

In the second to last verse of the Bible God's people say, "**Amen, Come Lord Jesus.**" They are eagerly awaiting His return. You might say they can't wait for Him to come. Do you feel the same? Life isn't getting any easier by a long shot. I think of Lot who was burdened down by the lifestyles of the people in Sodom and Gomorrah. It would be so much easier if Jesus just came and ended it all. "**Come Lord Jesus.**"

But Jesus hasn't come yet, and we need to deal with the reality of life. There are still battles to be fought; battles that need to be won; battles for your soul. It is not a matter of life and death. Everyone dies; battle as they may. It is a matter of heaven and hell.

The battle involves forces from the heavenly realms; there are angels and demons fighting behind the scenes. We are not powerful enough to fight against the demons of hell with their lies. Neither are we even powerful enough to fight against our own flesh - not on our own. So we need a king to come; to fight our battles; to lead us into battle; one that can win the war.

This is what the Israelites cried to Moses for. In 1 Samuel 8 they said, "**We want a king over us. Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles.**" God gave them what they wanted. However, what they wanted wasn't so good. Saul looked good. He was a head and shoulder above the rest. But his spiritual leadership and decisions lacked. He turned out to be a flop; as did many of their kings to come. Throughout all of these failures they looked for one main King; the ultimate King; called Him the Messiah: the Anointed One; who would be chosen and sent by God to save them. But by the time Jesus came many of them were looking more for freedom from the Romans than they were freedom from sin and hell.

Even today people look to elected officials to save them from the issues of their day. Who is going to save us from our immoral society and pass laws that will promote heterosexual marriage and prevent abortion? Who is going to save the planet from pollution? Who is going to save us from ISIS? Who is going to restore America to prosperity again? Who is going to stand up for Israel and keep her safe? These are issues to be concerned about. But no politician is going to fix them all, because the issue is deeper than that. It goes down to a battle for the heart and soul. There is a liar convincing women to murder their babies. There is a seducer convincing men and women to have sex with whomever they please. There is a deceiver who has convinced the Muslims that God is not triune and Jesus is not God but the product of fornication. His name is Satan. Even apart from Satan's work there are also cravings that selfish cravings that come from within a corrupted soul; dragging our neighbors and friends into ruining their marriages; spending money they don't have; getting into arguments and saying terrible things. No mere president or politician can save anyone from them. It's like trying to swim upstream with one leg and one arm while most of the people are going the other way.

When we pray, “**Your kingdom come**” we realize that we need a more powerful and permanent King to come and rule - one powerful enough to fight against Satan and even conquer our own flesh. We need someone to come into our hearts in order to conquer us and rule over us. Think of the man who had been possessed by a legion of demons in the Bible. They tried to chain him up and he was so powerful he broke through the chains. Everyone was afraid of this man and stayed away from him, but Jesus wasn't. Our King went into battle and easily freed the man from the demons that were abusing him. With just a touch He was able to raise the dead and heal the blind. With just a word He was able to still a storm. This is our King; the one we need.

When we see Him do such powerful things it is easy to imagine that we too will be able to do powerful things. The disciples tasted this power when they too were able to chase out demons and heal the sick. They had visions of Jesus setting up a kingdom on earth and conquering over all. But we can't forget that they all ended up being imprisoned and put to death. The power didn't end up in any sort of riches or kingdoms on earth. So Jesus had to keep on reminding them, “**My kingdom is not of this world. The kingdom of God is within you.**” The battle begins within. The King has to conquer in here (the heart). So when you pray, “**Your kingdom come**” you are praying that Jesus would come in and conquer your heart and your soul, your mind and everything you say and do. You aren't just asking for advice. You aren't just asking for a life coach. You are praying for the King to come in and conquer your heart.

Yet I doubt that many of us like to think this way. We don't really want such a king. Maybe you would you rather have Jesus be your invisible Facebook friend who only likes everything you do - where there is no dislike button. Perhaps you would rather have Jesus live in your heart just to listen to you; so that He can be more like an imaginary friend that you can tell what to do. Is your prayer rather, “Your place in the corner come.” “Your servant come.” “Your sugar daddy come.” Or is it really, “Why don't you just stay in heaven and I'll call on you when I need you, ok?” Perhaps you would rather that Jesus kingdom only rule on Sunday mornings while you rule on the other six days of the week? We may not say it, but from the way we live our lives; the way we talk with Him and deal with Him; it sure would appear that way.

Jesus didn't come to be a quiet little mouse. He came to be a King. You can't expect a king to come without making some noise. When Jesus came into Jerusalem there was plenty of noise being made. The same goes with you. Imagine a mother going to live with her son who has made a mess of his life. He has overspent his money and he is nearly going to be evicted. His house is a mess. His life is a mess. The mother would speak up. She can't help but tell him he needs to cut his grass or clean the dishes. She says to him, “I raised you better than this!” But she also helps him clean up while he's there. She's not a burden on him. She cooks him meals and vacuums the house. She's active, but she also wants her son to do things too. The son would welcome his mother's help, but he would also realize that she won't just let him sit on the couch and make a mess while she's there. When God moves into the human heart it is so much more than that. He's not a nagging mother. He's our Royal King. He isn't too afraid to pry into your emotions and expose your feelings; to call you out on your

actions and give you commands. Nor should He be. He is your God and your Lord. He is your King. You are praying for Him to come into you, not stay.

