

His Kingdom and His Will

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Preacher: Rev Calum M Smith

[0:00] Jesus teaching the Sermon on the Mount and part of that is the Lord's Prayer. So Matthew chapter 6, you can read it verse 9.

Pray then like this, Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

So we're coming back to the Lord's Prayer. It's been a little time since we looked at it but we've looked at the beginning of it. Where it says, Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name. We see that it begins by looking to God.

Your name, your kingdom, your will, they're all there before us. Before it comes then to verse 11, give us, forgive us and lead us.

So it focuses first and foremost on God and where we begin with all our prayers is looking to him as the one who is able to help. We are worshipping God at all times. We give him glory, we give him honour, we give him praise.

[1:05] And here as we come into verse 10, Your kingdom come and your will be done. It's almost like the prayer is starting to descend, if you like. Where we're lifting up our eyes to our Father in heaven.

We're glorifying his name. And now we're starting to come down and say, Your will be done. Your kingdom come first. So there's a sense of his kingdom coming in this world.

And his will being done on earth as it is in heaven. And this is connecting as to when what comes after that. Everything that we have, everything that we need, we are depending on our Father in heaven for.

So God is not just someone who is distant to us. God is not just a God who is away from us and we're trying to find him to call on his name. He is someone who has given his promise to us that he is near.

That's the way the prayer starts. Our Father who art in heaven. We have that relationship with him. And the themes that we're seeing this evening in verse 10.

[2:09] There's two themes there. The kingdom of God and the will of God. And both are linked together. Without the kingdom of God, we cannot see the will of God.

And the will of God is that his kingdom comes. And so we're asking God to establish his kingdom on earth. Because we cannot do it.

As Psalm 127 says, Unless the Lord builds a house, the builders build in vain. Without him, we can do nothing. That is what the word tells us.

And so we are looking to God. That his kingdom come. And we're also looking to him in that sense of, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

That God's desire for his people is his kingdom and his will being done. And that we'd be looking to him instead of ourselves.

[3:10] But in our sin and in our rebellion, We are often looking to ourselves to fulfill all of these things. Our own kingdom, our own will is what we are wanting.

But God still calls us as a rebellious people to look to him. Isaiah makes this clear in the Old Testament for us in chapter 65.

Listen to these words in the first two verses. There is a people seeking their own kingdoms, seeking their own will.

And yet the Lord is saying, Here am I. Here am I. And so as we're looking at these words tonight, We hear God's call that was through Isaiah.

It's still the same to ourselves today. Here am I. Here am I. He is the one who is there to be called upon. And to be called upon in that sense of his kingdom coming and his will being done.

[4:28] So we're just going to look at these two points. Your kingdom come and your will be done. If you want to find a great summary of the Lord's Prayer and what it involves, what it's speaking about, Then look up the Shorter Catechism.

Many of you will have it. Maybe some of you don't know about it. The Shorter Catechism, towards the end of it, there's 107 questions. The last few are focused on the Lord's Prayer.

And one of the questions that it asks is, What are we praying in each petition, in each part of the Lord's Prayer? And so for this section, Thy Kingdom Come, what are we praying?

Well, the Shorter Catechism says this. In the second petition, which is, Thy Kingdom Come, we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, And that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, Ourselves and others brought into it and kept in it, And that the kingdom of glory may be hastened. That's what the Shorter Catechism says. That is what we are praying as we pray, Your Kingdom Come. What is meant here by kingdom?

[5:37] Well, the kingdom of God is a theme that you see throughout Scripture. Maybe especially in the Gospels, you find that sense of a vision for the kingdom of God coming.

In the Gospels, we find it central to the Lord's teaching. Even before he arrives, John the Baptist speaks of the kingdom of God in those ways. In this way, in Matthew 3, verse 1 and 2.

In those days, John the Baptist came preaching in the desert of Judea, saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near. The kingdom of heaven is near.

Where was John the Baptist looking? Well, we see later on, John the Baptist says, Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. The kingdom of God was coming through Jesus Christ.

The kingdom of God is near did not mean the end of time, the end of days. But the kingdom of God coming was that sense of God sending his son for the salvation of his people.

[6:43] A time of hope, a time of restoration, a time of renewal. It was God working through Jesus Christ that John had in mind here.

And so that when Jesus himself begins his public ministry, what does he say? Mark 1, verse 15, Jesus says, The time has come. The kingdom of God is near.

Repent and believe the good news. So there's that sense of the kingdom of God is about good news. Your kingdom come is about that good news coming to this world.

Later on in the Gospel of Luke, Jesus said, I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent.

Jesus was sent. Jesus was sent into this world to preach the good news of the kingdom of God. And so the kingdom of God is something powerful, is something precious, is something that we here are commanded to pray for.

[7:51] Your kingdom come. This kingdom of God has, if you like, a past, a present, and a future. You see it developing from the Old Testament as God was calling his people to himself.

This is outlined for us in Luke chapter 13. A great passage that speaks about the kingdom of God in a number of different ways. How then shall we describe the kingdom of God?

We'll be quoting that later. But it's also talking about the day of judgment and our need to see and be part of the kingdom of God now.

And it refers back to the past in that passage in verse 28, where it's saying in judgment there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth for those who have rejected the kingdom of God.

But it says when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. There's that warning.

[8:58] There's that hope that the kingdom of God is something that's ongoing. God calling his people into the kingdom of God. You will see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God.

Alistair prayed that seeing Abraham, seeing Moses, seeing the prophets, they are part of the kingdom of God. So there's that sense of all who have gone before us, trusting in the Lord, are part of the kingdom of God.

But there's also a present to it. The Lord was saying here, your kingdom come was a prayer then. There was a present nature to it. The kingdom of God is near.

The kingdom of God is there for us. And the same is true today. It's a day of opportunity. The kingdom of God is there. And it's something that we are to be praying for.

Because the kingdom of God also has a future. When it will become that final kingdom for God and all his people.

[10:06] To be part of his kingdom. So that's the question. That's the kingdom that we're seeing throughout scripture. It's good news. And it's about a God who is creating a place for his people.

For all eternity. And so the prayer we see here is, are we praying then, your kingdom come?

Because here on earth, there are two kingdoms that are shown to us in scripture.

There is a kingdom of God, which could also be called the kingdom of light. And there is the kingdom of darkness. As a short, R. Catechson was saying, we are praying for the destruction of the kingdom of Satan.

The power of evil. And we are looking for God's kingdom to come in power. That people might be saved. So we ask, your kingdom come.

Where does it start? It starts, first of all, with you and with me. It's about ourselves knowing to be part of the kingdom of God in a personal way.

[11:23] The shorter Catechson makes that clear for us as well. That we may be part of the kingdom of God and that others may be part of the kingdom of God. And that we be kept in the kingdom of God.

And so it's to pray for a work and an ongoing work in our own hearts. So is that your prayer as you pray this prayer?

Do you see what it's saying? As we say it, repeat it so often in church, we can say these words every Sunday. We repeat them every morning. So as you say, your kingdom come.

What are we thinking? What are we praying? We are praying for ourselves. For his kingdom. That we might be part of it.

That our hearts will be focused on him. Brought out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of light. We also want to see two others come into this kingdom.

[12:24] Repent and believe the good news because the kingdom of God is at hand. That was Jesus proclaiming it. That was it preached. Not just for one person to hear but for all to hear.

Because God is a good God, a gracious God. He longs for none to be lost but for all to be saved. And so this kingdom is proclaimed.

again going back to Luke's gospel chapter 13 where it's describing the kingdom of God in many ways. It says this in verse 18.

What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden and it grew and became a tree and the birds of the air made nests in its branches.

the mustard seed the smallest of all the seeds just like a little grain of sand. That's the way the kingdom of God is described and yet it flourishes.

[13:27] It grows. His kingdom is coming. His kingdom is growing. He is calling people to himself.

And so as we look to this kingdom of God are we asking for it to flourish in our own hearts and are we asking for it to flourish all around us?

The encouragement to us is that his kingdom is growing. It cannot be defeated. The gates of hell cannot defeat it. R.C. Sproul once said this about the kind of the glory of God but we can think of it as the kingdom of God as well.

The world is filled with God's glory. You can't turn without bumping into it. Isn't that a wonderful way of thinking about the kingdom of God or the glory of God?

We know that there is evil all around us. We know there is sin all around us. We know that sin is within us and yet as Sproul says the world is filled with God's glory.

[14:36] You cannot turn without bumping into it. You think of all that you see around you whether it's his creation whether it's his word whether it's his people every way you turn you are bumping into the kingdom of God.

Reminders that his kingdom is coming. And so there is a great challenge to us in these words your kingdom come that that would be our prayer.

But it's also then linked secondly to your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And again I just want to read from the shorter catechism what it says about this part of the prayer.

Question 103 in the third petition which is thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven we pray that God by his grace would make us able and willing to know obey and submit to his will in all things as the angels do in heaven.

Be able willing make us able and willing to know obey and submit to his will as the angels do in heaven.

