

### Prayer 3 Thy Kingdom Come

With the Presidential elections consuming much of our broadcast media we have become inundated with reports from various public opinion polls.

- How did the Republican candidates perform in their last debate?
- How are Democrats doing in the State of New Hampshire?
- What does the latest poll have to say about President Obama's job ratings?

You may find it interesting to know that in 2011 the Huffington Post did a public opinion poll in which they evaluated God's job performance. (*Yes I said, God's performance*)

- After surveying a cross section of 928 American's God ended up with a 52% approval rating.
- I think it is a bit odd that in 2011 God's performance rating was only 5 points ahead of president Obama who was at 47%.

The Huffington Post poll asked specific questions about God's handling of certain issues.

- When asked to rate God's job performance as the creator of the universe, 71 percent of voters gave God a "thumbs up" and only 5 percent disapproved.
- Respondents were less impressed with God's governance of the "animal kingdom," with 56 percent approving and 11 percent disapproving.

As you might expect, Younger respondents to the poll were somewhat critical of God, especially with regard to His handling of natural disasters:

- Those ages 18-29 expressed a 26 percent disapproval of God's performance in natural disasters, compared to only 12 percent of those 65 and older.

I suppose that we could surmise from the results of that Huffington Post poll that there are 48% of Americans who would not be comfortable praying, "Thy Kingdom Come."

- Since they are dissatisfied with God's job performance they would most likely be unwilling to yield to his sovereign rule.

That should be no surprise to you; ever since the fall the human race in the Garden of Eden Man has lived in constant rebellion against God.

- From childhood we are taught that we can set our own direction in life, create our own destiny, map out our own future, chart our own course in life.

SLIDE #5

I remember in elementary school they forced us to sing pop songs: "I Did It My Way"

Yes, there were times, I'm sure you knew When I bit off more than I could chew

But through it all, when there was doubt

I ate it up and spit it out I faced it all and I stood tall

And did it my way

With powerful voices and great conviction men sing these words of self-determination not realizing, according to God's Word, they themselves are under the dominion of darkness, under the cruel dictatorship of the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air.

- You see, our self-determination is only a smokescreen.

- In reality the natural man, apart from the gracious intervention of God is ruled by the lusts of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life.

Our study of the Bible reveals the fact that there are TWO kingdoms in our world. There is the Kingdom of Satan, who is called the god of this world and there is the Kingdom of God, and all of mankind is submitted to one of these two kingdoms.

- Let me clarify: This is not the “Star Wars” type of spiritual dualism where the light and darkness (equally powerful) are battling it out for dominion of the universe.
- No, The Triune God is the only sovereign ruler over all of creation, and in his infinite wisdom and sovereign plan for mankind he is presently allowing the Usurper (a created being) to have limited rule and influence on the earth.

In light of all the spiritual battles that we face in this fallen world it is necessary that we remain steadfast in prayer.

Ephesians 6:17 **Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,** 18 **praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,**

- That brings us back to the disciples request in Luke 11: “Lord teach us to pray.”

We learned last week that when we pray we pray relationally to God OUR Father. We pray reverently when we say “hallowed be your name.”

- This week we focus our attention on the second petition of our Lord’s model prayer: “Your Kingdom come.”

Jesus spoke about the Kingdom more frequently than any other topic. From the very start of his public ministry until the time when he ascended into heaven he taught and He demonstrated the truth of the Kingdom of God.

My question today is this: What are we asking when we pray, “**Your Kingdom Come?**”

1. Seeing the Kingdom (*We are asking God to open the blind eyes of sinful men that they may see His glorious Kingdom*)
2. Submitting to the Kingdom (*This is a personal request for the rule of God to overcome our self-centered, self-willed lifestyle*)
3. Setting up the Kingdom (*This is a prayer for the full manifestation of the Kingdom when God creates a new heaven and a new earth.*)

1 Seeing the Kingdom:

When God graciously and sovereignly gives the gift of new life (we call that regeneration) an individual who was dead in sins and transgressions has their eyes opened and they are enabled to see the Kingdom of God.

- This is what Jesus told Nicodemus when he met with Nick at night. John 3:3 **Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”**
- It is by means of the new birth that God transfers the believer’s citizenship from the dominion of darkness to the Kingdom of Christ.

Colossians 1:13 **He (Father) has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**

- NOW, as soon as God imparts life, bringing us into His kingdom that kingdom is seen as a tremendous treasure! It is more desirable and exceedingly more valuable than anything we could ever find here on the earth.
- Jesus describes this for us in a parable:

Matthew 13:44, **“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.**

- Oh the joy, the wonder, the bliss of being released from the slavery of sin!
- I am reminded of the passion in Dr Martin Luther King Jr’s voice when he cried out in a loud voice “Free indeed, free indeed thank God almighty we are free indeed!”

The Apostle Paul writes to the Roman Church about this new freedom.

Romans 6:17 **But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, <sup>18</sup> and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.**

- The means that God has chosen through which he gives new birth is the proclamation of the Gospel. This is the “Standard of Teaching” that Paul mentions here in Rom. 16.
- NOW, God’s rule takes precedent over Self rule. Now God’s will begins to overshadow my self-will and I cry out with sincerity, God Your Kingdom Come, rule in my life, my heart and soul.

SO when we pray, **“Your Kingdom Come”** we are praying that God would graciously release men and women from the dominion of darkness and through the new birth bring them into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

- So the first point: Your Kingdom Come is an evangelistic prayer. (*salvation of souls*)
- But there is more to that prayer than salvation.

