

The Lord's Prayer (3)

Your kingdom come

Matthew 6:10

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This verse is part of the portion of scripture known as the Lord's Prayer. Jesus is giving it as an example of how to pray to His disciples. Previously Jesus had begun with these words, *"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name."* In prayer we present our prayer to God, our Father, the all-sufficient, all-loving One, who sits on His throne in heaven. He is the sovereign ruler over all things. He is holy, pure and trustworthy. With confidence we can present our requests to God our Father. We now turn to the following verse found in Matthew 6:10:

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

This verse is best understood when we recognize its use of parallelism. This writing style was often used in scripture. The first phrase states an idea, then the second phrase repeats the same idea in different words. We see this style in:

Psalms 46:1 – *"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."*

Psalms 46:7 – *"The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."*

Once we recognize the parallelism, in verse 10 it gives us the definition of *"Your kingdom come"*. It is that God's will would be done, on earth as it is in heaven. We will know that the Kingdom of God has fully come to earth when the total rule of God and the complete obedience of man becomes the reality of all life here on earth.

It is a simple concept. To be a king you have to have a kingdom, and the kingdom is made up of all who live under the rule of the king.

The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom. The word translated "kingdom" in the Greek was the word *basilea*. This word meant "the realm in which a sovereign king rules". If one has not put themselves under

the sovereign rule of God, then God is not their king, and thus they are not part of the kingdom. The kingdom of God is made up of all who have willingly submitted their hearts and lives to the spiritual authority of God. All who have not submitted by faith to God's authority are not part of the kingdom of God.

This spiritual kingdom of God is evident in various verses in the Bible. In John 18:36, Jesus is asked by Pilate, ***"Are you the King of the Jews?"*** Jesus responded, ***"My kingdom is not of this world."*** In Matthew 4:17, Jesus preached that repentance is necessary to enter God's kingdom. In John 3:5-7, Jesus describes one's entrance into the kingdom as being born again. Romans 14:17 states that the kingdom of God is a matter ***"of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit"***. 1 Corinthians 6:9 tells how the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God. Citizenship in the kingdom of God is given to all who submit their hearts to the rule of God.

The kingdom of God is not a geographical kingdom or a political kingdom. That is why the Jews of Jesus day did not recognize it. They were looking for a kingdom that would free them from the Romans, but that is not why Jesus had come. He was bringing a spiritual, eternal kingdom. When asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus responded, ***"The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."***

That is why Jesus came proclaiming the gospel and saying, ***"the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel"*** (Mark 1:14-15). In Christ, the kingdom of God had come near (Matthew 4:17; Luke 10:9). Jesus came, ushering in the kingdom of God into our world and into our lives. Jesus, living in their midst gave them and us an example of what a kingdom life looks like. His life was one fully lived under the rule of the Father. The Father's will was done completely in Jesus' life. He was tempted as we are, but sinned not (Hebrews 4:15). In John 5:19 Jesus declared, ***"Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of His own accord, but only what He sees the Father doing."*** The greatest picture of this was when Jesus wrestled in prayer in the garden of Gethsemane. He knew His arrest, torture and crucifixion were near. In desperation He prayed, ***"Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done"*** (Luke 22:42). The Kingdom of God had come so completely in the life of Christ that even in desperation His deepest longing was still that God's will would be done.

That is what kingdom living is to look like in our lives. Yes, we become citizens of the Kingdom of God when we turn to Christ through faith and repentance, but the fullness of the kingdom life is to grow day by day in the life of every believer. That is the idea behind the words ***"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."*** God's will is done completely in heaven. That should be the goal for our lives as well. That the kingdom of God would take such a radical hold of us that every part of our lives would be subject to God as King.

We often find ourselves in situations where kingdom living seems impossible, but nothing is impossible for God. Those who have entered the kingdom of God have been freed from their bondage of sin, which had bound them to this world (Galatians 4:3-9). God now works in us to will and to act according to His purpose (Philippians 2:13). As a member of God's kingdom, God's will is to be our constant pursuit. That

God would continue to take lordship over more and more of our lives. That we would walk by faith and experience the blessing of God.

