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**“YOUR KINGDOM COME”**  
**Matthew 6:10**

□ Matthew 6:10 ~ **“Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”**

Jesus taught these words nearly 2,000 years ago. Since then (as before), humanity has been plagued by immorality, greed, false religion, poverty, oppression, violence, genocide, disease, and natural disasters.

❖ Has the Father’s plan failed? Was the Son’s ministry for naught? Has the Spirit’s work been in vain? What does it mean to pray, **“Your kingdom come”**?

★ First things first. What does Jesus mean by **“your kingdom”**? The Kingdom of God is the reign (the kingship, the authority and power, the sovereignty) of God actualized (made real) in the attitudes, thoughts, beliefs, words, deeds and relationships of his people.

**“Your reign be actualized”** doesn’t exactly roll off the tongue, but that *is* what **“Your kingdom come”** means. Why do we keep praying these words when the godless continue to prosper, the innocent still suffer, and 100,000 men, women and children can die in an instant?

❖ Could this be a tempest in a teapot? Wasn’t the kingdom a mere side-line for Jesus? Forgiveness and salvation: *that’s* what He was all about, right?

♥ Those are of epic significance. Still, the Lord set them in the context of the kingdom. He used the titles **“kingdom of God/heaven”** in 63 *separate* sayings in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. With parallel references,

the figure jumps to 87. Jesus’ teachings *proclaimed* God’s kingdom, his miracles *proved* it, his relationships *exemplified* it, and his death, resurrection, and ascension *empowered* it. The kingdom was the heart of Christ’s mission and message!

This does not resolve the apparent disparity between his prayer and human experience. What’s the point of **“Your kingdom come”** in a world of tyrants, terrorists and terminal illness?

☼ On the surface, the answer could hardly be simpler. When we pray **“Your kingdom come”**:

① We are asking that God’s **“will be done, on earth as it is in heaven”** – but that frequently seems *not* to happen, does it? And,

② We are agreeing to cooperate with **“Our Father in heaven”** as He answers our request – but isn’t it sometimes tricky to perceive and obey his will?

By God’s grace, I have created a framework within which we can begin to discern and apply this truth.

☼ 1<sup>st</sup>, **“Your kingdom come”** is both a personal and communal petition.

Jesus says {Rev 3:20} **“Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me.”** The kingdom is personal.

It is also communal. What does Christ do as He comes preaching the good news of the kingdom? Does He mail invitations for people to consider in the privacy

of their homes, or build a huge auditorium where the masses come and go in faceless anonymity? No! He publicly gathers a group of mutually accountable disciples and says {Lk 17:21} **“the kingdom of God is in your midst.”**

⚙️ **“Your kingdom come”** is an appeal to God to exercise total authority and power over individuals *and* the world; it is also a commitment to bridge the yawning chasm between anticipation and existence.

🌀 2<sup>nd</sup>, **“Your kingdom come”** is both a spiritual and ethical petition.

For those who are in Christ there are no borders dividing faith from works or spirituality from reality. Not only is God sovereign in our faith, doctrine and church conduct, his kingship extends to the bedroom, the family room, the classroom, the workplace, the playground, the marketplace, the public square, and the voting booth.

To put it another way, the kingdom takes form equally in our vertical relationship with the Father, Son and Spirit, and in horizontal relationships with individuals, groups, institutions, and the world.

❖ Our temptation is to fixate either on the spiritual or the ethical. How can we find equilibrium, avoiding privatism and disengagement on the spiritual side, and worldliness and secularism on the ethical end?

🔑 The great commandments are the key: Jesus said, **“Love the Lord your God with all your heart... soul and...mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”** (Matthew 22:37-39).

★ Keep in mind that kingdom love is not primarily emotional. It is the decision to secure the best interests of others in thought, word and deed.

In relation to God love is reverence, trust, obedience, and service. When we love him the spiritual aspects of God’s reign are made real in and among us.

In relation to others love is compassion, humility, and help. When we love lovable and unlovable, acquaintance and stranger, friend and foe alike the ethical aspects of God’s reign are made real in and among us.

Spiritual love for God and ethical love for people are indivisible. **“If we say that we love God yet hate a brother or sister, we are liars...Those who love God must also love one another....In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands”** (1 John 4:20, 21; 5:3). John speaks here of our love for other disciples, but the principle applies with equal force to strangers and even enemies.

☹️ Of course, it is one thing to talk about love and another to do it. We are all victims and perpetrators of indifference and hatred. We demand that God love us even as we withhold reverence, trust, obedience, and service from him. We assume that others should love us, yet our thoughts, words and actions toward them are regularly anything but compassionate, humble, and helpful.

😊 But there is good news! Though our faults are deep-rooted and we frequently fail to love, God is not hasty to banish us from the kingdom. God forgives for the asking.

☼ **“Your kingdom come”** is an appeal to God to bring all into submission to him; it is also a commitment to help narrow the chasm between anticipation and existence as we obey God’s will in all matters of faith, relationship, sexuality, work, recreation, economics, politics, and culture.

☼ 3<sup>rd</sup>, in regard to fulfillment, **“Your kingdom come”** is both a present and a future petition.

In Luke 11:20 Jesus announces, **“If I drive out demons by the finger of God”** (and He already has) **“then the kingdom of God has come upon you.”**

The kingdom is *now*. Christ has defeated Satan, proclaimed good news to the poor, brought outcasts into the faith, healed the sick, raised the dead, inaugurated a new covenant, and sent the Holy Spirit.

Alternately, Jesus’ words in Matthew 7:21-23 that **“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven”** refer to the future, for He continues **“Many will say to me *on that day*...”**

The kingdom is *not yet*. Mortal flesh is still in {Rom 8:21} **“bondage to decay.”** The kingdom of the world continues to spit in God’s face. Even now Satan {1 Pe 5:8} **“prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”**

When we say **“Your kingdom come”** we celebrate God’s reign among his people. We also lament that many rebel against God’s sovereignty.

☞ We can be steadfast subjects of the kingdom in the tension of now and not yet by fully embracing the complementary virtues of faith and hope.

★ Faith (to paraphrase Hebrews 11:1 { NLT }) **“is the confident assurance that what we hope for is [beginning] to happen. It is the evidence of things we can’t yet see.”** It is the trust of the farmer who **“scatters seed”** and is persuaded that **“the seed [will sprout] and [grow], though he does not know how.”** And, sure enough, **“the soil produces grain”** (Mark 4:26-29).

☑ These {Yoder, p 129} **“‘hoped-for’ and ‘unseen’ realities are not some otherwise unknown truth...or prediction but the concrete vindication of obedience.”** **“‘Faith’ is obeying when it is not ‘visible’ [not evident] that [trust in God] ‘pays’ or ‘works.’”**

☞ Faith opens our eyes to see the kingdom here and now. We are certain that it is alive and well, for Jesus {Col 2:15} **“disarmed the powers and authorities”** of the world by **“triumphing over them by cross.”**

★ Hope is our {Ro 8:19, 23} **“eager expectation”** as **“we wait...for our adoption, the redemption of our bodies,”** when {Ro 8:21} **“creation itself will be brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.”**

This has not yet happened. {Ro 8:24} **“Who hopes for what they already have?”** But our hope is not wishful thinking. Far from it, it is based on Jesus’ resurrection and ascension. He who {1 Co 15:20, 24-25 NLT/NIV} **“has been raised from the dead...must reign until he humbles all his enemies beneath his**

feet.” **“Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to... the Father.”**

☞ Hope strengthens us to wait though the kingdom is slow in coming. {1 Jn 3:3} For **“all who have this hope in him purify themselves.”**

⚙ **“Your kingdom come”** is our appeal to the Father to eliminate the chasm between anticipation and existence by sending his Son to consummate the kingdom, and to fill us with faith and hope till then. It is also our verbal commitment (as individuals and as groups) to act in faith and hope.

We are plagued by innumerable evils, human and natural. The godless prosper, the innocent suffer, and thousands die in an instant. It is a world of tyrants, terrorists and terminal illness.

Knowing what we do about Matthew 6:10 this is grounds to pray more often (not less often), with greater earnestness (not with less)!

**“Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”** This is the word of the Lord.