John Mac: “The redemptive kingdom comes not only through salvation, but also through sanctification. The Kingdom progresses when people come in repentance and faith in Christ, and also when those who are His, increasingly grow and submit to His lordship.”

And that our second point: Submitting to the Kingdom.

- Here we learn that the prayer, **“Your Kingdom Come”** can be a personal prayer of sanctification a prayer of submission, a passionate plea from the heart of the believer that the rule of God would become more and more influential in his life.

All who are born of God become citizens of God’s Kingdom.

Think about this from the viewpoint of a refugee: Let’s say, a citizen of Iraq has fled the oppression of Isis to live in a new country, in a free and peaceful society.

- They lived in Iraq their whole life and this move is a great transition. They have to learn a new culture, new language, maybe a new vocation.
- But they don’t need to fear oppression any longer; they can go to sleep in peace.
- They can gather freely to worship the true and living God.

- BUT the transition of entering a new kingdom takes time, old habits die hard.
- I have found that this transition from self-rule to the rule of God requires more strength and devotion than I have in my flesh, but God has given me his Spirit.
- When I struggle to obey, when I find myself walking in rebellion, I cry out in prayer, “**Your kingdom come, your will be done**” in me!

When The Lord Jesus speaks of the growth of the Kingdom he uses parables that describe the progressive nature of His Kingdom.

- I see this in my own sanctification. The more I study the Word of God the more I know Him and the more I know him the more I desire to yield myself to him.

Matthew 13:31 He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. 32 It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” 33 He told them another parable. “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven (Yeast) that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened.”

- In both of these parables the Kingdom of Heaven is described as something that has a small beginning but grows exponentially until it permeates one’s entire being.
  - God has programmed a mustard seed with everything that is necessary to grow to full maturity.
  - In the same way the unique biological properties that are inherent in yeast are made to overtake every ounce of dough that it contacts.
  - SO the Kingdom infiltrates our lives in a radically progressive manner until that final day when rebellion is overcome and I am finally resting in God.

We have a responsibility to cooperate with God in the work of sanctification.

In Paul’s Letters to the Ephesians and Colossians he speaks of putting off the old man and putting on the new: (The image is that of a garment, taking off the old putting on the new)

Ephesians 4:22 **put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.**

- The rule of God in my life is teaching me to take off the filthy garments of rebellion and self-sufficiency and to put on the garments of praise and walk in the robe of Christ’s righteousness.

Often I wonder if this process of sanctification will ever be finished; I become disheartened by my own foolishness and then I remember Paul’s words: Philippians 1:6 **And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.**

- Thank you Lord for your Word! Thank you that it renews my mind and gives me strength

So what do we know? When we pray, “**Your Kingdom Come,**”

- We are asking God to sovereignly and graciously open the blind eyes of men and women that they might be able to see the Kingdom of God.

- Secondly, we are praying for ourselves a prayer involving our own sanctification. Asking that the rule of God would subdue the remaining rebellion that is in all of our lives.
- FINALLY When we pray “**Your Kingdom Come**” we are looking forward to that great day when the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ.

Like the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 16:22 we are saying, “**Maranatha**” which is an Aramaic expression a cry from the heart saying, “**O Lord Come!**”

- This is the same sentiment that John expressed at the end of the book of Revelation (22:20) “**Come Lord Jesus!**”

When we pray, “**Your Kingdom Come,**” We are petitioning God to hasten that day when the full manifestation of the Kingdom will be realized, when Christ shall rule and reign in righteousness, that day of perfect and lasting peace when all swords will be beaten into plowshares.

- A day when the **Lion will lie down with the Lamb**
- A day when **Christ shall wipe away all of our tears** and the **former things will be passed away** and all things made new!

Jesus describes that day for us: “**That day when the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.**” Matthew 24:29,

Remember in our study of Isaiah 9 we saw that the Prophet looked forward to the day when the governments will be on Christ’s shoulders.

- There is a day coming when the Kingdom of God will be manifest in fullness, a day when Christ shall come, a day when there will be a new heaven and new earth.

The establishing of the Kingdom of God is not a short story it is an epic of great proportion. God has determined that his sovereign rule would be worked out over the course of many millennia and through dramatic twists and turns the rise and fall of empires

- The prophet Daniel lists those empires for us and tells of the final kingdom:

Daniel 2:44, **And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set 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,**

**ARE YOU READY?**

- Has God opened your eyes to see the glory of His Kingdom?
- Are you, like me, laboring by the grace of God to put off the old man and put on the new? Daily Living in the HOPE of His soon coming. Longing to see him face to face.

When God has opened your eyes to see the beauty of his kingdom, this prayer should roll off of your tongue like butter. *Your kingdom come your will be done on earth as it is in heaven!!!*

PRAY, Father... We recognize that your name is holy.... That your throne is high above all powers, we bow humbly before your sovereign and gracious rule asking for the manifestation of your kingdom in us and in our world.

- We confess our failures, against you alone have we sinned
- We praise you for sending your beloved Son to be the perfect atoning sacrifice for our sins and not for our sins only but he is the ONLY true Savior in the world.
- We ask that you would open the blind eyes of our friends and family members who have never see the glory of your kingdom.
- We submit to you as the only sovereign King and ask that your kingdom would rule in us.
- We pray Come quickly Lord Jesus.