

July 13, 2008

**THE LORD'S PRAYER:
THY KINGDOM COME, THY WILL BE DONE
MATTHEW 6.10**

When we pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven," we are submitting to God's righteous reign ourselves and praying that his reign will be realized on the earth. Let's learn a little bit more about what this looks like.

1. THY KINGDOM

The Kingdom: Is the kingdom heaven itself? Place of God's throne and central to it, but not exhaustive of the kingdom.

The kingdom is associated with geography and structures but not confined to one particular place. It transcends particular geographical boundaries and cultural structures, yet it affects all of them.

The kingdom of God is an *order of things*. Leithart, *The Kingdom and the Power*, "The kingdom of God ... [is] the new world order that Christ established in His life, death, resurrection, and ascension, a new order of things that will be fully revealed and established only at Christ's return."

Calvin: God "is said to *reign* among men, when they voluntarily devote and submit themselves to be governed by him, placing their flesh under the yoke, and renouncing their desires. Such is the corruption of the nature, that all our affections are so many soldiers of Satan, who oppose the justice of God, and consequently obstruct or disturb his *reign*. By this prayer we ask, that he may remove all hinderances [*sic*], and may bring all men under his dominion, and may lead them to meditate on the heavenly life."

God's kingdom involves God's world being ordered in the way that he intended it. This will involve, among other things, God's faithful people ruling the world. We will know that the kingdom has come in the way Jesus is speaking when God sets things right, delivers his people from their enemies, and sets us up as rulers in the earth.

God all in all: Cf. 1 Cor 15.28; time comes after Jesus has completed kingdom work and delivers kingdom over to the Father.

From the beginning: 2nd day of creation—separation of the heavens and earth (waters above and below) by a firmament. Doesn't render the evaluation, "And God saw that it was good." (cf. ultimately Gen 1.31). Good but not complete.

Heaven (God's throne-room) is created mature. Earth is created immature and needs developing by the image of the Creator. When man (the image) completes the maturity of the creation, the two will become united. (Cf. Ps 115.16)

Clues in Scripture: 1 Cor 15.20-28 (kingdom development and then delivered to the Father so that God may be all in all.) Rev 21 (New Jerusalem comes out of heaven to be united with the earth.)

Tell tale sign: The incarnation of Christ, the heavenly man. (Cf. Jn 3.13; 6.41 *et al.*) Unites heaven and earth in himself.

God's intention was always to unite heaven and earth in this type of relationship. Sin added another obstacle to overcome, but the separation of heaven and earth was something that was created by God in the beginning and was to be his S/son's project in order to grow up and be like his Father in heaven.

2. THY KINGDOM COME

How does the kingdom relate to past, present, and future? Totally future? Inaugurated by Christ but "put on hold?" Kingdom is an invisible reality that is not reflected in cultural situations?

The Kingdom established: Did Jesus establish the kingdom—this new order of things—at his first coming? "Yes." Cf. Mt. 4.17, kingdom has drawn near; Mt. 12.28, Jesus casts out demons by the finger of God indicating kingdom has come; Mt 28.18, all authority in heaven and on earth is given to Jesus, the faithful Son; Acts 2, Peter preaches that Jesus has been exalted to rule at the right hand of the Father until his enemies are made his footstool, fulfilling Psa 110.1 (cf. also Heb 2.12-13).

Important questions: "Was Jesus declared to be the Lord of the world at his resurrection? Did he defeat Satan in fulfillment of Gen 3.15?" Cf. above and Phil 2.9-11. He is Lord. Col 2.15: he defeated the principalities and powers through the cross.

The Kingdom growing: Why are things the way that they are? Follows God's original intention: development. Having dealt with

the problem of sin, creation has been put on the proper track to head to its final destiny.

Cf. Mt 13: Kingdom is like a mustard seed: tiny but grows into a great tree (13.31-32); Kingdom is like leaven hidden in three measures of flour: leavens all the flour (13.33).

The kingdom begins small and imperceptible. It grows and permeates things in inconspicuous ways at time. But it does grow and it does permeate over time.

Growth continues until all enemies are put under Christ's feet. Ordering the world properly involves dealing with those who oppose. Jesus, at the present, is going about putting all enemies under his feet. Cf. 1 Cor 15.25, "For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet." (also Heb 10.12-13) Last enemy = death (1Cor 15.26); defeated at our resurrection.

This defeating of Christ's enemies comes through the proclamation of the gospel of the kingdom and discipling of the nations; our commission given by him who has all authority in heaven and on earth (Mt. 28.18-20).

The Kingdom Coming: Waiting for the consummated kingdom; i.e., when God will be all in all.

"Again as the *kingdom* of God is continually growing and advancing to the end of the world, we must pray every day that it *may come*: for to whatever extent iniquity abounds in the world, to such an extent *the kingdom of God*, which brings along with it perfect righteousness, is not yet *come*." (Calvin)

3. THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IN HEAVEN

Praying for an earthy kingdom: The prayer of God's people is not about *escape* from the earth, but about the *conformity* of the earth to God's will.

The incarnation and resurrection of the Son: goodness of creation affirmed; needed transformation, but went through great pains (literally!) to redeem it.

Praying for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven can, in no way, be disembodied. That is, we cannot make this about an invisible world; whether that is the world of thought/ideas or some other place that we cannot see.

Following the pattern: Heaven provides the template (so to speak) of how things are to be order on the earth. The earth is to be maturing into a heaven-like city.

What goes on in heaven? Look back at Tabernacle. It is patterned after a heavenly model; cf. Ex 25.40; Heb 8.4-5

Fundamentally the Tabernacle's presence was a call for the people to worship or draw near to God. Cf. Rev 4-5; emphasizes that there are people from every tongue, tribe, and nation gathered around the throne.

If and when the will of God is done on earth as it is in heaven, the fundamental meaning of this will be that the earth will be one big house for God in which people from every, tongue, tribe and nation will be worshipping him.

Worshiper = one who presents his total person as a living sacrifice to God; not just goes through rituals. Ready to do God's will like the angels in heaven (Ps 103.20).

Will this petition be answered?: "Will the Great Commission be successful?"

This is Jesus' own prayer. We pray it with him and he prays it with us. Jesus is asking for the submission of the tongues, tribes, and nations of the earth. Will he get them? Ps 2.8, "Ask of Me, and I will give *You* The nations *for* Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth *for* Your possession." Cf. also Psa 110

How do we live out this petition, putting feet to our prayer?:

1. *To pray this prayer is to sign on for the kingdom work.*
2. *Our kingdom work is not accomplished through worldly weapons.*
3. *Pray and work with faith-filled hope that this petition will certainly be answered.*