

Your kingdom come, your will be done

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[0 : 00] If you could keep your Bibles open in Matthew chapter 6. On these Sunday evenings we've been embarking on a series on the Lord's Prayer.

! One of the things we've been doing is looking systematically at each petition in the Lord's Prayer! and looking deeply at what that means for us as a praying people and what we can learn from the Lord's Prayer.

To deepen and enrich our prayer lives and to help us to grow in our communion with God. We've already gone through the preface of the Lord's Prayer and the first petition.

We've been reminded that this is a prayer for believers. We were also reminded that this is a prayer where we're not expected to recite in a kind of perfunctory, mechanical, unthinking way.

That actually as believers when we approach this prayer we are to engage our hearts and we're ready to engage our minds. It's a lovely framework to guide our prayer lives.

[1 : 11] These petitions are just wonderful pictures if you like of God's goodness in our lives that we can expand and to help us as a framework and to guide us in our prayer.

A helpful way of looking at the Lord's Prayer is looking at the broader structure is to consider the first three petitions pertaining to God's glory.

We're exalting God's glory. We're exalting God's glory. We're looking to God. And it's not until we've done that that we get to the last petitions, the last three petitions when we consider our own needs. And I think that's a very helpful way just to approach prayer. Just to start off exalting God. These petitions aren't kind of disparate, separate, unrelated things that have nothing to do with one another.

When we look at the Lord's Prayer we see that they're like running water. They kind of flow into each other. And although they are distinct there's this lovely unity in the prayer. So tonight we're going to be looking at your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

[2 : 22] So we'll get straight into it. Your kingdom come. Your kingdom has an emphatic kind of urgency to it, doesn't it? There's a kind of forceful sense to it.

It almost demands an exclamation mark. And I think it warrants us really thinking about the importance of the kingdom of God in Christ's ministry to start off with.

Just to get us in that mindset. Christ first recorded words in terms of his public ministry in Mark 115. He said the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand.

Repent and believe in the gospel. When we think of the purpose of Christ's ministry. Luke 4.43 he says I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well.

For I was sent for this purpose. So we see this priority. We see this purpose. And we think of Christ's priority for us in terms of how we approach the kingdom of God.

[3 : 23] He says in Matthew 6.33. But seek first the kingdom of God. And his righteousness and all things will be added to you. Even after Christ's death and his resurrection and before his ascension to be at the right hand of the father.

We think of that period of 40 days where he was teaching the apostles. All these wonderful things. And in Acts 1.3 it says he appeared to the apostles and spoke to them about the kingdom of God. So this isn't a kind of peripheral, esoteric, kind of obscure, unusual doctrine for kind of theologians to think about in seminaries.

This is front and centre in Christ's ministry. And I think it's a really important thing for us to look at. So before we kind of move into the practicalities of prayer.

I think it's really important we understand what is the kingdom of God. What does that actually mean. And I'm going to start rather unusually on a bit of a negative. And I think it's helpful just to clear up in our minds what the kingdom of God is not.

[4 : 27] Because I think it's an area where there can be some confusion. John 18.36 says my kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world my servants would have been fighting that I might not be delivered over to the Jews.

But my kingdom is not from the world. If you remember Christ is addressing Pontius Pilate isn't he? When Pilate asks him you know is he the king of the Jews?

And there's that whole backdrop of the Jews wanting a type of messianic, insurrectionist, political leader to kind of emancipate them from Roman rule.

But actually Jesus says that his kingdom is not of this world. So this kingdom of God is distinct from kingdoms set up by man. I think that's so important. It doesn't have its origins in the ideas of man. It's not man's prerogatives. It's not man's ideas. It's unashamedly theocentric. This is God-centered. It's your kingdom come. It's the kingdom of God.

[5 : 30] We read in the scriptures that there's a sense that this kingdom is a kingdom of dominion. But it's not a geographical area. It's not associated with a specific place.

It's a spiritual kingdom. It's not easily perceptible through outward signs. It doesn't come with pomp and ostentation. Luke 17.20 says the kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed. Speaking of Christ's first coming. It's not a military or political kingdom. It's not an outward show of man's power. And it's not even man-made effort to create a kind of utopian society or some kind of social emancipation.

Although it will have social implications. And as Christians we should care greatly for political issues and social issues. But we can't get that confused. It's not some kind of liberation theology.

Or it can't be conflated with a kind of Marxist ideology. This is something not originating in the thoughts and the ideas of man. You know adversity on the right.

[6 : 35] It's not associated with a country for example like the USA. Or you can't kind of relate it to the Christian right. Or some form of nationalism. Or a specific church. Although it is inextricably connected with the church universal.

It's not related to any specific denominational type of church. We can't attain the kingdom through education or employment. So those are things I think they're misconceptions we need to kind of put to one side before we get to what the kingdom of God is.

So there are a number of aspects to this kingdom. And I think the first thing I want to talk about is God has an eternal universal kingdom. God reigns and he rules eternally.

He has always reigned. He has always been king. God if you like has never been the majestic king and lord. So there's an eternity of God.

There's a kingdom of power if you like. 1 Chronicles 29 11 says. Yours oh lord is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty.

[7 : 39] For all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom oh lord. And you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come from you and you rule over all.

In your hands are power and might and in your hand to make great and to give strength to all. Or Psalm 103 19. The lord has established his throne in the heavens and his kingdom rules over all. So we have a sovereign king. We have a lord that rules over everything. But I think we need to get more specific. I think when Christ in this prayer is asking us to pray your kingdom come.

I don't think he is alluding to that eternal kingdom as such. I think there's something more specific. And I think he's talking of a particular kingdom. I think it includes that. I think this is a kingdom of redemption that he's talking about.

When we pray your kingdom come. We're praying for the redemptive supremacy and rule of God. To come forth and show itself in the hearts of his people and in the world.

[8 : 43] The Dutch reformed theologian Anthony Hukumar gives a fantastic definition of the kingdom of God. Incidentally in the Bible you won't see a clear definition.

It's so multifaceted and there's so many different aspects to it. I think Paul comes close when he says the kingdom of God is peace, joy and righteousness in the Holy Spirit. But this is helpful I think.

It's the rule and reign of God dynamically active in human history through Jesus Christ. The purpose of which is the redemption of God's people.

From sin and demonic powers and the final establishment of the new heavens and the new earth. So there's this cosmic element to the kingdom of God. There's this kind of consummation.

This crisis point where the kingdom will come in all its fullness. So the kingdom of God is the rule. It's the government. It's the kingly power and dominion of the triune God.

[9 : 39] In the sphere of redemption and salvation. This rule is individual and corporate. So it impacts me individually. It impacts you individually. But it impacts us all as a corporate body of Christ.

As a church. Not just this church but the church universal. It's internal and it's external. It reaches down into the deep recesses of our hearts.

It changes us. It's deeply internal. But it impacts what we do with our hands. It impacts how we use our speech. It impacts the ethical component of our lives. And how we speak to each other and treat one another.

So it has this external element to it. It's present. It's here. You hear theologians talking about the now and the not yet. Well there's a present aspect to this kingdom. But there's also a future aspect. And we'll come to that in a short while. So the science of the kingdom is that where there is the kingdom there's repentance. There's faith. There's righteousness.

[10 : 33] And there's blessedness. The kingdom will organically grow until reaching a future point of consummation in the return of Christ. And the renewal of the whole cosmos in the new heavens and the new earth.

So the kingdom is closely related to the church. Although it's not altogether identical with the church. If you like we're the kind of preeminent expression of the kingdom.

I've heard the term that we're like the arm of the kingdom. We're Christ's bride. We exercise the means of grace through the preaching and teaching of the word. Through the sacraments. We have the keys to the kingdom.

But what about in the Old Testament? What did the Old Testament say about the kingdom of God? Well in the Old Testament the prophecies they all pointed to a coming king and Messiah. Which culminated in John the Baptist as the last great Old Testament prophet.

Who was if you like he was the forerunner. We see God as a covenantal king don't we? Who has a redemptive purpose for his chosen people Israel.

[11 : 35] They were the people of God. And you have these messianic kind of kingly prophecies. That were brought into sharper focus kind of through the. We see it you know in the Davidic kingly line.

