

Prayer Is About Reigning

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[0 : 00] Well, this morning, I'm going to go back to our study of Luke chapter 11 and revisit again!

I decided to go back to our study of this marvelous prayer, the Lord's Prayer, because that place where we are ready to examine in this prayer is very fitting, very appropriate for our emphasis for this month, as I hope you're going to discover.

It was quite natural, even appropriate, certainly appropriate for the disciples to ask Jesus this question.

Lord, teach us to pray. They wanted to pray as Jesus prayed, and this is how Jesus answered their question, really starting with verse 2 of Luke 11.

When you pray, this is Jesus speaking, when you pray, say, Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

[1 : 59] Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Now, I think it's safe to say that this particular passage of scripture, and it also appears in Matthew's account as well, that this particular passage of scripture that we commonly call the Lord's Prayer is perhaps one of the most quoted verses in the entire Bible.

Perhaps even more than Psalm 23. Perhaps even more than John 3.16, though I doubt it, it may be a second to John 3.16.

Very quoted passage, very well-known passage. Again, we call it the Lord's Prayer. And though you may not be able to quote it verbatim, some of you I'm sure have memorized it, and you could.

But you certainly are so familiar with it that with each word, each phrase, those phrases have already come to your mind even before I read them a moment ago.

[3 : 20] Very, very familiar. In reality, though, it is not the Lord's Prayer. And I hate to disappoint some, and of course I've made this point a number of times as we've been looking at this prayer.

This is not, per se, the Lord's Prayer. J. Vernon McGee once preached a series of sermons on this particular passage, and he entitled it, The Prayer that the Lord did not pray.

Because Jesus never prayed this prayer. He said, well, He did right here. Well, this is not Him praying. He's teaching how to pray. Jesus did not pray this prayer.

This is not His prayer. And, in fact, it would be better, I guess, for us to call it the Disciples' Prayer.

This is not the Lord's Prayer. Dr. Louis Barry Schaeffer, the great professor of systematic theology and founder of Dallas Theological Seminary, he said that John 17 should be called the Lord's Prayer.

And, indeed, it should be, because that is a prayer that Jesus actually prayed. But, now, again, just to let some of you off the hook and not make you too mad at me, it would be all right to quote this prayer, okay?

[4 : 34] I'm not saying that it's wrong to do that any more than I would say it is wrong to quote any portion of the Word of God. And it's okay if you, from time to time, want to pray that prayer.

But please understand that this is a model for praying, at the very least. In fact, it's even more than that. It is a framework for praying that each part of the framework points us to some deep theological truths that we need to understand.

And I don't know if when Jesus was giving this model prayer, and though Matthew and Luke do not record it, that he may have gone in depth even more to teach each part of this prayer.

And so that's why I think it's important for us to take it phrase by phrase and dig deep into this prayer or this model prayer in order to discover the riches that it contains, the doctrinal, theological, spiritual riches that this prayer contains.

Now, what have we learned thus far? If you've been here, it's been a couple of weeks since we've been in the passage, but if you've been here all along, then let me remind you that, first of all, when we prayed our, when we took this phrase, our Father in Heaven, we learned about this reality, this truth about praying, that prayer is about resting.

[6 : 02] It's about resting, resting in God our Father. And so Jesus really is saying to us here that we should have an abiding confidence in God when we pray.

All of our confidence should be in Him. There should not be any doubting, any wavering, any wondering if God is going to hear and accept our prayer.

We're resting in that reality, a confidence, an indestructible assurance in regard to prayer, any of our prayers, all of our prayers.

It's a peace, a resting, a resting in God our Father. And how can we do that? Well, because we know that God our Father is on His throne in Heaven.

We ought to be thinking about it every time we either get on our knees or we're standing or sitting or lying in the bed or driving down the highway sometimes when we're praying.

[6 : 58] Every time we go to the Lord in prayer, we ought to be, first of all, acknowledging the fact that our Father is on His throne and He's in His Heaven.

And so we are resting in that reality and we have every confidence in the Lord when we pray. So prayer is about resting, resting in God our Father. Second prayer is about reverencing.

Reverencing. Reverencing who? God. Directing our reverence toward Him.

He said, pray this way. Hallowed be Your name. Reverenced be Your name. And of course, remember that when He said name, He was not talking about the actual name of God, but His reputation.

His fame. His character. His nature. And then now third this morning. And again, I would tell you that this is very relevant to this month in our emphasis on missions.

[8 : 06] Prayer is about raining. And not the kind of rain we had all night and probably still doing out there. I'm talking about a different kind of raining, spelled completely different.

We're talking about raining in the kingdom of God. This is how we ought to pray. Your kingdom come. And this is a very interesting part of the prayer.

Now, let's just think of this logically. Kind of taking this a step at a time. The flow of this is very logical. When a believer comes to know God as his or her Father in heaven.

Then he or she discovers how wonderful He is. And then when we discover, we have a personal discovery of His greatness and His nature and His character.

And so we believe, or rather we pray, Hallowed be Your name. And that is, we're saying how absolutely holy is Your person. And absolutely wonderful and great are all of Your works.

[9 : 13] And then this in turn begins to create in us a growing, or should create in us, a growing desire to see others come to know God in the way we know Him.

And also creating in us a desire to see His full and final glory revealed at His second coming. And so we pray, Your kingdom come.

And so you see, this is again very logical. The progression is very logical here. To pray, Hallowed be Your name is to express a strong desire to see God glorified.

And He will receive all glory, do His name, when His kingdom actually visibly comes first in us individually through salvation, but finally, ultimately revealed to the world as a whole when Jesus returns in all of His glory.

And one day He's going to do that. It may be today. So then, to pray, Your kingdom come, has far-reaching implications. That's what we need to understand here.

[10 : 21] It's not just simply a statement that we don't really give it any thought. It is just a part of the framework of a prayer. And that part points us to a marvelous, wonderful truth that not only is something to be known, but is something that should challenge us in our lives as believers.

It's far-reaching. It's implications. This part of the prayer, Your kingdom come. This prayer crosses space and time. It is, in the immediate sense, evangelistic.

And that's why I say this applies to our focus for this month. It is, in the ultimate sense, however, and here's a big word, eschatological. That is, it pertains to last things.

The culmination of all things that will one day take place when Jesus comes again. And so, in that sense, it is messianic. So, not only evangelistic, it is messianic.

And so, let's consider this part of the prayer, this phrase, in that order. Evangelistic, messianic. And here is a very simple way to conceptualize this kind of praying.

[11 : 38] This prayer, Your kingdom come, looks inward to the soul. That's first. It looks inward to the soul.

So, in that regard, it's very personal. Then, it looks outward to the sinner. The lost sinner in this world. And then, finally, it looks forward to the Savior.

To the Lord Jesus Christ. To the Savior coming again. So, inward, outward, and forward. First of all, this prayer looks inward to the soul.

To your very soul. Listen, this is very logical when you think about it. I mean, think about this. Any serious consideration of the kingdom of God must begin inside of us.

It must begin in the heart. The word kingdom here in the Greek language is basileia. And what does it mean? Well, it really means dominion.

[12 : 48] It means rule. It could also mean reign. As I've said, this kind of praying is reigning. Reigning in the kingdom of God.

And so, it would be absurd. Now, just think about it. It would be absurd to pray for God's kingdom to come in any sense that you understand that. It would be absurd to pray for God's kingdom.

It would be absurd to pray for God's kingdom. It would be absurd to pray for that if you're not personally submissive to His rule, His reign, His dominion in your own lives personally.

Right? Isn't that logical? This is the daily praying then. Before it is anything else, we must understand it is the daily praying for Christ's lordship, His kingship in our own hearts and in our own lives.

And by the way, where does God's kingdom reside right now? Anybody know? Don't say church. We would hope that it would. His kingdom resides in the individual believer.

[13 : 56] The individual believer. In you. In me. His kingdom resides there. In our hearts. That's where, hopefully, Christ rules.

Rules in your life. And so, your kingdom come is a personal prayer. Before we understand anything else about it, we must understand that. And when you pray this prayer, then you have already assumed a commitment to dethrone Satan, to dethrone self, to dethrone this world in its godless philosophies and affections and its Christless values.

To dethrone that out of your life. And to enthrone God daily. That's what you're assuming when you pray this prayer. It's ridiculous to think of it in any other sense.

It's absurd. Maybe even close to a blasphemy. To think about praying for God's kingdom and any other sense of what that might mean.

Without being willing, willingly, turning over your entire life and everything you do and everything you say and all of your plans and all of your desires and affections to direct all of that to God and His rule over your life.

[15 : 20] Listen, when the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ finally does come to this earth one day. And it will. And we'll be talking more about that here in a moment.

When He comes, it will not be a democracy. I know we love democracy. But it's not going to be a democracy when Jesus comes and establishes His kingdom in the real sense.

