



LIFE APP

January 11-12, 2014

FIRST THINGS FIRST

## Spiritual Before Material

**Matthew 6:31-33** “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.”

### **GROUP / PERSONAL STUDY:**

As we continue this week to work on setting our priorities in the best order for 2014, we see that Scripture points out that we need to place greater importance on spiritual things in our lives instead of always being focused on our material possessions, etc. Let's really stop and think about the stress and worry that threaten to overwhelm us so often and where this stress and worry comes from.

1A) PERSONAL: Honestly answer this question: Are you stressed and worried about spiritual things or are you stressed and worried about material things? For example, if you have to miss church or Bible Study or Life Group, or you don't have time for your Daily Quiet Time, how much time do you spend worrying?

1B) PERSONAL: If you're expecting a check in the mail and it doesn't come or you're on the way to an important business meeting – how much time do you spend worrying about that?

2A) PERSONAL: Take a long look at your checkbook, credit card bill, and calendar. Where is most of your time and money spent?

Approximately - what percentage of your time and money are involved with spiritual things?

What percentage is spent on basic needs and activities?

What percentage is spent on material goods or entertainment?

2B) PERSONAL: How surprised are you by where your actual every day focus is placed?

2C) PERSONAL: What could you do to be more proactive in changing your priorities to the Spiritual before the physical and material?

Are you willing to make those changes? How hard do you think it will be?

3A) Our focus passage is Matthew 6:31-33: What is encouraging in verses 31-32?

3B) In verse 33, what are we told to do and if we obey God's command, what will be the result?

4) From the following passages, what are we told to do that seems completely opposite from what we - in our humanness - think should be done?

Luke 6:38:

John 11:25:

Galatians 2:19:

### **Read Matthew 20:25-28:**

5) How does this passage show that in God's way, we need to do the opposite from our natural instincts?

6) What new understanding do you have concerning God's consistency and the idea that we must seek God's kingdom first instead of worrying, we must die to live, we must give to receive, and we must become a slave to become truly free, etc.?

**ACT:** God's process of fixing our problems is vastly different from the ways of the world. The world's system says to focus our time and attention on our material possessions and our position in society, to take our money and possessions and keep them for ourselves, to live for today because tomorrow we die, and to do it all "my way." However, when we follow God's plan and His process in our daily decisions, He promises to provide what we need so that we don't have to worry. He can be trusted! So it's time – right now in January 2014 - for us to change and decide whom we will serve, "but for me and my house – we will serve the Lord!"

**Daily Devotional:** It always helps to look at the context of the passage. Then try to answer the following questions about the passage. Who is involved? What is going on? Where is the action taking place? When? How can this concept apply to my life? Why is it important? Also look for Commands, Warnings, and Examples to follow or not to follow.

- Each day of the week, read the designated passage about serving and notice how serving God becomes a blessing in our lives and in the lives of others.

## **Monday:**

### **Deuteronomy 10:12-13 NLT**

And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you? He requires only that you fear the LORD your God, and live in a way that pleases Him, and love Him and serve Him with all your heart and soul. And you must always obey the LORD's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good.

## **Tuesday:**

### **Deuteronomy 11:13-15 NLT**

If you carefully obey all the commands I am giving you today, and if you love the LORD your God and serve Him with all your heart and soul, then He will send the rains in their proper seasons—the early and late rains—so you can bring in your harvests of grain, new wine, and olive oil. He will give you lush pastureland for your livestock, and you yourselves will have all you want to eat.

## **Wednesday:**

### **I Samuel 12:20-21 NCV**

Samuel answered, "Don't be afraid. It's true that you did wrong, but don't turn away from the LORD. Serve the LORD with all your heart. Idols are of no use, so don't worship them. They can't help you or save you. They are useless!

## **Thursday:**

### **Matthew 6:24 NLT**

**"No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."**

## **Friday:**

### **Romans 1:25 NIV**

They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator – who is forever praised, Amen.

## **Saturday:**

### **Ephesians 6:5-8 NLT**

Slaves, obey your earthly masters with deep respect and fear. Serve them sincerely as you would serve Christ. Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. As slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart. Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free.

## **Sunday:**

### **I Peter 4:10 NIV**

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.



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[www.metchurch.com](http://www.metchurch.com)

817.379.4638