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God cares about Earth not just Heaven and his Kingdom is both the Kingdom of earth and Heaven.



Martin Luther-King Jnr once said that **“I worship the God of Heaven AND earth, not just the God of Heaven”**

Martin Luther-King was facing the same politics that we often do where people misunderstand the Christian faith so much that they think it is only about heaven and that God doesn't care what happens on earth. Nothing could be further from the truth.

In 1958 Martin Luther King Jnr said:

*Religion at its best, deals not only with man's preliminary concerns but with his inescapable ultimate concern. When religion overlooks this basic fact it is reduced to a mere ethical system in which eternity is absorbed into time and God is relegated to a sort of meaningless figment of the human imagination. **But a religion true to its nature must also be concerned about man's social conditions. Religion deals with both earth and heaven, both time and eternity. Religion operates not only on the vertical plane but also on the horizontal. It seeks not only to integrate men with God but to integrate men with men and each man with himself.***

This means, at bottom, that the Christian Gospel is a two-way road. On the one hand, it seeks to change the souls of men, and thereby unite them with God; on the other hand, it seeks to change the environmental conditions of men so that the soul will have a chance after it is changed.

Any religion that professes to be concerned with the souls of men and is not concerned with the slums that damn them, the economic conditions that strangle them, and the social conditions that cripple them is a dry-as-dust religion. Such a religion is the kind the Marxists like to see - an opiate of the people.

This was said and recorded in the 1950s and so references to “man” means both men and women.

God's interest is in everything, indeed Jesus Christ's words tell us to ask God and we shall receive. The context here is that if we are in tune with God's ways then we can indeed ask and receive but then we will not be asking selfishly. Going with belief in Jesus Christ and growing in His likeness, such that we become in tune with God's ways, is linked to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Matthew's gospel chapter 7 at verse 7 our Lord Jesus Christ tells us:

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

At the same time, even in the Lord's prayer, which you can also find Jesus Christ telling us to say at Matthew chapter 6, he tells us to constantly acknowledge God's authority over the earth as well as over heaven. So it is that we say in the Lord's prayer:

“Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven”.

This acknowledges God's rule in both earth and heaven. We know that God's way is a way of truth and justice and yet God has given us freewill which allows us to mess up things from time to time. Nonetheless this prayer acknowledges God's authority over everything around us.

Throughout the Bible, God constantly acts when his people ask. Indeed Jesus is shown throughout the Gospels to be healing and caring for people. God does care about what is happening on earth. He loves us, i.e. God cares for us. It is also a reality of that same caring love that God gives us free will. Yet that same free will means that we also get things wrong. What seems like a good thing for us to do has bigger consequences elsewhere and we can often end up by being upset by what happens as a consequence, and yet that is also the reality of free will.

God is ruler over both earth and heaven. Jesus' resurrection proves to us that there is indeed something beyond the grave, there is a heaven.

As St Paul writes in the letter to the Colossians. In chapter 1 at verse 15 we are told:

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; ¹⁶ for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

So God rules our lives and God, in truth, rules both earth and heaven. Nor can we escape God and God is always with us.

Sometimes, in the dismissal at the end of a service, special words are used that tells us that God is always with us, but those words also reminds us that God is always there no matter how we feel.

The words of this dismissal are:

Go and know that the Lord goes with you. Let him lead you each day into the quiet place of your heart where he will speak with you, know that he loves you and watches over you, that he listens to you in gentle understanding, and that he is always with you, wherever you are, however you may feel.

So go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ, Amen

There is the conclusion for us all: God is with us always. Wherever we are. However we feel.

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