

THE PRIORITIES OF JESUS

“The Prayer of Jesus”

A Study of Matthew 6:10

(originated by Dr. Stan Reeder)

INTRODUCTION:

I love the comic strip of two guys sitting in the back of the church with a laptop computer on Superbowl Sunday. They have developed a program entitled “Catch the Pastor”. It scores the pastor for mistakes and blunders. For grammatical errors the pastor gets 50 points, for a pointless illustration he gets 100 points, for stuttering, it’s 25 points. As the pastor is preaching away on this superbowl Sunday, the one guy (with an excited look on his face) says to the other: “If he finds nine points that spell S-U-P-E-R-B-O-W-L out of Genesis 22, he could become our all-time winner.”

Today, we are studying the phrase...*Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.* In these lines the Lord was teaching us to pray about our priorities. What are the Lord’s Priorities?? Let’s study the Lord’s “Priority Prayer”...

THY KINGDOM COME:

ελθατω η βασιλεια σου
Elthatoo hee basileia sou

Literal Translation: Come (let it come), Kingdom of you

Jesus has not asked us to just make a request in this phrase, he has asked us to make a DECLARATION! The verb is put at the beginning of the sentence for emphasis. The Greek underscores praying this phrase – “**Come, Kingdom of God!**”

Whenever I pray through the Lord’s prayer and come to this phrase I make a declaration on behalf of those who are not-yet believers. God’s kingdom is a kingdom of believers, and it is His will for all humanity to be a part of His kingdom. I start by calling out the names of those in my family who are not Christians. **Come, Kingdom of God .**

I name my unbelieving neighbors: **Come, kingdom of God!**

I pray for my unbelieving friends: **Come, kingdom of God!**

I pray for government leaders on all levels who are not believers:

Come, kingdom of God!

We live today in a Pagan society. It is post-Christian. This is the first generation since the rise of Christianity that does not know the “God of its Fathers.” Think about that. This is the first generation to be raised in homes that are non-Christian, non-church attending; in which children do not receive Judeo-Christian training.

The result is a culture in which there is thought to be no right or wrong. Where reason and logic are no longer important. You can see this or the results of this thinking everywhere you look – **especially on the roadways...** We are taught today to think in mosaics and embrace contradictions: the name of the prevailing philosophy today is “deconstructionism” which trades...

Reason for emotion.

Discipline for urges.

The result is a deconstructing, breaking society.

Our families are broken. The Math Prof. posed this problem:

"A wealthy man dies and leaves ten million dollars.

One-fifth is to go to his wife, one-third is to go to his son from his first marriage, one-sixth to his butler, and the rest to charity. Now, what does each get?"

A student in the back of the room answered, "**A lawyer?**"

Marriages are broken. A book released last in the last few years, The Starter Marriage (author Pamela Paul, Random House: January 2002) was written on the subject. "A starter home is that first house you buy knowing full well that the bedroom is smaller than you'd like [and] the kitchen has no windows. You accept these faults ... knowing that you'll only be there temporarily." – **now there are “starter marriages”**.

Entertainment Weekly included “divorcing in your 20’s” on its list of “in” things to do (September 2000).

Self magazine has the snappy headline “Just Married, Just Split Up.”

How will we respond? When it comes to the pagan, ungodliness of our society, it can appear like we Christian’s fight everything.

Some people do fight against everything. Like the centenarian who was interviewed on his birthday. “Being 100 years old, you have seen a lot of changes.” “Yes, and I bin agin every one of ‘em!”

We can take on the disposition that is reflected in this letter:

To: President Jackson:

From: Governor Van Buren of New York State

January 31, 1829

The canal system of this country is being threatened by the spread of a new form of transportation known as railroads. The government must preserve the canals for the following reasons:

1. If canal boats are supplanted by railroads, serious unemployment will result. Captains, cooks, drivers, hustlers, repairman, lock-tenders will be left without means of livelihood. Not to mention the numerous farmers now employed in growing hay for the horses.
2. Canal boats are absolutely essential to the defense of the United States. In the event of the expected trouble with England, the Erie Canal would be the only means by which we could ever move supplies so vital to waging modern war.

3. As you well know, Mr. President, railroad carriages are pulled at the enormous speeds of 15 miles per hour which in addition to endangering life and limb of passengers, roar and snort their way through the countryside, setting fire to crops, scaring the livestock, and frightening women and children.

The Almighty certainly never intended that people should travel at such breakneck speeds.

Martin Van Buren

Governor of New York¹

Clearly, he was ready to fight the changes. Now, am I saying, we just sit back and let society slowly deconstruct? No, not at all, we are to take our stand against evil. But, the Word reminds us that we are not on a “seek and destroy mission”, we are on a **“mission to seek and save that which is lost”**. We can get so caught up in fighting the Kingdom of this world, we forget to pray for the Kingdom of God to break into this broken world. We forget to pray that there would be a day of the visitation of God’s grace.

Our deconstructing, broken world desperately needs you to pray “Come, Kingdom of God!”

“Come, Kingdom of God” into our schools.

“Come, Kingdom of God” into our city hall; in our state and federal government.

“Come, Kingdom of God” to our halls of justice, our business board rooms, our homes and yes, into our churches. Visit us with your transforming grace.

As Isaiah prayed: *Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down. . . . For when you did awesome things that we did not expect, you came down, and the mountains trembled before you. Since ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who acts on behalf of those who wait for him. You come to the help of those who gladly do right, who remember your ways (Isaiah 64:1,3-5).*

Did you catch that last statement . . . he comes in response to those who *wait in prayer*. AND *who gladly do right*.

This brings us to the next petition the Lord invited us to pray. It has everything to do with being a people who gladly do right, with those who remember His ways and so pray...

THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN:

γεννηθῆτω το θελημα σου

¹ Tape of Joseph Stowell, “The Moment of Opportunity: Preparing for Excellence or Enfeebled by Mediocrity” message given in the World Views in Collision conference, 1994?

Geneetheetoo to theleema sou

Literal Translation: Be done, the will of you

ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς

Hoos en ouranoo kai epi gees

as in heaven, also on earth!

Again, this is not just a request for God's will to be done. The verb's placement at the beginning of the sentence reveals that Jesus is teaching us to *declare* "Be done, will of God." Declare it with your tongue at the beginning of each day.

The truth is, our tongue, our declaration has a power over the course of our day. James 3:5, 6b: *the tongue is a small part of the body, but it . . . ^{6b}sets the whole course of [one's]... life.*

You want to know what direction your life is going . . . just examine your words from last week. The tongue sets your course. Jesus is asking us to set the course of our day by declaring emphatically: **"Be done, will of God!"**

Be done, will of God . . . in my family, in other believers, in the church, in the challenges, problems, questions; **"Be done, Will of God" in my life today!**

In "Come, Kingdom of God" we pray for God's grace to visit the lives of others - - the follow-up is this, "Be done, Will of God" in my life: *Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God [become believers] on the day he visits us.* As you pray "Come, Kingdom of God", His grace *will* visit. And *when* his grace does visit, His truth will be verified by the witness of your life lived in accordance with His Will. Conversions take place.

Dr. Stan Reeder, who designed this series on the Prayer of Jesus, relates this story:

Mark and Joelene are members of my previous church. Joelene took to praying "Come, Kingdom of God" for every one of her neighbors. Each day they consecrated their lives to the Lord . . . Be Done, Will of God . . . perfectly, completely in my life today!

It was just a matter of time before God's grace visited. The Kingdom of God came, Holly came to Joelene and said . . . there is something different in your family; we've been watching you. Tell me what is different in your life. Joelene led her to the Lord in her living room. Holly, who had never been to church in her life, dragged her unbelieving husband out to church next Sunday. There they were in a suit and tie church, wearing shorts and t-shirts, but the Kingdom of God visited him; He committed his life to Jesus. Soon they were baptized.

They had been trying to have children for years with no success. Several Sundays later, having watched the pastor anoint people for healing, they asked if they could be anointed. We did and today she is 7 months with triplets. TRIPLETS . . . It must have been that 3 in 1 anointing oil. Good thing I didn't spray them with a little WD40.

It all started because Joelene started to pray, “Come, Kingdom of God” in my neighbor’s lives. And, “Be done, will of God” in my own. Hard to argue with that combination.

How do we live according to God’s will?

God’s will being done depends on:

My consecration (Romans 12:1; 6:1-14).

God’s will being done in my life requires me to totally consecrate my life to his full control. Turn with me to Romans 12:1-2:

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is YOUR spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. THEN you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Knowing and doing God’s will begins with your action: *to offer your bodies as living sacrifices . . . this is your spiritual act of worship.*

APPLICATION:

It starts with your consecration. Phoebe Palmer was an evangelist in the early 1900’s. In her book, The Way of Holiness, she described consecration as . . .

*to take the service of God as the absorbing business of life,
and to regard heaven as [your]... native home,
and [to make] the accumulation of treasure in heaven the chief object of ambition.*²

This is your spiritual act of worship. Only when you have so consecrated your life to the Lord are you in a place where you can *be transformed*.

*Christ says, “Give me all. I don’t want so much of your time and so much of your money, and so much of your work. I want YOU. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No half measures are any good. I don’t want to cut off a branch here and a branch there. I want the whole tree down. I don’t want to drill the tooth, or crown it, or stop it, but to have it out. Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as those ones you think wicked – the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. In fact, I will give you Myself: my own will shall become yours.”*³

-C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

It’s **“MY ALL FOR YOUR ALL”**.

*Nothing in you that has not died will ever be raised from the dead.*⁴

What ain’t dead can’t get resurrected from the dead! Jesus is in the resurrection business.

² Phoebe Palmer, The Way of Holiness (Kansas City, MI: Publishing House of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene: 1915?), 19.

³ Ibid. 163-164.

⁴ Ibid. 188 (one of the last lines of his plea for Christ).

Christianity is founded on resurrection. The Christian life is a resurrected life.

You must offer yourself as a living sacrifice (sacrifices get killed for the Lord), THEN Christ can transform you through His work of sanctification.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24:

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body [that's your all] be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls [literally: is calling] you is faithful and he will do it.

More than a century ago Dwight L. Moody, founder of the Moody Bible Institute, was sitting in a hay pile in Ireland, listening to a preacher named Henry Barley. ***“The world has yet to see what God can do with and for and through a man who is fully and wholly consecrated to Him,”*** Barley declared. Moody later said that something turned on in his heart that day. Five and a half years later he was sitting way up in the balcony of Charles Spurgeon’s church in London, England, and the words of Henry Barley came back to him: ***“ . . . with a man, for a man, through a man fully and wholly consecrated to God.”*** In the balcony of that great church, Moody bowed his head and said, ***“Lord, if there were ever a man who would commit himself to such a way, here’s one.”*** He went out from that place to set the world on fire.

Moody was purified and empowered!!! That’s what God’s sanctifying work does!

***A sanctified life is . . .
a delight to Jesus,
a joy to the soul,
a benediction to the home,
a power in the church,
a terror to sin,
and a continual disappointment to the devil
-Phineas F. Bresee***

Doing **God’s will in earth as it is in heaven requires your total consecration** and God’s transforming, sanctifying grace in your life. He is faithful . . .the only question is will you have the faith to consecrate all . . . and believe for his sanctification?