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DATE: June 21, 2026
SERIES: The Shape of Prayer
MESSAGE: Your Kingdom Come
PASSAGE: Matthew 6:10
SPEAKER: Ryan Harmon

I'm thankful this morning that our VBS stage is still here, because it fits what we want to talk about this morning perfectly. Here we sit, we stand, as we worship in what is a makeshift throne room. Big old throne right there. And we want to use that for our purposes this morning.

So I want you to imagine with me that this stage represents the entirety of your life. Everything about your life, from the most personal and intimate, your thoughts and your feelings, your desires. And extending out to your relationships. Your family, your friends, romantic relationships. And then extending all the way out into where you work, the way you operate in the world at large. All of your life represented here on this stage.

The question that we need to consider is who sits on the throne of your life? Who is the one that oversees all of that? Who is the one that has final and ultimate say concerning everything in your life?

Now I grew up in church. So I know the answer. You know the answer. We're all familiar with the correct answer. The Sunday school answer. But I'm encouraging you for a second this morning to not immediately jump to the correct answer, but to be honest with yourself, about who really is in charge. Now, if in your heart of hearts, you would say, God is on the throne, I would affirm that and say, that's exactly right, but I still would ask you for a moment to humbly consider whether there are parts of your life, pieces of your life, arenas of your life, where you're still inclined to walk up to the throne and tell God, scoot over for a minute—I'd like to be in charge now.

I almost, as an illustration, went up and did that last night, but I learned this morning it's made of cardboard and very flimsy. So I'm thankful, I'm thankful I did not do that. It would have been a good video. I think our natural inclination is every once in a while to say to God, you know, I'll take it from here, just for a moment. This here, this part of my life, this is off limits. Now why is this question so important for us? Well, it's important because this very question, who is on the throne, sits at the heart of the second request, the second petition that Jesus taught his disciples to pray in the Lord's Prayer. That's what we're going to look at



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this morning. So open your Bibles with me to first—I'm sorry, not 1st Samuel! We are going to open to 1st Samuel as well, but Matthew chapter 6. You can keep a thumb, a finger, in 1st Samuel chapter 8, because we are going to turn there in a few moments. Matthew chapter 6, verse 10.

Now, as we've been walking through the Lord's Prayer, we've been going slowly. We're desirous that this isn't just an intellectual approach, but it's something that will shape our very life of prayer. And so as we began, we learned that prayer, of course, always begins by addressing the one to whom we pray. And Jesus taught us to pray a very intimate prayer. "Our Father who is in heaven." Name who God is. We bring him before our mind and acknowledge that because of Jesus Christ, we are now children of God. And he is the one who is both transcendent in heaven, bigger than all of our problems, but he is also imminent. He is closer than we think.

So with that address in mind, Jesus then turned to the first request. And it may have caught us off guard that Jesus so immediately turned to requests because sometimes I think we feel like we can't get there yet. We need to wait before we go to asking things of God, but Jesus immediately asks something. Now, what he asked, what he taught us to ask, is very different than what our natural inclination is. Our first request usually is our needs, what's happening in our life. And that is perfectly appropriate, and Jesus is going to get to that. But he begins by directing his first petition towards God and towards his reputation. Jesus taught us to pray, "hallowed be your name."

We talked last week about how that sounds like a statement of adoration. We're saying, God, this is who you are—and that's an appropriate thing to do. But last week we discussed how this is a request. This is us saying to God, may your name be hallowed. May your name be more glorified, more magnified, in my life and in our world than it is right now, Lord. May that happen. Father, may you act in such a way that your reputation increases and you deserve the glory that you are due. Hallowed be your name. That brings us to our request that we're considering this morning. Your kingdom come. Your kingdom come.

Now, before we move into the meaning of that request, I do want to remind you about the structure that we talked last week about, about the structure of this prayer, how after Jesus begins with the address to God, he then turns to six requests. And those six requests are grouped in two groups of three. Three in verses 9 and 10, and then 3 in verses 11, 12, and 13. The first three in verses 9 and 10 are all focused on God, the second three are all focused on us, on our needs.

