

Title: Your Kingdom Come  
Text: Matthew 6.10  
Theme: Desiring the kingdom  
Series: Matthew # 30  
Prop Stmtnt: Desiring the Kingdom of Christ above all will radically change your life.

Read Text:

Have you ever heard someone say, “Do not pray for patience because the Bible says that tribulation brings forth patience? Therefore, if you pray for patience, you will get tribulation. So, don’t pray for patience.” Ok, what did that just reveal? Patience is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5.22). Patience is a symptom of authentic Christianity. Patience puts Christ on display. Patience honors God. Patience reflects a part of the very character of God on this earth. Romans 5.3 says, “...*we rejoice in sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance (patience), and endurance produces character and character produces hope and hope does not put us to shame because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given us.*” So, suffering, tribulation is the means that God uses to bring forth patience and endurance. Patience and endurance produces character, and then hope and hoping in God will never be a waste because God’s love cannot fail and God gives us His Spirit who enables us to see that and believe that, no matter what. Therefore, the person who endures with hope through the greatest adversity is in a position to be able put God’s magnificent grace on display. There was no greater evidence of this than in Christ, who believed and trusted the Father, even through the agonies of the cross. Even in his suffering he prayed to God. Even in his dying he trusted in God. Even in his unjust, completely unfair suffering, he nevertheless commended his soul to God. He did what made no sense to this world. He accepted a sentence that was unfair and did not argue. He accepted a punishment that was completely unjust and did not retaliate. He took our sin upon himself and endured a punishment that was unfairly thrown upon him and suffered a death that was truly mine to die. Today, we rejoice in his sufferings because his sufferings gave us life. And, as followers of Christ, we are called to suffer. We are not called to suffer in order to pay for our sins. Oh no! Jesus already did that. Jesus paid for your sins in full. There is nothing left for you to pay. But, we are called to suffer not to become followers of Christ but because as followers of Christ, we can expect the same kind of mistreatment, the same kind resentment, the same kind of rejection and ridicule and misunderstanding that he experienced. But, that’s okay. The suffering and tribulation that we face is actually a gift from God that helps us see what really matters and what does not. It helps us focus on eternity. It helps us let go of stuff. It helps us see with the eyes of eternity. So, when someone says, “don’t pray for patience” what are they saying? They are saying that I would rather have comfort, than look like Jesus. I would rather have a life of ease than put Christ on display. I would rather use God as my own private good luck charm so that I can get the kind of life that I really think that I deserve, so that my kingdom will come.

You see, I am trying to get my way through college and I need God to help me launch a career so that I can get stuff. Or, there is this girl, and I want to ask her to homecoming,

but I am so afraid that I am going to get shot down, I need God to help me say the right thing and look the right way, and for everything to work out just right and for that other guy NOT to ask her out first. Or, I am trying to get this sales account. If I can just get this account, this will give my family some financial breathing room that we have longed for. I am so tired of living on the edge, watching every dime, feeling like I can hardly breathe, or hoping that no gets sick because, well, we just can't afford it. I really need God to fix this. On and on it goes. I know that this is how we tend to live. It is so easy, because it is natural for us to believe that the main objective in life is to get through to the end with the maximum amount of pleasure and the minimum amount of pain. We tend to measure pleasure in terms of respect, admiration, success, safety, sex, food, ease, control, power, companionship, experiences and stuff. Pain is not only physical pain it is the absence of the things that we think give us pleasure. So, maximum pleasure and minimal pain becomes the target of life that we tend to aim for. In fact, it is not only a target, we tend to think of it as a right. I am entitled to a life of pleasure. It is God's job, because he loves me and God exists to make me happy, to help me avoid pain. God would not want me to unhappy. God wants me to have good things. Therefore, maximum pleasure and minimal pain is not only the target, it is the grid through which we filter life and make decisions about how we spend our time and money. The way we spend our time and money is the revelation of what really matters to us.

