1 Jn. 3:4-10 (LD 48) "To Destroy the Works of the Devil"

For the Children: During wars, soldiers often try to destroy the enemy's cities and factories, as well as their armies. The more of their "works" that can be destroyed, the more the enemy is weakened. God's children must also serve Him by trying to destroy His enemy's "works." We do that by fighting against the sins the devil wants us to do, instead trying to live God's way, according to His Word. We also try to help make the church stronger and fight evil in the world around us. Since we need the Lord's help in that, we pray, "Thy Kingdom Come." **Questions:** What is God's "Kingdom"? How does it "come" into the world? How can you become stronger in fighting against the devil?

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Introduction:

First Point: The Son of God's Purpose
1) To Take Away Sins: V. 5 indicates that Christ came for the purpose of taking away sins – since God is holy, and sinners may not enter His holy Kingdom without the removal of their sins. That removal is applied not only to those individual sinners who turn to Christ, but also to the whole church; and, indeed, to the whole of creation – which is being redeemed with us (Rom. 8)

2) To Destroy the Works of the Devil: V. 8 indicates the flip-side of the same coin, that the taking away of sins also destroys the works of the devil. Again, this is true of the individual. Christ destroys the devil's work to which our old nature leans, by covering our sins, also by sanctifying us through Word and Spirit. As we resist sin and pursue righteousness, the devil's work is pushed back. Something similar happens to the whole church, as Christ prepares His Bride, making her "spotless." Christ also destroys the devil's work when He punishes those who oppose the believer and the church, and when He protects His people from persecution

3) The Kingdom Has Come, Is Coming and Will Come: All this is aimed at the completion and perfection of God's Kingdom, at which time God will be all-in-all (1 Cor. 15:28). But this Kingdom is already coming – it is a process – as Is. 65:17, Mt. 12:28 show

4) What We Pray For: When we pray, "Thy Kingdom Come," we are asking God to work in all these areas - in our lives, sanctifying us; in the church, purifying her and preserving her; in society, judging and saving; in the present and towards the consummation. It is hypocritical to pray this and not be willing to co- operate with the Spirit in achieving these purposes

Second Point: The Outcome of That Purpose upon Sinners
1) A Sharp Division: The effect of Christ's 2-fold purpose has been to create 2 lines within mankind, from the time of the Fall: Those who are born of God/born again, versus those who are born of the devil. Throughout this text, John takes great pains to show how sharp is the division between the two lines

2) Those Born of God: Those who are born of God, submit to Him – they are ruled by His Word and Spirit. They do not merely hear His Word, they "practice" righteousness and habitually resist sin. Note the emphasis on *practice* here. God's "seed" *abides* in them (v. 9), and they "abide" in Him (v. 6) – there is a permanent dwelling or living. John uses the present tense in these verses, indicating an ongoing, continual activity – not to say the believer NEVER sins, but to say that he does not keep on abiding in sin, in the same old way, without repentance. Note also that the other result of Christ fulfilling His purpose is that the believer loves his brethren

3) Those Born of the Devil: Those who are born of the devil habitually refuse to submit to God's Word, they live in their sins & lawlessness without repenting. They do not love God's people

4) The Ability to Discern: The sharp division implies a need for discernment – so we can resist what we recognize as evil and pursue what is truly holy; join ourselves to the true church and avoid that which is false; and oppose evil in society as well. See 1 Jn. 4:1. When we pray "Thy Kingdom Come" we are praying for help in that discernment as well

Conclusion: