

Thy Kingdom Come

Text: Matthew 6:10a

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 Sunday Sermon
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 Holy Light Church (English)
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Sermon Statement

When we pray that “Thy Kingdom come” we are acknowledging that God is in the process of establishing his kingdom here on earth now. The characteristics of this kingdom are:

- Kingdom of God is in the most ordinary of things we do
- Kingdom of God is about love, not religiosity (love)
- Kingdom of God is worth committing your life to (wisdom)
- Kingdom of God is not hoarding but using and giving what you have received from God (caring for others)
- Kingdom of God is at a state of war but God knows who is his own (justice)
- Kingdom of God has eternal consequences
- Kingdom of God starts with small groups from the margins

The Lord’s Prayer (Matt. 6: 9-13)

MT 6:9 "This, then, is how you should pray:

" `Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name,

MT 6:10 your kingdom come,
 your will be done
 on earth as it is in heaven.

MT 6:11 Give us today our daily bread.

MT 6:12 Forgive us our debts,
 as we also have forgiven our debtors.

MT 6:13 And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from the evil one.

My Lord’s Prayer sermon series

- ✚ The Rainbow of Prayer
- ✚ Praying the Jesus Way
- ✚ Approaching: Our Father in Heaven
- ✚ Adoring: Hallowed be thy name
- ✚ Acknowledging: Thy kingdom come
- ✚ Accepting: Thy will be done
- ✚ Asking: Give us this day our daily bread

- ✚ Admitting: And forgive us our trespasses
- ✚ Adhering: The kingdom, and the power, and the glory
- ✚ Structure of the Lord's Prayer
- ✚ Features of the Lord's Prayer
- ✚ The Lord's Prayer in the Church
- ✚ The Lord's Prayer in the Marketplace
- ✚ Lead us not into temptation
- ✚ Deliver us from evil
- ✚ The kingdom, and the power, and the glory
- ✚ Amen

What is the Kingdom of God?

The Lord's Prayer recorded in Mathew is part of what is called the Sermon on the Mount. This is a collection of teachings of Jesus. The audience is Jewish who were familiar with Second Temple rabbinic Judaism. We need to try to understand in context of how their Jews understand what Jesus meant when he mentions the kingdom of God in his prayer.

(a) First Century Jews' understanding

- The King/Messiah overthrowing the Roman empire (ruler)
- The Jewish people taking their rightful place as God's chosen people (community)
- Their sovereignty of the Promised land and ruling over other nations (mission)

(b) Common Christian understanding

“The rule of God in our hearts”

- The Following of the King (discipleship)
- The Making of a People (community)
- The Redemption of created order (mission)

(c) Jesus and the Kingdom of God

- God is at work here and now
- Being ‘loving’ is more important than being right
- Worth sacrificing for
- It’s about giving
- A box of chocolate
- Life matters
- It’s the small stuff

1. God is at work here and now

a. The Parable of the Growing Seed: seed growing secretly (Mark 4:26-29)

MK 4:26 He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. 27 Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. 28 All by itself the soil produces grain--first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. 29 As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come."

A man scatters seeds on the ground at sowing time. Then whether he works or sleep the seeds grew on their own. The man harvests the wheat, thrushes for the grain, grinds it and makes flour. There is enough bread to last his family for another year. Just your ordinary and common everyday work.

b. God is at work in the ordinariness of everyday life.

- i. Make a cup of coffee for breakfast
- ii. Talk to a friend
- iii. Take your children to school
- iv. Pay your taxes
- v. Go to work
- vi. Tidy your house

c. Kingdom of God is in the most ordinary of things we do

2. Being 'loving' is more important than being 'right'

a. Parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

LK 10:30 In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. 32 So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

LK 10:36 "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

LK 10:37 The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

b. Parable of the prodigal son (Matt. 21:28-32)

LK 15:11 Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

LK 15:13 "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. ¹⁴ After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

LK 15:17 "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! ¹⁸ I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' ²⁰ So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

LK 15:21 "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

LK 15:22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

LK 15:25 "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ²⁷ 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

LK 15:28 "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'

LK 15:31 " 'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' "

c. Kingdom of God is about love, not religiosity

Religiosity is religion with rules. It is sometimes called legalism. The most famous rule followers are the Pharisees. They have 613 rules from the Torah they must follow. Jesus reduces these to 2! Many of these rules are man-made, though with good intentions. Its purpose is to help you follow other rules!

Theologian Scot McKnight shares an interesting anecdote from his youth. In his church dancing was forbidden.

"When I was a kid I was taught often that sex was a sin if you weren't married. Which meant that dancing was prohibited. If that ruling about dancing isn't obvious to you, this is how it worked...Dancing to begin with, involved listening to or singing along with music that had words written by godforsaken, hip-slinging singers like Elvis. (And then came the Beatles with their long hair and peculiar peacoats, and then the Beach boys, with their California seductive ways. Then the Ramones...and it all just unraveled with even more vulgar sinners, and you end up with Ricky Martin or lady GaGa.) on top of that, young adults, while listening to such words and dancing will touch a girl or guy and hold them close, and that fired up one's sexual appetite, and the next thing after getting fired up was having sex.

So sex and dancing were the same thing. We were suspicious about this argument because those who were telling us these things didn't even dance. So, how would they even know? It didn't matter, they were adults and they said dancing lead to sex, and before long, we had a ruling, a halakah: "Do not dance." It was as authoritative as the Bible."

(McKnight, (2010), *One.Life: Jesus Calls, We Follow*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 49-50)

3. Worth sacrificing for

a. Parable of the hidden treasure (Matt. 13:44)

MT 13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

b. Parable of the merchant and fine pearls (Matt, 13: 45-46)

MT 13:45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. ⁴⁶ When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

c. Parable of the tower builder (Luke 14:28-30)

LK 14:28 "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? ²⁹ For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, ³⁰ saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'

d. Parable of the warrior king (Luke 14:31-33)

LK 14:31 "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? ³² If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. ³³ In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

e. The Kingdom of God is worth committing your life to

Jesus said in Matt. 16:26

26 What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?

4. It's about giving

a. Parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:13-21)

LK 12:16 And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. ¹⁷ He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

LK 12:18 "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."'

LK 12:20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'

LK 12:21 "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

b. Kingdom of God is not hoarding but using and giving what you have received from God

5. A box of chocolate

a. The Parable of Wheat and Weeds (Tares) Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43

MT 13:24 Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and

sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away.²⁶ When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

MT 13:27 "The owner's servants came to him and said, `Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?'

MT 13:28 " `An enemy did this,' he replied.

"The servants asked him, `Do you want us to go and pull them up?' **MT 13:29** " `No,' he answered, `because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them.³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.' "

b. The church in the world and the world in the church

Two quotes from U2 Bono sums up why some people find it difficult to see the church as the Kingdom of God.

"Even though I'm a believer, I still find it really hard to be around other believers. They make me nervous, they make me twitch. I sorta watch my back."

"Christians are hard to tolerate; I don't know how Jesus does it"

Most of us have problems with the church and our denomination whether we admit it or not. There are personality conflicts, betrayal of confidence, quarrels, fights, boredom and loneliness. Many younger people leave church because they are disgusted with the hypocrisy they find in the church. They join the ranks of 'Churchless' Christians. People who follows Jesus but do not attend church.

Is the local visible church the same as the kingdom of God?

Jesus explains his parable (Matt. 13: 36-43)

MT 13:36 Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field."

MT 13:37 He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man.³⁸ The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one,³⁹ and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

MT 13:40 "As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age.⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil.⁴² They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

c. Kingdom of God is at a state of war but God knows who is his own

The movie Forrest Gump portrays a mentally retarded man with polio. His only string point is that he is able to run fast. Actor Tom Hanks portrays Forrest Gump well. There are many memorable quotes from the movie. One of my favourite is

“Life is like a box of chocolates... you never know what you're gonna get”.

6. Life matters (there are ultimate consequences to what we do)

a. Parable of the sower (Mark 4: 2-20)

² He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: ³ "Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴ As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵ Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶ But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times."

MK 4:9 Then Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

MK 4:10 When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. ¹¹ He told them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables ¹² so that,

"`they may be ever seeing but never perceiving,
and ever hearing but never understanding;
otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!' "

MK 4:13 Then Jesus said to them, "Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? ¹⁴ The farmer sows the word. ¹⁵ Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. ¹⁶ Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. ¹⁷ But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. ¹⁸ Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; ¹⁹ but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. ²⁰ Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop--thirty, sixty or even a hundred times what was sown."

b. Parable of the net (Matt. 13:47-50)

MT 13:47 "Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. ⁴⁸ When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. ⁴⁹ This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

- c. Remember my little monk story about Iron Wok Tong? The story is about a successful chef which discovers **what really matters**.

d. Kingdom of God has eternal consequences

7. It's the small stuff

a. The Parable of the Mustard Seed (Mark 4: 30-32)

MK 4:30 Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? ³¹ It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. ³² Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade."

- b. **Don't sweat the small stuff**...and it's all small stuff by Richard Carlson (1997). Omnibus: Don't Sweat the Small Stuff/ Don't Sweat the Small Stuff at Work/Don't Sweat the Small Stuff with Money.

c. Kingdom of God starts with small groups from the margins

- i. Jesus started with a marginalized Roman colony at the margin of the Rome empire with a marginalized group of people
- ii. He did not start at the seat of power in Rome
- iii. Most revivals start from the margin of Christianity
 - 1. Moravian Revival (1727)
 - 2. Great Awakening in America (18th Century)
 - 3. Welsh Revival (1904)
 - 4. Azusa Street Revival (1906)
 - 5. Korean Revival (1907)
 - 6. Sijil Sidang Borneo (SIB) Revival

Starts with ordinary people who are not satisfied with the status quo of the church and get together to pray and study the word of God.

“Thy Kingdom come”

When we are praying that “Thy Kingdom come” we are acknowledging that God is establishing his kingdom here and now on earth. This kingdom involves:

Kingdom of God is in the most ordinary of things we do (living)
Kingdom of God is about love, not religiosity (love)
Kingdom of God is worth committing your life to (wisdom)
Kingdom of God is not hoarding but using and giving what you have received from God (caring for others)
Kingdom of God is at a state of war but God knows who is his own (justice)
Kingdom of God has eternal consequences (eternity)
Kingdom of God starts with small groups from the margins (mission)

addendum

Scot McKnight states that

Kingdom is an interconnected society;
Kingdom is a society noted by caring for others;
Kingdom is a society shaped by justice;
Kingdom is a society empowered by love;
Kingdom is a society dwelling in peace;
Kingdom is a society flowing with wisdom;
Kingdom is a society that knows its history;
Kingdom is a society living out its memory;
Kingdom is a society that values society;
Kingdom is a society that cares about its future.

(McKnight, (2010), *One.Life: Jesus Calls, We Follow*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 34)