I want to suggest to you this morning that as we turn to the second request, there is an internal logic, a sequence to these requests. Here's what I mean by that. Last week, if we pray with all of our heart, if we pray and we earnestly desire that God's name would be hallowed, and our motivation for that prayer is that we believe with



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every ounce of our being there is no one greater—he is the absolute best, we are jealous for his reputation—if we believe that, then it logically follows that he should be the one that we want to be in charge of everything. If he is the greatest there is, it is natural for us to say, Lord, our desire is that you would be in charge of everything. The first request prayed with all of our heart prepares us, primes us, to enter into this second request. Your kingdom come. So what exactly is the kingdom?

Now, I will acknowledge to you that I think it is a very good thing that over the past, I'd say 20 years or so, I think this topic of the kingdom, even our speaking about the kingdom, is more frequent than it was when I was growing up. I don't recall hearing a lot about the kingdom of God when I was growing up. But now, over these past two decades, I think it makes its way into our worship, talked about often, people will talk about how we want to be kingdom people. We want to grow the kingdom, these kind of things. All of that is very good, but it doesn't necessarily clarify what the kingdom is.

And I'll be honest with you, this week as I was preparing, I had a few moments of existential crisis, and here's why. This is a big topic. This is a very big topic and I labored. I was praying. I was like, Lord, how do I take this big topic that really, we could, we could say, let's start on the very first page of scripture, and let's look at every page of scripture until we get to the last page so that we can adequately cover the kingdom, because that's what it would take. How do I not do that? Because that would bore everyone to death! But how do we adequately, sufficiently, capture what your kingdom is?

So my plan here this morning, in these next few minutes. I want to do my best to simply define the kingdom for you. Then I want to clarify a few things about it, give you some characteristics of God's kingdom. And then we'll move to implications. If we offer up this prayer, your kingdom come, what might that look like?

So begin with a simple definition. When we hear that word kingdom, it is natural for us to immediately think of a place, a land, a realm, let's say. Might think of the United Kingdom, or the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. There are kingdoms in this world. But when we think of the kingdom of God—or the kingdom of heaven, as Matthew likes to refer to it, those are interchangeable—we're not talking about a realm or a place necessarily. Not yet. What we're talking about primarily is a rule. A rule, the rule and reign of God. The kingdom is God's rule. It is where he is in charge. And because he is in charge, what he wants done is done. The kingdom is the rule of God, the reign of God.

Now, a few clarifications about that. First clarification and first characteristic of the kingdom is sometimes I believe that we are apt to believe that the kingdom is something that came on the scene in the pages of the New Testament. There was



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no talk of the kingdom prior to that, but then Jesus came and we started talking about the kingdom. But we need to understand the kingdom of God is all over the pages of the Old Testament. Starting all the way back at the very beginning. God has always had a kingdom. God has always ruled. He has always reigned.

I want to look at a few different passages out of the Psalms with you for just a moment to illustrate this. I'm not going to ask you to turn there. We are going to put them on the screen, but this first Psalm is the words of David in Psalm 22, verse 28. David says this, "For the kingdom is the Lord's, is Yahweh's. And he rules over the nations." The kingdom is the Lord's, and here's what that kingdom is he rules—he rules over all the nations of the earth. That is what David is saying there.

Next psalm, Psalm 47 verse 8, says the same thing essentially, but with different language. "God reigns over the nations; God sits on his holy throne." Now, God sitting on his throne means he is the one that has authority. He is the one that is in charge. He is the one who rules.

The OT, the Old Testament, proclaims that God has always ruled. He has always reigned. And in fact, God's rule and God's reign, and therefore God's kingdom, is as old as God himself. Which is to say, it has always been here. As long as God has been God, he has always ruled, he has always had a kingdom. That's what David captures in Psalm 145, one last passage from the Psalms. Psalm 145, verse 13. He says, "your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom [without end], and your dominion endures through all generations." An everlasting kingdom means one that always will be and has always been, because God has always been.

God has always been in charge. He has always ruled, and he will always rule. And for us, his people, that should bring us great comfort and great assurance in the midst of a world that is absolutely chaotic. God is on the throne—God rules, he reigns, he's in charge—should bring us great assurance.

But it also raises a question, doesn't it? If that's true, then why are things so messed up? Why is the world so messed up? And this brings us to the second clarification and a second characteristic of God's kingdom. See, God's kingdom is unlike any other kingdom we can imagine. Because God is unlike any other king or any other ruler that we can imagine.

And here's what is so unique about God and his kingdom. God in his sovereignty, God in his ruling capacity, allows people to reject his rule. He allows people to reject his reign, to ignore that he is on the throne and he is the only rightful ruler. God allows this as the sovereign over the entire universe, and it is astounding to me. That's not how we work. That's not how human kingdoms work. But that's how God works.



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I think the most vivid and sobering illustration of this comes from God's interaction with his people, Israel. If you turn to 1st Samuel chapter 8, or if you put your finger there, open it up to open up to that now, and let's talk about this passage.

First Samuel 8. Now, Samuel, of course, was a prophet of Israel, but Samuel was also essentially effectively the last judge of Israel. You might remember that after God brought Israel out of Egypt, after he brought them through the wilderness and, through Joshua, conquered the promised land, God then instituted a system of judges—leaders, that would come and go. Not kings, not sovereigns, but judges who would help people, help God's people, remember to be dedicated to him and him alone, to keep the covenant.

Now, there were some incredibly beautiful, high moments in this period in this system of the judges. There were some devastating low moments. When we get to Samuel, we've come to what is effectively the last judge. Now, Samuel tried to name his successors. He tried to name his sons as the judges over Israel after him. But what we're going to find is that Israel, the people, had something else in mind. So listen with me as we read 1st Samuel chapter 8, beginning in verse four.

"Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Rama. And they said to him, behold, you've grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now, appoint a king for us to judge us like all the other nations. This thing was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed to the Lord."

Now, of all the things the people came and said to Samuel—even their asking for a king—the part of it that is so devastating as I read it is that they said, "we want a king so that we can be like the other nations." These are God's unique people. Set apart for his purposes. They're supposed to be unlike all the other people of the earth. And here, they looked at the other people of the earth and said, we'd like to be a bit more like them. We'd like to be a bit more like them.

Now, Samuel, as you can imagine, was incredibly upset about this. He was devastated by it. We're not told exactly what he prayed, but I can imagine that was a prayer that was full of heartache and frustration and sadness and maybe even a bit of anger. But we've already talked about how God and his kingdom are unlike any king or queen or kingdom or ruler of this world. And that's illustrated by God's response. Verse seven.

"The Lord said to Samuel, 'Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they've rejected me from being king over them. Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day and that they have forsaken me and served other gods, so they are doing to you also. Now then, listen to their voice.



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However, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them of the procedure [could be translated custom, the way, the way] of the king who will reign over them."

Now let's just stop for a moment and even in our hearts. Just be caught up in worship of God's compassion and patience with his people. It was an astounding moment to me. Now, his compassion, first of all, is extended towards Samuel, because I can imagine at this moment, Samuel feels or felt like an abject failure. If you're the judge that led a whole group of people to say, "I think we're done with judges now," that makes you feel pretty, pretty worthless as a judge. Now, I understand it was that his sons did not follow in his ways. I understand that, but still, I think for Samuel, this feels like on my watch, everything's unraveling. But God comes and compassionately lets him know, "it's not you, Samuel, it is me. They have rejected me. I was their king. I am their king. And they've rejected me."

You think about all that God had done for the people of Israel. Just devastating. Brought them out of Egypt with his strong right arm, led them through the sea, defeated the most powerful army on the face of the earth at the time, led them through the wilderness, brought them under the leadership of Joshua, into the holy land, the promised land, and then defeated king after king after king as he was giving them the land that he promised to them. He defeated for them on their behalf, somewhere between 30 and 40 different kings during that conquest, so let's just pick the number right in the middle. God had gone 35-0 on their behalf. Undefeated. And they said in this moment, we'd like a human king, thank you very much. We'd like to be like the nations we see around us. And God, in his patience, in his compassion, does not abandon his people, but he does say if that's what you want, you can have it, but you need to understand what you're asking for.

So he told Samuel, give them a solemn warning. Tell them of the procedure of the king. Tell them how kings, how rulers, work so that they know. Make sure they're sure about this. So that's precisely what Samuel does. Gonna continue in verse 10. And as we do, listen to the words that are repeated in this explanation, this prediction that Samuel offers as a word of warning to the people. Verse 10.

"So Samuel spoke all the words of the Lord to the people who had asked of him a king. He said, 'this will be the procedure [this will be the way] of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and place them for himself in his chariots, and among his horsemen, and they will run before his chariots. He will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and fifties, and some to do his plowing and to reap his harvest and to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. He will also take your daughters for perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and your vineyards and your olive groves and give them to his servants. He'll take a tenth of your seed and of your vineyards and give to his officers and to his servants. He will also take your male servants and your female servants and your best young men and your donkeys and use them for his work.



