Jesus On Prayer, Part 2

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[0:00] And we are thinking about the second clause of the Lord's Prayer, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And one of the things that Matthew does is he presents Jesus as the king.

So I want to read a couple of different sections just to remind us of what kind of king we have in Jesus. So Matthew chapter 21, first 11 verses, and then we'll go over to Matthew 26.
As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples saying to them, go to the village ahead of you and at once you'll find a donkey tied there with her colt by her.
Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them and he will send them right away. This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet.
Say to the daughter of Zion, see, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
[1:11] The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, Hosanna to the son of David. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.
When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, Who is this? The crowds answered, This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.
And then just a few short days later, on in Matthew chapter 26, again shortly after Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper, and we're going to read that later, after Jesus predicts Peter's denial, as he anticipates his impending death on the cross, let's turn to Matthew 26 and verse 36.
Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, Sit here while I go over there and pray.
[2:31] He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.

Stay here and keep watch with me. Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, My father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me.
Yet not as I will, but as you will. Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour, he asked Peter.
Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak. He went away a second time and prayed, My father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.
When he came back, he again found them sleeping because their eyes were heavy. So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.
[3:43] Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Rise, let us go. Here comes my betrayer. Amen. This is the word of God. Thinking about prayer and the battle for hearts and minds.
Let's read the whole of the Lord's Prayer again. This then is how you should pray. Let's think about struggle within.
I'm going to guess there are things that you and I know are good for us, but still we find there is a battle inside us either to do that something or not to.
Some examples that didn't take too much thought from my own experience. Exercise would be one of those. I know exercise is good, but I also know my couch is good. It's a challenge.

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[5:14] Late night snacking. I know I shouldn't do it, but still it looks just much better than standard fare. Perhaps for us it's maybe switching our phones off.

We know it's good to be fully present in the present. To give our attention to the person who's in front of us is really hard to do. And we can find ourselves distracted. More significantly, we know that it's important to sacrifice time and energy for the sake of others.
Yet there is that pool that says, but I need time for myself. We know when things go wrong in a friendship or within a family, it's our job to pursue reconciliation and to pursue that quickly.
But often there's that pool towards just enjoying a sense of anger. We feel it's right and it's good. As Christians, we know it is really important for us to commit time regularly, daily, to be reading the Bible and praying.
But yet there are so many other things, other pressures that can pull us away. So we understand something of the internal battle that goes on within us in lots of different areas of our lives.
[6:30] We come to this section of the Lord's prayer. And we remember that in prayer too, there is battle. What are we asking here in verse 10?

We're asking that God the Father would be king in my life. That he would be king in his world as his will is gladly obeyed.
Now if we take that seriously, we're going to recognize there's going to be that challenge. And that's that conflict. I'm going to think about that. So Jesus is continuing to teach his disciples and to teach us to pray.
He's saying here are things to pray that are for your good. I think the challenge for us is, is will I believe him? Will I honestly submit to this so that it changes how I pray and how I live?
I want to say, first of all, that this prayer is a revolutionary prayer. One of the great themes that you find in the Bible is that of the kingdom, the kingdom of God.
[7:37] There's an excellent book by Vaughn Roberts called God's Big Picture, which traces the storyline of the Bible using kingdom as a helpful theme. And he says that when you think about life in the beginning, what do we have?

Genesis 1 and 2, life in the beginning, we have God's people in God's place, under God's rule, and enjoying God's blessing.
That's life as it's meant to be. God's people in God's place, under God's rule, and knowing and enjoying God's blessing. But then we get to chapter 3 of Genesis, and we discover very quickly Adam and Eve rebelling against their king.
And that's the story in our own hearts too, isn't it? That we know there is a God, but there is that rebellion, there is that sin within us.
And so we have these two things going on in the Bible. We have the story, and in our lives, we have the story of ourselves and our resistance towards God, our rejection of God, our rebellion against God.
[8:41] But we also have God's determination to restore a kingdom. So he makes promises. He makes promises to families. He makes promises to nation, the nation of Israel.

