

SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS— WHAT EXACTLY DOES THAT MEAN?

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Matthew 6:33 KJ

Hi all,

In order to get "all these things" that we need in this life, what exactly does "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" mean for us today?

What it *doesn't* mean is that I am supposed to "seek" and find some special "spiritual place" where if I can be good enough and holy enough then I might get or earn "all these things". It doesn't say for me to "seek my righteousness"; it says to seek God's righteousness.

In order to successfully "seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness", there are two questions that have to be answered here:

#1 What is the "kingdom of God?" and #2 What is "His righteousness?"

Let me answer the second question first.

What is "His righteousness"?

The word "righteousness" that is used here is from the Greek word "dikaioma (dik-ah-yos-oo-nay) and it means "equity of character or act". In other words seeking "His righteousness" means finding out what God's character is and how He acts or operates and "equaling" or "imitating" it. To put it another way, finding out "God's way of being and doing" and do the same.

Am I saying that we should imitate God? No, I'm not saying it—God is saying it and saying it very plainly!

Ephesians 1:5 AMP *"Therefore be imitators of God, copy Him and follow His example, as well-beloved children imitate their father."*

And that is what we are doing when we read and study His Word, attend Word-based bible studies, services and seminars—and then we apply in our own lives what we learn.

Now let's address the first question:

"What is the kingdom of God?"

If I have to "seek it", I'm going to have to know what it is, right?

This is a little lengthy, but if you will take the time to read it all, I think you will be blessed by it.

Let's go now to Mark 4. In this chapter, Jesus is teaching about sowing and reaping.

Mark 4:26-32 ²⁶*And he said, So is the kingdom of God as if a man should cast seed into the ground;* ²⁷*And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. ²⁸For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. ²⁹But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come."*

Simply put, the kingdom of God is "sowing and reaping". That is how God and His entire kingdom have operated since before the beginning of time, and will continue as long as the earth remains. (Genesis 8:22)

If it operates that way in His kingdom, then we are supposed to operate that way on earth—in all that we do. We are supposed to be “seeking the kingdom” by learning to operate in His kingdom the same way God does.

The only way “*all these things*” are “*added to us*” as it says in Matthew 6:33, is through our sowing and reaping. No matter what you are believing God for, it won’t come any other way. Whether you need salvation, healing, deliverance, favor, financial prosperity, wisdom, direction, or anything else, they all come to you the same way—through sowing and reaping.

God’s Word is seed. The greatest way we operate in “sowing and reaping” is first and foremost by reading, hearing and speaking the Word of God. If you want to be “transformed” in any area, you must start by “renewing your mind” by the Word of God. (Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 10:5)

By the same token, our money is seed, giving to others is seed, our actions are seed—no matter how you slice it everything in the kingdom of God and in our natural world today operates through “sowing and reaping”. Therefore it would be a good idea for us to learn how to successfully “sow and reap” in every area.

Can I reap something different than I sow? No.

Some people will say “*I don’t have money to give, so I will give of my time to the church and then God will bless me financially. After all, God understands that I don’t have any money, right?**”. Yes, God understands. It is us who don’t understand. God is not going to change the spiritual laws upon which He set up the entire universe. You are going to reap exactly what you sow and nothing different.

Listen very carefully to what I am about to say: I’m not telling you not to give time to the church, or that you should not give anything else God tells you to give. I am just using this as an example to explain the principle of “sowing and reaping”

Luke 6:38 in the King James says “*Give, and IT shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.*”

What is the “*IT*” that “*shall be given unto you*”? Whatever it is that you give. You can’t sow one thing and reap something different. That is not how “sowing and reaping” works.

I used to believe that if I needed money, for instance, but I didn’t have any money, I could volunteer my time, or give away some material thing I had and God would bless me with money. That was how I thought giving and receiving worked.

(By the way, if you need “seed” money but you don’t have money to “plant”, 2 Corinthians 9:10 in the AMP tells us that God provides “seed for the sower”. In other words, if you ask God for “seed” (money) to plant, He will give you money to plant. But I did not know that at the time.)

Then one day, God said to me “*If you want wheat, you don’t plant corn.*”

It’s like a farmer who wants a crop of wheat, but doesn’t have wheat “seed”. So he thinks “*oh, but I do have corn ‘seed, so I’ll plant corn and because I was faithful in planting corn, God will bless me with wheat!*”

When put like that, it sounds ridiculous doesn’t it? If you plant corn you are not going to reap wheat!

Well, that is what we do when we give away clothes or something material to someone else and expect God to bless us with money. If you plant things, you reap things. And it works that way for everything else as well.

If you plant time, you reap time.

If you find you have too much to do and not enough time to do it, try giving a little of your time each day to God. Either in prayer, reading your bible, meditating on His Word, or look for someone else who needs help and give a little of your time to help them. If you do that, you will find you are able to do more with less time.

If you plant mercy and forgiveness, you reap mercy and forgiveness.

Make up your mind every morning that throughout the day anytime someone says or does something that irritates you, or offends you, or makes you mad, you will be quick to forgive them and let it go—no matter what it is. If you sow seeds of mercy and forgiveness, when the time comes that you need mercy and forgiveness—from God or other people—that is what you will reap.

If you plant joy you get joy.

If you are down and feel depressed, find someone else who is in that same condition and cheer them up. It could be something as simple as smiling at them or giving a word of encouragement, whether you feel like it or not. I know there have been times where I expressed joy and happiness by faith. If you sow joy and happiness, then you will reap joy and happiness.

If you plant healing, you reap healing.

You may think “*how can I plant healing?*” If you are sick in your body, find someone else who is sick and pray for them to be healed. That is how you “plant” healing. Give them some healing scriptures and speak healing to their body based on God’s Word.

And, of course, **if you plant money, you reap money.**

And let me point something else out to you about giving money. 2 Corinthians 8:12 and Mark 12:41-44 (which is Jesus account of the widow with the 2 mites) tells us that generous giving is not based on amount. It is based on percentage.

God in His infinite wisdom set it up this way to put everybody on the same level of giving regardless of income or material wealth. What this means is that if you give 10% on \$100, (which is \$10) from God’s perspective you have given just as much as the guy who gave 10% on \$100,000 (which is \$10,000). And what’s more is that if you gave one extra dollar over your 10% on \$100, but the guy who gave 10% on \$100,000 didn’t give anything over his 10%, as far as God is concerned, you actually gave more than he did! Go read the story in Mark 12. Jesus said there that the rich people in that congregation gave out of there abundance. But the widow who gave two mites gave more than all of them because she gave all she had. Her giving was based on percentage, not amount.

(For more on God, prosperity, giving and money, read my latest book “Wealth & Prosperity 4 Life”. It will answer every question you ever had about what the Bible says concerning God and money. Now available on Amazon.com or through our website at www.wbf4life.com)

In God’s economy, whatever you need is what you have to plant and then you reap a harvest of the thing you need. And just like one corn seed will produce a stalk with many ears of corn containing hundreds or even thousands of kernels of corn, planting just a little of whatever you will need (in faith believing you receive) will produce a much greater harvest than what you planted. It doesn’t take a \$1000 seed to reap \$1000.

It is called the **Law of Genesis** and is completely opposite of how the “world” thinks about how to get what you need. In reference to “sowing and reaping”, the “Law of Genesis” basically has two principals:

#1 You always reap in kind exactly what you sow, physically, spiritually and emotionally.

#2 The harvest you reap is always exponentially larger than the amount you sowed. In God’s economy, you always receive much more than you give.

Let’s get back to our passage in Mark 4. Here Jesus gives us a clear example of how we are to “sow and reap”. He uses the natural process and principals of how a farmer sows his crop and then reaps the harvest. We operate the same in the spiritual realm as we do in the natural realm.

Let’s take a close look at these verses to see how to bring the manifestation of the “Kingdom of God” into our own lives in abundance through “sowing and reaping” according to God’s plan.

What is the first line of Mark 4:26?

“And he (Jesus) said So is the kingdom of God.”... Stop here.

What did Jesus just tell us in **Matthew 6:33** that we had to do in order for us to have “all these things”? We have to **seek first** “the kingdom of God”, right? That means there must be something about “the Kingdom of God” that we have to learn to do in order for us to receive “all these things”.

What is Jesus getting ready to tell us here in **Mark 4**? What the kingdom of God is and how to operate in it!

