

**Right Hand of God**  
**Lord's Prayer: Rooted and Grounded in Love**  
**Matt. 6**

The idea of king ruling His Kingdom is quite a foreign concept to us in the West isn't it?

Its terminology that is quite archaic until this recent resurgence of movies and TV shows featuring the British Monarchy.

The King and I

You have the Crown – new coming to Netflix

Shakespeare in Love

Cinderella

The Tudors

The King's Speech

Game of Thrones

History has no shortage of disastrous kings and rulers; rulers have been homicidal and paranoid lunatics like Nero and Genghis Khan, incompetent leaders like King Edward II, and untrustworthy like King Charles I.

Whether a kingdom achieves historical greatness is largely determined by its King; by its leadership.

We're going to talk a bit about the kingdom of God this morning.

Like gravity the kingdom of God doesn't require our attention or consent in order to exist.

It just does.

God's kingdom, embracing the kingdom, living the kingdom from what we see in scripture is something very easy for us to miss.

In light of all the opposition we face from within and without, it's easy for us to lose sight of God's Kingdom, and settle for less...get caught up in all kinds of lesser kingdoms.

Do you long for more of God's Kingdom.

Maybe you've prayed God's Kingdom Come for years and have become weary. Not seeing the results you thought there would be.

Maybe you've been trying to build God's kingdom and are growing weary. But is it your kingdom to build in the first place anyways?

Maybe you've been praying God's kingdom come out here, but wonder when it will ever arrive in here (point to heart).

Maybe the Kingdom of God is more present and near than we realize too, therefore we so need God to open our eyes so we can see it all around us.

But is it wrong for us to long for more?

This now and not yet kingdom?

That's the point of the Lord's Prayer – approaching the Father, this Good King and pray, "Thy Kingdom Come."

Interesting that scripture paints a picture of heaven with all kinds of thrones...elders, apostles, and Jesus at the right hand of God.

On one occasion James and John were confused and thought this kingdom would be established right away on earth, and they wanted to sit on Jesus' right and left side.

Thrones.

Positions of authority and power.

We don't need to concern ourselves with such things. All we need to know is that Jesus is God's right hand – he is the one who supports you; who rescues you and prays for you.

**Pete Greig** – "Good news is that Jesus is praying for you. Bad news is that you'll need it."

Jesus sits at God's right hand and supports you. Prays for you. Rescues you. Protects you.

Often when we approach God in prayer, we have to realize we approach him from our human vantage point.

Any description we come up with of this Holy God is still from our human perspective...flawed, blurred, askew, and diminished.

We talked about how easy it is for all of us to project our own feelings about ourselves onto God, and as a result minimize or diminish our view of God and His character.

I forget who first said it. "God created man in his own image and we returned the favour."

This is why it is so key for us to begin the Lord's Prayer with God...Father, on His throne...as King.

The Lord's Prayer is all about praying God's kingdom come.

All through Jesus' ministry Jesus was announcing that His kingdom was present and near. That His kingdom had now come.

There was this understanding that because Jesus was there in flesh and blood, that where Christ is actually made King, you can't help but see tangible evidence of that reality.

I think the Lord's Prayer is a pretty scary prayer; with lots of implications. I wonder in our praying the kingdom, whether we are actually afraid of what it means to actually make him king.

Reflect on my teenage experience, and the importance of knowing God as this good king. And the freedom I had to submit to this good king. I think of the negative consequences that relationship saved me from.

But yet we shy away from this sort of relationship, maybe for that very reason, for what it requires of us. It's hard to submit our will to any sort of relationship, let alone a good king.

I like how **Rick McKinley** says it.

"We take the Jesus as savior message home like a real good story, but Jesus as king has no place in our lives. Kings are for fairy tales and hamburger commercials. Kings wear funny clothes and funny hats. We don't need a king. What we need, we think, is a little more defense of our doctrines and a little more time to tidy up our messes. That's all we need; then our world will go better."

As I preach this message I have to ask myself this question.

Do I want to just know God as father, or am I afraid to know Him as King? Am I living for Darcy's Kingdom, or the actual Kingdom of Jesus?

But what if God is calling us to explore, venture out of our safe understanding of God as Father and begin to explore this new mansion – this experience of God as King.

**Q: Which do you find easier? Relate to God as King, or Father?**

When I envision God on His throne I think about this phrase mentioned over and over in scripture.

## **THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD**

The scriptures repeat over and over and over the phrase, "The right hand of God". The right hand of God in scripture means strength, honor, and power.

When God saves, protects, provides, delivers, or fights it is always with his right hand and arm.

What does the right hand of God specifically stand for in scripture?

**Isaiah 48:13** plainly states the by the hand of the Lord He laid the foundation of the earth and by His right hand He laid out the heavens.

Have you ever considered the importance of this idea, God's right hand?

Is God's right hand stronger than his left? Is this a proof text for those who use to condemn those who were left-handed?

God used His right hand so should you!!

No, I don't believe so.

Interesting that these same actions are ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Colossians 1:15-20 and Hebrews 1:8-11**

Through God's right hand all things were created...

So can we say that God's right hand is Jesus Christ?

I can't reference all the texts but here are just a few...

(Ps. 63:8) My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me.

(Psa 121:5) The Lord is your keeper; The Lord is your shade at your right hand.

(Isa 41:10) Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

(Mat 26:64) Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

(Rom 8:34) Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

(Heb 12:2) looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

You will see that God's right hand in the Old Testament defeats enemies, gave the Law, saves, gives joy and pleasures, shields, teaches, upholds, acquires, plants, gives victory, does valiantly, provides shade, leads, embraces, and creates.

In the New Testament it is repeated over and over and over that Jesus after finishing the work of redemption sat down at the RIGHT HAND OF GOD.

Jesus is at God's right hand and **IS THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD!** And that He is for you, and not against you. He's interceding for you, strengthening you, upholding you....

### **So what other implications does this have on our lives?**

For those of us who are in Christ? Who have entered into the dance of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit? It is by the finished work of redemption that God legally moves in power and glory on our behalf in every conceivable way!

Jesus finished work is the strength, honor, and power of God working for mankind.

Too often Christians are trying to get things done by their own right hand. Our own authority. Our own power.

But what can our puny hands ever accomplish?

When it comes to changing hearts, drawing people to God, securing God's kingdom, only He can accomplish these things.

Approaching prayer with this understanding that it's God's Right Hand that can accomplish what we can only imagine; what we can't possibly begin to do on our own, leads well into the Lord's Prayer.

**The Lord's Prayer can be divided into two halves – petitions verses 1-3 petitions 4-6.**

The first half uses the pronoun “your” and the 2<sup>nd</sup> half uses the pronoun “us”.

**Your kingdom come, your will be done.**

**Give us our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our debts or trespasses.**

**Lead us not into temptation.**

**Deliver us.**

Jesus is teaching us to first and foremost begin praying God’s agenda, not ours.

When I pray, am I beginning with me, or with God?

If I begin with me, my agenda, I often lose my way. My prayer becomes too much about me, and not enough about God.

My prayers begin to reflect the puniness of my self rather than the holiness of God.

When I think about the puniness of our own efforts and our own idols compared with the awesomeness of God I think about this movie clip.

**HULK – “puny god.”**

I love that scene.

When I pray with myself in the predominant view all the time, and never catch a glimpse of the awesomeness of God, I come up short every time.

Now I know that often times we find ourselves in a desperate situation and we can often begin with a cry for help. Pouring out our emotions and just being honest with God with what we need.

That happens...

I can get melancholy sometimes...quite sobered in my thinking...it’s easy to begin my prayers in those times, all about myself.

But if that honest confession of vulnerability and fragileness doesn’t lead me to whom God is, I can lose myself.

So sometimes we naturally begin our prayers with “Father, give me...”.

But Jesus teaches us here just how to begin.

“Father, hallowed be your name, bring your kingdom, do your will.”

Why begin here?