It will be a theocracy. And that's the way it should be. And so if that's true, then you ought to understand that right now here today, His life, His presence, His kingdom in your life is not a democracy.

It is a theocracy. A theocracy. God demands absolute kingship, lordship over the lives of His children.

And that's you and me. Now we're talking about reigning in the kingdom of God. Your kingdom come. That's what we're praying. And so this prayer looks, first of all, looks inward.

[16 : 24] Inward to the soul. The prayer also looks outward to the sinner. To the lost sinner in the world.

When we pray, your kingdom come. We are expressing a genuine desire to see God's kingdom grow and flourish in this lost world through the salvation of souls.

That's what we're praying. We want to constantly pray. That God's word. The gospel.

Will be proclaimed every person on this planet. That's what we're praying. And we're praying. Even further than that.

We're praying that God's work of redemption would be accomplished in this world through our lives, through the ministry of His church.

[17 : 30] To pray, your kingdom come, is to pray for the triumphant advance of the gospel of Jesus Christ around this globe.

That's what we're praying. In the Muslim world, which today, best estimates, one-third of this earth's population. To see the gospel, to pray that the gospel would advance in the Hindu world.

In the Buddhist world. In the Catholic world. In the Russian Orthodox world. In the Jewish world. In the pagan world.

That's kind of a catch-all. Everywhere. Everywhere. And among all people of this world. And that's what, by the way, we want to happen in Bartlesville, right?

And we kind of participate with that and work toward that in a half a dozen or a dozen different ways. We're going to be focusing upon that next week.

[18 : 31] But listen, the best way is not through some church program, some program or some organized strategy. The best way is through our resident missionaries here. You say, who are they?

Well, go home and look in a mirror. That's you. That's me. We want to pray. We're praying for the advance of the gospel around the world.

That's what we want to happen in Colorado as we continue to partner with Open Bible Baptist Church and support them and help them in reaching the people of their community. That's what we want to happen in places like Odessa, Ukraine.

And in Shenzhen, China. And in Kalula, Malawi. And Leon, Mexico. And wherever else God eventually may lead us to connect with and send people to.

See, to pray your kingdom come is to pray for the advance, the triumphant advance of the gospel around the world. That's what we ought to be all about as a church and as a people.

[19 : 43] Jesus said, pray in this way. Pray for the glorious reign of Christ over his kingdom as you look inward to the soul.

As you look outward to the sinner, the lost sinners in the world. And third, and finally, as you look forward. As you look forward to the Savior.

To the coming of the Savior. Because one day he's coming. That's what we're praying for. Now, I believe that when Jesus first gave this lesson on prayer. And when he said to his disciples, pray this way, your kingdom come.

I believe he meant just one thing. Not three things. You say, well, pastor, we've just talked about two things. And now you're talking about a third thing. Which is it? Well, it's really this third thing. Now, you know, I've not wasted my time in mentioning these first two things. Looking inward and looking outward to the sinner. Because these things, I believe, they're not wrong.

[20 : 48] Jesus assumes these things. Now, we're coming to prayer with that already assumed. That already a given. We are to look inward when we pray for Christ's rule.

We're to look outward when we are praying for Christ's terrain. These are a given. But nevertheless, Jesus primarily meant one thing.

When he said, pray your kingdom come. And he meant what his disciples would have understood that he meant. We've got to immerse ourselves into the disciples and try to think the way they would have thought.

Jesus' disciples would have had an Old Testament understanding of the word kingdom. They would have understood it in that sense.

Not in the sense of a New Testament sense. Not yet. It would have been an Old Testament sense. Now, it would have been wrong. Because what was true of kingdom in the old is true of kingdom in the new.

[21 : 55] But they didn't have a full revelation of those things yet. So they would have understood kingdom in that sense, in the Old Testament sense. And so they would have understood Jesus to mean the messianic kingdom that had been promised through many, many centuries of prophetic teaching in the Old Testament.

That's what they would have understood. See, they were looking forward to the time when the Messiah would come and establish an earthly kingdom. They thought that's what he'd come to do the first time.

To establish his kingdom. To announce his kingship. His messiahship. To announce his actual rule over the world at that time.

That's why many of them were disillusioned when Jesus didn't do that the first time. Because he didn't. Jesus did not establish his earthly kingdom when he came the first time. But he will when he comes the second time.

He will when he returns the second time. And so when we pray, your kingdom come. We are praying for the messianic kingdom to come.