And we see it in the prophets like Isaiah and Daniel and Zechariah. And we see it in some of the kingly psalms. Psalm 2 and Psalm 110. I won't go into all of those because time doesn't permit. But I think it's especially in the book of Daniel. That we see this idea of a future kingdom. It's developed in kind of contrast to world monarchy. So you recall that dream that Nebuchadnezzar had.

Where there was that rolling stone that was cut out of the rock. That was kind of hurtling towards this statue of gold and of bronze. And of silver and iron and clay.

That depicted all the nations at that time. I think it was Babylon. It was Medo-Persia. The Greek Empire. And then Rome. And this stone kind of smashes into these kingdoms.

[12 : 33] And it's a prophecy of Christ. And it has this kind of future element to it here. Daniel 2.44 says. And in the days of those kings. The God of heaven will sit up a kingdom.

That shall never be destroyed. Nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces. All these kingdoms. And bring them to an end.

And it shall stand forever. Just as you saw a stone cut from a mountain by no human hand. And that it broke in pieces. The iron. The bronze. The clay. The silver. And the gold. So in a sense.

The Old Testament believers. They look forward to this kingdom. And I think a helpful word is anticipation. There's a kind of anticipatory note to it. John the Baptist.

He announced the coming of the kingdom. Matthew 3.2. Repent. The kingdom of God is at hand. But Christ. He said very similar words in Mark 5. The time is fulfilled.

[13 : 28] The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the gospel. So there's that sense of fulfillment. There's this anticipation in the Old. Fulfillment in Christ's coming. The kingdom of God is indissolubly connected.

And linked with the person and work of Jesus Christ. I don't think you can separate the two. We see this really wonderfully in some parallel passages. You recall the story in the gospels.

Where the rich young ruler approaches Christ. And he says what should I do to gain eternal life. And Jesus basically says to him. You need to fulfill the law perfectly.

And he says well I have done this. And then Jesus says something along the lines of. Sell everything you have and then follow me. And he's like well that's too much. I can't do that. And Jesus is relaying that story to his disciples.

And the implications of that. He says truly I say to you. There is no one who has left house or wife. Or brothers or parents or children. For the sake of the kingdom of God.

[14:29] Who will not receive many times more in this time. In the age to come. Eternal life. Now in the parallel passage in Mark. It says instead of for the sake of the kingdom of God. It says for my sake and the gospel.

And in the parallel passage in Matthew. It says for my name's sake. So can you see this parallel. We've got the kingdom of God. But we've got my sake and the gospel. And we've got for my name's sake. And there's that lovely parallel.

And so it tells us this is so linked with the person and work of Christ. So what does this mean for us? How should we respond as believers? I've said already that the kingdom of God doesn't have its existence rooted in us.

And what we can do. But there is a duty and a responsibility to enter into the kingdom. We don't bring it into existence. We enter into it by bowing the knee.

By repentance. God calls us into the kingdom. He gives us the kingdom. He brings us into the new kingdom. God advances his kingdom.

[15:30] He gives the growth. But we're the means that he uses. So we're therefore to be dutiful aren't we? We're to take responsibility. And to be busy in kingdom work. So the next point is the kingdom is both present and future.

Jesus clearly taught that the kingdom of God was present in his ministry. Luke 11 20. If it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons. Then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

The kingdom is here. The kingdom was there then. Matthew 5 3. Blessed are the poor in spirit. For theirs is the kingdom of God. In Luke when he's addressing the Pharisees.

When they ask him when is the kingdom coming. He says well for behold the kingdom of God is in your midst. So there's a real sense that the kingdom had come in Christ's coming. But Jesus also taught that there was a future element to this kingdom.

I think this is one. Well I think this is probably the most challenging passage in the whole of scripture. Not everyone who says to me Lord Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven. But the one who does the will of my father who is in heaven.

[16:33] On that day future. Many will say to me Lord did we not prophesy in your name. And cast out demons in your name. And do many mighty works in your name.

And then future will I declare to them. I never knew you. Depart from me you workers of lawlessness. So we have this sense of future as well. When we think of the Pauline epistles. He speaks often about not inheriting the kingdom of God. Due to people's unrighteousness and constant practice of sin. So it's all over the New Testament. So we see this kingdom that's fulfilled in history.

