

Our Father, Who is in heaven; Hallowed be Your name;

Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

the *Lord's* prayer

Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

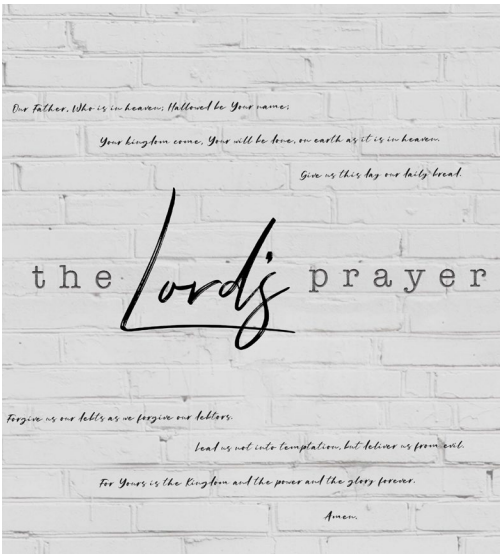
Amen.

Sermon Growth Guide

July 17, 2022

The Father's Kingdom

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The Lord's Prayer - The Father's Kingdom

Matthew 6:9-13

Key Verse: Matthew 6:10

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

Big Idea: When we submit our all to the Lord's will, the Kingdom appears.

Foundations

This is the second week of our sermon series, ***The Lord's Prayer***.

In simple terms, prayer can be thought of as the act of simply talking to God. We have a list...we let him have it...Amen! Prayer completed. But throughout this series, we are learning that prayer is the avenue for a relationship. While the Lord is always available to hear what is on our hearts, prayer gives us the gift of opening our ears to listen for what is on His. For prayer doesn't simply alert God to what's going on in our world, but it awakens us to what's happening in His.

Jesus instructs us to pray, “Your kingdom come.” The Lord's Kingdom is real and good. We apprehend this “alternative reality” and taste of its goodness when our souls are surrendered and satisfied in the Father's sovereignty over all. And while the Father's Kingdom is certainly but only partially present in the here-and-now of our lives, we pray with anticipation for the fullness of its revelation to come.

The prayer for the Lord's Kingdom to come and for His will to be done must begin in us—personally. It must invade my mind and inhabit my heart. It must be a forerunner over every desire we have. When we submit our all to the Lord's will, the Kingdom appears.

Understanding God's Word

Together, read Matthew 6:9-13

What do you think the disciples were longing for during the time Jesus' teaching on prayer came to them? How might their longings be like ours today?

Applying God's Word

Where might the Lord be inviting His prayer to be particularized in your own life?

What is one way this week you might cultivate a surrendered posture to the Lord's Kingdom personally?

Witnessing God's Word

Open up your calendar and take a look at what's ahead. For what meetings or interactions might you pray, “Your kingdom come, your will be done” before you show up?

Who can you be praying for in the coming week?

We have just finished another exciting week of Vacation Bible School. Wow! My favorite part is when I get to stand in front of 400 screaming kids and get them to fold their hands, bow their heads, close their eyes, and pray. Connection with God. My first prayer I remember was the “Now I lay me” prayer. “Now I lay me down to sleep, pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I die before I wake, pray the Lord my soul to take.” I could recite it all the way through without thinking about a single word. “Now-I-lay-me” was one word in my mind. My Mom tucked me in with that prayer and a sweet kiss every night. It’s a little alarming, isn’t it? I never thought going to bed was so dangerous! But if I did go that night, I sure wanted a prayer that would get me into heaven. I knew that! Later I realized it isn’t a prayer that gets you into heaven, it’s a Person. It’s a relationship with Jesus Christ, faith in Him, reliance on Him, trust in Him. Still, I’m grateful to be taught to pray from before I can remember. Prayer is the beginning of that relationship.

We are studying **The Lord’s Prayer**. What if we, as a church, grew a fathom deeper in our lives of prayer? What if we all grew closer to the Lord in prayer this month? The application point we heard last week from Pastor Greg is very simple. Let’s pray more. Pray. The Lord’s Prayer is what Jesus taught us to pray. He teaches us still. For the rest of the series, we will read this same passage, but we will look closely at it line by line. Today it is, “Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” What does that mean to us today? **The Father’s Kingdom**. Your Kingdom Come.

Whenever we stop to think about prayer, it raises the age-old questions. Why pray? What does it do? How does it work? C. S. Lewis said, “I pray because I’m helpless. I pray because the need flows out of me all the time, waking and sleeping. It doesn’t change God. It changes me.” I think someone had asked him, do you really pray expecting God to do your bidding? We don’t pray expecting to make God our servant. We can’t make God a butler no matter how hard we try. So why pray? Lewis said not to change God, but to change me. Prayer changes me. But prayer does also make room for God to move. Prayer changes things. God is able to change things. I’m reading 2 Kings right now in my “Bible in One Year” plan. God can set up kings and knock down kings. God can prosper countries and despoil them. God can bring an end to the reign of Vladimir

Putin today. God can bring the American economy to a stop, or He can turn it around and restore prosperity. God can change a terminal cancer diagnosis to a free bill of health. I’ve seen it! When He does and does not answer our prayers is mysterious, but we do pray to change things—not only ourselves, but the world. Prayer changes me. Prayer changes things.