Our second way to think about God's kingdom should be that God's will would be done in our world. We have been called to be more than just citizens of the kingdom. We are to be ambassadors for our King. This world is not our home. 2 Corinthians 5:20 says, ***"Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."*** We are to herald the coming of the King, urging others to submit to the rule of Christ in their lives. We are to be kingdom-bearers to our workplace, neighborhood and homes.

We must realize being an ambassador for Christ is difficult work. Matthew 7:13-14 describes it with these words, ***"The gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many . . . The gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few."***

It is not hard as in difficult or complicated. Coming into the kingdom of God simply requires one to put their faith in Jesus Christ. It is hard because people do not want to repent and humble themselves under the rule of God. They do not want to give up lordship of their lives. They do not want to turn away from the pleasures of the world. They would rather live in the darkness than the light (John 3:19). Many would rather cling to their sinful identities than being born again and made new in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). But still, as children of the King we are to win the world for the kingdom of God. That the kingdom of God, that is growing in our lives, would begin to stir in their hearts a desire for what we have, ushering them into the kingdom of God as well.

Let's return to Matthew 6:10: ***"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."*** How do these words affect the way that we should pray? Jesus is calling us to pray for the will of God in our lives and in our world. If we want to be a people whose prayers are powerful and effective, we must pray for God's will to be done. In 1 John 5:14-15, we find these words: ***"And this is the confidence that we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him."***

If the Kingdom of God is going to rule in our lives and in our world, we must pray for His will to be done. Is that the characteristics of our prayers? Whether it be through praise, confession, thanksgiving or petition, are we seeking God's will? Whether we are praying about finances, health, future, marriage, business, or relationships, are we submitting our requests to our God and King, ready to respond with complete obedience? Those are the prayers that will be answered.

If we do not pray for God's will to be done, and if we do not pray with a heart that is ready to submit to however God responds, then we cannot hope that our prayers will be answered. Jesus is showing us the way to pray. We must realize that we are praying to the King and we must submit our hearts to His will trusting that He knows best.

How can we know God's will? God's will is discovered in His Word. The more we read of how God has worked in the past we begin to understand His character and His purposes. We then can better attune our prayers to His will. It is much like a child who grows to know their parents to the point that they know

what they can ask for and what they cannot, because they have grown to know the character of his or her parents.

We learn more about God through regular Bible study. We then align our prayers with His will. In those times when we do not know God's will for a situation, we pray the best we can, with a neutral heart, placing our request before Him as Christ did, ***"Not my will, but yours be done."***

One day Jesus Christ will return to rule. The kingdom will no longer be hidden from our view. Christ will show Himself clearly as the King of kings and Lord of lords, but for now may we be a people who live for the kingdom in the present while longing for the Kingdom of the future.

As we seek the kingdom difficult situations will come, and Satan will try to convince us that our King does not care. Even then, will you pray into the truth of scripture that says that God knows our every need and is our ever-present help in time of trouble? Even when our problems seem insurmountable, will we pray to our heavenly Father, who is our Almighty King, our Savior and Ruler of all? Even when we cannot clearly see God working in our situation, will we trust the holiness and purity of His will for us? When we cannot see His "hand", will we choose to trust His heart . . . and keep praying?

God, our Father, has drawn near to hear our prayers and work in and through our lives. May we trust Him, pray to Him, submit to Him and experience Him.

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

Discussion questions:

- 1) What words would you use to describe a "king"?
- 2) Why do you think people find it difficult to let God be the King of their lives?
- 3) How would you explain *"Your kingdom come"* in your own words?
- 4) What parts of our lives do we often find difficult to let God rule over?
- 5) Where do you think God wants you to be an ambassador for His kingdom?
- 6) Create several prayers that would not be in line with God's will.
- 7) Create several prayers that would be in line with God's will.
- 8) Create several prayers where God's will is unsure.
- 9) How can we better be prepared to know God's will?
- 10) What do you think God wants you to remember from this lesson?
- 11) What do you think God wants you to do in response to this lesson?