But then there's a consummation at the end of history. So there's inauguration. Meaning it's arrived in part. But it's yet to reach its full consummation.

So if you like it's here with us now. But it's not here in its full scope. It's not complete. It's not in its consummate state. So the Bible if you like it teaches an age that is here.

[17:34] At this age. But also an age to come. And if you like as believers. This age is breaking into our lives and our existence. This age referring to the world system under the.

Sorry. The age to come is breaking into our existence. This age refers to the world system under the regime of Satan. Whereas the age to come refers to the regime of Christ.

And consummated glory. Could be thought of as first fruits and harvest. I've often found it helpful that analogy of D-Day and V-Day. You've probably heard that.

You know when the allied soldiers troops. Landed on the beach of Normandy in 1944. And they pushed the German forces back. For all intents and purposes. The Second World War was.

That was a decisive defeat. But there was still much fighting that went on from that. I think there were about 11, 12 months until 1945. Until V-Day. And we're in D-Day.

[18 : 33] Aren't we? I think as the church. There's a tension that we live in. Isn't there? There's this sense of urgency. We're not living for the now. We're waiting for the return of our Lord.

And there's this expectancy. However, we have to do our lives here and now in this world. Don't we? We have to plan. And we have to think about life now. So we're pilgrims, aren't we? We're not of this world.

But we're in this world. So what do we pray for when we pray, Your kingdom come? First point is we pray for victory in conflict. God isn't the only one who has a kingdom.

Satan has a kingdom. The first gospel promise, Genesis 3.15. I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring. He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.

The serpent of Genesis becomes the dragon of revelation. And we see that there's this kind of ongoing conflict between the two seeds all throughout redemptive history. So you have Satan's kingdom and God's kingdom.

[19 : 35] And we're citizens of God's kingdom. But we have to do business in this kingdom. We have to live our lives in this kingdom. Philippians 3.20 says, But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1.13, He has delivered us from one domain, from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

So it's important to recognise that Satan, he does have a certain dominion and rule over this world system, but he's chained, he's bound. God is sovereign over Satan. It's not like an equal battle.

You can see this in Revelation 22, Mark 3.27. Although our adversary, the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour, we can look at the work of Christ, and we can see that he said, I saw Satan fall like lightning.

So he is a bound adversary. He's on a lead. Admittedly, it's a very long lead, and he has sway in many ways. So we have to have this kind of realistic sense that we're in a conflict.

[20 : 45] So when we're praying, your kingdom come, we're praying in this kind of militant sense for the kingdom, because Satan's always vying for supremacy in our hearts, isn't he?

He's always wanting to kind of infiltrate and influence, and we're in this kind of constant, constant battle. So there's a militancy in the kingdom.

We're praying for advance and conquest. We also pray for the kingdom of grace. We pray for the conversion of men, women, boys, and girls. We pray for the advance and triumph of the gospel now and in the future.

We were thinking earlier on of Victor and Judith and the news we've heard from them. And I think this is hard, because I know from my own life, it's very easy to kind of have your own kind of local sphere of prayer.

You know, you pray for your family. It's like concentric circles, and you kind of tend to stick with the ones that are more inside. But we should be praying for evangelism, Bible translations, unreached lands, where the church militant is advancing for the nation.

[21 : 50] We pray for the means of grace, the sacraments, the preached word, discipleship, pastors, teachers, elders, deacons, gospel workers, children's workers. These are all things that are part of kingdom advancement.

Excuse me. One of the things I've been deeply encouraged by is to see our church grow on a Sunday morning. It's so encouraging to see all these new faces, and I think church growth is something that should be very, very much on our hearts in terms of kingdom prayer.

And we're so blessed and privileged, I think, to be part of a gospel church, a church that reveres sound teaching, that has a very high view of God.

And I think it's important, and I think this prayer also instructs us to pray for the preservation of the church. Hugely important.

The purity of the church. You know, to keep that purity and that unity and to preserve that. We need to be praying for that when we shouldn't be taking that for granted.

[22 : 51] What about the kingdom of grace internally? Well, we pray for God's rule in our hearts, the beginning of that and the progression of that. We pray for restoration and healing, don't we?

