

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

Date : 3 Jul 2022

Sermon Title : Our Father's Kingdom Come

Speaker : Rev Shannon Chan

Text : Matthew 6:10

INTRODUCTION

Despite the ambitious longings of people like Alexander the Great, the Greek king who conquered much and spread much of Greek culture, gods and political thoughts in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, history repeatedly tells us that human kingdoms rise and human kingdoms fall. It is just a matter of time. Kings, emperors, caesars, pharaohs, czars, presidents, prime ministers, dictators and regimes might have ruled with great military prowess and economic power that controlled their kingdoms, empires or nations, yet it was only for a season.

Our Father's Kingdom Come

Jesus came preaching a simple message saying, "The time has come, the Kingdom of God has come near/is near/at hand". (Mark 1:15) This Kingdom that Jesus announced transcends geographical and territorial limits. For the Jews at that time, it ignited or reignited a dream that had faded amongst them. As a people conquered by the Romans, they felt oppressed, ill-treated, and were looking for the Kingdom of God, the King, to come and intervene and save them out of their misery. Now, when Jesus appears at the scene and says this, they were probably overjoyed.

The Lord's Prayer: "Your Kingdom Come"

Even in teaching His disciples about prayer, Jesus included, "Our Father in heaven, Your Kingdom come" in the Lord's Prayer. (Matthew 6:10)

Reading the newspapers sometime back gave me the feeling that there was nothing new in it. Although there were new names of people, locations, or pictures, for me, it was all the same because it did not tell me anything really new about the kingdom of this world. It did not tell me anything new about the rise and fall of human kingdoms, within there is a greater kingdom of darkness in this world. This kingdom of darkness is obviously evident in things that are happening in certain countries, yet it is also hidden.

However, reading the timeless book called the Bible reminds us there is a Kingdom of God. So, do persevere in reading the Bible following our Transformed by the Word reading plan, and even when you have stopped or missed a day, pick up again to read

For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

on. Reading the Bible helps us better understand the sense of the prayer, namely “Our Father’s Kingdom Come” – this Kingdom of which we are a part of and live in.

Look at the phrase and terms within the Bible verse,

“kingdom” is *basileia* (Gk), which means rule, reign, kingship.

“come” is the verb *elthetō* (Gk), (from *erchomai*).

As an imperative, it would be read this way:

“Your kingdom, let it happen, Your kingdom, let it happen, let it actually take place, let it actually come”

When we pray, “Your (Thy) Kingdom come”, it means inviting God the Father’s Kingdom to take priority over our own. It will inevitably create tension or struggle within us.

Three points of tension that can arise:

A. His Kingdom overturning our kingdoms

If we are honest with ourselves, many of us spend our time expanding our own kingdoms. This comes in the form of us increasing our assets, resources and influence. Our kingdoms might include our workplace, church, mission fields, board, committees, small groups or even in the home. We can get very protective over them because we have invested much time, energy and money in them.

What does it mean for your day-to-day experience when you pray for God our Father’s Kingdom to come?

- It demands the surrender of your values to embrace His
- To surrender your will to His (Your will be done – Matt 6:10b)
- Giving up your ambition in favour of God’s ambition for you. God’s ambition for you and your ambition for yourself can be qualitatively different.
- It means letting go into His hands the reins you hold tightly onto.

“...Your kingdom come” does not invite the Father to come and watch us, but to come and rule us. We do not invite Him to partner with our lives, but to take charge of them...”
- David Timms

It requires enormous lifestyle upheaval if we are serious when we pray “Your kingdom come”.

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Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

B. Reject toxic ambition

We live in a society that values ambition. We applaud ambitious people with initiative, drive and energy. They seem to know what they want and how to get what they want. They put in long hours to achieve their ambitions. Generally, parents want their children to grow with direction and ambition. But there are unhealthy and toxic ambitions.

An example is Napoleon. His ambition led him to make the fatal mistake of attacking Russia in cold winter. His ambition to conquer the then known world led him to a coup and his final defeat at the Waterloo battle. The same mistake was made by Hitler and that ambition unchecked and uncheckable, over-ruled wisdom and better judgment.

- The Bible sees ambition and success differently. The Greek word for selfish ambition, *eritheia*, appears in various places such as Galatians 5, Philippians 1 and 2 and James 3. In James 3:16, it is said where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will be disorder in every evil practice – self-seeking selfish ambition leads to chaos.
- But there is also godly ambition. Paul considered everything as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, he counted everything as loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus his Lord. Paul went on to say, “for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ... I want to know Christ...and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings...” (Phil 3:8-10). Praying the Father’s Kingdom come, and the coming of His Kingdom means the lessening of our kingdoms. It means renouncing our own fame. This guards the heart against the appetite for the approval of man and silences the toxic love of self.

You cannot build your private kingdom and God’s eternal Kingdom at the same time. God’s Kingdom come comes against toxic self-love. The lovers of self hold to a form of outward godliness (religiosity) but have denied its power because their conduct actually nullifies their claim of faith (2 Tim 3:2-5).

C. Refuse silo thinking - be it individual or (unhealthy) group-think

Silo thinking suggests individuals, groups, boards, committees, or departments in organisations that function as standalone. Silo thinking leads to our own mini kingdom and it may innocently slip into competition between the groups or being defensive of our turf. Many efforts for the Kingdom of God can become personal attempts to actually build and protect our own turf. People get hurt most when we insist on our right to do things our way because we fear losing what we are building or have built.

- “Our Father’s Kingdom come” helps defuse such silo thinking.
- The church in ancient Corinth experienced this kind of silo thinking - where groups claimed they were for Apollo or Paul. Paul reminded them nothing about him was worth following but Christ, and Christ only is worth following.

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Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

Christian ministry is not about us nor is it for us, but for God and His Kingdom. Therefore, we need to hold loosely our achievement or allegiance.

CONCLUSION

'Our Father's Kingdom Come' is applicable to Christian ministry, church ministry and the mission fields. When God's Kingdom comes in final fulfilment, all corruptions will be taken away, and there will be healing of the nations and peoples. In the New Heaven and the New Earth, Paradise lost will be regained! Let the declaration that only to the Father belongs the Kingdom, power and glory begin here and now in you and in each one of us.

A. Review Sermon Application

Purpose: Reflect on how you have been embodying God's truth.

- 1a. How successful have you been in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do for the last FaithWalk!?
- 1b. What were some challenges you faced and what would you like to celebrate?

2. When you pray, "Your Kingdom come" in The Lord's Prayer, it means inviting God the Father's Kingdom to take priority over your own.
 - a. Were you aware of its meaning when you prayed this prayer prior to this sermon?
 - b.
 - (i) What would happen to the kingdom of darkness in this world when God's Kingdom comes here on earth?
 - (ii) What evidence shows that God's Kingdom is here on earth but has not reached its final fulfilment?

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Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

B. Relate Sermon Content

Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.

3. Read Matthew 6:10 slowly and reflect on the following:
 - a. On a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being the least and 10 the most, how much do you want God's Kingdom to come
 - (i) on earth, why?
 - (ii) in your life, why?
 - b. What lifestyle upheaval is required in your life if you are serious when you pray "Your Kingdom come"?

4. You cannot build your private kingdom and God's eternal Kingdom at the same time. God's Kingdom come comes against toxic self-love.
 - a. How would selfish, self-seeking ambition look like in someone's life, career, family or ministry?
 - b. Do you have toxic or selfish ambition for yourself or your loved ones (e.g. your children)?
 - c. Praying the Father's Kingdom come, and the coming of His Kingdom means the lessening of our kingdoms and renouncing our own fame. This guards the heart against the appetite for the approval of man and silences the toxic love of self. What is one step you can take towards this change and how can your group members help or encourage you?

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Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

C. Testimonies and Prayer

Purpose: To act to embody God's truth.

- 5a. How can silo-thinking creep into your life, career, family, small group, ministry or church?
- 5b. What is something you can do with your talents and gifts, in the above areas for "Our Father's Kingdom come"?

Suggested activities:

- i. Use your talents or gift to bring healing to someone who has been hurt.
- ii. Spend time to listen to someone whose opinion had been ignored.
- iii. Serve in an area which is different from your usual ministry in church.

- 6. Take time to pray for each other to persevere in making the necessary changes in your lives so you will mean it when you pray, "Your Kingdom come".

Optional items:

Suggested worship songs:

- 1. House of the Lord – Phil Wickham <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqfV0zeEvT8>
- 2. This Kingdom – Hillsong <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FlnBsbSCnWk>
- 3. Speak O Lord – Stuart Townend <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnBCuv7hfHA>

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