“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). Your Kingdom come. What do we learn from just those three words? **(1) The Kingdom of God exists**. There is a reality called the Kingdom of God. What is that? The Kingdom of God is where God is the King. That’s what I like to say, very simply. But what does that mean? God is sovereign, and in His sovereignty He sovereignly allows us to ignore His sovereignty! God allows us to ignore His will and disregard His commands. The Kingdom of God is where His commands are not ignored, but followed, where God’s way is the way. And it is both present, whenever we submit to God, and also still coming, where God’s ways will once again reign over all that God made, restoring the fallen world to order, peace, justice, health and beauty to the glory of God. The Kingdom of God exists. An alternative reality. A future hope, but also an alternative reality you can know and experience right now as you submit your heart to the Lord.

(2) The Kingdom of God is good. Jesus wants us to pray for it. In Luke, we are told about how Jesus taught this prayer privately to the disciples, but here in Matthew we see Jesus also teaching it to the masses smack in the middle of the Sermon on the Mount. And the whole sermon is about the goodness of the Kingdom of God. Don’t wonder if the Kingdom is a good kingdom, read about it. The more you look into it the more satisfied you will be. We try to satisfy our souls with lesser, but, as Greg said last week, “our souls know better.” Kingdom is what we need, and it is good.

(3) The Kingdom of God is not here yet. If we are praying for its coming, we are praying for something that isn’t here yet. It is present. It is a present reality, but it has not yet fully overthrown the confusions and brokenness of the fallen kingdoms of this fallen world. We feel that. It isn’t fully here yet. Jesus wants us to pray into that “not yet,” broken feeling. Jesus doesn’t teach prayer as a mind-numbing dulling of the senses. The most popular thing right

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now is “mindfulness, a way to quiet your unsettledness, to drain your anxieties, to empty your mind. There are worse things to do than take a deep breath for a minute in a world that’s moving 1,000 mph. But be careful here. Jesus doesn’t teach prayer that dulls your awareness of broken things. In fact, this prayer increases your unsettledness. This prayer inflames your discontent. To pray “your Kingdom come” is not to deaden your emotions about the things that currently are not right, but to exacerbate your longing for things to be put right. It isn’t here yet.

(4) The Kingdom of God will come. This prayer will be answered. The Kingdom is on the way. The life, death and resurrection of Jesus and the outpouring of His Spirit, guarantee it’s coming. Come Holy Spirit. Come Lord Jesus. Your Kingdom come.

“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). Your will be done here, on earth, in our lives, as it is done in heaven. Well how is it done in heaven? The will of God is executed in perfect obedience and order in heaven. The angels are so aligned to God’s will that they respond in immediate obedience. There is no bouncing back and forth, no hemming and hawing, thinking “on this hand, but on the other hand.” Angels obey in perfect order. That’s why they represent God so well as his messengers. Can you imagine a quibbling angel? What if Gabriel said, “Mary, I think I heard God saying you’re going to be pregnant and bear His Son, the Savior, but, I don’t know, that just sounds weird to me.” Mary needs a little more clarity than that. Angels represent God so directly that the Bible gets unclear whether it was God or His angels the person saw. To pray for the Kingdom to come and to pray for God’s will to be done is to pray that we, in our lives, would fall more in line with the perfect will of God than we have been up to now. On earth as it is in heaven.

Now, notice the direction. I may have prayed, “my soul to take.” I may have wanted a prayer to get me up into heaven when I die, but this prayer isn’t a prayer to move us up into heaven, is it? Your Kingdom come. Your will be done on earth, down here, as it is in heaven, up there. This is not a prayer to be taken up to heaven, this is a prayer to bring heaven down to earth. This is a prayer to pull heaven down here. This is a prayer to claw the Kingdom down to my earth and clay life. Come down. Rend

the heavens and come down. Bring heaven down. That’s the prayer. We have the privilege and responsibility of pulling heaven down right now. That’s what Christ is saying. When you pray, here is your model, here is the shape, give glory to God and pull heaven down. Right here. Right now.

We’ve been singing a praise song in the Worship Center called “I Speak Jesus.” I speak Jesus from the mountains, Jesus in the streets, Jesus in the darkness over every enemy. I speak Jesus for my family. I speak Jesus into my world. I want to claw the Kingdom down. I want the Kingdom to come down and invade. Invade this church. Invade my city. Invade City Hall and all the halls of government. I want the Kingdom there. I want the Kingdom in our schools, don’t you? I want the Kingdom in my business, in my workplace. In my unit on base, in our universities and industries, Kingdom. In every hall of power—Your Kingdom come. The Father’s Kingdom. I’m not praying me up there; I’m praying the Kingdom down here. Jesus says this is our model of prayer. How does it happen? Well, let me tell you, it doesn’t start in the ballot box, although we need Christians engaged there. It doesn’t start in City Hall, although we need Christians there. It doesn’t start at the school or at the paper or at the Supreme Court, although we need Christians engaged there. Where does it start?

Jesus said, “But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you” (Matthew 6:6). What happens in private will pour out in public. Who you are in your secret closet of prayer is who you will be in your relations with others and with the world. You think it’s hard to get the Kingdom into your kids’ school? Let me tell you, the hardest place to get the Kingdom, the most difficult terrain to conquer, is right here in your mind, and in your heart, and in your guts. Inside you. Kingdom come.

First that prayer has to be answered in your mind, in your thinking. Will you submit every thought and opinion to the Lord? Will you, as it says in 2 Corinthians 10, “We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we **take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ**” (2 Corinthians 10:5). Come into the closet of prayer, lay down every philosophy, every ideology, every political position, every idea and say,

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“Lord, Your Kingdom come. I submit every thought, every way of thinking, to You. I may not understand why You command what You command, prohibit what You prohibit, teach what You teach, but I submit my very mind to You.” His thoughts are not our thoughts, His ways not our ways. But can you trust that they are good? A 4-year old doesn't understand his mother's prohibitions or appreciate his father's commands. We often don't understand God's. But can you trust that they are good and submit your thinking to the Word of God? This is not anti-intellectual, actually. You will find your intellect inflamed when you submit and the Kingdom invades your mind.

How about your heart? Your Kingdom come into my heart. What do you love? What do you cherish? What pulls your heartstrings? In the Kingdom, the Lord is God, the greatest of all loves. The petition “Your Kingdom come, your will be done” said to God in our private closets of prayer, this is a petition asking God to invade and capture and overtake every part of our lives, every dimension—my emotions, my desires, my thoughts, my commitments. Pray the Kingdom down into your very heart. “Order my loves, O Lord.” I believe it was Augustine who asked God, command us according to Your good and teach us to love what You command. “I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart” (Psalms 40:8).

Mind, heart and will. Your guts. Your desires. Your wants and needs. How much desperation comes from the bottom of your belly when there is something you want that you can't have just now? Can you claw the Kingdom down into your very belly? Ask God to rule your desires. This is our prayer for the Holy Spirit to invade our being to the very core where we don't only know the good with our minds, or love the good with our hearts, but we actually want the good, the true goodness, of God's will and ways for us and for the world. Your Kingdom come, all the way down here.

When that happens, we walk out of here different people. You exit your prayer closet with the Kingdom within you. You want the Kingdom to come down in your neighborhood; bring it down first in your heart. You want the Kingdom to come down in your business; claw it down into your own soul. You want the Kingdom reflected in your nation; it comes first to the soil of your heart. Then wherever you go, you go with the Kingdom within. The Kingdom, the

presence of God, comes with you wherever you go. It is in school, because it is in you as you sit in school. It is in the ballot box, because it is in you and you walk in there differently with the Kingdom in your heart. This is how the Kingdom comes: in you.

Theologians debate about prayer whether it is more about communion or Kingdom. Is it internal or external? Is it about being with God alone, “prayer changes me” or about seeing God move in this world, “prayer changes things”? What I'm saying to you this morning as we meditate on the Lord's Prayer is this: communion brings Kingdom. Communion brings Kingdom. When the Kingdom reigns in your mind, heart and will on the basis of your personal, private contests of prayer with God, wrestling with God in your prayer closet, when the Kingdom comes down in you the Kingdom comes down in this world. Private communion with the Lord in personal submission to His will—it brings monumental Kingdom advance in this world.

How do I know? It's what Jesus did. This is the one petition Jesus Himself repeated as He knelt by a stone in the Garden of Gethsemane, waiting for Roman guards to come and bind Him and take Him to be beaten and crucified, as He sweat drops of blood in His anxiety. “Thy will be done,” He said. “Your will be done.” “He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, ‘Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done’” (Luke 22:41-42). Let our communion in prayer bring Your Kingdom on earth. Let my submission in private bring Your rule in this world. Why can we call God Father? Because Jesus Christ has named us sisters and brothers, and in His perfect obedience and submission He has paid the debt of our sins on the cross, and in His rising from the dead, He has inaugurated the Kingdom of God, He has turned the curse around, the healing has begun. And in all who are in Him, the Kingdom grows, it is emerging, and one day it will fill all the earth with the glory of God as the waters cover the seas.

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