-31; w86 10/15 8*)

As long as the Law given by God through Moses was in effect, Jewish followers were to practice it and advocate obedience to it

We must not be like Adam; not willfully disobey in any matter

Neither must we be like Pharisees, who had own brand of righteousness (*w90 10/1 12, 19 ¶14, 15*)

Not merely obey the letter of the Law; must get the spirit of it and act in harmony with it (Mt 5:21, 22; *w90 10/1 13 ¶12, 13; w78 4/15 21-2; w89 7/15 24-5*)

Besides doing what is right, we need to learn to love what is right (Mt 5:27, 28; *w90 10/1 13 ¶14; w78 5/15 28*)

Bible urges us to safeguard the heart

Jehovah wants only willing subjects, those who truly prefer his ways

Important to learn to imitate God in showing love (Mt 5:43-48; *w90 10/1 13 ¶12, 14, ¶18, 19; w78 7/1 5-6*)

This kind of love is not stifled by pride when others are unappreciative but seeks the lasting welfare of others, even those who act like enemies

We must be striving to be at peace with brothers, genuinely loving them, in order to serve God acceptably (Mt 5:23, 24; *w78 5/1 29-30; wt 147 ¶7*)

(Brief review of Matthew chapter 5 based on *w90 10/1 15 ¶20*)

Be careful not to appraise value of our works on the basis of outward appearance (Mt 6:1-6, 16-18; *w90 10/1 15-17; w78 7/15 30-1; w78 9/1 14-15*)

Motive is a key factor—not hypocritical, not seeking attention for self, but bringing honor to God

Jehovah sees what is in our hearts

Be spiritually minded, putting spiritual interests first, not getting diverted by materialistic pursuits (Mt 6:19-21; *w90* 10/1 18; *w78* 9/15 9; *w89* 7/15 13-14)

Proper to care for our material needs; but not proper to become a slave to them, letting them control our life (Mt 6:24; *w78* 9/15 10)

Cultivate trust in God and in his promise to bless our efforts to obtain necessities of life (Mt 6:25-34; *w90* 10/1 18-19; *w78* 10/1 24-6)

WE NEED TO EXERT OURSELVES TO GAIN THE KINGDOM (9 min.)

To keep out unworthy ones, God requires that those entering the Kingdom travel cramped road, find narrow gate (Mt 7:13, 14; *w90* 10/1 23 ¶8, 9; *w78* 11/15 29-30)

Do not take view that it is impossible; forgiveness for unintentional sins is available (Mt 6:12-15)

What is required is that we truly love what is right (Mt 7:7, 8; *w90* 10/1 22 ¶6; *w78* 11/1 22)

This will move us to persistent effort, not giving up easily when problems arise

Must build our spiritual house on obedience to the teachings of Jesus Christ (Mt 7:24-27; *w90* 10/1 24 ¶13-15; *w78* 12/15 12-13)

Includes imitating Jesus in sharing the good news of the Kingdom with others (Mt 5:14-16; *w90* 10/1 24 ¶12; *w78* 3/15 11)

This is a vital work; others need to hear; those who share in work reap rich rewards

There is a grand future ahead; blessings of God's new world are the answer to every righteous desire of our hearts (Ps 145:13, 16)

Jehovah will provide these things because he wants us to have them (Mt 6:33)

He will bless our efforts to gain them; the question is: Do we truly want not only the blessings of God's Kingdom but also his righteousness?

We need to keep on seeking God's Kingdom by (1) applying ourselves diligently to get acquainted with Jehovah, the Universal Sovereign, (2) cultivating love for his ways, (3) putting these into application in our lives, and (4) advocating God's Kingdom to others

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)