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He will take a tenth of your flocks. And you yourselves will become his servants. Then you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the Lord will not answer you in that day."

If there is any word that jumps out, it's this one word, "take." Here's what this king will do. He will take what does not belong to him. He will take what is rightfully yours. And he will use it for his benefit, and you will be his servants. He'll take everything. Because that's how rulers, that's how kings, that's how kingdoms of this world, operate. They take. That's what it looks like when we consider what ruling and reigning looks like apart from God. That's how ruling works in this world.

But contrast this with what Jesus taught his followers, his disciples, to pray. While rulers of this world take, Jesus taught us to pray that God's kingdom would come. A word of invitation, a desire of the heart, that God in his sovereignty would come. While all the other rulers of the world come and take, God does not come if he is not invited. That is a characteristic of his kingdom that is absolutely unique in the world. There is no other kingdom like that. It operates on requests. Operates not by force, but by invitation. That's who God is.

That brings us to the final characteristic, final clarification about the kingdom. While it's absolutely true that the kingdom has always been—that God's kingdom was present in the Old Testament, that God has always been king because he has always been sovereign—something changed in Jesus, and what changed is access to the kingdom. Entrance into the kingdom can be found nowhere else but through surrender to the rightful king, to king Jesus. The way that we enter into the rule and reign of God in our life—the way we enter in, we step in, to the kingdom—is through surrendering to the king, to the one that God sent, to the one who died and rose again and ascended to heaven and currently is seated on the throne at the right hand of God, King Jesus. He is the gate. He is the doorway. He is the entrance into the kingdom of God.

But in much the same way that God, in his sovereignty, does not force people to submit to his rule. Jesus also doesn't force us to name him and submit to him and acknowledge him as king. Jesus, as king, does not force obedience. But he does invite us to surrender. He invites us to willingly give up rights to our life, to invite him to come in and sit on the throne of our life where only he belongs. He invites us to invite him, to ask that he might come in and that he might reign and rule, that we might live now under the reign and rule of God. He's the rightful king. And we now, as God's people, through our faith in him, we become citizens of the kingdom. And that is our most foundational fundamental identity. We sit under the reign of God through King Jesus.



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Three clarifications about the kingdom: It's always been. God doesn't force it, he allows people to reject his rule. An entrance into the kingdom comes through surrender to the rightful and risen king.

So now, as we think about all of that, and we consider, what does it mean then when we pray, "your kingdom come," what are the implications of that prayer? I want to consider three different implications, but I want to start with what is most personal and what is most foundational.

When we, as God's people, pray "your kingdom come," we are first and foremost offering up what is, in essence, an evangelistic prayer. We are praying that more and more people would surrender their life to King Jesus, would place their faith in him that they might enter in to the reign and the rule and the kingdom of God. Now, of course, that begins with us, every individual. We must do that. Before we can experience the goodness of the kingdom, we have to enter into it. We enter in through faith in Jesus, naming him as king, hailing him as king.

But we don't stop there. This prayer also means that we have an evangelistic fervor to our prayers and to our lives. So when we pray, "your kingdom come," I would invite you to consider different people that you know and that you love who have not yet surrendered to the rightful and risen king—asking that God would move in their life, that he would bring about evidence in their life, that he'd bring more and more people, including you, into their life in such a way that they might tell them about King Jesus, they might let them know "here is the way you can enter into the rule of God." It's an evangelistic slant to this prayer. It's a longing to see more and more people become citizens of the kingdom, and that is a way the kingdom comes. It manifests itself on the earth. It's through surrender. Through salvation.

Second way, second way this prayer will impact our life. When we pray "your kingdom come," what naturally is behind that request is an acknowledgment that there are ways and there are places where God's rule, his reign, is not being demonstrated, is not being acknowledged currently. That's what we pray—we're praying it because it's not happening and that is devastating to us. And I think, just like last week, when we think about hallowed be your name, it's so easy to think about what's happening *out there*—maybe what we see on the news, and we're going to get to that—that's the first place we want to go. My encouragement is to remember that the first point of application when we pray this prayer—after we understand this means people need to get saved—then the next question is, what in my life, what in my life needs to be surrendered to the rightful king? Are there areas of my life where I have not yet accepted that Jesus is the only one that deserves to be in charge of my life? Are there areas where I'm holding something back where I'm saying, "you know what? I got it covered. I'm thankful that you



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covered those things, but I got this part covered." We go up to the throne and we say, "hey, scooch over, just for a minute. Let me take the wheel."

It's natural for us to do that. It's our natural inclination. Even though we have surrendered when we have entered the kingdom, I think we also all know as believers, as followers of Jesus seeking to follow after him in every part of our life, we know that this surrender is something that has to continue to happen. Our natural inclination is to wander, is to start to hold stuff back. And so I need to ask, as I look at the fullness of my life, my thoughts, my feelings, the way I conduct myself in relationships, how I'm approaching my job—am I with the way that I'm approaching those things essentially saying to King Jesus, "I know better than you, and I'll be in charge here. I'll be in charge. Thank you very much."

If we are, the call then is to is to surrender. It's to, with courage, believe that it is a good thing to surrender control, to give the absolute rule and charge of our life solely to Jesus, and to trust him with everything. And so the call then is to repent. To repent and to seek to surrender, to submit to his rule and his reign in our life.

See, we as people, we are inclined towards holding on to control. When we pray "your kingdom come." And then we acknowledge that means "in my life, your kingdom come right here." It is a prayer that God would empower us to release our grip on life and surrender control to him. Lord, may your kingdom come in my life, but not only there. Not only there.

This leads to the final application. Certainly, we acknowledge that in our world, there is abundant evidence that God's reign and rule is not effectively moving forward in every corner of the earth. That is obvious. They got wars. Think about corruption in business and in politics, in all facets of life. We think about the erosion of morals that seems to increase. We think about relationships and sexual unhealth. And we think about addiction. People living in strife and conflict. Then we just think about run of the mill, everyday things—gossip and slander and envy and malice and all of these things the scripture names. And all of that is evidence that God's kingdom has not come in its fullness, and our heart longs for that to be so.

And so we say, Lord, may your kingdom come. May that final day that is somewhere in the future, may you hasten it. May it come quickly. May you in your fullness, King Jesus, come and right all the wrongs in the world, and may your reign be effective and complete and universal. May that day when every knee will bow down to you and hail you as king, Lord, may it come. When we pray, "your kingdom come," we're essentially praying, "come quickly, Lord Jesus." Because our world is desperate and it refuses to acknowledge you as king. But when you come in your fullness, that day we'll finally arrive, and we long for that day.



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And so we pray, your kingdom—your kingdom—come. Only God can bring that day. He has that day named. We pray it because our heart's longing for it to arrive. Only he can bring it about. That's something only he can do. But in the meantime, there are things that we can do. And it begins with our own surrender. Our own acknowledgment that his kingdom is the only kingdom that is worth surrendering to. Our personal little kingdom, so to speak. We are running them horribly. We are bad kings and bad queens. The only way we can step into the flourishing that God intends for us is if we surrender to the rightful king.

And so we can seek to surrender. We can ask for spirit empowered courage to open up areas of our life that maybe we are tempted to hold back. And we can repent and respond. And we can believe, we can believe with all our heart that God will use that as we increasingly surrender to him as king. He will use that to demonstrate to a broken world how good it is to surrender to King Jesus, how good it is to live alive in the kingdom right now. We can do that. And we can pray. We can ask, crying out with our heart, "Father, your kingdom, come."

And so that's what we're gonna do. That's what we're going to do today. That's what we're going to do this summer. That's what I pray we will do every day, that we will be people whose hearts will cry out. Lord, there's only one solution to this world, and all its problems, and it's that you'd be named, you'd be acknowledged as the rightful king. And so we pray, your kingdom come in my life, Your kingdom come everywhere. Because you're the only rightful king. And it's the only way this world will be set right. So let's join up together and do that now.

Our Father, we do thank you that you sent your son, that he died for our sin, that he rose from the dead, and that he ascended on high, and he reigns now and forever. And we long for the day that that reign will be so obvious, and it will be impossible to ignore. Therefore every knee will bow down. We long for that day, and so we ask, Father, may your kingdom come. May it come in our life, in our world. And may it come finally and ultimately. For the sake of your glory, we pray. Amen.

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