

"The Danger of Hypocrisy"

Part 8

Matthew 6:1-18

Introduction: In our study of the Sermon on the Mount we are looking at what many people refer to as the "Lord's Prayer". The "prayer" is recorded in Matthew 6:9-13. What we find here is not a prayer given by Jesus to be recited over and over again but it is an outline upon which we are to build our prayers upon. We have outlined the prayer and we have been looking closely at this outline.

- I. **The Seniority of God** - *"Our Father which art in heaven"*
- II. **The Supremacy of God** - *"Hallowed be thy name"*
- III. **The System of God** - *"Thy kingdom come"*
- IV. **The Scheme of God** - *"Thy will be done"*
- V. **The Supply of God** - *"Give us this day our daily bread"*
- VI. **The Security of God** - *"And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors"*
- VII. **The Safety of God** - *"And lead us not into temptation"*
- VIII. **The Sovereignty of God** - *"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen"*

From the outline we can see that prayer is all about God and not about us dictating to God the way in which we believe life should unfold.

Prayer is not about you and me getting that which we desire in our lives but prayer is about God being glorified in all that we face in our lives. Prayer is not me trying to convince God to accept my will. Prayer is conforming myself to His will.

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Notice the words of Jesus in John 14.

John 14:13

¹³ And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

When we pray our prayers should be focused upon bringing glory to God not comfort into our lives. Our lives as believers are all about glorifying God and making Jesus known to those around us.

2 Corinthians 4:10-11

¹⁰ Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

¹¹ For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

We have already looked at the first 2 points of the outline.

I. **The Seniority of God** - *"Our Father which art in heaven"*

II. **The Supremacy of God** - *"Hallowed be thy name"*

Now tonight we come to the 3rd point of the outline.

III. The System of God

"Thy kingdom come"

This is the 2nd petition which Jesus mentions in this outline of prayer. Let me just remind you that until the first petition is understood there will be no desire in our lives for the second petition.

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There is so much to consider in the 3 words of this petition. The study which we will look at tonight is one that is very timely and is one that you may here again real soon on a Sunday morning.

A. Our Focus

When I read the words of this petition the first point I see is that our focus is not to be upon this world but upon God's Kingdom. So many believers are completely consumed with the restoration of the United States of America and are focused completely upon doing all that can be done to restore our nation back to what it used to be under the founding fathers. As a believer I am not to be consumed with the "kingdoms of this world" but I am to be consumed with the Kingdom of God.

There is one thing that is very clear in history and that is nations do not stand forever they all fall after a period of time. There have been many great powers that have existed before the United States and they have all fallen because of sin. The United States has stood longer than any of the previous powers but it will not stand forever. As we gather here tonight this nation is being eroded from the inside as God has lifted the moral restraints because of the suppression of the Truth.

Romans 1:18

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

Romans 1:24

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²⁴ Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

Romans 1:26

²⁶ For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

Romans 1:28

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

Three times we are told that when a nation or a people suppress the Truth of God's Word that God lifts the moral restraints from that nation and that is exactly what we see happening today. Therefore we live in a nation today that is quickly eroding from the inside out.

Proverbs 14:34

³⁴ Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

Notice what God said through Daniel about the kingdom of Belshazzar and the rejection of God by that king and his kingdom.

Daniel 5:18-26

¹⁸ O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour:

¹⁹ And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew;

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and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.

²⁰ But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:

²¹ And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.

*²² And thou his son, O Belshazzar, **hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this;** [this was the suppression of the Truth]*

²³ But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:

²⁴ Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written.

²⁵ And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

*²⁶ This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; **God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.***

The kingdom of Belshazzar fell that very night the hand writing appeared on the wall. We do not know when but there will come a day when the United States will also fall and another power will rise up for a period of time and then the same thing will happen again.

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There are really only 2 kingdoms, there is the kingdom of darkness in which Satan rules and there is the Kingdom of God in which God rules. The world we are in is under the kingdom of darkness and this is exactly why as believers our thoughts are to be consumed with the Kingdom of God.

B. Defining the Kingdom

When Jesus says that we are to pray, "*Thy kingdom come*" what does He mean? In the Bible the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven are the same and are spoken of in 2 ways:

1. Present tense
2. Future tense

Let's consider the future kingdom first of all. This is when Christ will return at the end of the Great Tribulation and set up His Kingdom on this earth. He will reign for 1000 years here and then His Kingdom will continue right on into eternity.

Revelation 20:4

⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

This is the future Kingdom. Now let me show you the present Kingdom.

Luke 17:20-21

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²⁰ And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

*²¹ Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, **behold, the kingdom of God is within you.***

In verse 20 the religious leaders demanded to know the times of the coming Kingdom and Jesus responded to them by telling them His Kingdom was not like the kingdoms of this world. He said, "*The kingdom of God cometh not with observation.*"

Then in verse 21 He seems to turn and speak to His disciples and He told them the Kingdom was within them.

Now we must understand this in order to understand the 2nd petition of the Lord's Prayer.

The religious leaders were looking for a kingdom that would change their surroundings but what Jesus said was that His kingdom was not a kingdom like the kingdoms of the world. His kingdom was inside of His followers and it would change them from the inside out. His present kingdom was and is spiritual. This is the key to understanding the 2nd petition. The future Kingdom is physical but the present Kingdom is spiritual.

1 Corinthians 15:50

*⁵⁰ Now this I say, brethren, that **flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;** [this is the spiritual Kingdom] *neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.**

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Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God because it is a spiritual Kingdom.

C. Understanding the Petition

Now we must ask the question, "What does it mean to pray for God's Kingdom to come?" The answer to this question is twofold:

1. Pray for the lost.

We must understand that it is the present spiritual Kingdom in the hearts of believers that changes communities, families, and individual people. Therefore to pray for God's Kingdom to come is to pray for people to be saved. The nation we live in is under the kingdom of darkness and the only way to change what is happening is to make Jesus known to those who are subjects of Satan's kingdom of darkness and are enslaved therein.

I am reminded that the religious leaders of Jesus day wanted to see a change of government to free them from the oppression of the Romans but what was really needed was a change of government within the hearts of all who were not saved. To change the surroundings would do no good because the reason for the oppression was the sinful hearts of the leaders. The leader's hearts had to be changed from within and that could only be through faith in the Son of God.

Many believers today are fighting to keep the Constitution in place but what all of us need to remember is that the Constitution of the United States will not fix the problem within our nation. It can only be changed by the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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We are to pray for God's Kingdom to come into the hearts of people but prayer is not enough. People need to hear the Gospel so they can believe.

Matthew 6:33

³³ But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

To "seek" is to get up and move. The idea is that we are to pray but we are also to go out into the world and preach the Gospel.

Romans 10:13-14, 17

¹³ For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

¹⁴ How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

¹⁷ So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

2. Live for the future.

Let us remember that the Kingdom is also future and so we are to be praying for the return of Jesus Christ and living for our eternal home.

Matthew 6:19-21

¹⁹ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

²⁰ But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

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²¹ For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Revelation 22:20

*²⁰ He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen.
Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

Conclusion:

This second petition requires our spiritual focus. When we are concerned about hallowing the name of God then we will be consumed with living for His Kingdom. We must be careful not to allow our eyes to get fixed on the things of this world but we must be always looking toward our eternal home.