Continuing with verse 26: “**And he (Jesus) said So is the kingdom of God, as if a man* should cast seed into the ground;” (*my addition)**

*(*Note: Anytime the NT scriptures use the word “man” this is not gender specific. Don’t let this trip you up. It is not saying that only a “man” can do this. We are all one in Christ. So anytime you read the word “man” or “men” or “he” or “him”, read it as “whosoever”.)*

Who sows the seed? We do. Does God sow the seed? No. Can we wait on Him to sow seed for us? No. The farmer has to sow the seed in order to get a harvest and, in the example of financial blessing, we have to sow the (financial) seed (money) to get our financial harvest. It says: “as if **a man should cast seed into the ground;** whose responsibility is it to put the seed in the ground? Ours.

You can pray, quote scripture and make confessions and faith declarations until you are blue in the face, but if you don’t sow the seed, you are never going to reap the harvest.

You can sit on your porch with every prosperity scripture memorized and pray and confess all day long “*Lord I thank you for a bumper crop of tomatoes. I believe I receive vines and vines full of big, red, ripe, juicy, delicious tomatoes. I visualize and see myself enjoying those juicy, thick, beefsteak tomatoes in my salad and my white bread, mayonnaise and thick slices of juicy, red tomato sandwiches.*” You can say that a 1000 times but it will never happen **if you don’t first plant tomato seeds!**

And then when the tomatoes don’t appear, you blame God, assuming it is His fault because you did “everything” you were supposed to do, right? Wrong. The truth is that no matter how sincere or faithful you are in your prayers and confessions, if you won’t get off of your butt and go out and plant those tomato seeds, you will never, ever see the first one appear. The kingdom of God operates exactly the same way.

Verse 27: “**And (the man) should sleep, and rise night and day**”...Who is Jesus talking about? The man who planted the seed.

Continuing v27: “**and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.”**

Do you have to know and understand when you plant a seed in the ground, how the seed produces? No. You just have to know you are supposed to get the seed in the ground.

Verse 28: “**For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.”**

Do you have to make the seed produce once it is in the ground? No you don’t. Whose job is it to make the seed produce? God’s. God has already designed the ground to do that. He makes it rain on it and He causes the sun to shine on it. Where we get into trouble is when we try to “make the seed produce”. That is God’s job, not ours.

When we plant money into the ‘good ground’ of ministries, churches, ministers, people to whom God directs us, He is the one who makes it multiply back to us.

Tithing is NOT sowing.

Let me just stop here and point out to you something the Lord showed me. Tithing is not sowing. Everywhere in the scriptures where it talks about sowing or giving generously, it is referring to giving over and above your tithes. How do we know this? Because the word “tithe” actually means “tenth”. We are to tithe the first 10% of our income because the Word

says that the first tenth belongs to God. Therefore you can't "tithe" generously. Tithing is 10%--period. Anything over 10% is sowing and giving, not tithing.

Even though tithing is not sowing, tithing definitely affects sowing. How? Without tithing we have no "open heaven" so there is not enough "rain or sunshine" (spiritually speaking) to make our (financial) seed grow. Look at **Malachi 3:10-11 in the Amplified translation**. V10 is referring to tithing and V11 is referring to sowing above your tithes.

¹⁰Bring all the tithes, the whole tenth of your income, into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and prove Me now by it, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

It doesn't say "pour out on you" a blessing. It's like when a waitress "**pours you out**" a glass of tea. You don't open your mouth and have her "pour it out on you". After she "pours it out" for you, if you don't reach out and take it, you can't have it and enjoy it. You can sit there and die of thirst expecting the tea in that glass to get up and jump down your throat and into your stomach. It will never happen. When a farmer plants seed in the natural, the only way the seed will turn into a harvest is if there is an "open heaven", meaning rain and sun in the natural. But the farmer has to go out and harvest it. More on that in a moment. Keep reading....

*¹¹And **I will rebuke the devourer** [insects and plagues] for your sakes (note: the word "devourer" is from the Hebrew word "akal" and means "to eat up; consume; devour). In the natural, insects and plagues come to destroy natural crops, just like the enemy of your soul, the devil, comes to destroy the harvest of your financial crop that is yours because of the money that you "plant"—keep reading:) and **he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground**, neither shall your vine drop its fruit before the time in the field, says the Lord of hosts".*

Once you plant your seed, you don't have to make your financial crop grow. You don't have to make it multiply. God has got that covered. If you are a tither, He causes the ground you sow it in to produce that multiplication AND He protects it from the devourer.

Let's go back to Mark 4, continuing with v29:

²⁹But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle because the harvest has come."

What is "*putting in the sickle*" referring to? It means to physically bring in the harvest or crop from the seeds which were sown.

