**Seek Ye First**

*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you* (Matthew 6:33).

Like the Jews who returned from captivity, we need to learn to seek the kingdom of God above our perceived self-interest. May the Lord deal with us as He dealt with them.

**1. They were tempted to put God off** (1:1-5)

A. It seemed *prudent*

B. It was *pleasant*

**2. They lost God’s blessing** (1:6-11)

A. Through “natural” *disasters*

B. Through a divine *decree*

**3. God’s Spirit stirred them to obey** (1:12-15)

In the work of God –

A. Exhortations alone are *powerless*

B. God’s Spirit alone is *persuasive*

**4. God promised to glorify His temple** (2:1-9)

A. In *their day*

Zechariah 4:6-10

B. In the *latter day*

**5. God prepared to bless them** (2:15-19)

A. Forget the “gospel” of *prosperity*

B. Trust in the God of *promise*

**For additional study or family discussion**

Did the Lord speak to you today about Himself and His ways? Did He show you a duty you need to perform or a promise you need to claim? What was either encouraging or challenging in the sermon?

1. How true do you think the last line of this hymn is? In what ways have you acted as though you believed it to be true? In what ways have you acted as though you did not believe it? How much of yourself are you willing to spend?

*Give of thy sons to bear the message glorious;*

*Give of thy wealth to speed them on their way;*

*Pour out thy soul for them in prayer victorious;*

*And all thou spendest Jesus will repay.*

(Verse 4 of the hymn “O Zion Haste,” compare Luke 10:35).

2. Matthew 6:33. In the context (vv. 25-34), what does Jesus promise to those who seek God’s kingdom first? What is the difference between our perceived self-interest and our actual self-interest? How does seeking God’s kingdom first, promote our actual self-interest? Why is seeking God’s kingdom first an act of faith?

3. What difference would it make if you acted out of a hunger for God’s blessing rather than out of a sense of duty and guilt? How would you regard –

God’s word and prayer?

Your entertainment?

Your friendships?

Church and Sunday school?

Your tithes and offerings?

The use of your money, your time, and your energy?

The demands of your extended family when they conflict with putting the Lord first?

4. How might you seek the stirring up of your spirit by the Spirit of God (Haggai 1:14; 2:5)?