

general intro & brief recap

Good morning everyone. Welcome.

Today we are continuing our new series on the kingdom of God. This is the second week of the series.

For those that missed the first week, we looked and saw how Jesus said that he had been sent to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God. That was his purpose. We also saw how incredibly valuable and precious the kingdom of God was, like a treasure hidden in a field, or a pearl of great value. Precious, beyond imagination, yet hidden with some people not even realising that it is there. This week we will look and start to discover more. As we do I will pray.

prayer

Kingdom of God

One of the key questions about the kingdom of God, is has the kingdom of God come or not. Is everything available right here and right now, or alternatively has the kingdom of God not come and it is just something for some other time in the future. Or is there another option, are things not as simple as that.

That is a good question and it is a big question.

There are hints about this question in scripture. The disciples often thought that the kingdom of God meant kicking out the Romans who were occupying Israel. The kingdom of God to them meant national sovereignty, things being like the glory days of the past. And Jesus had to keep on saying - no, no, no it is not about that, the kingdom of God is not going to come like that, it is not going to be about things like that. It is bigger than what you can imagine, it is not a political

kingdom. It is about the values of God, it is about the will of God, it is about the reign of God.

In his teaching Jesus gave clues, hints about the kingdom of God.

For example there is some teaching in a prayer that we often say.

The prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to pray.

The Lord's prayer.

Here is some of it from Matthew chapter 6 verse 10

Your kingdom come.
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven. ¹

Do those words sound familiar?

Now Jesus was saying - pray to God, ask God for his kingdom, the kingdom of God **to come**, ask God for his will the will of God **to be done**. To be done here on earth, like it is in heaven.

So, God's kingdom coming is related to God's will being done. God's rule, and God's will happening are intertwined.

In heaven that happens all the time. In heaven, God rules, that is God's kingdom. In heaven God's will is done, that is what happens in God's kingdom, that is what happens when God rules.

But we are not in heaven we are on earth.

And the prayer asks for what happens in heaven to happen here on earth as well. For it to happen on earth **as it is** in heaven.

¹ *The Holy Bible : New Revised Standard Version*. 1989 (Mt 6:10). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

For God to rule here on earth, for God's will to happen here on earth. