

Matthew 6:5-10 - Thy Kingdom Come

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[0 : 00] You are listening to a message from Southwood Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Alabama. Our passion is to experience and express grace. Join us.

Good morning. It is an honor and privilege for me to be here representing Mission to the World. And before we hear God's Word, I just want to offer a heartfelt thank you to Southwood for supporting Mission to the World missionaries and for your prayers and our joint commitment in seeing the Great Commission go forth to all the world.

Our scripture passage today comes from the book of Matthew chapter 5. I'm sorry, chapter 6. It's a very familiar passage and I'll be reading from verses 5 through 10, really focusing on the last two verses of the Lord's Prayer.

I'm describing the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer, but I wanted to read some of the context as well. So if you have your Bibles, please turn to Matthew 6, verses 5 through 10, or you can see it up on the screen.

This is God's very own Word. And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others.

[1 : 33] Truly I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room, shut the door, and pray to your Father who is in secret.

And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words.

Do not be like them. For your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. Pray then like this. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come. May God add His blessings to the reading of His Word.

Please join me in a quick prayer before we hear the message. Lord, we just pray for Your Holy Spirit to come and to fill our time now, that You would help us to understand Your Word.

[2 : 45] And help me, Father, please, to speak faithfully from Your Word. In Jesus' name, amen.

We were doing our family devotions one night, as we often do, and it was my turn to pray the Lord's Prayer, which we do each time we do our devotions.

And this particular night, I said to myself, tonight I am going to pray so intentionally every phrase in the Lord's Prayer. I'm not going to just run through it from memory like I normally do.

I want to think about each word so that my kids can kind of see a model of this prayer. Well, I got to about the third phrase, and there was a pause.

I forgot the next line. The kids started giggling. I must have been really tired, I think, that night. And my kids had a field day with me.

Good job, pastor, missionary, coordinator. Don't even know the Lord's Prayer. I've always thought it was ironic how Jesus teaches His disciples not to pray repetitiously.

[4 : 01] But almost every week, we pray this prayer He's taught us very repetitiously, almost mindlessly, religiously. Well, the passage that we examined, that we read, comes in the context of Jesus' disciples asking Him how to pray.

And after teaching His disciples how not to pray, Jesus gives this model prayer. But what is presupposed in this prayer is a completely different way of looking at life and our relationship with God.

You see, Jesus doesn't want us simply to utter this prayer mindlessly, repetitiously, but to adopt the worldview, the set of values, the kingdom perspective that this prayer assumes.

And you see, it's this perspective that's almost behind this prayer that helps shape, I'm sorry, helps shape our sense of purpose and our direction in life.

And it also informs our collective call to world missions. And so today, we're going to be looking at the first three phrases in this prayer, the opening address, Our Father.

[5 : 32] And then second, Hallowed be Your name. And finally, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Well, what is the first thing that we pray?

Our Father in heaven. And what is presupposed is that we have a relationship with God as Father. You see, earlier in this chapter, Jesus speaks against the hypocrites who prayed in order to be what? He'd be seen by men. You see, their problem was they didn't have a genuine relationship with God as Father.

And even though they were religious, their religion didn't go beyond their culture. They were just acting as if they knew God.

And so what we must recognize before anything else is the fact that we cannot engage in any meaningful way with mission. Or for that matter, have any lasting peace or joy in our hearts unless we have a relationship with God as our Father.

[6 : 58] You see, much of the striving that we experience in life, whether we are conscious of it or not, is really a striving to reconnect with the One who has made us, the One who has created us.

And so this prayer assumes that we have a relationship with God as our Father. But maybe there are some here today who do not yet know God as their Father.

And I'm speaking particularly to the young people here in the church because you see, having a genuine relationship with God as Father is different from just growing up in the church.

It's different from just knowing the right answers to your Sunday school questions or even saying the sinner's prayer. Having a genuine relationship with God as your Father is only possible by the Holy Spirit changing us from the inside out.

It's a spirit that convicts you of your sins, leads us to repentance and faith, helps make sense of the Bible. And it fills us with the fruit of the Spirit, with love, with joy, with peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

[8 : 38] It is the Spirit that guides us and comforts us in life and adopts us as the children of God and enables us to cry out to God, what? Abba. Father.

Father. So do you know the Father? One of Ernest Hemingway's short stories tells of this Spanish father who decided to reconcile with his son.

Son had run away to the big city of Madrid and the father wanting to reconcile with his son, remorseful, took out an ad in the El Liberal newspaper hoping that his son who had run away to Madrid would read the paper and understand his heart.

And so he took out this ad in this paper and he wrote Paco, that was his son's name, meet me at Hotel Montagna noon Tuesday.

Paco is a common name in Spain and so when the father went to the square he found 800 young men named Paco waiting to be reconciled with their father.

[10 : 05] Hemingway strikes a chord in our hearts with this story. What child doesn't want to be reconciled with his father?

What child does not want to be in good fellowship with his father? Now if this is true with our earthly fathers, how much more is it true with our heavenly father?

The Gospel of John tells us that all who receive Jesus, those who believe in his name, call upon his name, will be given the right to be called the children of God.

You see, all of our prayers, all of our religion is worthless if we do not have a genuine relationship with God. And so if you have not yet received Jesus or called upon his name for the forgiveness of your sins, do not wait another day, don't wait another minute.

Turn to him in faith and repentance. Our father calls to us to come to him and he writes to us in the Gospel, all is forgiven.

[11 : 19] Love, Papa. Now the second phrase assumes that our life purpose is not to hallow our name but to hallow God's name.

It's not about our reputation, it's about his reputation. It's not about our glory, it's about his glory.

You see, the Pharisees and scribes prayed in order to be what?

to be seen by men. What does this mean? It means that they were more concerned about their own reputation, their own name.

They wanted others to speak well of them or to hallow their name. Jesus tells us that our orientation in life as the children of God is not to hallow our name but to hallow his.

And so we exist to honor, to glorify, to build up the name of our God rather than our own. But you see, it's much harder than it sounds.

[12 : 31] This past January there was a Mission to the World mission conference on the west coast in the sunny city of San Diego. It was a very special, it still is, very special city to me and to my wife.

We used to live in San Diego for several years. It's where I went to seminary, where I served in the presbytery, where my wife went to medical school, where we had friends.

And so I thought finally I get to go to a place where people will know my name. I was one of the speakers in the conference and so I go to register and I come to the desk and they say, well, what's your name?

I said, well, my name's Lloyd Kim. Surely expecting they would recognize at least that I was a speaker and they said, oh, okay, here, here's your packet. I was so offended.

During that conference, the worship, guest worship leader came down and he did a great job and I said, you know what, I just really wanted to thank you. Just did an amazing job.

[13 : 38] And he said, well, thank you and tell me again, what's your role around here? I said, well, I'm kind of a speaker and, you know, coordinate things with missions of the world.

Needless to say, I was also again humbled by that. Finally, the last day of the conference, I was rushing in. I was a little bit late. I didn't have my conference tag on and as I was going through the doors, someone stopped me and said, did you register?

They thought I was trying to freeload. Needless to say, God was telling me something about my own preoccupation with my name.

Jesus teaches us to pray, hallowed be your name. But how often do we live out the prayer, hallowed be my name.

But you see, this phrase also has a missions thrust. For we are asking God that He would make His name hallowed.

[14 : 44] The reason that we go, the reason that we send people to the nations is because the nations are not yet hallowing the name of our God.

And so, we pray that those who do not yet know the name of our God from every tribe, from every tongue, from every nation, would come to know Him as Father and would also hallow His name. The final phrase we'll discuss today is, your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Now, what would be the opposite? My kingdom come, right? My will be done. This is what Jesus was speaking against when He criticized those who would pray repetitiously, thinking that they would be heard for their many words.

What were these people trying to do? They're trying to manipulate God to give them what they want, to accomplish their will above all else, thinking they would be heard for their many words.

[16 : 07] But you see, our Lord wants us to orient our life away from our own personal agenda, our own kingdom, towards His agenda and kingdom.

wisdom. This is what it means to be a follower of Jesus, a disciple of Christ. People have often asked me, Lloyd, what is your vision?

What is your vision for mission to the world? And I often respond, pretty simple for me, my vision is Jesus' vision. What did Jesus want to see?

What did He preach? preach, repent for the what? The kingdom of God is at hand. How is He teaching us to pray? Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Jesus' vision was to see God's rule and reign fill the earth. He wants to see the heavenly kingdom come to the earth.

[17 : 15] This isn't just a prayer for the second coming, which we certainly desire, but a prayer for the power and the presence of God to be known even today here on earth as it is in heaven.

And we ask, well, what does this kingdom look like? In any kingdom you need citizens. And so when a person repents and believes in the gospel, submits himself to the king, the kingdom advances.

And when the church lives out the ethics of the kingdom, an ethic of radical self-sacrifice, surrender, and submission to the king, when the church lives out this ethic, the kingdom of God is here.

And when those from every tribe and every tongue and every nation worship the Father, the kingdom of God has come.

This is the vision of our Lord Jesus Christ. Is this our vision? Is this Southwood's vision? After a speaking event, a young college student came up to me and she thanked me for the message and then she went on to share how her mother had passed away just a month before.

[18 : 49] She started crying. She said it was an accident, something that could have been prevented. And she simply couldn't understand why God would take her mother away.

She had, this young woman had just given her life to Jesus several months before this. And then she looked at me and she said, but now, Pastor, I realize he wants everything, even my mother. And I'm okay with it. I looked at her and I said, your faith and your submission demonstrates God's rule and reign in your life.

