

“Domine, volumus Jesum videre,” John 12:21.
“Credo, Domine; adjuva incredulitatem meam,” Mark 12:24.

Luke 12:31-40

³¹Instead, continue to seek the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added to you. ³²Do not be afraid, little flock, because your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom. ³³Sell your possessions and give to the needy. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not become old, a treasure in the heavens that will not fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. ³⁴For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

³⁵“Be dressed, ready for service, and keep your lamps burning. ³⁶Be like people waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. ³⁷Blessed are those servants, whom the master will find watching when he comes. Amen I tell you: He will dress himself and have them recline at the table, and he will come and serve them. ³⁸Even if he comes in the second or third watch, they will be blessed if he finds them alert. ³⁹But know this: If the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁰You also be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you are not expecting him.”



Intro: Do we expect to earn the kingdom of God? That kind of thinking makes us afraid. It should, since “we cannot by our own thinking or choosing believe in Jesus Christ or come to Him.” It’s a frightening thought that we might not only have to look for the kingdom ... but that we also have to supply it.

Today Jesus tells us not to fear the kingdom, not to earn the kingdom, but to simply expect the kingdom. That’s very important, because if we’re going to be ready for God’s kingdom, we better know what to expect. That’s the definition of being ready. That’s also a solid description of faith, to be sure of what we hope for and certain of things unseen.

Brothers and sisters, know that the Lord doesn’t expect us to climb our way to salvation tooth and nail anymore. Know that Jesus did that for you. But know that He must be your trust and treasure.

YOUR FATHER IS PLEASED TO GIVE YOU THE KINGDOM

I. IN ITS ENTIRETY

The flock is dumb and directionless. As a husband, sometimes I don’t know what I am doing. Parents may admit they are caught between different philosophies of parenting. Brothers and sisters don’t know what they did to cause an argument in the car. But it is all definitively due to sin.

Jesus calls His followers a “*little flock*.” The flock is not marked by greatness. The flock is always in the minority. If you hoped to find a massive group of people, you were wrong. We have only a few gathered around God’s Word here. The flock is outnumbered by death and the devil.

There is danger in the kingdom of God. The world hates the flock.

But the flock has a Good Shepherd who offers a fearless policy. It pleases Him to give you the kingdom. To the dumb He offers the timeless truths of the Bible. To the directionless He offers the altar for forgiveness. The flock is always in the minority, yet the kingdom is given in its entirety.

You don’t have to fear the kingdom. It is a good thing of God to give.

Only God can give the kingdom. (I can't win it.)

Only God wants to give it. (Other religions demand that you wrestle it away with good works.)

II. OUT OF HIS OWN POCKET

Lose your dependence on your possessions, Jesus tells His followers. To give alms to the poor is to disregard those things we might hold onto just to keep.

We as followers of Jesus expect to serve. But what causes us to serve less? What causes us to give less? Is it perhaps still a sheepish, sinful fear that we won't get a return on our investment of time, talents, and treasure.

It is always good practice to do the opposite to what one is tempted to by the flesh. If the flesh tempts to cursing, pray. If the flesh tempts to doing your neighbor harm, help and befriend her. If to slander, speak well of him. Do the opposite to what one is tempted to by the flesh

Christians show their confidence in this promise by readily giving up the anxious worries they thought necessary for their earthly life. If your earthly goods are hindering you in seeking the kingdom of God, get rid of them.

Getting rid of these worries and attachments is part of what is called "readiness." Those who are ready will relinquish their earthly attachments.

Then, astonishingly, those who are ready will be served.

Jesus gives a startling announcement: The Master Himself will invite His servants to sit down at a feast and He will serve them. This is not the way of men; it is the way of our gracious Lord. Imagine the King of heaven and earth serving His unworthy servants!

The extremely unusual procedure of the lord serving his slaves is to show the grace and goodwill of the lord to his servants. They know that they have no right and claim whatever to this beautiful and unmerited treatment. It comes right out of His own pocket!

And what is this food that the Lord will serve? The food that Jesus shall serve at the heavenly table is not the food of others, but that which He Himself has prepared while on earth by His work of atonement – forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

If your heart is still with earthly goods and an earthly banquet, it cannot well receive the promise Jesus has just now made.

Make purses that won't wear out. Open your heart of faith to heavenly currency out of God's very own pocket.

Then use your earthly purses and money bags for the kingdom of God. Consider where your heart is based on one of the most sensitive things in life – your money and possessions. Gifts to God out of these earthly money and possessions are selfless good deeds of love.

Selfless good deeds of love cannot save. Deeds cannot win the eternal soul. Deeds cannot snatch from the grave. Deeds cannot overcome the devil. Giving to God cannot atone for anything wrong.

But selfless loving good deeds last forever. They cannot be taken away. They cannot wear out. They don't go out of style. Nothing changes their selflessness, just as nothing changes the selflessness of God's gifts to us – the whole kingdom, life everlasting, out of His own pocket.

In Jesus' name, Amen.
