

THE THINGS THAT MATTER

Matthew 6:33

Daniel Idogar

ILLUSTRATION

One night, a group of thieves broke into a jewellery store. But rather than stealing anything, they simply switched all the price tags. The next shoppers were unaware of what the thieves had done. The expensive jewels had suddenly become cheap, and the costume jewellery, which had been virtually worthless before, was suddenly very expensive.

Customers who thought they were purchasing valuable gems were getting fakes. Those who couldn't afford the higher priced items were leaving the store with treasures.

Our world is like that jewellery store. It's like someone came in and switched all the price tags. It's hard to tell what is of value and what is not.

In our world, great value is given to the accumulation of material wealth and the power that goes with it. Our world puts a high price on popularity, prestige, beauty, and fame.

But Jesus taught that such things are virtually worthless in the only "*jewellery store*" that

matters which is the kingdom of God.

In the text before us, Christ admonished us to set priorities and know what really matters in life. *He said we should seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness.*

Christ was teaching a principle that involved a deep relationship with our king and a display of Christ like virtues. That is what really matters.

JUSTICE, MERCY AND FAITH – MATTHEW 23:23-24, 18:23

Jesus Christ recognized the Scribes and Pharisees for their good knowledge of the law. But he pointed out the weightier matters of the law which they were found wanting. They were deficient of the things that really mattered.

Doctrine is good, but Christian virtues are more vital. Do not get so deep into doctrine that you forget how to be human. Christ wants to build Christians who are *just* in their way of thinking, analysis and judgement. The things that really matter in Christianity

are characters that are trustworthy.

It is high time we take a little leave from doctrinal matters and see how we can become merciful and kind people. Do you know that kindness is one of the fruits of the spirit and can be cultivated?

Many of us want mercy from God but we are lacking in that thing which is necessary. We are not merciful.

Kindness is beyond showing compassion to the weak, it is even more about showing compassion to the wicked. Isn't that the basis of our conversion today?

Romans 5:8

Just like the parable of the unmerciful servant, in order to be merciful, we must learn to remember. The servant had forgotten so soon what his master did for him and when he met his fellow servant who was a debtor to him, he was not compassionate and he threw him into prison. But there were witnesses. As much as possible, avoid wickedness because people are watching!

Kindness is about sacrifice. Kindness may demand going out of your way to help the needy. One thing that affects the depth of our kindness or mercy is that we often feel someone else would do it. *Look only at yourself.*

Don't base your mercy on others or the church's own mercy. And we should strive to nurture a church that is merciful. There is

nothing more beautiful than a merciful church, a church that is honest, and a church that is just in decision making. These are the weightier matters of the law. *These are the things that really matter.*

FELLOWSHIP – MARK 6:31

Fellowship goes beyond coming together to worship or study the Bible.

Real fellowship involves a forum where people can share thoughts, pains, meals, etc.

Fellowship builds understanding and human integration. That is why when the disciples returned from their evangelism, Christ ensured they had a sort of a little retreat, a time to talk and share, a godly therapeutic session.

Christ knew that what really mattered was not preaching the Gospel alone, but how much they could be refreshed, understand, and complement one another.

We can get so spiritually focused that we forget that the physical is also as important.

The world now is tailored in a way to refuse mediums that encourage fellowship among Christians. And sadly, we are buying into that syndrome.

Mutual relationships are more valuable than individual accomplishments.

After the preaching, what next? After the sermon, what next? We may have become a group of bible

scholars lacking commonness and togetherness.

We must create forums that encourage true fellowship. And as individual Christians, we should be ready to put in the work and make ourselves available.

Stop leaving the church immediately they say amen. Stop running away from meetings. Stop hiding from socializing. Stop being a one man army. Stop being all about the Bible and nothing about your brother.

A little time to talk, a deeper bond we create, burdens become lighter, then sharing truly becomes caring. Fellowship is what matters in life, else, why must we co-exist if we cannot co-exist?

FAMILY – MATT. 19:5, 6

Families are important to God. It is the first institution God created. God designed the family as the basic unit of society.

A man and woman are to leave their own families of origin and come together in a lifelong covenant relationship.

The family is also the building block of the local church. The church is only strong when the families in that church are strong.

Do you know that one of the best cure for depression and loneliness is the family?

Psalm 68:6 says that God's sets the lonely in the family. ***It has always been God's design that***

blood would be thicker than water.

There are friends and there is family. *There are things only family can do for you. There are tears only family can wipe away. There is a certain peace only family can give to you.*

Do not joke with your family. But the world we are living in now has changed the price tag such that we see family as less important and our jobs and careers and hustle as more important.

That is why today young couples pursue greener pasture and leave their spouses.

The first institution God created has casually become the forgotten institution.

Care for your parents as much as you can if you still have them. Remember them now. Tend to the needs of your children; for these are the things that really matter.

CONCLUSION

A professor gave an illustration to his students on the things that really matter in life. He used an empty can and filled it with small golf or tennis balls. And the students agreed in no time that the can was full.



Now, he filled it more with little pebbles, they also agreed that the pebbles that the can was full again.



Then, he filled the can with sand. Definitely, the sand particles did find their way into those smaller spaces and now the can was also still full.



This represents what our lives is all about.

The gravels represent the most important things in our lives like God, righteousness, fellowship, health, family.

The pebbles represent other important things like school, job, etc.

While the sand represents the other things of life like vacation, cinemas, parties, etc.

If you fill the can first with sand, then there will be no room for the stones and pebbles. There will be no room for the most important things. There will be no room for the things that matter.

Do not fill your life with sand and block the way for the gravels and the pebbles. Do the first things first and the right things right.

May God help us to focus on the things that matter in Jesus Name. Amen.