

Teach Us to Pray: His Kingdom, Our Needs

Matthew 6:10-11

Bethany Assembly of God

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Central Proposition: You should pray for God's concerns, then your concerns.

Introduction

Last week, we began a mini-series about prayer, using the Lord's Prayer that Jesus taught His disciples as our model. We saw that prayer is intimate and ultimate, that is, we start our prayers with the intimacy of calling God "Father," but we seek the honor of His name above our own needs. Today, we're going to continue with the next two requests: His Kingdom, Our Needs.

1. You can seek His Kingdom first.

John the Baptist came saying, "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand." Jesus' message was largely the same and He taught His disciples to proclaim "the Kingdom of God has come near to you." And that message didn't change after Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension; the message was still the good news of the Kingdom of God. So, what does it mean then to pray, "your Kingdom come"? It expresses the all-encompassing nature of God's Kingdom that we've been talking about. Currently, we live in the middle of another kind of kingdom. It is a kingdom that isn't limited to a particular location or nation. Instead, it is a kingdom that is ruled by sin and Satan. So when we pray, "Your kingdom come" we are asking God to supplant the way things are currently. When we pray, "Your Kingdom Come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven," we're praying for the application of God's Kingdom to our world. We know this will happen in the future, and so, this prayer sets our eyes on the day of Christ's return when He will reign forever and ever. But, we also know that God's Kingdom is present and that we're in it, so we can't ignore the present. When we pray this for our world, we're asking God to reveal Himself through us, through the church, and through whatever means He will so that people can come and submit to Him.

2. You can depend on God.

The Lord's prayer begins with requests for God's concerns, but we shouldn't think that our Father is unconcerned with us. We can pray and trust His provision for all kinds of things like resources, direction, health, courage... In first century Palestine, where Jesus taught this prayer, there were a great many poor people. By teaching the people to pray for daily bread, Jesus met these people right where they were at. What if everyday you had enough to eat but nothing in the cupboards for tomorrow and every night you had to go to sleep trusting that God would provide because if He didn't, you might not survive? I believe that this is the essence of this prayer for us. While you may have plenty to eat and feel like you have nothing to worry about, you should still depend on God in prayer. You should come to Him with your needs and seek His help. But we should always remember that He is God and has not forgotten our needs. We should depend on Him when we have plenty and when we are in need.

Conclusion

When we pray, we bring our need and God's greatness together and trust that He will help us, and He does. When we pray, we do not presume to give God advice or manipulate Him to do what we want. Instead, we come to the great King who holds all things in His hands and we seek His Kingdom knowing that He will do what is right and will provide for and strengthen us. The best evidence for this is Jesus.