

## "THY KINGDOM COME."

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First Christian Reformed Church, Lynden, WA

January 28, 2024, 6:00 pm

**Text for Sermon: Matthew 6:9-10; Daniel 4:34b-35**

### **Introduction:**

We have been looking at the petitions in this great prayer that Jesus taught us so that we can pray more fruitfully and effectively. What Jesus teaches us in this prayer is truly remarkable. Prayer is asking, and this is our invitation to ask for big things, sweeping things, life changing things.

We have been away from it for two months and since I didn't preach on the second petition, I am returning to it as a good overarching petition and refresher on the Lord's Prayer.

When we pray the second petition of the Lord's Prayer, we find ourselves praying for something we are unfamiliar with, kings and kingdoms are not part of our experience or vocabulary. Let's take a closer look at this business of kings and kingdoms.

### **What is a king?**

A king is a person with no equal and no superior. That's what makes him king. He is on top, king of the hill, above all others in his kingdom. That's why we call lions the king of the jungle, they dominate, they rule, without fear of any real enemies.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the King of kings, the King over all other kings. *Jesus is our king.*

Jesus has the *kingly title*, Lord of Lords and King of Kings. God the Father bestowed this title on His Son. In Isaiah 57:15 He is called "the One who is High and Lifted up."

Jesus has the *kingly symbols of royalty*. According to Scripture He has a crown on His head (Rev. 6:2; 14:14), a sword on His hip (Ps. 45:3), a scepter in His hand (Heb. 1:8) and He's seated upon a great throne in heaven at the right hand of the Father (Heb. 1:8).

Christ is a *three-way king*. He is the executive, legislative and judicial branch all in one.

**First, He rules.** Jesus Christ *rules* over His Kingdom which is the church. He holds the scepter of authority in His hand, and He governs by His Word and His Holy Spirit. His rule and power are so effective He inclines and bends our hearts and wills by His Spirit to follow Him in obedience.

It is the prerogative of kings to make laws and to rule by those laws. But His law is a law of love to those who surrender to His mercy and grace.

**Second, He judges.** He will *judge* all authorities and all peoples. One day every deed, every thought, every injustice, every evil motive and intention will be brought to light. God has committed into Jesus' hands all judgment and He has the power of life and death. He is the highest court, the supreme court, there is no appeal beyond Christ.

**Third,** not only does He hold the scepter, but He also holds a shield by which He *preserves and protects* His Church and us against our enemies both external and internal (Ps. 3:3; 124:2-3). He does this by His mighty power at work in us. He also ever lives to intercede for us and to defend our faith from the evil one's attack. The gates of hell cannot and will not prevail against Christ or His Church.

Christ is our great King, He rules, judges and protects. But a king is no real king without a kingdom. When we pray, "Your kingdom come" what are we asking?

### **What is Christ's kingdom and where is it?**

When Jesus says, "My kingdom is not of this world," what is he saying?

He is not saying that it's not in this world.

He is not saying that He is not over this world.

He is not saying that it doesn't impact this world.

Rather He is saying His kingdom doesn't originate from this world or derive its power from the world. It's not one gained by military might or political maneuvers. His kingdom isn't an earthly kingdom. It will outlast all other kingdoms. It will grow until it fills the earth. One day heaven and earth will be one (Joseph Spurgeon).

***The kingdom of God means two things.*** By kingdom we mean a kingdom of grace and a kingdom of glory. The kingdom of grace is established in our hearts. The kingdom of glory is established in history over the hearts of all men.

When we pray, "Thy kingdom come" we are praying that our hearts and our history will all one day be under one Lord. It is a present and a future kingdom, one that is already at hand and one that is not yet at hand.

As Christians we live our lives in between, between the inauguration of the kingdom by Christ and the consummation of the kingdom at Christ's return.

***First, the kingdom of God's grace is set up in our hearts*** through salvation in Christ by the power and work of the Holy Spirit and His Word. So when we pray we are asking God to expand His rule over the territory of our hearts.

A little later in this Sermon on the Mount Jesus says, “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” Matthew 6:33, ESV). Jesus is telling us the kingdom is personal and present and real and now, it’s in our lives. We are praying, “Father, rule my life, take over control and set me free from my anxieties over the details.”

***Second, the kingdom of God’s glory will one day be finally and completely and perfectly set up in history*** when Jesus returns. So we are asking God to expand His dominion in enemy occupied territory. And we are praying for that day when He will come to finish the job.

Paul writes, “there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also *to all who have loved his appearing*” (II Tim. 4:8).

In God’s kingdom there is a crown for all who love and long for His appearing, for His coming in glory to finally establish His kingdom. One of the ways you know who loves and longs for His appearing is by who prays for it. Praying passionately and fervently “thy kingdom come” shows we love His kingdom and long for it and can hardly wait for Jesus to come.

For this one thing Christians impatiently pray, “Lord, hasten the day of your return and the establishing of your Kingdom.”

Everything in history points to this day. It has been predicted since the day of Adam’s fall that the head of the serpent would be crushed. All of creation groans in expectation of a day of redemption and restoration. The last verses of the Bible echo the prayer of all Christians through the centuries, “Maranatha. Come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20).

I like the way one commentator described it. All of history is hurtling toward a glorious and climactic conclusion when all the kingdoms of this earth will become the kingdoms of our Lord. We are praying for the end of history. (Hank Hanegraaff, *The Prayer of Jesus*).

Let me sum it up with these words of a great old puritan pastor:

“The kingdom of grace is but the beginning of the kingdom of glory.