And we pray for peace that flows from that reconciliation that we have with God. I think this is a prayer that we can say speaks about sanctification.

Your kingdom come. And we want that kind of ongoing work of sanctification and holiness in our lives. There are pockets of resistance, aren't there? I know in my life there are besetting sins. Sins that can still entangle, still crop up, and we should still be praying for the advance of the kingdom to do business with those things. I think as Christians, we can struggle with assurance and enjoying the blessedness of being in Christ, the joy of being in Christ.

And I think that's something that we should be praying for. So lastly, we pray for the kingdom of glory. I wonder how often you and I pray for the return of Christ.

[23 : 58] Your kingdom come. And how often we think of Christ as the cosmic king and head of the new heavens and the new earth, the king of the whole of the cosmos. Just coming out of Christmas, obviously we've been meditating, haven't we, on the humanity of Christ and the incarnation and God stooping down.

But there's also Christ as king, isn't there? We should be praying for Christ's triumph in the future. As we've said, it's not yet fully here, but it's going to come in the person of Christ.

It's partially veiled, but the consummation is still to come. When the kingdom comes in all its fullness, sin, sickness, death, pain and misery will be taken away for those who are in Christ. Isn't that wonderful, wonderful news? Are we praying that God will hasten this return and the establishment of the new heavens and the new earth where an end is put to all sin and suffering? Do we long for this return? The early church, they expected that day. It was at the forefront of their prayers. And this should bring us great comfort and assurance.

[25 : 05] Well, moving on then. The next petition, your will be done. And as I was saying earlier, this petition, it naturally flows from the previous petition. There's a sense that if God is king, if he has a kingdom, what are the implications for you and what are the implications for me?

How should we respond to that? I think this is a really, really hard petition. As I was looking at this and meditating upon this, there's something uncompromising about it.

Your will be done. Because it goes against so many of our kind of modern cultural kind of proclivities, doesn't it? It's, you know, I was thinking about this and I thought of the sovereign self. That's the religion of our culture, isn't it? I was thinking of the area of psychology. It's all about self-actualisation, self-realisation. The area of identity politics, well, I can just be who I want to be regardless of anyone else.

Sexual ethics, well, it made me feel good. So me, I'm at the centre of everything. Whereas this is absolutely in opposition to our own will, isn't it? The will of Satan, it's in opposition to his will and the will of men.

[26 : 12] This is your will be done. And I think that's why it's hard. And I think even as Christians, if we're honest, this is hard. There are two aspects to God's will. There aren't two wills. God has one will, but there are two aspects to God's will.

There's God's decretive will or his secret will or his providential will where all things that happen, all things that take place, they're accordance, they're in accordance to his will.

If you think of the fall, that wasn't outside of God's will. Or if you think of the crucifixion, as heinous as those things were, God was in control.

Deuteronomy 29, 29, says, the secret things belong to the Lord, our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever that we may do all the words of the law.

There's another aspect of God's will, his preceptive will or if you like, his commanded will that we see in Scripture or we hear in preaching and in the commands and the precepts. And I think this part, thy will, your will be done, I think that encompasses both aspects of God's will.

[27 : 20] I think it's important to think about who God is for a moment and God is an infinite and boundless intelligence. He has a sovereign, free will. He is a volitional being, he is a personal God and he works on a plan.

He does nothing under compulsion and he always accomplishes his purposes and is beyond our ability to fathom. There's something incomprehensible about God. We can't really comprehend his secret will.

If you like, that's above and beyond our pay grade yet we have to trust in that. I've spoken to some Christians a while back now and discussions about God's knowledge and his plans and they had a sense that God planned for the future, his plans for the future were conditional on man's ability to exercise his free will.

So at the end of the day it was all about man's free will. They saw God as kind of a mutable being that was in process depending on how we would respond and I don't think that's the God of the Bible.

I don't think that's the God that we are confronted with. Psalm 115:3 says our God is in the heavens and he does all that he pleases. Isaiah 46:9 says for I am God and there is no other.

[28 : 32] I am God and there is none like me declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done saying my counsel shall stand and I will accomplish all my purpose.

I have spoken and I will bring it to pass. I have purposed and I will do it. I think it gives us a clear picture that God is in control and has a sovereign free will.

