



## **Matthew 6:10**

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

### **Reflection**

Matthew began his gospel in Chapter 1 with the genealogy of Jesus, his family tree, verse after verse building to the inescapable climax that the king is here. In fulfillment of all those Old Testament promises God's anointed king, the son of David, the

rightful king of the Jews has finally come to reign on the throne of David for ever. But as Matthew's account of Jesus began to unfold we saw that God's anointed king hadn't come to do battle with the Romans. Jesus hadn't come to take the fight up to King Herod or Caesar. Jesus' sights were set on a far greater victory. He'd come to set the world right again. He'd come to deliver the world from the dominion of Satan, sin and death. Jesus had come to do battle with the real king of this world, the 'god' of this age who sits on the throne of the world. And so the prince of peace, Jesus, went out into the wilderness to do battle with the prince of the world, Satan, in their first skirmish in Matthew chapter 3. And as we'll see throughout the rest of the gospel Satan will throw everything at Jesus because if Jesus makes it to the

cross then Satan is doomed forever.

You see, the prince of peace, Jesus, came into this world to make peace between God and humankind, and peace between humankind and each other. The cause of our rift with God and each other is Satan, sin and death. So Jesus came to defeat Satan, sin and death forever by his work on the cross. In Jesus, God's king has arrived and his kingdom has dawned. On the cross Jesus triumphed and Satan, sin and death were defeated forever but until the Second Coming of Jesus, when his kingdom is fully and finally here we live in in-between times. We live in the overlap of the kingdom of God and the kingdom of this world. Satan's defeated but our world is still his domain until Jesus returns. And so most of Jesus' teaching in the gospel of

Matthew is targeted at helping Christians understand what it is to be members of the kingdom of God in these in-between times.

We've seen this in the beatitudes, how radically different the values of the kingdom of God are to the values of the kingdom of this world. In fact, the whole Sermon of the Mount finds its theme in the kingdom of God – it's all about Christian counter-culture, who Christians are as members of the kingdom of God, and what it looks like to stand out as salt and light amidst the darkness and decay of our fallen world.

So it's no wonder that many find the Lord's Prayer, here at the heart of the Sermon on the Mount, to be entirely focussed on the kingdom of God. They find in the Lord's

Prayer, a prayer for the kingdom of God to become fully present on earth. I find it hard to disagree.

The coming of the kingdom of God will be fully and finally realised in the Second Coming of Jesus which is the goal and deepest desire of the Christian faith. Jesus has started his model for prayer by reminding us of the intimacy we now have with the Father. This came about when the kingdom of God dawned in this world through his person and his work on the cross. Next Jesus teaches us to pray with longing for God's name to hallowed throughout all the earth which will only come about when the kingdom of God is fully and finally here. This of course leads us to pray the second and third petitions of the Lord's Prayer which we find in to-

day's passage. We'll now deal with each of these in turn.

The second petition is,

'your kingdom come' – which expresses a longing for the second coming of Jesus. The kingdom of God is the rule and reign of Christ. Right now Christ is ruling and reigning but his rule will only be finally realised at the climax of the ages when Jesus comes again to judge the living and the dead. On that day God's righteous judgement will fully and finally prevail, and God's kingdom will be fully inaugurated. A new age will begin. There'll be new heavens and a new earth where God and his people will finally live in perfect peace and harmony with each other and with all of creation forever. When we pray

‘your kingdom come’ this is what we are praying for.

The third petition is a natural expansion of the second, as the kingdom of God triumphs over the kingdom of this world, as God’s kingdom increasingly becomes a reality on earth, his will is increasingly followed. It starts in our hearts. As we give ourselves over to the work of the Holy Spirit we are transformed into members of the kingdom of God who increasingly resemble its founder, Jesus. As we then share our faith and live out our righteousness in the world, progressively the effects of the kingdom take hold, and God’s kingdom advances. People are converted, our society and our earth progressively healed as God’s will is increasingly done, and one day soon, when the work of the

kingdom is completed and the last Christian comes to faith, Jesus will return. But in praying for God's will to be done, we must acknowledge that his will will never be fully and finally done on earth until his kingdom comes. On that great and glorious day heaven and earth will be as one in that God's gracious rule and reign will take place in this world exactly as they currently do in his throne room in heaven.

## **Think**

It's hard to step down out of this glorious vision back into the reality of the day to day. But Jesus would have us think about and long for this vision every day, which is why he has shaped the Lord's Prayer as he has done, and in particular included our verse today. So please take a moment

now to meditate over this verse. Do you long for it with all your heart? Do you long for our world transformed, for everything set right again, for Christ's work to be fully and finally realised and God honoured equally in heaven and on earth? Or are there other longings in your life that crowd out your longing for the kingdom of God? If so, how has this come about? Is it shortsightedness or the urgent distractions of the day to day? Or has some area of sin clouded your judgement, or momentarily meant that you've taken your eyes off the precious prize and destination of the Christian faith? For me I think it's a mix of these things. I need to be constantly reminded, to constantly reset my vision on things above. Perhaps that's why Jesus offers us this model for prayer.

# Pray

So again today, let's test out this model. Takes some time now to pray:

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

Do you know this is the oldest prayer that we have? From barely 30 years after Jesus' death, the oldest surviving Christian prayer, *marana tha*, 'Come, Lord.' Those were rough times, many Christians suffering and dying for their faith. Perhaps that's why many of us in the western world find it hard to pray with equal passion. Many of us are comfortable and resting comfortably in the things of this world. Perhaps repentance is needed here. Either way, take some time now to pray for God's kingdom

to come and his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. Pray it earnestly and eloquently and with all your heart and pray it in Jesus' name.