Who puts "*in the sickle*"? Does God? No. Is it God's responsibility to get the harvest in? No. Who was responsible for planting the seed? The man was (us). Then God caused the ground to produce the multiplication which produces the harvest. Now, who gets the harvest in? In the natural, who goes out and gathers it? What does the Word say? "*He*" (the man) *putteth in the sickle*" so it is the man who planted the seed who then goes out and gets the harvest in. It is the same way with our financial harvest.

You can plant 1000 acres of soybean. You don't have to make it grow. God will make it grow, He has made the ground so that it will grow and multiply. Once you put the seed in, the ground knows what to do. God will shine on it with the sun. He will rain on it with the rain. As a result, you will have a bumper crop on 1000 acres. And at the time of harvest, will those soybeans automatically jump up and march out of the field and come into your silo by themselves? No. Why then do we think our financial harvest would do that?

Remember, we are still talking about how to "*seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness*" so "*all these things will be added unto us.*"

Listen to this carefully. Underline it and remember it. This is where people are missing in on receiving the harvest of the seed they are planting: REAPING IS NOT AUTOMATIC.

Most people think it is. Somehow, when they sow and believe and do all they know to do they think that God is supposed to just gather all that harvest up and dump it in their laps. It is the same with our financial harvest today. When people sow, believe and then God doesn't cause it to miraculously appear in their bank accounts, they think they didn't get a

harvest. They don't understand why and they wind up blaming God. They think "I was faithful in doing my part. Why didn't God do His part?" Because bringing in the harvest is NOT God's part, it is ours. We cannot leave up to God what He has left up to us!

Is sowing automatic? No. Then why do we think reaping is automatic? Am I saying that we are always responsible for reaping our harvest? No. Jesus said it! Now don't feel bad if you have believed this way for years. I know I did. I have years of planting that I never received a harvest on because I didn't understand that I am the one responsible for reaping the harvest I have sown. But I understand it now. I learned how to reap my harvest and the Lord also showed me that I can go back and reap all that harvest I have planted seed for over the last 5, 10 and 20 years. And I'm going to show you how to do the same. Understand that this is good news for you. It will help you in receiving your harvest now and for seed you have planted in the past.

It takes as much, or more, effort to bring in a harvest as it does to prepare and plant for a harvest. In Exodus 16, God supernaturally rained manna down from heaven for the Israelites. But as supernatural as that provision was, they still had to go out and gather it up, right? If they didn't go out and gather that day's provision, they wouldn't have any and they would go hungry. So if they went hungry, whose fault was it? Certainly not God's.

The Lord asked me "how much did you give over and above your tithes last year?" "Or the years before?" "Do you believe that it multiplies?" Yes. "Does it decline with the passing of time?" No. Actually He had me go back and write down all the seed above my tithes that I have given over the last 10 years. I now keep a specific giving record. I also know at all times how much financial harvest is in my "heavenly account", whether 10, 30, 60 or 100 fold. And you should know what is in your account as well. How do you know what to believe for if you don't know how much is there?

You might say "but I haven't given like I should have over the years." Listen, God loves you and His mercy and loving kindness endures forever. So don't beat yourself up because you have not done what you think you should have in the past. The Word says that God never forgets a seed sown. Don't discount God's ability and method for multiplication. God told me to "look at seeds in the natural".

A single corn seed produces 300 fold from what is planted. Do you think corn seed is any more powerful or anointed than the financial seed you have planted over the years for the kingdom of God? Of course not.

The Lord then said something that astounded me. He said "Frank, I guarantee you that if you knew how much harvest was in your heavenly account right now from seed you have planted in the past; you would fall off your chair and pass out."

He continued "Now, what would you think of a farmer who plants 500 acres of corn and then at harvest time he goes out and brings in 25 acres of it and then quits, and leaves the other 475 acres to rot? You would think he was crazy, right?"

"That is what you have done with the harvest on your giving. You have failed to reap a fraction of the harvest that was produced by your giving—because you didn't know." (Hosea 4:6 says "My people are cut off for a lack of knowledge.")

He continued "And, **in the natural**, crops left in the field rot, right? But in my kingdom, the harvest will **never rot** because **my seed is incorruptible. (1 Peter 1:23)**. It is all still there, multiplying, waiting for you to reap it!!" I thought, wow, that is reason to shout!

If you sow according to your faith, how are you going to reap? The same way—**According to your faith**.

