

The Model Prayer – Thy Kingdom Come¹
Spilman Memorial Baptist Church, Kinston NC
Dr. H. Powell Dew, Jr.

June 20, 2021

Text: Luke 4:16-21

Purpose: Jesus has given us a model prayer by which our prayer and thought life can be formed. After we have acknowledged God as Father, revered His Holy Name, we can petition God's Kingdom to come. It comes to us as we yield our lives and our obedience to what He teaches us in His word.

A mother had been teaching her three-year old daughter the Lord's Prayer. For several evenings at bedtime, she would repeat the lines from the prayer. Finally, the little girl decided to go solo. The mother listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word, right up to the end of the prayer: *"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us some E-mail. Amen."*

And one particular four-year old prayed, *"And forgive us our trash baskets as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets."*

A little boy was overheard praying:
"Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am."

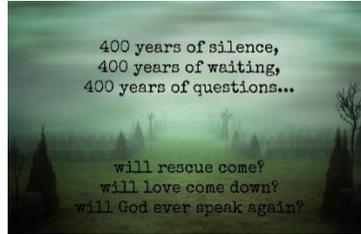


¹ Outline from God's Psychiatry by Charles L. Allen

A Sunday school teacher asked her children, as they were on the way to the church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."

This last one is out of the mouth of a 3-year-old boy named Reese: "Our father, who does art in heaven, Howard is his name...."

Over the past few weeks, we have been examining the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples. The disciples saw the power of God resting on Jesus and in some ways; they stood at a distance from Jesus in awe of what He said, what He did, and how Jesus' agenda was completely different from anything they had ever seen.



For 400 years the voice of the Lord was silent in Israel. At the conclusion of Malachi, (the last book in the Old Testament) there was no voice calling for the people to repent and seek the Lord. Then one day, John the Baptist came upon the scene and was preaching repentance, baptizing individuals, and had the nerve to say the ruling religious leaders, the Pharisees and Sadducees, were a nest of vipers. John was saying He was not the hoped for Messiah, but there was one coming behind him that would be.

Jesus, at the age of thirty, put down His carpenter's mallet, set aside his handsaw, closed up the box of nails, swept out the shop, and closed the door for the last time. The fullness of time had come for Jesus to begin His appointed ministry. Jesus came, as was His custom, to the synagogue and He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah and began to

read, starting at chapter 61. This public announcement of Jesus' ministry came after His baptism by John the Baptist in the Jordan River and after His forty days of temptation by Satan in the wilderness near Jericho.



Jesus read this to the congregation gathered there that day:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

Jesus was essentially saying, "My time has come to announce the entrance of the Kingdom of God."

If you were to turn to Isaiah 61:2, and compare that verse of scripture with what Jesus read, you will see Jesus stopped in the middle of verse 2 and did not complete that verse. The second half of verse 2 says, "And the day of vengeance of our God." You see, Jesus did not come at this time to bring vengeance upon the nation of Israel. Jesus came announcing the Kingdom of God is here!

Jesus was anointed to do what? Preach to the poor. Heal the brokenhearted. Proclaim liberty to those caught up in the clutches of sin. Help the spiritually blind see. And proclaim the year of the Lord. Jesus did not come this first time to sit as judge over people. He even said that to someone that wanted Jesus to mediate a family inheritance

issue. Jesus came as the Holy Son of God, to an appointed task of yielding His life upon Calvary for the sins of all mankind. That is what He was born to do.

To prove Jesus was who He said He was, the gospels record Jesus healing all the sick that came to Him. (Luke 4:40) He cast out demons (Luke 4:41). When some wanted Him to stay in their town, Jesus said, *“I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.”* (Luke 4:43)



He came announcing a Kingdom. This word Kingdom is offensive to many democratically minded individuals. Here in America we would not stand for a King, we insist on governing ourselves. The religion of some in America is democracy and we seek to implement that form of government all across the world. We reject the idea of a king, a dictator, or totalitarian forms of government. Some individuals are so self-guided that they even have dethroned God and made themselves the King or Queen of their own universe.

But God is still in control and is still ruler over all of His creation. God has set forth principles that all of us operate under. This earth is still the Lord's and His precepts are law. Scientists can see the precision of the order of creation. The stars are fixed in their orbits. The sun and moon move as planned by God. Gravity still keeps us attached to planet earth. The laws of physics remain true year in and year out. God has established His rule and law over His creation.



Mankind can make laws and change them time and time again. But God's word never fails. God's promises never fail. Ezekiel 18:4 reminds us that *“The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”* This is an echo of the promise God gave to Adam in the Garden of Eden if they ever ate from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. The day in which you eat of that you shall surely die.



Man's days are few upon this earth, and then we die. God is eternal and only those connected with God will live eternally in His presence. Those who reject God and His Son Jesus Christ will live eternally away from His presence. Failure to come to God as *“Our Father which art in Heaven”* and taking time to set our hearts right before our creator *“Hallowed Be Thy Name”* will only result in our own destruction.

Foolish men and women reject God's rule and law and it only works to their destruction. Will people ever come to their senses? Will we respond to the law of God and surrender ourselves and be obedient to its teaching? There are many that when the word of God is announced or proclaimed, they turn their hearts away from God and reject God's sovereignty over their life. Sadly, many say *“NO.”*

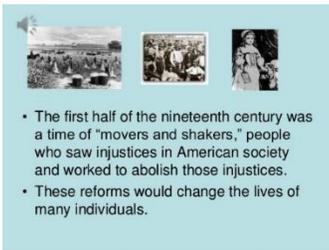
God often gives us a window of opportunity to respond to the gospel. We do not need to harden our hearts against the pull and tug of God's Holy Spirit. I cannot save you, only God can. I am only a messenger. We do not need to disregard God speaking to our heart. Tomorrow may never come. Tomorrow, circumstances in life may change and

you may never get another opportunity to say “YES” to God.



I have seen some individuals that it seems as if God has taken His protective hand off them as Romans 1:24 says: *“Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves.”* God can back up and let you have your fill of sin. I never want to be in a place in my life where God has given me up in that manner. Today, if you have never accepted Christ as your Savior, today the Kingdom of God is at hand.

Jesus spoke of this kingdom time and time again. A kingdom where God is the acknowledged King of Kings and Lord of Lords. A kingdom where God’s word is obeyed and followed in every area of life. A kingdom where a lion and lamb can lay down together. As we look at our current world today, we see the Kingdom of God has not materialized.



There was a strong movement in the early part of the 19th century where Christians believed if we could only get our laws right here on earth then surely God would come to earth and establish His Kingdom. In attempts to do that Christians began to attack issues like poverty by creating a welfare system. They began to address issues of illness by creating a Medicare and Medicaid health system. They began to address illiteracy by funding public education. They sought to eliminate alcoholism by passing laws to eliminate the sale of alcohol – the period known as

prohibition. Laws were made to protect worker safety, food safety, and minimum wage. Looking back on history, I agree all of these were necessary changes.

The Christian community worked hard and then they were knocked back by the atrocities experienced in WWI and WWII, they began to see that maybe God’s kingdom won’t be established here on earth in the way they anticipated. But still embedded in the greatest Model prayer ever given, the phrase “Thy Kingdom Come” is still there.



Are we really ready for the Kingdom of God? It is so much easier to pray for the “starving children in Africa” than it is to go across town and give a bag of groceries to a hungry child here. It is so much easier to vote on a mission’s budget and send our finances to the four corners of the earth than to get our hands dirty with the physical and financial needs of people around us. It is so much easier to pray for world peace than it is for us to forgive someone that wronged us.



Before we can take God’s kingdom message out to the world, we must first bow our knee and dedicate ourselves to God. There is a hymn by the name, “Give of your Best to the Master.” The second verse goes like this:

Give of your best to the Master,
give Him first place in your heart;
Give Him first place in your service,
consecrate every part.

Give, and to you shall be given,
God His beloved Son gave;
Gratefully seeking to serve Him,
give Him the best that you have.

Chorus:

Give of your best to the Master,
give of the strength of your youth;
Clad in salvation's full armor,
join in the battle for truth.

God is calling us to give our best to Him, not our leftovers. Our best is our life and our obedience.

I heard a story of a man that had heard the gospel most of his life.

Even though he had heard the gospel message, he never once responded to the invitation to receive Christ as his personal Savior. When he was getting older and less able to do the things he wanted, his heart was finally touched and he said "yes" to the gospel message, repented of his sins, and followed that decision by being baptized.

In tears he told the pastor that he now realizes he had saved the leftovers for God – his remaining years – and would seek to serve the Lord with what he had left. The tears came about because now he realizes how much more he could have given if he dedicated his life to God at an earlier age instead of selfishly squandering his years on his own pleasures and entertainment.



“Give of your best to the Master,
give of the strength of your youth,
Clad in salvation's full armor,
join in the battle for truth.

We are given the Model prayer that says, “Thy Kingdom Come.”

Are we ready for the kingdom of God to come to us now? If we give ourselves to God now, we receive the kingdom of God – the presence of the Holy Spirit. When we receive Christ as our Savior, we get the gift of the Spirit of God in us. Then we will have the power of God in

us to be able to overcome the temptations of sin. *“Greater is He that is in us, than He that is in the world.”* Thy Kingdom come is an invitation for God to come into our lives and lead and guide us.

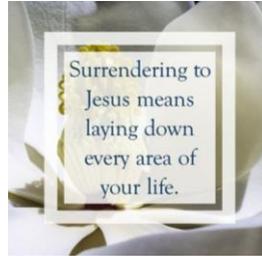


In Matthew 13 Jesus compares the kingdom of God to a man that went and sowed some seed. We looked at this parable in our June 9th Sunday school lesson. In that same chapter, Jesus goes on to compare the Kingdom of God to four other parables. It is compared to a mustard seed that is small that grows mightily, it is compared to leaven that starts out as a small lump, but later leavens the entire loaf, it is compared to wheat and tares – the righteous and unrighteous growing up together.

The Kingdom of God is compared to a man who finds a treasure hidden in a field and sells everything to go and purchase that field. It is compared to a merchant that finds

a pearl of great price and sells all he has to purchase that most valuable pearl.

Is Jesus Christ a prize worth giving up everything else to come and follow? Are you willing to yield your plans to obtain a better plan ordained and ordered by God? Are you willing to surrender everything in order to possess God?



The story is told of a man that had a dream that Jesus was coming to see him. So he hurried and scurried around the house to make it presentable. Do you ever do that when company is coming? The story continues that Jesus came and the man invited Jesus sit there in the living room. Jesus got up and headed towards the kitchen and looked in the refrigerator. The man was a little agitated that Jesus wanted to explore in the kitchen, but there wasn't too much wrong there. Jesus continued to move through the house and the man got more and more uncomfortable.

Jesus sensed the man's reluctance to open his entire home to Jesus. Jesus said that when you invited me into your home and life, you agreed to surrender your will to my will. You agreed that I was Lord and Master of your life. The man agreed but knew there was one area which he had hidden and didn't want to surrender to Jesus. Jesus walked back to the bedroom and pulled out a small case that was locked. Jesus asked for the key and the man refused to surrender that one thing. The man said Jesus could have the living room, the kitchen, the other areas of the home, but not this one. Jesus looked at him and said, "If I am not Lord of all, then I am not Lord at all."

It is so easy to talk about the evils of this world – corrupt government, the evils of gambling, filthy magazines and literature, inappropriate television programs, or drug dealers across town. Before I can pray, "Thy Kingdome Come" I need to allow it to first be made in me.



Jonathan Edwards, the fiery preacher from the 18th century once said, "I go out to preach with two propositions in mind. First, every person ought to give his life to Christ. Second, whether or not anyone else gives Him his life, I will give Him mine."

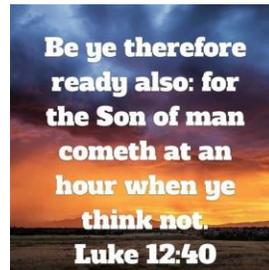
The apostle Paul wrote, *"Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."* (Ephesians 4:31-32)

As we yield our lives to Christ, the Kingdom of God is formed in us. As we become imitators of Christ, we no longer walk in the flesh, we walk in the Spirit. This is what it means to be Christlike – tenderhearted, loving, forgiving, obedient.

Unrighteous people (either outright sinners or pretend Christians) are not very good models for the watching world. We are called to live to a higher calling – the upward calling of Christ Jesus.

With our feet firmly planted on earth, our heart and mind should be on heavenly things. I don't believe we can make our world perfect. We should strive to be the Salt and Light to our community. I don't believe God is waiting for us to get it right here on this earth so He can come and join us. I believe, one day, He will come and take His bride, the church, to be with Him. And there we will live in a land that is perfect, surrounded by forgiven Saints of God – Praising God who had redeemed us with the precious blood of His Son Jesus Christ.

Can you honestly pray, “Thy Kingdom Come”? Most don't want to have anything to do with God coming. They know they will only face the wrath and vengeance of God. Only prepared people can pray, and want to pray, “Thy Kingdom Come.”



May we all be ready!

LET US PRAY