It's a picture of the kingdom of God. You have encouraged and strengthened my faith more than you know. You see, our Lord teaches us to pray that God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Because in heaven there are no tears. There is no sorrow, no sickness, no injustice, no corruption, no abuse, no brokenness, no sin, and no death.

[20 : 12] And so when we pray this prayer, we are praying that Satan's kingdom would be destroyed and that the gospel would go throughout the world and that the church would grow in grace and in holiness and that Christ's reign would indeed extend to the ends of the earth and that He would return in glory.

We pray that people lost in hopelessness would find hope, that marriages that are broken would be mended by grace, and that the glory of God would indeed fill the earth.

Beloved, Jesus teaches us to pray this way because that's how He prayed. He says, Our Father. He considers us His brothers and His sisters. He prays, Hallowed be Thy name when His own name is mocked and ridiculed.

He prays, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, and then establishes the very kingdom by submitting to the Father's will. Remember how He asked the Father to take the bitter cup from Him in the garden of Gethsemane, but then prayed with resolution, not My will be done, but Thine.

[21 : 45] What did it mean for Jesus to pray this prayer? It meant that He would willingly give, willingly sacrifice, and submit to the suffering and pain of the cross.

Jesus gave up everything for the kingdom, and He calls us to do the same. What are the implications of this kingdom prayer?

The implications are that we would live wholeheartedly for the kingdom, submitting to our King, seeking to advance His will, and His name above all else.

And you see, this is where missions comes in. Our great commission mandate to go and make disciples of all the nations is the means by which the kingdom of God advances.

And so, if we want to see this vision of our Lord come about, we need to take seriously our mission in sending and supporting and going to the nations with the good news of the kingdom of God.

[22 : 59] Every dollar given, every prayer lifted up, every person sent or project supported for missions testifies that the kingdom of God is real.

It declares to the world that we submit to a living King who rules the heavens and the earth, and it bears witness that the kingdom of God has come and that we seek its advancement here on earth. Can I suggest maybe some practical ways in which Southwood might consider being involved in missions? It was wonderful last night to talk with Sarah about what the church is doing in the community.

And I would say amen to that. Those who are engaged in mission here will be the best missionaries overseas tomorrow. But one thing that has been in my mind in terms of how I might encourage the churches is to consider tithing your members.

Often times, churches give a tithe to missions, but very infrequently would they think of actually tithing their members. And what I mean by that is to have as a goal as a church to send 10% of your congregation to long-term foreign missions.

[24 : 27] If you have 500 adults, consider sending 50, 25 units, 25 families. What does this mean practically? Instead of waiting for the one or two odd members who feel a personal call to missions, the church actually encourages, challenges, and prepares members to go.

If the mission field says we need three families to start a new church planting work in Myanmar, then the church begins asking people in the congregation to prepare.

For those of you who are parents, if you have three kids, you know, send one of them. And don't send the one you don't like. That goes for the church leadership too.

Don't send us the troublemakers. Send your best. Send your elders, your deacons, your pastors, your best evangelists, your best disciples. Send them and see how God will bless this church. Maybe you're thinking, we can't afford to give away our people to missions. We need every soul to make this church healthy and strong. Here's the thing, beloved. You can't out-give God.

[25 : 39] I've seen it again and again. I have a friend who's a church planter in Northern California. He was struggling. The church was barely able to support him. But one of his members says, I want to go.

And he wrestled with it for over a year but finally he said, I can't keep you back and let that family go. And guess what God did right after that? Flooded that church with new people.

Another church in Southern California sent their pastor to missions. After he left, the church grew even more. It wasn't because he was a bad pastor.

Afterward, the church sent an elder and the church grew even more. And finally, they sent another elder and the church grew even still and then people didn't want to become elders at the church because they thought if they became an elder they would have to go to missions.

missions. But of course there is another way to participate and that is to go.

[26 : 47] Have you ever asked if the Lord is calling you and your family to go and invest your life in making disciples among the nations?

You see, Jesus, he's entrusted us with the gospel. And he gives us authority and power to proclaim the good news of the kingdom. It's not about us.

And he gives us his spirit which enables us to go forward with confidence and if you are afraid, beloved, his perfect love casts out all fear. Your life will never be the same.

And so let me ask you, Southwood, what is your vision? may our collective vision be that the nations would call upon God as their father and that the nations would hallow his name and that indeed his kingdom will come and his will be done here on earth as it is in heaven.

Amen? Let's pray. Father, as we pray this prayer week in and week out, remind us of the kingdom perspective that this prayer assumes.

[28 : 12] Help us, Father, be a people, your people, your citizens living in the kingdom here on earth, testifying to the kingdom in our decisions, our relationships, all that we do and say.

May Southwood be a church that truly seeks your kingdom first. Amen. Amen.