It's according to what you believe for. Don't pray begging and pleading with God for finances. If you have been doing that—stop it. All the money you need and want is already down here in the **worlds system**.

By the same token, all the healing, deliverance, joy, peace, salvation, etc. has also already been bought and paid for by Jesus Christ at Calvary. And God is trying His best, through His Word and His Ministers, to teach us how to get it into our hands! (Go read Mark 11:22-25 where Jesus explains how to receive it by faith.)

If you are a tither and you are a giver, it belongs to you. If you are not—start giving and planting seed today!

How do I reap my harvest?

If the Kingdom of God is “sowing and reaping” and I know how to sow my seed by faith, the question is “how do I reap my harvest by faith”?

When you need money, or any other provision available to you from the Kingdom of God, you reap it by verbally claiming it out of this world's system and then do whatever God tells you to do.

What are we going to do now? We are going to exercise our faith to receive our harvest and to lay hold of it. See yourself doing this. You are taking the sickle now, right? You are going to get in here and cut out of your harvest what you need now.

BE SPECIFIC. You don't go to the bank and say “give me some money”. They would say “how much”. If you replied “I don't know—just give me some money.” They would say “we can't give you money if you don't tell us exactly how much you want according to what is in your account.”

Claim what you need, whether it is \$100, \$500 or \$5000. Whatever you need right now and you have the faith to receive, claim it out of this worlds system. Say, “*I claim that money out of this worlds system.*” “*I withdraw that money from my heavenly account.*” “*Satan, take your hands off my money.*” Then say “*Go ministering spirits and cause that money to come in.*” And expect it to come in.

What is that? Faith. Faith for what? Faith to receive, faith to lay hold of it, faith to reap. How much are you going to reap? It's going to be according to your faith. Whatever you can believe for is what you will have.

“*Well, then why don't I just ask for a billion dollars and be done with it?*” Is your faith at the “billion dollar” level? If you haven't had experience receiving \$100 by faith, you are not ready to step out in “billion dollar faith”.

When I asked the Lord “how much should I believe for?” God said “*What do you have faith for? The fact is that I could make you a multi-billionaire before the sun sets today. But it is not up to me. It is according to your faith. Where is your faith level? How much harvest do you have in your heavenly account? What can you believe for? How many times did Jesus say in the Bible “according to your faith, be it unto you”?*”

A lot of people believe in “putting in” but not “drawing out”.

A person can work all their life, putting most of their pay in the bank every week for 30 years. Then when their house is rotting, their car is falling apart and they are crying because they don't have a new house or a new car, what do they do?

When asked why don't they take some of that money out and get “all those things”, they reply “*oh...I don't believe in drawing money out of the bank—just putting it in there.*” “*Besides, the bank knows I have a need. They will give it to me if they see fit.*” How ridiculous does that sound? But that is exactly what a lot of Christians are doing. They say “*if God wants me to have anything, He knows what I need and will give it to me.*” Wrong. God wants you to have everything—but you have to reap it and take it in order to have it.

God has used words concerning sowing and reaping in the natural (as in farming), as well as natural banking terms (accounts). It is ours, but we have to lay hold of it and claim it and believe we receive it. Just like we would for our natural crops and just like we would do for our natural bank account. Do you know how much is in your “heavenly account” referred to by Jesus in Matthew 6:19-21 and by Paul in Philippians 4:16? If you don't, then you need to find out.

Now, are you ready to put this into action?

Here is how we are going to act on this right now. We are going to lay hold on it. I want you to think of an amount of money that you need right now. When you pray and claim it, I want you put the specific amount in the appropriate place below. This is not just a one-time thing. You can't do this just once. After you pray the initial prayer, ever day after that, you call out that specific amount and thank God that it is done. You have to continue doing this every day. This is how you should be living, praying and claiming on a daily basis until you receive the harvest you have laid claim to. Here is a sample prayer:

“In Jesus name, I am a giver. I have sown. I have sown and abundance is in my account. In Jesus name, I claim \$_____. I claim it out of this world system. I receive it and make a withdrawal out of my heavenly account. Satan, take your hands off this money. I claim it in Jesus name. Angels, you who are the ministering spirits who have been assigned to minister for me, who hearken to the voice of the Word of God, go to work, cause that money to come into my hands. Right now, I believe that I receive it. In Jesus name. Amen!”

Rev. R. Frank Bowers

Walking By Faith 4 Life Ministries