

***The Marks of a True Believer***  
***Message Two***  
***Praying: “Thy Kingdom Come”***  
***Matt 6:5-15***

- 5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.
- 6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.
- 7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.
- 8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.
- 9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
- 10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
- 11 Give us this day our daily bread.
- 12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
- 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.
- 14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:
- 15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

**Introduction:**

We come today to the second issue of the Lord’s Prayer and an idea that is understood so very poorly by many who use these words to guide their minds (at least theoretically) toward God.

But it is essential that we know what we mean when we say these words. Why? Is it really an important issue? Well, unless there is some spiritual benefit to making certain sounds with our mouths regardless of our understanding of them, YES, it is important!

Paul made this point in 1 Cor 14:6-9:

- 6 Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?
- 7 And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?
- 8 For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?
- 9 So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.

I hope you see the point. Unless what is said has some meaning, some understanding, communicates some useful idea, the sound is pointless, vain, and without significance. Words separated from their meaning have no spiritual benefit.

If you will recall, one of the driving issues of the Protestant Reformation was that the Roman Church conducted all of its' services in Latin which was not understood by many of its' members, sometimes not even by the priests who recited them. Often the words were merely sounds that some had committed to memory, and that sometimes poorly. People wanted to understand what was going on, to know what was being said, so that they could consciously participate in what was going on.

It is beyond 'important,' it is *essential* that we know and understand all of the words that we say to God.

So, what do we mean when we say 'Thy kingdom come'? What do you mean?

Let us start at the beginning.

## I. ***Thy kingdom come.***

Whose kingdom is this that we are discussing?

Our Father's, the One of the Trinity toward Whom All worship and All prayer is to be directed.

The Trinity is, of course, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God in Three Persons, as the Doxology goes.

The Father is the Central Figure even though the Son and the Spirit are equally Deity.

The Father sent the Son and it was to the Father that the Son paid the redemption price for the salvation of His people. It was to the Father that the Son prayed, "My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken Me?" It is to the Father that the Son will yield up the Kingdom when all is finally done.

1 Cor 15:22-24

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. KJV

So, this 'kingdom,' whatever it is, is the unique possession of God the Father. He possesses it in three different ways.

1. By creation, all things that exists automatically belong to Him,
2. Some things, He takes to Himself in special and unique ways, such as Israel,

3. And, then, some things He possesses in an even more unique way in that He makes a special investment in them in redemption.

The Kingdom is a part of the redemptive work, so He owns it in every way imaginable. This 'kingdom' belongs to the Father because He has paid the price of the death of His Only Son for it.

## II. What is a 'Kingdom'?

In our ordinary and historical understanding a kingdom is a territory and a group of people who are ruled over by a monarch, a person who is the single and sole authority in the government of that place and those people.

In scripture we encounter kingdoms as small as a town, kingdoms that are a nation such as Israel, Egypt, and Syria, as well as kingdoms that include many nations; Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Rome.

But even a casual reading of the NT will give us to understand that *this Kingdom* is not like the other kingdoms that we know about.

Jesus to Pilate:

John 18:36

- 36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

But even a rudimentary awareness of church history and doctrine will reveal that there is and always has been much confusion on the matter. The disciples themselves were confused about it when Jesu ascended back to heaven.

Acts 1:6-7

- 6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?
- 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

Today we have those who believe that the New Testament references to 'the kingdom of God,' 'the kingdom of heaven,' and 'the kingdom of Christ' all refer to three *different* kingdoms. But even a modest degree of comparison will show that the writers used these terms interchangeable to reference the same thing.

But, what 'thing'?

Let us consider together for a few minutes what a kingdom really is.

Suppose a hypothetical situation with me. Let us suppose that when the early Puritans came to the New World they did not come alone. Suppose that some physical calamity was occurring on the island we know as England, a volcanic eruption or a devastating plague or a hideous drought

and it was clear that no one who remained there was going to survive. Let us suppose that they *all* came, King, aristocracy, government, army, and all of the population of England and let us further suppose that they set up shop here, not planning to return. Where, now is the kingdom of England? It is in the New World now, is it not? Instead of New England, we have just plain 'England.'

So, what is the kingdom of England? It is wherever the authority of the king is supreme, the people and the place, the influence and authority of the monarch.

But God has authority over all things, right? So, why is there some special designation of 'thy kingdom' or the request for it to 'come'? Obviously this is a special thing, separate from the totality of Creation.

The Kingdom of God, as can be easily demonstrated from scripture, is that sphere of influence in which the Will of the King has special and voluntary submission. It for sure is the people who have given themselves in allegiance to Him through faith and repentance but it is also, abstractly, the special reign and influence of God, gladly received and heartily obeyed.

But, again, what is this 'special reign and influence of God'? This submission to the King?

Let us consider a different hypothetical in an attempt to explain. Suppose something awful happens, a nuclear strike, impact from a large comet, or a revolution in our country, and suppose the military takes control of the government and decides to install a king. But suppose he is a really good guy, a believer, who really takes his job seriously and wants to encourage everyone to be godly and holy. Got the picture?

Now, suppose you wake up one morning and a uniformed agent of the king is sitting in your living room when you walk through on your way to the coffee pot. He explains that he is simply there to enforce the will of the king who has your best interests at heart. You pick up the remote to turn on the TV and he says, "the king would like for you to spend an hour in the scripture and in prayer before you begin your day." You agree and comply with the request. After prayer you pick up the remote again and turn on the TV but on the screen of your favorite channel are the words, "banned for indecency and unchristian content by the king." You flip through the channels and most say the same thing. There are a few things on, someone preaching, some gospel music, and a few channels with things like 'Andy Griffith' and such but very little else.

You decide that you will go visit a friend and as you are getting ready the agent asks, "where are you going?" You tell him and he says, "the king would like for you to go see someone who is really struggling and needs some comforting." Someone calls to invite you to a party but the king's agent reminds you of a Bible study going on at the same time and recommends you go there instead. Everything you start to do or think to do, he is there, reminding you of good things the king would rather you do.

Very quickly most of us would get tired and frustrated with the king's agent, the king, and his kingdom would we not?

Now, change the picture with me, Eph 6:10-17,

- 10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.
- 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
- 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
- 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
- 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;
- 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;
- 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.
- 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:
- 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;
- 19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,
- 20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. KJV

Here we have the apostle Paul instructing us as to how to prepare for the day using the trappings of the soldier of his day as an allegory for the spiritual graces essential to spiritual victory for each day. But let us stay with his allegory for a moment. When this guy (or gal) is fully dressed, what is he?

He is a soldier is he not? And who is his general? Jesus Christ. Who is his king? God the Father. He is an agent of the King of the Kingdom of God. This means that he is an armed enforcer of God's Will.

Who is he? He is you and he is me, right?

Now go back to my ridiculous story of the king's agent in your living room. But, this time, there really is an agent of the King, helmet, breastplate, sword and all. And, he really is serious about the will of the king. He objects to you beginning your day without prayer, to any programming on TV or the internet that is not wholesome, to you wasting your time, ignoring those in need, and a thousand other things that you might do without his input. But the King's agent is YOU!

### **III. When we say, "Thy kingdom come," we are swearing allegiance to the Kingdom of God and voluntarily assuming our place as the King's agent in our own lives.**

Now, understand this, our primary duty in the enforcing of the Will of the King is in our own lives. Except for parents and a few other situations, none of us has been called as an enforcer in the lives of others. Truth be told, if we take the task of being an agent of the King seriously we

will have very little time or energy for meddling with others.

We are called upon to swear allegiance to the King, to His Will, and to His Word every day. We are to measure all of our actions, our thoughts and our words by His commands and teachings.

As far as our dealings with others, especially those of the household of faith, we are taught to be servants with a heart for their spiritual prosperity.

#### **IV. So, what is this rulership of the Kingdom of God in one's life and how does one understand the dynamics of it?**

Even very basic understandings of scripture teach us that the Christian life is not *primarily* about rule keeping and law obeying, so how does it all play out and work together?

This is a huge discussion for which we do not have time today to even begin to explore but I have some suggestions for a 'quick start' as well as a long range plan.

I would suggest you begin with the Sermon on the Mount and lay hold of the lifestyle commended by the Lord Jesus, all of it. Make application fully to yourself alone and set yourself on a path of compliance with the teachings there.

Next, give yourself to the study of 2 Cor and the book of Philippians. Absorb fully the character of the believer that you see modeled by the Apostle Paul there.

Finally, find and read biographies of some of the great ones of church history and look deeply into their management of their own lives and the godliness that flowed out from their efforts.

You see, we can't just make stuff up and call it 'being a good soldier of the kingdom.' The pattern has been written and is engraved in the stones of history.

The other thing is that we have little, if any, real context for such living in our upbringing or our environment. We need to allow the Word of God and the experienced saints who have gone before us show us the way.

What will be the result?

You will become the King's agent.

Not to others but to yourself with questions like:

You going to pray this morning?

Read your Bible?

Be a spiritual blessing to someone?

See how you can grow spiritually?

Am I going to seek to honor the Lord and advance His kingdom?

I challenge you to think about your intentions and understandings when you say:

"Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy Kingdom come....."