There are no limits to the petition and no conditions. When we pray for His kingdom to come Jesus wants to rule in your hearts all the time. He wants to permeate your thought process. He wants to direct your actions. Listen to what Paul said in Romans chapter 8,

⁵ Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. ⁶ The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; ⁷ the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. ⁸ Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. ⁹ You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.

People don't like the idea of mind control. One of the worse things you can say about a religion is that it brainwashes the people. But the Holy Spirit doesn't work this way; making us into mindless robots. Imagine when you first meet someone that is attractive to you or who has a personality you really like. You think back on the conversation. You want to meet the person again. The person controls your thoughts; at least for a time. So you might compare how the Holy Spirit works. He engages our hearts and our souls with stories of who we are and what Christ did for us. He shows us the death and resurrection of Christ for the sins of the world. He captivates our souls. He possesses our hearts with love.

Take for instance when you read the story of the Samaritan woman at the well. Here you see Jesus engaging and talking with a woman that was living an openly sinful lifestyle. She wasn't a Jew. None of His disciples would speak with her. But Jesus doesn't just ignore her. He doesn't refuse to talk with her. She wants to get in a religious argument with Him, but He has none of it. He confronts her sin, and then says to her, "I am the Living Water that can breathe life into your soul." He engages her; offers her forgiveness; wins her with His attention and mercy. He cleans her up and changes her life. He dies for her. For those who have committed adultery; this story captures the soul. It brings tears to the eyes. It makes you realize, "Jesus wants me too."

Listen to Jesus from the cross. Hear Him care for His mother. Listen to Him pray for those who were making fun of Him. Hear the passion that comes from His voice as He cries out to the Father as He dies under our sins. Hear the King cry, "**It is finished.**" This is what God did for me. This is what He went through for me. That captures us. It shows us how compassionate and merciful God is; to go through that for me. It makes the Christian say to himself, "I will follow this God."

Paul wrote in Romans 14:17, "**The kingdom of God is . . . a matter . . . of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.**" So the kingdom comes with all of its beauty through the simple word of

Christ. We have a new attraction. We have a new reason to live. We want to bathe our children in Christ. We eagerly await the time we eat and drink of Him in the Lord's Supper. We want Him washing us on the inside and out. Everything that we have; everything that we are; everything that we do; it comes from Jesus and returns to Him. The King controls our thoughts. He motivates our words. He directs our deeds. There's a reason we come here on Sunday mornings - to receive Jesus.

It's really an odd thing if you think about it. It's almost anti-American to a point; to want someone to rule over you and in you. To confess your sins to someone; lay at His feet; beg for His forgiveness and mercy and revolve half of every church year around Christ and Him alone. And I think that is why so many people are straying from church; because they don't want a king in their lives. They don't want a pastor or elders calling them to account. They don't want their old fashioned parents telling them what to do. They want to make their own kingdom and call their own shots.

It's like the three year old who wants to put on his own shirt. You try to help him out and he says, "NO! I'll do it myself!" So you sit back and watch him struggle to put his head through the arm hole, you sit back and laugh as he struggles and can't figure it out. This is the way Americans end up and it's no laughing matter. It's terribly sad. You see it through the lives of our celebrities, and sadly in the lives of our own children. Addicted to drugs, without work, parentless children; all alone. Nonetheless they can't figure it out. They keep on crying, "I did it my way!" And as you look at the results, you can't help but ask - "How is that working for you?" When all of the long they had a King that could have taken care of them; given them peace; forgiveness; direction and hope.

We are not immune from losing what we have. So we keep on praying the Second Petition. It's such a simple and short phrase. "**Your kingdom come.**" It's not a prayer of escape. It's not a prayer of fear or resignation. We are asking Jesus to come with His power right now to rule in our hearts and minds - so that we can live in hope and not despair - to find comfort and forgiveness in the midst of sin and death - and to find strength and courage to fight against Satan, the world and our flesh.

There are many people in this world who are losing the fight and have given up the battle. They are under Satan's control. But you aren't. They need your help as well. So you also are an answer to this prayer as a member of God's kingdom. You have the word of Christ to proclaim to them; the Law and the Gospel to grab hold of their souls and free them from their slavery. This has been known as the Mission Petition, but it could also be known as the battle petition; for our Lord is a powerful and mighty King who came to conquer our souls by destroying sin's power. He came to fight for our salvation, and He won. His Spirit is fighting for the truth in the Word and through us. So we keep on praying, "**Your Kingdom Come.**" Amen.