Because if we begin here often our own agendas and petty issues are put into proper perspective.

And as a result our needs and wants all of a sudden don’t feel as weighty ... as heavy and burdensome.

Let's be honest. How often have you come out of a time of prayer feeling just as weary and heavy burdened as the time you began?

Could it be because we have not grasped what the Father is telling us?

Could it be because we have not caught a glimpse of who God is, and that He sits on the right hand of God?

With all authority.

The only one who can do the work in the first place.

As we begin with the Father's concerns, our concerns are put into proper perspective.

**The Lord's Prayer begins with the phrase "Our Father, who art in heaven...on His throne, high and lifted up, sovereign, and holy..."**

Seated at the Right hand of God...Jesus.

From this perspective we can then see the centre of the Lord's Prayer.

"On earth as it is in heaven."

We're beginning to catch a glimpse of God as father, holy good, holy just, holy loving...a picture of God on His throne...the Trinity, God in three persons, this relational loving

God inviting us into this relationship of love...this glorious dance.

We're leaning on the doorpost of heaven's gate, looking in and catching a glimpse of God's holiness.

And we see this phrase emerge at the very centre of the text...

"On earth as it is in heaven."

And this phrase goes with each of the three petitions.

**Hallowed be your name, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Thy kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**They will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Darrell Simpson** even wonders if the clause needs to be attached to each of the second petitions as well.

Give us our day, our daily bread...on earth as it is in heaven.

Forgive us our debts as we forgive those who trespass against us...on earth as it is in heaven.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one...on earth as it is in heaven.

This captures God's heart...to bring the reality of heaven on earth.

After all, isn't this the very reason Jesus came? Jesus being the ultimate reality of what God is like; and who God is.

**Jesus – on earth as it is in heaven.**

In heaven right now the Father's name is being hallowed, His kingdom is being actualized, and His will is being done.

So we are invited to approach this holy God with this prayer...

"O Father, make it reality here on earth! O Father, bring heaven down on earth right here!"

Sounds pretty bold to pray this way doesn't it?

**Darrell Johnson** points out a pretty amazing piece often missed in this text.

He tells the reader to pay attention to the verbs in the prayer.

Hallow, come, be done, give, forgive, lead not, and deliver."

We've already mentioned that this is Jesus, God's Right Hand who ultimately accomplishes these things.

**Darrel** also points out the mood these verbs are in – which is in the imperative.

Here's how one grammarian puts it.

"The imperative is the mood of command or entreaty – the mood of volition."

It is a very forcible tone or command."

So the verbs in the Lord's Prayer, addressed to the one who sits on the throne, the **Superior of Superiors**, are in the imperative.

They are commands, not requests.

So the prayer is to be prayed more like this.

Be hallowed! Be come! Be done!

When I first learned this it began to push some buttons – around how I saw myself...and how I often approach prayer.

Not really with any authority as a child of God. I wonder if I can pray that way? Makes me realize how much I can grow in this area; claiming my own authority in prayer as a child of God.

People who get this better than any of us are firefighters, police, army and navy – people who understand lines of authority and the role of submission.

The picture I have is a captain coming before a general, and speaking with authority, making requests, but in the end submitting to the general.

Jesus is called the Commander and Chief of the armies of heaven.

Ultimately he goes to the Father on our behalf; we intercede through Christ.

Part of what it means to be in Christ.

But do we have this sort of confidence?

### **David Benner Opening to God**

“How deep is your confidence in God’s love? Your prayer life will be no deeper than this confidence.”

Here Jesus calls his children to address God with boldness...with authority...with some force.

### **When I first saw this it caused me to reflect on our Value Statement “GET REAL”**

Sure it’s an acronym that lists our core values...

But can it also not serve to be conveying an ultimate value statement that it takes God to accomplish anything.

An actual heart-cry, or mantra that reminds us how to pray...

Our Father...get real; get real in my heart, get real in my family, in my school, in my friends and in my work-place.

It’s a declaration that only God can usher in His Kingdom.

Get hallowed; get in people’s faces, in people’s hearts, in people’s homes.

**Now some of you are feeling alarmed. How can we possibly pray this way?**

**Bossing God around.**

First we need to remember who is the one teaching us to pray this way. It’s Jesus who is telling us to speak so forcibly, so boldly to the Father.

And this is God’s Beloved Son, the beloved Son with whom the Father is well pleased.

He is the One who calls us to pray...

Be hallowed! Your name – come! Your kingdom – get done!  
Your will...

In order to guard us from taking this too far there’s something else to be noted in the text.

The first three petitions are in the passive voice.

The pros at this tell me that the passive voice is used to introduce a note of reverence. The passive voice softens the tone.

Instead of “do it” it’s more “be done, be hallowed...”.

But they’re also passive for another important reason.

It’s to remind us that only God can do what we are asking him to do.

Only God can hallow His name. Only God can bring His kingdom. Only God can do His will.

**The prayer is not...**



Let us hallow your name

Let us bring or build your kingdom.

Let us do your will.

**The prayer is “Father, you do it!”**

You hallow your name on earth as it is in heaven.

You bring your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

You make your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Do you see the difference?

How liberating this is?

We are asking God to do what only He can do.

Sure this good father, this good King invites us to join Him in what He is doing; He wants us to be involved in the process of His Kingdom coming, but we are not the ones responsible to make it happen.

**Darrell Johnson quotes D Elton.** I like how he put it.

“We mistake the kingdom request greatly if we think we are the chief actors in the drama. We may be needed, but the fundamental work for which we pray is God’s work.”

**Professor Stendahl** from Harvard says it this way.

“Prayer asks for the establishment of the kingdom of God, by God for us, not by us for God.”

**I have a confession to make.**

I put way too much onus on me in the process of seeing God’s kingdom coming.

In a culture where high production is the ultimate value it’s easy to think it’s about getting busy...making it happen...doing the things that are tangible so I am convinced that I am doing something.

For this high achiever it’s easy to downplay prayer, and up-play my own activity.

It’s hard to pray.

To stop working...and remain present to God. Be still and simply pray...

God, Father, make your name great again! Be hallowed in my heart. Be hallowed in my family...”.

It takes great faith to stop all the good activity for something apparently greater...prayer.

It takes faith to actually believe that prayer makes a difference.

It takes faith to believe that the world is chiefly transformed by getting down on our knees and praying this way...

Pete Greig's words ring in my ears.

"Pray as if it all depends on God; live as if it all depends on us."

There is a balance.

Do it Lord, only you can do it. Do it again Lord.

Be done Lord. Hallowed be your name. Let it be done.

Get real in my life Lord.  
Get real in my kid's lives.  
Get real in my family Lord.

**Prayer:**

Father, your Kingdom come, my kingdom go. Help us pry our fingers off our little kingdoms so we can embrace a far grander Kingdom...your kingdom.

Give us a glimpse of you Jesus, the very Right Hand of God, and that you are the good King in this Kingdom.

Teach us to surrender to your good reign.

O Father, your name is hallowed in heaven; hallow it on earth, in me, in my family, in Brackendale, in Squamish. O Father, your kingdom has come in heaven; cause it to come on earth, in my house, in my neighborhood, in this country. O Father, your will is done in heaven; make it be done on earth, in my work place, in the work places here in Squamish, Whistler and Vancouver and Ottawa and Baghdad and Warsaw and London

and Tehran and Jerusalem and Moscow and Damascus and Washington.

Only your right hand can accomplish this. We can't build your kingdom or make your will to happen. Only your right hand can usher great things into being. Jesus, we thank you that you are the Right Hand of God. So we believe we can pray this way. Jesus, we receive healing today by your right hand of righteousness! Lord, we receive financial help and provision by your right hand. We thank you for delivering us from our spiritual enemies through your right hand! Lord Jesus, uphold us today with your right hand of righteousness!

O Father, your name be hallowed; your kingdom come, your will be done in Brackendale and Fort Lauderdale.

Amen.