

SERMON

Matthew 6:10

Your Kingdom Come

Nunawading and Waverley, 5-9-21

Dear friends in Christ,

Your kingdom come. Sometimes we can catch ourselves thinking that this life is so good we don't want it to end. If the Lord Jesus could delay his coming that would be helpful. We would have time to see children and grandchildren grow up or to find that special person and marry. There are careers we would prefer to advance and enjoy reaching our goals in life. When we pray, **your kingdom come**, we are praying for the once and for all coming of the kingdom. It will, indeed, be a massive interruption of what we are doing, perhaps occurring when we are loading the dishwasher or watching a game of football.

The kingdom comes into our lives today through faith but first we need to understand that we are praying for the end of human rule in history and the coming of Christ's rule (or more accurately, any human rule will be completely one with Christ's will. This should not be perceived as a loss but a joyful embrace of a coming gift. The kingdom is the promise of something truly glorious: our Lord Jesus will right terrible injustices and fulfill God's purposes in creation and humanity. Do we want another dictator or see terrorists take control? Wherever human beings are in charge of things, you will get incompetence and nepotism, pork barrelling and just plain unfairness. I often think of people working hard for \$25 or \$30 per hour and then someone charging \$400 per hour. We can think of huge disparities in our world where people live on the streets while their leaders live in luxury. So, it is a good thing that we are praying for. We are in fact praying for the gospel, the good news of sins forgiven, equality established, the sick healed and relationships working well with the glory of the Lord at the centre of all things.

Now, let me tell you a great mystery. We are praying to the Father, **let your kingdom come**. Luther said that 'God's kingdom comes without our prayer' and he is right for the Lord operates under his sovereign rule. Yet, the Lord Jesus is allowing his faithful people to be his partners with him and engage in the coming of the great end of all things and the beginning of the new. **Your kingdom come** is our voice and the voices of all Christians reaching heaven and urging the Father to bring his future into the present. Our prayers are involved in eternal matters. In a sense, we are pulling the levers that move the universe. The future kingdom is not a point the universe reaches but an event rushing towards us for it is the coming reign of Christ. Believers actually **speed the coming of the kingdom**.

John the Baptist spoke of the Christ and his kingdom coming with **a baptism of fire and the Holy Spirit and fire** and when Jesus ascended into heaven, he commissioned his people to baptise the nations. Therefore, Luther said that we ought to pray for the kingdom to come to us and into our lives. This happens when the Father sends us the Holy Spirit in baptism and the rule of God enters our hearts. We are praying that the Father will completely reorient our lives, so that we live in trust and live godly lives. Do you believe that the management of your life has always been good? Think about that for a moment. How are we coping with the lock down? We are not always patient, hopeful or grateful. Do people always treat us well and fairly? We need a different form of control in our lives one that changes hard or broken hearts to, believing, hopeful, compassionate and courageous hearts.

The rule of Christ in the believer's heart is a confrontation with the human will to control and to be master. Against this desire for autonomy, God does not crush a person but grants victory over slavery to oneself through the companionship of the Holy Spirit. The prayer, **your kingdom come**, is our prayer to let Christ rule and be master.

Newness of life through the rule of God in the believer's heart has a societal impact as justice, equality, reconciliation and acts of mercy take hold in the culture and in politics of a nation. However,

the kingdom is not a human rule and so these changes are only signposts pointing towards a coming future.

To use the word king as in **kingdom**, makes it clear that the Lord is providing us with a scale. Are we that great, that important that human beings are the focus of attention and the cameras should be on us? Christ is **the king of kings** and **all must bow before him** as the holy Bible says. Let us then truly mean what we are praying for: your kingdom come to me.