So I think in this prayer we are praying to submit to God's secret will and I think in a way this is particularly helpful for coping with situations we would not choose.

It is important to note this isn't fatalism or a kind of stoicism. This is not a kind of forced resignation or you know what will be will be. I am really aware there is people in this church who have suffered greatly under God's providential hand and actually when Megs and I first came to this church one of the things we were immensely attracted by in this church was the spiritual reality of the people here the way they have been faithful in suffering and that was a very attractive and wonderful thing and I think as Christians we need to be emotionally honest people we don't come to church saying yeah everything is great it clearly isn't sometimes we have to have integrity but in a sense being a Christian makes us more human but nonetheless we have to trust in God as Father Ben was speaking of God as Father a couple of weeks ago he is directing and governing the universe for the good of his people he has promised that all things will work together for our good that's wonderful news for your good for my good even when it feels that we're walking in darkness

I think of Isaiah 50:10 a lovely passage let him who walks in darkness and has no light trust the name of the Lord and rely on his God isn't that lovely we think of examples like Joseph Job we could go on in the scriptures but time doesn't permit to look into that it doesn't mean we don't try and change our circumstances it's not as if oh well I've got this sickness or I've got this situation I can't change it but it means we leave our circumstances in the Lord's hands and we have this peace we trust that God knows what he's doing next point is knowing and obeying God's revealed will so this is God's revealed will in scripture and this is I think this is teaching us to diligently studying God's word and to be immersed in God's word I remember reading somewhere once that if you the old Puritan John Bunyan it said if you cut him he would bleed Bible he would bleed scripture because he was so immersed in the scriptures he just loved them and that's just the way he lived his life and he exuded that some of the scriptural commands are clear aren't they 1 Thessalonians 4:3 for this is the will of God your sanctification there's a clarity there but sometimes sometimes it's not so easy we need to exercise wisdom and discernment we need to deduce from scripture what the old divine said was good and necessary consequences you know should I move home should I move into this town it's not clear in scriptures who should I vote for sometimes our options aren't great are they and we need to deduce from the word of God what's the wise course of action

[31 : 49] I think it's important to say there's a delight and there's a happiness in obedience to God's word and to being in God's word there's a blessedness and when the Bible speaks of a blessedness it's more than a happiness it encompasses God's favour upon us there's a joy blessed are those who walk in the law of the Lord who keep his testimonies who seek him with their whole hearts on 119 there's an honour to God's glory when we obey his will it's the truest freedom to be subject to God's will Thomas Manton said he whose heart is bent towards God's will has the clearest knowledge of God and he was quoted from John 7:17 Calvin we become more Christ-like as we are governed by his spirit under whose inward teaching we learn to love those things which please him and hate those things that displease him I wonder people of God is that our reality are we learning to love those things that please him and hate those things that displease him the next point is as it is in heaven heaven being the place of perfect righteousness and holiness the angels and glorified saints show sincere unhindered and wholehearted obedience to God

Psalm 103 if you like there's a commentary on this bless the Lord oh you his angels you mighty ones who do his word obeying the voice of his word the old Puritan Thomas Boston speaks of this I think really helpfully he said that the angels faithfulness and obedience he says they obey evenly meaning that they obey not just in one precept and not in another but evenly he says they obey

unweariedly he says they obey universally humbly cheerfully readily and constantly so we have the heavenly host as our example but I think it's important as we kind of draw to an end the example of our Lord and Saviour isn't it Jesus Christ when we think about your will be done we look to the Lord Jesus as our great example he obeyed God's will perfectly I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me John 5 30 in the garden of Gethsemane not my will but yours be done Luke 24 42 although Jesus is our great example and I wouldn't wish to diminish that I would say it's not enough to have Jesus solely as our example we need him don't we as our saviour because although we try and do God's will we're hindered aren't we by our own sin by our weaknesses it's something that we grapple with in a sense without the spirit of God without Christ we're incapable we need his spirit we need his saving grace to enable us in our weakness so although we cannot attain to perfection here we recognise as the apostle John says that whoever does the will of God will abide forever isn't that lovely and one day heaven will come down to this renovated earth and we will do God's will perfectly people of God may we as a church be found to be faithful on that day Amen Amen Amen.