The kingdom of grace is glory in the seed, and the kingdom of glory is grace in full flower. The kingdoms of grace and glory are so closely joined together, that we cannot go into the kingdom of glory but through the kingdom of grace” (Thomas Watson, *The Lord’s Prayer*).

This is what it means to pray, “Thy kingdom come.” May thy kingdom of grace grow and increase in me and because of me and through me; and may thy kingdom of glory come quickly.

**There is one thing this kingdom will not look like.**

It will not look like what those false preachers and false shepherds of the prosperity gospel say. They say we are king's kids and so we should look like and live like kings' kids. In other words, they contort and abuse this teaching to sell the lie of the health and wealth gospel, that kings' kids are rich, healthy and happy and all you need to do is name it and claim it.

**Romans 14:17** The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

The kingdom of God is within us, it will not come with observation (Luke 17:20-21). Our King is a heavenly King and His blessings are heavenly blessings, the greatest of which is eternal life in the glory of God's presence. Scripture teaches us to expect to be like Jesus in His earthly life while we are on earth and to expect to be like Jesus as He is in heaven when we get there.

This life may be full of misery, distress, hunger, lack of material comforts, and all kinds of trouble but we are completely confident that our King is on His throne, and He will never leave us or forsake us. And we are completely confident that His victory will be ours and that He will share with us all the Father has given to Him.

**I Corinthians 15:24-25** [The end comes], when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

What are the enemies of His honor and glory? "There is no disease, no addiction, no demon, no bad habit, no fault, no vice, no weakness, no temper, no moodiness, no pride, no self-pity, no strife, no jealousy, no perversion, no greed, no laziness that Christ does not aim to overcome as the enemy of his honor" (Piper, on I Cor. 15:25).

**Philippians 3:20-21** Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

When you trust Christ, when you put your trust in Him and in nothing else, when you surrender to His Lordship and submit to His Kingship, then you are His, you are His subject. Your citizenship is based on who your King is and your citizenship is where your King is.

**Application and Conclusion:**

If we are king's kids what real difference will it make? What is the application of a sermon on praying for the coming of the kingdom in our hearts and in our world?

It is great wisdom to make this King our King. If we belong to Him, we belong to the strong side, to the truly right side of history and where history is going.

Think about it. If the King is this great and mighty, this rich and powerful and if this King is your friend you have no worries. Life is as good as it could get.

If God is so gloriously rich, what will we not sacrifice or give up or lose for Him, that He will not repay thirty and sixty and hundred-fold?

### **What should we do in the light of this second petition of our Lord's Prayer?**

***First, submit to His kingly lordship.*** Some people, in fact some people here, try to have Christ as their Savior, but not as their Lord. But that is impossible, they cannot be separated. To say you have one but not the other is to say you have neither. If Christ is not your king then you are His enemy. If Christ is not king to rule over you then neither will the blood of the Savior save you (Thomas Watson, *Body of Divinity*). To pray thy kingdom come, thy will be done is to hand over to God total sovereignty over our lives.

***Second, rule over yourself.*** By His power, Word and Spirit through faith in Him subdue sin, oppose and overcome the three enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil.

Do you face temptations that are wearing you down? Do you feel like there are sins or bad habits you can't kill or defeat? Appeal to the king. What is too strong for us is nothing to Him. By His Spirit He defeats the power of sin in our lives. Appeal to Him, go to the throne room and there you will find great help. To pray thy kingdom come is to acknowledge there are two kingdoms and we are taking sides and declaring our allegiance *to* God and *against* the world, the flesh, sin and the devil.

We should feel the tension all around us between the world and Jesus Christ. We should feel the conflict in our own souls between the kingdom of Satan and sin, and the kingdom of Christ.

***Third, rule over your world in a way that imitates and reveals His Kingship.***

**Psalm 8:6-8** You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet, 7 all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, 8 the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

If Christ is Lord and King over everything then we should make Him so in every aspect of life.

Make Him Lord over your home and family, over all your decisions about careers, financial choices, investments, job changes, what you do at school, family size, sacrifices, serving, disciplining, TV and movie choices, what you drive, vacations, etc. If He is not Lord of all, then He is not Lord of all. Our faith cannot and must not be private, but go public and encompass everything. But all our rules must reflect His rules and cause others to marvel at Him and His nature.

Which kingdom are you serving, kingdom of self or kingdom of God?  
What do your choices show, what do your words and actions show?  
You can know where the kingdom of God is, it is where His will is being done.  
Are we building the kingdom of God? Do we seize the opportunities around us?

Are we using this season of our lives to build the kingdom of God in our homes, marriages, children, with our money, with our time, our retirement?

Pray to see the kingdom come through our work, our efforts.

***Finally, marvel at this King and pray for the coming of His kingdom in glory.***

**Philippians 2:9-11** God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**II Thessalonians 1:10** says the day is coming when Jesus will “be *glorified* in his saints, and ... *marveled* at among all who have believed.”

Marvel that:

Jesus Christ has the highest throne, the richest crown, the largest dominion, the longest reign.

There was nobody before Him and there will be nobody after Him.

He has a multitude of heirs, but He has no predecessor and He'll have no successor.

He can't be impeached and He's not going to resign. His opposition is impotent.

His power is unlimited, His wisdom is unparalleled, His justice is perfect.

He's the greatest Lord and King that has ever crossed the horizon of this world.

Do you know Him? Have you submitted to Him? Are you surrendered to Him?

Have you said with all your heart, “Thy kingdom come”?

Have you said with true longing for His appearing, “Thy kingdom come”?

He is my king, is He your king?

(see Thomas Watson, *The Body of Divinity*, p. 187; and S.M. Lockridge).