

## Pray Like Jesus

1.7.2018 Matthew 6:9-13 Bland Mason

**BIG Idea: Through Kingdom Prayer we join Jesus in the renewal of our world.**

### INTRODUCTION

- Brief Announcement: Our end of the year goal to give 15% to kingdom causes outside of CoaH, including 5% to the International Mission Board. We reached and FAR Exceeded our goal! \$155,315!!! CRAZY!!!
- The first Sunday in February we are starting a new series called “Wisdom of God in a Secular Age” and is a study through the book of 1 Corinthians so if you want to read ahead, there’s a lot of good stuff there.
- Today we are starting a series called Kingdom Prayers along with Redeemer and Renewal Churches. As we heard read just a few moments ago in Matthew 6, Jesus taught us to pray to God, “*your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven...*” (v.10)
- Now, most Christians I know struggle with a near constant low key guilt and shame about not praying enough. The one exception is when we are facing a serious problem or suffering and then often times, prayer is moved to the front burner in life.
- It is not because Christians don’t know that prayer is important. In fact most people, whether they are Christian or not, pray. According to one recent survey 79% of Americans said they had prayed in the last 3 months. So as we get going, I know most of the people in this room pray but most of us would admit we don’t pray enough and that when we do pray it is more often for what we need or want in a situation.
- So, my goal through this series is NOT to guilt and shame you into praying more. I went to seminary so I know how to do that but it has NEVER been a good motive in my life and doesn’t work for anyone else either. Don’t believe me, those of you who go to the gym regularly, notice anything different this week? First week of January is always HUGE. First week in February-December not so much. WHY? People feel guilty for not exercising so they join the gym and go... for a week.
- I don’t want you to pray because you feel guilty that you don’t pray. No. The truth is that prayer is driven by need – a desperation to connect with God and experience his power and presence in your life in some way. AND it is driven vision for the name and fame of God – that is when we desperately WANT to see God’s presence and power show up in our world and undo the brokenness.
- One thing Christians share with secular people is the desire for a world better than the one that exists now. The difference is what that looks like and how we get there. The Christian view is that the root of problems is not simply broken behavior but broken people. Broken people do broken things so the real hope to deal with something like racism is not simply education or create laws that protect minorities. It is that someone’s heart is changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ. When their heart is changed they don’t just stop being racist personally but they start being agents of change in our world.
- That’s the Kingdom of God at work and Jesus calls and invites us to be join him through prayer. This is our BIG IDEA: **Through Kingdom Prayer we join Jesus in the renewal of our world.**  
I want us to see today 1) What is the Kingdom 2) Why pray for it, and 3) How we pray for it.

PRAY – “King Jesus, may your kingdom come in our midst today... May you draw us deeper into praying for your kingdom and inspire our hearts today to see all you can and will do as we pray.”

### 1. What is the Kingdom of God?

- “The kingdom” is a big theme for Jesus. In the ESV translation, “kingdom” is mentioned 126 times in the Gospels.
- Mark begins Mark 1:14–15 “*Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.’”*

- To understand what Jesus was announcing, you have to understand the word Gospel. The word gospel means good news but not general good news. It was news that was heralded through the land that a new king had taken the throne. Jesus was saying here, the kingdom of God was finally here and that he was that King. He had come and this was good news.
  - Now, why was it good news that Jesus had come as King? Some thought it was because he would be a great military leader and set Israel free. After all, the previous kings had all been that type of leader. But Jesus' kingdom was different. It was upside down kingdom. Jesus did not come to be served but to serve. He didn't come to take power from people but to use his power to help the powerless. He didn't come to be lifted up on a throne but to be lifted up on a cross. He was given a crown of thorns and a robe and enthroned on the cross.
  - His kingdom wasn't established by conquering people but by conquering the sin and brokenness that held them and this world in bondage. His death on the cross for our sin, destroys the penalty and power of sin in our lives when we believe and trust it. We are then transferred into Jesus' Kingdom and become citizens.
  - So what is this kingdom? First, a few things it is NOT... ([SAM STORMS](#) – Pastor/Theologian)
    - It is not a geographical realm with clearly defined boundaries, such as those that separate the United States from Canada and Mexico. The kingdom, therefore, is not to be identified with any one nation or political body.
    - The kingdom of God is not that place we call heaven—at least not yet!
    - The kingdom is not the church. The church is the people through whom the reign of God's presence and power is manifest.
    - The kingdom is not a place, but a power. It is not a static thing, but a dynamic and living reign. It is not an issue of land, but of lordship!
    - The kingdom is not yet deliverance from political oppression (but it will be).
    - The kingdom is not yet renewal of the creation (but it will be).
    - The kingdom is not yet material prosperity (but it will be).
- BUT IS...
- The kingdom of God is the presence and powerful lordship of the person of the King himself: Jesus!
  - The kingdom is known and seen wherever Christ is acknowledged, where his subjects are saved, where his enemies are vanquished, and where his ways are obeyed.
  - The kingdom of God, then, is anywhere or anytime or anyone over whom Jesus Christ exercises lordship.
  - The kingdom is the King reigning in hearts and minds.
- Practically speaking, "The Kingdom of God is what the world looks like when King Jesus gets His way." - Jeff Christopherson
  - OK, so what does this look like practically? Well, looking at the NT we see the kingdom showing up in some key ways: Peace, family, justice, love.
  - In our world, where King Jesus rules, his peace rules in people's hearts. Where King Jesus rules, everyone is together part of his family. Where King Jesus rules, justice happens and spreads and every person is valued. Where King Jesus rules, people press out in love for others, even to the point of loving our enemies.
  - And the Kingdom has been moving for 2000 years: Matthew 13:33 Jesus: "*The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened.*"
  - The kingdom is moving in our city too. One way to see that is the number of churches springing up in neighborhoods across this city. Whether it is one 14 year old church south of the city made up of almost all locals see over 125 people get baptized in 2017 OR another church that saw people set free from

addiction to our own church where we have seen people experience peace and hope in the face of terminal disease, the Kingdom of God is moving across this city.

## 2. Why pray for it?

- Before we get to talking about WHY we pray for it, I think it's important to ask *WHY DON'T WE PRAY FOR IT?*
- 1. Busyness - our lives are TOO full to have margin to consistently and passionately pray for Jesus' Kingdom.
  - "American culture is probably the hardest place in the world to learn to pray. We are so busy that when we slow down to pray, we find it uncomfortable. We prize accomplishments, production. But prayer is nothing but talking to God. It feels useless, as if we are wasting time. Every bone in our bodies screams, 'Get to work.'" ~Paul Miller
- 2. Selfishness - Sin causes us to put ourselves at the center of the world so our desires and longings become paramount. The reason we don't pray for the kingdom to come is the same reason when a child sits on Santa's lap they don't tell Santa what the impoverished kid down the street wants for Christmas. We want what WE WANT! There is nothing more natural for you and I than thinking of ourselves. We want OUR KINGDOM to come.
- 3. Doubt - we struggle to believe in the power of prayer, the ability of God to rule and reign in the circumstances around us.
- 4. Don't see the value - ILL - If I told you that each day that you read your Bible and pray, I will give you \$100, how many of us would all of a sudden find the discipline to get up earlier or to carve out our lunch time. Sin causes us to see the things around us as being ultimately satisfying, not the kingdom of God.
- BUT WE NEED IT!
- Any or all of these may be at work in our hearts. But Jesus wants to invite us into affecting ETERNAL realities through kingdom prayer.
  - Kingdom prayer counteracts our busyness by keeping our eye on what matters and cutting through distractions.
  - Kingdom prayer re-orientes our hearts away from our kingdom and to Jesus' kingdom. Jesus' kingdom is not simply an alternative to my kingdom it is utter reality versus a delusion. I'd argue that to pray for God's kingdom to come is an expression of God's Kingdom coming in your life.
  - Kingdom prayer requires faith but also rewards faith as you see God answer.
  - Kingdom prayer connects reminds us what is most valuable... seeing Jesus exalted in every aspect of our life and world. The most desperate need our city has is to see Jesus' kingdom go forth here, reconciling people to God, overcoming racism, greed, selfishness, and every other root of brokenness.
- Consistent Kingdom prayer counteracts the constant, relentless pull on us to see ANYTHING else as ultimate other than God and his kingdom. Daily, kingdom-centered prayer grabs our hearts and minds and says, "God is ultimate, not me or anything that will happen to me today. God's kingdom is ultimate, not anything I can achieve today. God's reign is ultimate, not me, not my boss, not anyone!"
- Kingdom prayer orients us toward the Sovereign King who is actually in control and is at work in this world and let us join him in renewing the world. That's what the Lord's prayer is about..
- ILL - One of my strongest memories as a child is working with my dad. I joined him working and learned his ways. Yesterday, I replaced a blower motor on my wood pellet stove using a lot of the wisdom he gave me. I learned to help my dad when I was little and couldn't really do much. He would show me and let me put my hand on the wrench or hammer while he did the work. This is really what God is doing through his people when we pray. He has ordained his kingdom to go forth through the prayers of his people.
- Jesus calls us to pray Kingdom prayers in order to join him in renewing our world! This then is a catalyst for the kingdom of God to come in our lives and in the lives of those around us. If that is true, and you and I can be a part of eternal realities through prayer and what flows from it WHAT ELSE would we want to

do? What are you going to do with your time that is bigger than that? If you long to see the broken, hurting people around you experience peace, kingdom prayer is the key. If you want to see Jesus invade and bring healing in the broken spaces in our culture and world, then kingdom prayer is how we join.

### 3. How do you pray for it?

- Praying kingdom prayers means connecting our lives with the purposes of King Jesus in this world. It is a way God has ordained for us to join him in the renewal of our world. I want to challenge you to take this month to join us in praying for the kingdom of God to come in our lives, city, and world.
- So the next few weeks we are going to focus kingdom prayer on 3 big categories. There are lots of other ways for the kingdom to come in our city and world, but these 3 are weighty ones.
  - Next week: Kingdom Prayer and Racial Reconciliation: Jesus is passionate about racial reconciliation.
  - The week after: Kingdom Prayer and the Sanctity of Human Life
  - The final week: Kingdom Prayer and the Nations
- How do we pray kingdom prayers? A central way is to recognize our utter dependence on God... The entire Lord's prayer is meant to pull us out of ourselves and orient us to our dependence on God and his kingdom purposes. Not meant to be an incantation that people recite over and over again as if the words themselves are the ultimate purpose. The ultimate purpose of the Lord's prayer is to lead us to pray Kingdom prayers and to join King Jesus in the renewal of our world.
  - V.9 "Our Father in heaven, hallowed is your name." You are OUR Father. You have adopted us into your family and we depend on you. YOUR name and character is perfect and holy"
    - Pushing us to be dependent on God's mercy and character.
    - All the verbs of the prayer are in the imperative. Jesus is teaching us to "ask" with a boldness that is like a command. This can only be good because God is our Father and we are confident we are praying in line with his will.
  - V.10 "*Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*" Notice that it is not about what I want right now, or even what I need. The FIRST request in the Lord's prayer is for his Kingdom to bust forth in this world and for his sovereign will to be obeyed. We'll come back to this.
  - V.11 "*Give us this day our daily bread*" – God we are dependent on you. Our needs are supplied by you and not ultimately by what we can do with our hands.
  - V.12 "*and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.*" God we are dependent on your grace and mercy through the cross! PLEASE keep continue to extend it to us and help us to extend it to those around us.
  - V.13 "*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*" We CAN'T face temptation. We are weak and will give in. Our pride will get the best of us. Protect us from ALL evil that we might walk in holiness and we obey you in every area of life.
- This whole prayer is built around the idea that we are dependent on God's character, God's provision, and God's grace to us. When you live and pray in this realities you are already in the context to pray kingdom prayers.
- What do kingdom prayers look like Individually, CG/church, and city.
- INDIVIDUALLY praying kingdom prayer means praying for Jesus rule and reign in your life. What is one way that you are desperate for the kingdom to come in your life? Pray for that and keep praying that King Jesus as Lord will carry out his will in your mind, heart, and life and spill over into the people around you. ILL – Starting City on a Hill. Desperate for God to move in Brookline.
- CG/CHURCH – The Lord's Prayer is not a solo prayer and the kingdom of God is not a "me" thing. So, what if to actually see the kingdom come we are meant to pray TOGETHER? **KINGDOM PRAYER GUIDES** - join CoaH, Redeemer, and Renewal Churches praying across this city. CGs or Tuesday morning prayer meeting at the 133 (THIS WEEK). We are praying for Jesus to move in our church to be a counter-cultural

community, to bring healing to the sick, to bring restoration to relationships, to give hope to the hopeless, to break the power of addiction in people's lives.

- CITY – pray for Jesus kingdom to come in Boston. We will talk about this more next Sunday but Boston may be the most racist big city in America. Not Birmingham, not Dallas, not Charleston, West Virginia.... Boston. Our city NEEDS the kingdom of God and race relations is just part of it. Our city is a place of opportunity for some and absolute oppression for others.

PRAY – What kind of message on prayer would it be if we didn't take a few moments to pray for the kingdom? Would you pray for Jesus' kingdom to come in your life? That King Jesus would unite us together this month to pray for his kingdom?

- Response... communion is the reminder that no matter how little you prayed this last year, no matter how selfish you found your heart to be, no matter how sin has tripped you up in the last year, that's not how God relates to you. That on the cross, ALL your sins have been traded for ALL Jesus' righteousness. You come now, free to pray for the kingdom and join the King in the renewal of our world!

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