But God is neither satisfied with nor worthy of being a means to another end. God is not content to be your train to get you to where you want to go. Because where you want to go is right off a cliff. God and his glory is not a rabbit's foot for good luck. God is not willing to be a pawn in your game of pursuing glory, because your glory does not satisfy and will not last. God's worth is way more valuable than stooping himself to cooperate with your pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain. Yes, God wants you to be happy. And God loves you so much that he will lead you in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. He knows that your goal of maximum pleasure and minimal pain will betray you. If your goal is limited to pleasure and the avoidance of pain, then it is not only the wrong goal, but you have set your sights, way too low. He knows it is a game that you will lose. So, he, like a parent of child who wants to take a drink out of the toilet, says, "No! I am not going to let you do that." And we, like the 2-year old, cry because God is opposed to our happiness and won't let us do what we think will give us maximum pleasure and minimal pain. God is not going to pretend that drinking out of toilets is okay. So, what does this have to do with praying, "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."? It has EVERYTHING to do with it!!! When we pray this way, we are admitting that...

### I. **We are not the King!**

What is a kingdom? A kingdom consists of a ruler and that which is ruled. A kingdom has a king and a dom. We are the dom. Jesus is the king. The king-dom is the reign of Christ, the King over all that he has made. The kingdom of heaven is the same thing as the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Christ. The Kingdom of God has two aspects to

it. There is first of all the general sense in which God rules over everything that is. This is what the Psalmist is saying in Psalm 93.1-2:

*The LORD reigns; he is robed in majesty;  
The LORD is robed; he has put on strength as his belt.  
Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved.*

*Your throne is established from of old;  
You are from everlasting.*

1 Chronicles 16.28-33

*Ascribe to the LORD, O clans of the peoples,  
Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!  
Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;  
Bring an offering and come before him!  
Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness;  
Tremble before him, all the earth;  
Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved.  
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice,  
And let them say among the nations, "The LORD reigns!"  
Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;  
Let the field exult, and everything in it!  
Then shall the trees of the forest sing for joy  
before the LORD, for he comes to judge the earth.*

Is God in charge? Does God reign? Yes!! So, if God is so great and powerful, then how come this world is such a mess? Why is there cancer and child abuse, ALS and rape? Why is there divorce and Parkinson's and chemical weapons and nuclear warheads and gunmen who walk into military installations and schools and open fire on random strangers? That leads us to the 2<sup>nd</sup> aspect of God's kingdom. The ultimate manifestation of this kingdom is the formal reign of Jesus Christ as King over his people in a place of astounding beauty and perfection. It takes place where heaven has literally come to earth and where God literally lives among his people. This kingdom is a spiritual, political, environmental, physical and governmental reality. That has not yet happened. The 2<sup>nd</sup> aspect of God's kingdom has not come, yet. So, when we pray, "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" We are acknowledging that...

## II. **The Kingdom of God is here but not yet in its fullness.**

From the beginning of time, it has been God's plan to reign over his people in a particular place. That is why he made the earth, the garden and put Adam and Eve in it. God's plan is for life on earth to be like life in heaven. Life in heaven is perfect. Life on earth? Not so much. But, in the beginning we had land, people and God. That was the kingdom of God. It was perfect. But, Adam blew it up. He blew it up because God gave him the freedom to rebel. God gave to humankind freedom because God made us as people in his

image and not as robots or machines. But, how do you rebel against God? Can you actually dethrone God? No rebellion against God will succeed. Any revolt against God is doomed to failure because God is and will always be God. God gave us the opportunity to learn that even while God set out on a plan to restore the kingdom, which is like restoring Eden. He is still King. Everything is still under his reign, but for now, he gives the world freedom to live, as it wants, to a degree. Yet, make no mistake; even the freedom to rebel is under the sovereign control of God. So, while we have freedom, it is not unlimited freedom. We have what appears to us to be freedom, but God remains sovereign over our freedom. We have used our freedom to make an absolute mess of this world. And then we turn around and blame God and say stuff like, if you were really God, you would not let these things happen. But, the truth is, God is allowing the rebellion of mankind to run its course. My understanding of the Bible and the book of Revelation is that things are going to get a whole lot worse before they get better. The rebellion by mankind against God will become more and more organized, more and more violent and destructive. And yet, this world remains his. He made it. He owns it and he will return in person to reign over it. God has promised that the day is coming when everything will be re-established as it was intended to be. In order to show the world a picture of what this would be like God selected a people (the nation of Israel) and he selected a land (the promised land, Canaan) for his people. And, he was the king. But even that was met with resistance. The people wanted a "real" king, which meant that they were rejecting the real king and getting an imitation king. So, God let them try that out and it did not go real well. So, God gave them a king (David) who would look, in some ways, like the real king who would come. But, the real king who would come, was not just going to reign over Israel, he was going to reign over the entire earth. He was going to have a kingdom that involved people from every tribe, language and nation. These people would be in his kingdom because they would first and foremost acknowledge that Jesus is the King. They were not going to be in the kingdom just because God is the king and that's just the way that it is. But, they would be in his kingdom because they wanted to be citizens in his kingdom. These are the people who say because they truly believe that Jesus is my King. That means that I am not the King. Jesus is the King. Jesus makes the rules and I am to submit myself to his reign. Everybody is under the reign of God. But only those who trust Christ have become actual citizens of his Kingdom.

Let me explain it this way. I know a girl who was raised in a "family" with two moms. This is what life was like as far as she was concerned. But as she got older and began to see and later understand and experience what a family was supposed to be like, she saw that what she was in was not the way God had made it. We are born into this world as members of the rebellion. The world that God made for the kingdom of his Son is in a state of revolution and rebellion and we are born into it. As sinners we join the rebellion and attempt to live as if we are king. We are told by our world and by our hearts that life would be awesome if we could just overthrow the king, because the king hates fun and makes all of these rules and places ridiculous limits on us. But the rebellion is a mess. People do not get along. They kill each other. There is disease, famine, death, lies, addiction, bondage, slavery and abuse. It is ugly. So, even though we are in this rebellion, we wonder if life really has to be this way. Then we hear that life was not always this

way. In the beginning this earth was made to be the kingdom for a wise, loving, joyful and delightful king who really was and is infinitely great and infinitely good. And yet, the subjects of this king listened to the treasonous words of an imposter who convinced them that they should be king instead. And on that fateful day, the citizens rebelled. Since that day, the kingdom has been in rebellion against the real king. But, the days of the rebellion are numbered. The King has planned to re-establish his reign. But, before he does that, he wants to give every member of the rebellion a chance to repent of their allegiance to the rebel cause, renounce their citizenship in the imposter kingdom and trust in him. The real King is so merciful that he has provided a pardon for the rebels who will renounce their allegiance to the rebellion and will trust in Him. This pardon is made available because the King, personally paid the debt for their transgressions, so that when they renounce their citizenship in the rebellion and are transferred into the Kingdom of Christ, that there is no punishment for them to endure, no penalty for them to pay, no probation for them to serve. The King has made it possible through repentance (renouncing my kingdom) and faith (allegiance to Christ as King) to become full citizens of his kingdom. Now, as citizens of the King and the coming Kingdom, we are ambassadors who live to tell others about the demise of this kingdom and the establishment of the eternal Kingdom. As citizens of the real kingdom, we are viewed as rebels and threats to the rebellion. So, no, the kingdom is not here in its fullness. But every time another person trusts in Christ, the real kingdom is then established in another life. The third petition is an aspect of the second. (Compare the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of v.10 to the 1<sup>st</sup> half.)

### III. God's revealed will is not being obeyed on earth, yet.

When the Bible speaks about the will of God it speaks about it with different emphasis. For example, there is the will of God for your life. 1 Thessalonians 4.2 says, "*For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor...*" Here is an example of the revealed will of God. The revealed will of God is sometimes called the desired will of God. God reveals, what he desires and calls us to follow, but God gives you freedom, to some degree to obey and/or disobey. For example, if you are truly a follower of Christ, and you know that the revealed will of God is for you not to be sexually involved with anyone other than your spouse, and you ignore that, God may give you the freedom to do that. But, that will not go on and on and on. God will graciously bring consequences into your life that will make it abundantly clear to you, that he is serious about his revealed will. But, notice this: Our exercise of our God-given freedom is still under the sovereign will of God. God uses our choices, that we freely make, to carry out his Sovereign plan which we call the decreed or determined will of God. An example of this would Isaiah 53.10. "*Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him.*" God determined that Christ would come to the earth and die on the cross for us. This is the point that Peter makes in his sermon on the day of Pentecost when he says, (Acts 2.23) "*this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of the lawless men.*" Was it God's will to crush him? Yes. How did God carry out his plan? He used the sinful choices of a rebellious people to carry out his plan to crucify his Son. The sinful choices of those who crucified Christ does not make their sin of

rejection less sinful because the death of Christ accomplished our salvation, but it does magnify the incredible mind and plan of God. Now, someday, there will be a time on the earth when everything that God desires and reveals for us to be and do, will be believed perfectly and carried out perfectly by us. When Jesus returns and establishes the Kingdom of God on the earth, then his revealed and desired will that is being carried out in heaven will be carried out on earth. On that day, his revealed and desired will and his decreed and determined will be perfectly aligned. Just as God has sovereignly permitted man to be sinful and God uses even the sinful choices of man to fulfill his plan, God will sovereignly banish sin from the earth and the free choices of the citizens of his kingdom will only be exercised to joyfully love, obey and delight in the pure worship of God. That day is THE DAY. That day is what we were made for. So, when we pray this we are crying out for the day when...

IV. **Heaven is a place on Earth.**

We anticipate and long for the day when what is going on in heaven as described in Revelation 4-5 will be going on, on earth. We long for the day when heaven comes to earth, when the throne of God is on the earth, when earth and heaven are one, when God dwells with his people, and when we are living with God and each other in a perfectly pure, infinitely delightful way. We know that we are not there yet. We know that we appear to be rebels on this earth because we have rebelled against the rebellion and have sworn our allegiance to the true King. We are praying this not only asking God to bring this about, but also as a way of reminding ourselves of who we really are and what our true identity and citizenship is. Finally, we are crying out for God to

V. **Use us any way you choose to advance your Kingdom.**

The Kingdom of God is the guaranteed culmination of God's plan to unite all things under Christ. The Kingdom of Christ is guaranteed. Because his kingdom is our citizenship, we are to live now in anticipation of that day. We are to, "seek first the kingdom and his righteousness" (6.33). The Kingdom of Christ is our ultimate priority. It is eternal. It is the plan. When we become citizens of the Kingdom, we give up the right to rule our own lives and submit ourselves to our King and willingly surrender ourselves to him in order that his kingdom will be advanced. It is not only our calling, it is the most glorious and guaranteed mission in the universe. He truly is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever. All others are impostors.

Some of you are pouring your life into a company that will simply replace you. Others of you are investing your resources into stuff that your kids will sell or give away at a garage sale. You want God to help you stay healthy so you can keep on working and keep on living and keep on pursuing the wrong goal. God is not a means to an end. God is the beginning and the end. His kingdom is the only cause that is worth living for, because it is the cause that Christ died for. Are you willing to pray, your kingdom come? Are you willing to pray even as you ask God to use you and your children in any way that he chooses to advance his kingdom?

Bill McChesney was a single 28-year old from the U.S. who, 50 years ago determined that the Lord had called him into missions. He was in the Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) when a series of revolts took place, one of which involved a group called the Simbas (lions). In November of 1964, this group successfully captured several hundred Americans, Belgians and other foreigners, among them was Bill. Bill was already sick with malaria and was thrown onto a truck to be taken to a prison. His missionary friend Jim Rodgers volunteered to go to prison with him to take care of him. By the time the truck reached the prison, Bill could not stand, the soldiers spent the ride beating Jim. Once at the prison they were crammed into a small cell with 40 other people. The next morning the prisoners were brought into a courtyard where a mob had been rounded up to abuse them. The prisoners were separated by nationality, but even though Bill was American and Jim was British, Jim, refused to leave Bill's side. The mob was set loose and they pummeled both of these men to death and then took their bodies and threw them into the Wamba River to be eaten by the crocodiles.

That was 50 years ago. Today, the evangelical church has grown so much in that country that over 25% of the population are now considered to be evangelical Christians. Thousands upon thousands of people have come to faith in Christ. Bill could have done many other things that were much safer, but he lived for a kingdom that cannot be shaken and for King who will reign forever. You do not have to go to Africa to live for the kingdom, but most of us need to re-think a great deal about our lives if we are going to pray for his kingdom to come. Pray your kingdom come as you bow before the king. Pray your kingdom come knowing that life is not yet what it is supposed to be. Pray for the day to come when the revealed will of God is embraced and carried out by his people from the heart, when heaven is a place on earth, and pray that his reign in hearts now, is spread abroad by the witnessing of his ambassadors, the faithful preaching of the gospel and the planting and growth of healthy churches, no matter what! Christ, you are the real king! Your Kingdom come!