

LENT DEVOTION

Austin Christian Fellowship of India (ACFI)

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"Seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33). The word "seek" is in the present tense. In English it refers to 'one time' action that is happening right now but in Greek it refers to the "continuous course of action" - it happening right now and is repeated again and again. Seeking Righteousness is not a one-time action but continues all through the life of the believer. The Lord is there helping us, leading us, and guiding us. But a believer needs to seek God's Kingdom and His righteousness continuously.

We seek continuously to have the best and to do our best when it comes to our jobs, finances, health, and interpersonal relationships. The common man persists and perseveres to have their temporal needs met - paying the bills, taking care of the physical needs and that of the family, etc. It becomes the priority number one and if not met, it becomes a 'worry.' Some people do anything and everything to meet their needs and desires - even if it costs their faith, health and time and relationship. Sometimes they even cross the moral and ethical boundaries. But for a believer it is the other way around. 'Seeking God and His Kingdom and His righteousness' becomes priority number one and a believer strives to do the right thing with the right motive in spite of the circumstances and conditions.

We do not lose heart or give up in our pursuit of Righteousness, "Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, (you) and I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called (you) and I heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13--14). That does not mean a believer is 'indifferent' to the necessities and need and becomes lazy or irresponsible. But a believer very well knows that God is the only source and supplies all the resources and seeks Him first and the rest next. For example, when a person runs toward the west his shadow is cast in front of him or her. The faster the person runs the faster the shadow also runs away from that person and can never ever catch or step over the shadow. But on the other hand, if the person stops and turns around and runs toward the east (sun) that very moment the shadow follows the person all along! That is the secret of the life of a believer. When a believer 'seeks' first God's Righteousness then the promise is "everything follows him or her."

Our faith, of course, will be challenged and opposed in the course of this pursuit of righteousness. Severe trial will certainly 'sift' the believer but he or she persists and perseveres. Enduring does not earn Salvation for us but marks the believer as already saved. God encourages "persistence" in every area of our lives, including the pursuit for Righteousness and in this process He also provides the needed help and guidance. What are you seeking in the present times? Whom are you seeking now are the important questions!