Ultimately, he makes the promise that he'll send his own son, the Lord Jesus. And Jesus comes to bring in the kingdom of God. So the story of the Bible is that there is a king.
His name is God, and he is a good king. And the question for each one of us then, as we live our lives, is will we submit to him as our king or not?
I was thinking about this as I was watching a travel documentary this week. There's a man who's doing a long walk, and he found himself walking into a war zone.
Different nations have been fighting over one particular territory. And he got talking to a group of men who were saying, well, while this government claims us, and sort of other nations have been involved in sort of carving up the map and saying, this is now a new country, the people who were living in that region said, we want to be independent.
[9:53] We don't want to recognize that government. We don't want that kingdom. We want one of our own. And in some ways, that speaks to the story in our hearts on how we respond to God.

We struggle sometimes to receive his good and loving rule. We're in the Gospel of Matthew, and in the Gospel of Matthew, we are reminded in lots of different ways that Jesus has come as God's promised king.
So perhaps if we go back to the Christmas story, we'll remember the wise men, the magi. They come asking the question, where is the one who's born king of the Jews?

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They've been told the king has come. When Jesus begins to preach, he preaches, repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near. Of course, the kingdom is near because the king has come.
Jesus says in the Gospel that his powerful miracles are a demonstration of the power of the kingdom of God. When he heals the sick, when he raises the dead, it's a little glimpse for us into the coming perfect kingdom of Jesus.
[11:03] We saw something in our readings of what our king is like. We saw him riding on a donkey, humble, gentle king. We saw him praying as he anticipated the cross.

And we see at the cross a king who uses his power in order to love and forgive and to save. Jesus is a very different kind of a king. Jesus is a good king.
Now, but the radical point that we have here in the Lord's Prayer is a reminder that there is a king. But it's not you and it's not me.
There is an absolute authority to obey and to live under. And that's why to pray this and to mean it is always going to at times spark something of a revolution, something of a battle within.
It forces us to think who really does sit on the throne of my heart, your heart, whose will matters most, who sets the direction, who sets the agenda for our life day to day, year to year.
[12:22] Naturally, our inclination, me, myself and I come first. We had some friends round for dinner and we saw this.

One way to recognize that tendency towards self-interest, try coming between a baby and their food.
And you will very quickly discover how loud that child will scream. We are naturally inclined towards self-interest. We want what we want. We want to be in charge.
And then culturally, that's the message that we keep hearing. That no one other than me gets to say how I live. Self-fulfillment, happiness, freedom.
That's the goal of life. To choose our own path. The culture would say actually you have a duty to love yourself, to be true to yourself, regardless, it seems, of the cost to those around you.
[13:32] Sometimes that message, love yourself, be true to yourself, just find your own path, it can sound really attractive. But when it starts to work itself into all of our life, it can make us selfish.

It can cause us to lack commitment to others. I'm in it for when it suits me. But if the going gets tough, then I'll just pull out. It can be exhausting to pursue this moving target of personal happiness and enjoyment.
We compare that ethic, compare that voice with the ethic of King Jesus. How did King Jesus live and how did he teach others to live? He said actually you find true freedom in living for others, in loving God and loving your neighbor.
He called his followers to sacrifice themselves for the sake of others. And of course, that's what Jesus did. Jesus said, take up your cross and follow me. And Jesus, of course, took his own cross so that we might enter the kingdom, that we might have that barrier between us and God, our sin, removed so that we might belong to him.
Jesus said you'll find your true joy actually in obeying God's will because that's how we were made. And that's how life works best, to live within the limits that God sets.
[14:48] There's freedom rather than the confusion of anything goes and you don't know what you should do. There are limits that God sets for our good and Jesus says there's joy in obeying God's will.

And so this prayer, as we pray and as we mean it, is asking us to trust and obey even as the angels do. So again, as we see the demands of this, we ask ourselves the question, how can I pray this prayer and mean it?
Why should I pray this prayer? Because it seems demanding and costly rather than just live however I want to keep myself as king and lord.
I was reminded of one of the things that happened in the Vietnam War. The American government entered into what it called the battle for hearts and minds. And it involved various things.
But one of the things that they did was to have leaflet drops with information about how life would be much better if they would receive the American soldiers and if there would be that recognition that the rule of America would be better for the people.
[15:53] Now, of course, it didn't work in that case. But we can only pray this prayer when we see, when we truly see God's rule is better.

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When what God says is best for us. That the coming of Jesus is this message from above. A message that says, my rule is good because I am good.
So we need to come to that point where we see that God's rule is better rather than us just setting our own path, our own agenda, deciding to be king.
How does that happen? We need to let moments like Gethsemane, the garden of Gethsemane, really hit our heart and our mind. To think, here is King Jesus.
He's facing the cross. Not for anything that he has done. But willingly going to die for sin that we have done. And there we find Jesus saying, not my will, but yours, Father, be done.
[17:07] Jesus was concerned above all for the kingdom of God and the will of God. This is our good and gracious King. When we know him, when we know him, when we love him, when we see his goodness, that's when we'll be able to pray this prayer as we mean it.

And mean it. This is as we see God as our loving Father in heaven. The one who made us, the one whose will is for our best. The one who promises a better kingdom.
As we see more of our God. That's how we can pray this revolutionary prayer. But also when we think about this prayer, we recognize that it's a demanding prayer.
To pray your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. It's demanding because of those competing forces and voices.
The voices of culture, our pride, our selfishness. It's hard to pray this and mean it. It can be hard to accept that it's fundamentally right to pray this at all times and for all people.
[18:16] To recognize that for everybody, whoever they are, the best thing for them is to live under the rule of God. Father, Son, and Spirit. And it's really hard for us.

It's demanding for us. Because we find ourselves living in a time when we're more individualistic than we ever have been. When we have all these individual freedoms, when we tend to be much more independent, whether that's thinking about travel opportunities, whether it's mobility at work, whether it's just the separation of family because of that.
We've got more choice. And at the same time, a sense of belonging community seems to be on the wane. There's less of it than it was. So for many people, they hear God is king.
And that seems really strange to those people. I am to honor God and be accountable to him.
That's shocking to many when we're raised on a diet of personal freedom, personal choice with a minimal responsibility.
At a personal level, praying this is saying, I want to live in each moment to show my loyalty to God, my king.
[19:29] To live by his will as I find it in the Bible. That's profoundly demanding, isn't it? A helpful question I came across this week by way of self-assessment.

There's an Australian pastor called Peter Adam. He asked this question. He said, how long is it since you have changed the way you live because of something you read in the Bible?
That's such a great test of the rule of God in our lives. All of us, if we're Christians, we're works in progress. How long is it since you've changed the way you live because of something you read in the Bible?
Every time that we read, are we willing to submit? When we find that this word challenges us, confronts our behavior, our thought life, our lack of forgiveness, whatever it might be, are we willing to change?
To say, God, you must be king, therefore I need to change to conform to your will. We let God challenge what Jerry Bridges calls our respectable sins, our greed, or our anger, or our jealousy, or our gossip.
[20:50] Practically, to pray this prayer demands of us a commitment to humility. Augustine, Augustine on this says it stops us trying to play God. One of the things perhaps that we teach our children is to remind them they're not the center of the universe.

Perhaps they say to them, it's not your party. This is not your moment. And for us, Jesus is teaching us this is not our kingdom. This is not our party.
The world and all in it belongs to God. But positively, that then also lets us rest. When we find ourselves praying, your kingdom come, your will be done, it's helping us to learn to depend on him and to trust in him.
It gives us a course and a pattern. It gives us one who is greater than us. It's demanding too because it commits us to work.

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Jesus says you should pray, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Where do we find the will of God? How do we know what God wants us to do? Well, we find it in the Bible.
[22:01] So it commits us to work to find out what God is saying to us in the Bible about how we should live. How we should have this life of obedient faith. So we're thinking kingdom, we're thinking country.

You know, when you move to a new country, you need to understand what are the laws that I need to obey. Especially, let's think about driving laws. You come to the UK, fundamentally, left, not right. There are procedures that you need to follow. There are values that cultures have that you need to understand in order to live well among a people. And similarly, to live as a citizen of God's kingdom, we need to know what his laws and values are.
This prayer commits us to humility. It commits us to work. It also commits us fundamentally to our king. Here is a prayer to keep re-centering us.
To set our hearts and our minds and our will on our God, Father, Son, and Spirit. So it's a demanding prayer.
[23:06] But it's also a missionary prayer as we think about what this looks like when it's prayed and lived out.

We said last week prayer has three dimensions. We pray this prayer for ourselves. We pray it for our church. And we pray it for also the world. And it's got that broad dimensions because the call to submit isn't just for some.
The call to submit to the rule of God is universal. Because God is the universal king. Now, we know from our own experience that many people that we know, family, friends, colleagues, God's kingship, God's rule is resisted.
People do not want to know. They've decided perhaps. They know what Christianity is all about. They don't want anything to do with it. We also know in other parts of the world, God is king, Father, Son, and Spirit is completely unknown.
There are billions of people who know nothing about the Lord Jesus. That's one of the reasons why it's a missionary prayer. But still, this is true. God is king, whether people resist him or not, whether people know him or not.
[24:25] And everybody on the face of the earth owes him loyalty, glory, honor. And we need to understand beyond that, the call to submit is good news.

We need to remember who it is that people are called to submit to. Who are we called to live under? We're called to live under the rule of God, our Father in heaven. A good and gracious king.
The one who wants us to enjoy his love, his peace, his joy. His new heaven and new earth. When Jesus comes to make all things new and to take his people to be with him forever.
This is the king who, in grace, sent Jesus to show us what he's like. And also sent us Jesus to be our savior, to love us.
We look at Jesus and we see the values of the king. We see his humility. We see that welcome that he extends to people. We see that self-giving sacrifice at the heart of his ministry.
[25:34] So to pray this prayer and mean it involves us in the work of praying for more followers of Jesus. Involves us in the work of mission.

That we would see people turn to trust in Jesus among our family and our friends. In our communities and in our world. It involves us in praying that the gospel message would advance.
To pray for churches to be planted. For churches to be revitalized. For mission work to continue. It involves praying against the devil and his lies.
And the blindness that he causes in the hearts and minds of unbelievers. So they want nothing to do with Jesus as Lord. This is work. Prayer is work. Prayer is struggle.
It's praying for the global church. It's praying that God's kingdom would be as it's pictured in Revelation. Where there's people from every tribe and nation and people group and language and culture represented.
[26:39] And ultimately it's praying seeking the return of Jesus. It's seeking his complete victory. When he will once and for all destroy the power of death.

The influence of sin. When he will make renew the world. Where there will be the new heavens and the new earth. Where God and his people will be together forever.
For that completed kingdom to be established. All of that is taken up in this prayer. Prayer is a battle for our hearts and minds.

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Even as we consider praying. It's a battle for the hearts and minds of the world. I wonder how will you respond to Jesus teaching today.
In just a few moments. The people of God will share the Lord's Supper. Let's let the Lord's Supper help us. Here we have the symbols of sacrifice.
[27:46] We have wine representing Jesus' blood. And we have bread representing Jesus' body. The symbols of sacrifice. Let's remember Jesus brings in the kingdom.

By laying down his life. So that you and I might live. That Jesus is rejected. Jesus goes under the judgment of God for our sins.
So that we might be welcomed. That Jesus dies in weakness. So that we can experience God's power. In our lives. Have we seen his love?
Have we experienced his goodness? So that we want him as king? Maybe today is the day to repent. And believe.
And to have him. As your Lord and your king. For those of us who are Christians. Will we pray this? And pray this daily. Pray this humbly for ourselves and for others.
[28:47] Believing and trusting that the rule of God. The will of God is good. Is best. Will we submit to him?

Even when that means that he challenges us. Even when it means making demands on us. That we would be willing to pray. Your kingdom come.
Your will be done on earth. As it is in heaven. Love you. I love you.cher■AL end. Be so. Amen.s a real benefit. Dear Lordúngradio.
Good. Bye. Good.■■osii. If you didn't have the money. If you didn't.
If you didn't prevent adultery,

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