[15 : 51] Now the angels do in heaven is linked to a psalm that we were going to sing but we missed Psalm 103 at the end of Psalm 103 in verse 19 it says God's kingly role is over all in heaven in heaven he has set his throne O you his angels praise the Lord strong ones by whom his will is done a connection there strong ones by whom his will is done his angels doing the will perfectly that's why it says here then your will be done on earth as it is in heaven that in heaven his will is done perfectly but we want to see his will done perfectly here but we know it's almost impossible but it's still a prayer isn't it your will be done on earth as it is in heaven to make us able and willing to know obey and submit to his will it's hard it can be one of the most difficult statements in this prayer maybe your will be done because there's times when we don't understand what his will involves we don't understand why certain things happen it's an acknowledgement that because the kingdom of God is only here in part that there is still another kingdom the kingdom of darkness that is active that is seeking to destroy the kingdom of light but as we pray to God we remember that he is the one who is sovereign that he is the one who has purposes and plans that we so often don't understand there are times in scripture when the will of

God seems to go against anything that God's people would want you see it time and time again you go back to the book of Genesis and you think of the life of Joseph a one who was despised by his brothers they were jealous of him so they sold him into slavery they had him sent away and he was imprisoned but the amazing thing is how that worked because what you see in Joseph's life is later on as his brothers come to him and see that he is still alive Joseph's response to them is this don't be afraid am I in the place of God you intended to harm me but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done the saving of many lives you wonder did

Joseph see that as he was going through all his trials or was it only when it came to that fruition that he could see that God meant it for good the will of God is hard at times you see it in the life of our Lord Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane in his natural way he was saying my father if it is possible let this cup pass from me those unnatural fear the will of his father just seemed to be at odds with everything and yet what his prayer was nevertheless not as I will but as you will putting himself over into the father's hands why for the good of his people for the salvation of many so that later on in the book of Acts you can read this man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge

God's will for his son and you with the help of wicked men put him to death by nailing him to the cross but God raised him from the dead freeing him from the agony of death because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him God had a plan and a purpose and there are times when the will of God seems so hard for us or for others around us his will being done we think of events in these last few weeks and you see it it is the will of God but so many ask and we all ask maybe why and we think of verses like in Romans 8 verse 28 we know that for those who love God all things work together for good for those who are called according to his purpose all things all things work together for good for those who love

God! And yet we still ask why the will of God is hard and yet we are to pray your will be done on earth as it is in heaven when it comes to the will of God and ourselves we can look at our lives and we see is this really Lord what you want for me is this what you would have me to go through we want the good we know that all for those who love God all things work together for good we want the good but we cannot leave the hard providence out we cannot leave the difficult days out our prayer still has to be your will be done on earth as it is in heaven as the shorter character says we pray that God by his!

[21 : 50] grace There's a key word grace would make us able and willing to know obey and submit to his will in all things we are saying your will be done if we're not saying that we are saying my will be done my way be done but we don't want that we should never want that what we want is God's will to be done for the good of his people that God can bring good out of every hard providence every difficult experience God can bring good from and so our prayer is your will be done on earth as it is in heaven a perfect will not to kick against the will of God and say

I know better I've got a better plan a better idea a better way but to submit ourselves to the will of God not to be like an old woman an old Scottish woman from many years ago she used to go from house to house across the countryside selling all kinds of little different things threads buttons shoestrings all kinds of odd pieces and said the way she went around the countryside was when

she came to a crossroads she would throw a stick in the air and whichever way the stick landed and pointed that's the way she would go and so that's the way she lived but one day someone saw her standing at a crossroads and she was throwing the stick up in the air it would land and point to the left but she would pick it up again throw it up in the air it landed pointed to the left she picked it up again the same thing the person asked her it keeps pointing to the left and

I want to go to the right and so she kept doing it until it landed pointing to the right and took that as the way that she should go isn't that like us when it comes to the will of God we know we'll keep throwing our stick in the air until it lands going the way that we want instead of just saying Lord your will be done and taking his will day by day moment by moment trusting him that he knows best his ways are not our ways and that's the way that we are to look because his ways are better than our ways his thoughts are higher than our thoughts and so we can either say be still and know that he is God and wait on his will or else we can tell God to be still and know that we are the ones who know best which way are we praying are we asking your will be done on earth as it is in heaven are we seeking his perfect will whatever it is we have to entrust ourselves to him in the good providence and in the hard providence we rejoice with those who rejoice we mourn with those who mourn but we seek his will

Robert Law was a minister in the free church in the late 1800s early 1900s and he said this prayer is a mighty instrument not forgetting man's will done in heaven but forgetting God's will done on earth which do we want which do we need well the answer is here for us not our kingdom come and our will be done but your kingdom come and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven so we pray his kingdom come and overcome the dark kingdom that's at work around us so that people would rejoice in the glory of God that is seen at every turn and that we would be reconciled and able to submit and all around us to the will of God no matter how hard no matter how difficult that we would see that

God can use it all for good for those who love him let us pray Lord our gracious God we thank you that your word instructs us at every step that we take that there is no time when you leave us floundering in the darkness but that you have sent your truth and your light forth for us to find our way to you and we pray Lord that in the darkness of the world in which we live that your light would shine brightly that your spirit would move among us by power that your kingdom would come in power and that your will be done on earth as it is in heaven your perfect and your good will for the good of all your people for the glory of your name and for the growth of your!

[27 : 34] kingdom we ask all of these things with the forgiveness of our we're going to conclude by singing in psalm 40 in the sing psalms version page 15