[23 : 04] We are asking the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, to come a second time. Now, he's going to. We're just, actually, we're not asking him to do something he's not going to do anyway.

But we are joining God in this plan of God that was established in eternity past. And so we are actually joining with God's plan.

And so we're praying that Jesus would come. That he would come the second time. And that he would establish his rule and his reign upon this earth. And that he would put down all sin.

And I believe in a literal kingdom. A literal millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe it's taught in scripture. And I've already mentioned the word basileia a moment ago.

This is a word that is used for kingdom. And again, it means to rule, to reign, to have dominion. But I would also have you notice the word come here.

[24 : 06] In these three word phrases. The word come. It's just the ordinary word come. And by the way, in the Greek language, it is just simply the ordinary word used for come.

It's ercomai. And it just means come. But, you know, as is true of all Greek verbs, it changes its form. And it helps us understand a little bit more of the meaning.

And in this case, the form is very important because it is in the imperative. Now, that's interesting.

Because this is a command. It's a well, okay, big deal.

Well, this is part of the prayer. That Jesus is actually telling us that when we pray, we are to command something. It's an imperative.

And I say that very respectfully. That we would command God to do something. But in the strictest sense of the grammar, that's what Jesus is saying. And we're commanding that Jesus would come.

[25 : 10] And then the word order is also important in the Greek. We'll put all this together in just a minute. When the Greek writer put the verb on the front, which is really unusual in English.

But when they would do that, they would do that for emphasis. Emphasize a certain part of the phrase. And so that's what we have here. We have the verb coming first.

Now, it doesn't appear that way in the English. In fact, it comes last, doesn't it, in the phrase. In the Greek, it comes first. And if I were to give you just a literal translation of this phrase, it would go something like this.

Come, kingdom of yours. And we wouldn't write that way, and it seems a little bit confusing. But it's intended to put emphasis upon this word, come.

It is an imperative. It is a command. And it is emphasized right on the front end. Come. And so it literally conveys this idea.

[26 : 15] In prayer, we are saying in prayer, Come now. Come suddenly. Your kingdom come now.

That's how we're to pray. Now, the problem is we're so in love with the world and the things of the world and our life in this world that we're really not real sure if we want Him to come right now.

Right? We have a kind of an attachment, and we have plans, and we, you know, some of the younger ones here want to accomplish things and want to find that boy and get married and find that girl and get married.

And as parents, we have children. We want to see them excel and exceed. And those are all very natural feelings. But we sometimes ought to put a check on us. And that's what this prayer is actually doing for us, to put a check on us to not be so in love with this world that we don't have a desire that Jesus would come right now.

You know, that's what Jesus is saying, how we ought to pray. Come now, Lord Jesus. Come and establish your kingdom. You see, Jesus is not talking about some social gospel where Christians unite together and create a more godly society.

[27 : 36] Jesus is not talking about a gradual or progressive Christianization of this world. Jesus is talking about something quite different.

Jesus is talking about the coming of His kingdom, His millennial kingdom. Revelation 20 talks about that. And so, listen, this is a significant part of our prayer life.

Here is what we are praying for. Jesus, return. Come. Establish your reign on this planet for a thousand years.

Put down all rebellion and all sin. Enforce absolute obedience to a very benevolent, gracious, loving God.

Rule the nation. Revelation 22. Revelation 22.20. The aged apostle John closed his revelation with really what amounts to a testimony from the Lord Jesus Himself.

[28 : 51] It's printed in red in our Bibles. If you have one of those kind of Bibles. This is a testimony from Jesus. And He said, Surely, I am coming quickly.

I am coming quickly. Well, we love to hear that. Surely, I am coming quickly, Jesus said. The meaning being, I am coming suddenly.

At any moment, I will be coming. And how did John respond? That's right. Amen. So be it. Even so, come Lord Jesus, is what He said.

That is exactly what Jesus is saying here in this prayer. In how we are to pray. That's what it means to pray. Your kingdom come.

Are you ready for His kingdom to come? Do you want His kingdom to come? Do you want Jesus to come? Do you want Jesus to rule in your own life?

[29 : 56] As He should. As a born-again believer. If He doesn't, then something's wrong. Do you want Jesus to rule in the hearts of lost sinners around the world?

Who are living in darkness and hopelessness. And under the condemnation of a righteous and holy God. You want His kingdom to come to their lives.

You should. You ought to participate in that. In every possible way that God allows you to. And equips you for it. You want to see His kingdom come?

Really? In this world? You should. Jesus said, pray for that. John said, come now.

Thank you.