

—Westminster Shorter Catechism—

Lesson 58—*What do we pray for in the second petition? Q. 102*

Having the right heart in our approach to God as our Father, and seeking as our first priority, the glorifying of His name in the church and in the world, we're now taught to pray that the Kingdom of His Son Jesus Christ might advance unto consummation. So that if the first petition teaches us to pray for the Father to be honored, in this second petition we're taught to pray for Christ to be honored.

- I. *What's meant by the kingdom of God? There's a fourfold kingdom of God mentioned in Scripture.*
 - A. The Kingdom of His *power* over all the world, Ps 103.19-22.
 1. Christ is King over this Kingdom, Ps 2.7-12; Phil 2.9-11.
 2. He rules over it by His governing providence, ordering all things to His glory and for the good of the church He's building within it, Mt 10.29-31; Rom 8.28.
 - B. The Kingdom of His *gospel* in the visible church, Mt 13.24-25, 30, 47.
 1. Christ is King over this Kingdom, Mt 28.18-20; Eph 1.20-23.
 2. He rules over it by His Spirit and ordinances, ordering all things to His glory and for the good of His elect within it, Rom 10.17; 2Cor 4.4-6; 1Th 1.9; 1Tim 4.12-16; 2Tim 3.15.
 - C. The Kingdom of His *grace* in the hearts of the elect.
 1. Christ is King over this Kingdom, Col 1.13; Rom 14.17; 1Pet 3.15.
 2. He rules over it by His Spirit and ordinances, ordering all things to His glory in order to safely bring His elect home to glory, Phil 1.6; Phil 2.12-13; 3.20; 2Tim 3.16-17; 1Th 1.10.
 - D. The Kingdom of His *glory* in heaven.
 1. Christ is King over this Kingdom, Rev 1.8; 5.9-14; 15.3-4; 22.1.
 2. He rules over it in perfect peace, righteousness, and holiness, with His elect, forever and ever, Rev 21.1-4.
- II. *In this petition Christ teaches us to pray for the advancement of His Kingdom over the world, the church, and the elect, unto its consummation in glory.*
 - A. *We're to pray that He might providentially govern over all creation and created powers in the service of His Kingdom in Glory.*
 1. *We're to pray for the welfare of the land in which we live, Jer 29.4-11, for the magistrates who rule over us, Ezra 6.3, 10; 1Tim 2.1-3, and even for those who oppose and persecute us, Mt 5.44.*
 2. *Our desire is that God might so order all things that we might live quiet, peaceful and godly lives, which He might be pleased to use for the salvation of the world around us, 1Tim 2.4-7; 1Pet 2.11-12.*
 - B. *We're to pray that He might ministerially govern over all the ordinances and ministers in His church in the service of His Kingdom in Glory.*
 1. *We're to pray for the spread of the gospel into foreign and blinded lands by missions, Lk 10.2.*
 2. *We're to pray for the raising up of ministers to preach, elders to shepherd, and deacons to serve, Rom 10.14-17; Eph 4.11-14; 1Tim 5.17; Acts 6.1-7; Heb 13.7, 17.*
 3. *We're to pray for the blessing of God on seminaries and internships, 2Tim 2.2; 3.10-11; Phil 4.9.*
 4. *We're to pray for the blessing of God on the preaching of the Word, Col 4.3-4; Eph 6.19-20, on the sacraments, 1Pet 3.21, and on all the ordinances of His worship, Isa 58.13-14; 1Th 2.13.*
 5. *We're to pray for the blessing of God on our children born, sealed, and raised as members of His visible Kingdom in the church, that they may know His saving grace, Ex 3.6; Gen 17.7; Eph 6.4.*
 6. *We're to pray for the full ingathering of the elect and their children, Jn 17.20-21.*
 - a) *That men might be brought into the church by regeneration, justification, and adoption.*
 - b) *And that men might be kept within it by sanctification, assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Spirit, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.*
 7. *And we're to pray for the destruction of Satan's kingdom which opposes Christ's Kingdom.*

- a) The kingdom of Satan is his power and dominion in men's hearts and they serve him in a slavery to sin, 2Cor 4.4; 1Jn 3.10. Watson, "Satan doesn't care for their purses, but their hearts."
 - b) When the gospel advances into the devil's territory, it pushes back the darkness in culture, government, and morals by the light of the gospel.
 - c) And when it advances into men's hearts, it conquers and dethrones the devil from the throne in men's hearts and places Christ there.
- C. We're to pray that He might graciously rule over all the motions and issues of our hearts *in the service of His Kingdom in Glory*.
- 1. We're to pray that grace might rule in our hearts, Mt 7.21; Ps 110.3; Lk 17.21; Gal 2.20; Rom 7.21-25. When grace comes in, it sets up Christ's Kingdom in the soul. It rules the will and affections and brings in the whole man subject to Christ and His laws.
 - 2. We're to pray that sin might be mortified in us, Jn 17.17; Rom 6.11-14; Eph 5.25-27; 1Pet 5.10; Jude 24-25. We cannot hope for an extinction of sin, but by God's grace, it shall not have dominion over us. Grace casts sin down and breaks its reign, power, and dominion. We're to pray for the increase of Christ's government in our hearts until sin is no more.
 - 3. We're to pray that we might be preserved and kept safe within it, and enabled to persevere faithful to it until we're brought safely to glory, 1Pet 1.3-5; Jn 17.15.
- D. We're to pray that He might be quick to swallow up all the temporal aspects of His Kingdom and *consummate His Kingdom in Glory*.
- 1. Everything serves this. Everything moves toward this. And this is what we're to pray for, Jn 3.16; 6.39-40; 17.1-4; Rom 8.30; 1Cor 16.22; Rev 22.20.

Inferences

- I. If Christ is King over all the world, then let us humbly submit to all the disposals of His providences.
 - A. Can there be anything wrong in His administrations of our weather, our rulers, our sicknesses, or our misfortunes? Can there be anything He does in all His Kingdom that isn't perfect, Dt 32.4?
 - B. Shouldn't His sovereignty silence all our murmurings and complaints? Boston, "His infinite wisdom should satisfy us, who knows better than we do what is best for us, and who can overrule all things for His glory and our good."
- II. If Christ is King over the church, then let us humbly submit to and be grateful for His ordinances, His sacraments, His ministers who preach to us, His officers who shepherd us, and His pleasure in adding to our number those whom He pleases.
- III. If Christ is King over our hearts, then let Him sit enthroned there, without any rivals or competitors, and without the slightest look of interest at other lords, such as the world, the flesh, and the devil.
 - A. Give Christ your heart, and let Him mold and shape all your affections. Let His Word be the meditation of your thoughts and the stuff of your speech.
 - B. Yield to Christ all you are and have and seek to be conformed more and more to the life of one ruled by His sovereignty and grace.
- IV. If Christ has prepared for us a Kingdom of glory and is now working to prepare us for it, then let us rejoice in the assurance that we shall be safely carried through all our sufferings into the glory. Evil men may besiege and attack us, but they can do us no harm, because, by His Spirit, the Lord dwells within our hearts, to protect, keep, and deliver safely to the Father on that day.
 - A. There are none who will see the Kingdom of glory that don't know the Kingdom of grace; but all who know the Kingdom of grace are assured entrance and a permanent dwelling in the Kingdom of glory. So let us rejoice in this and long for home.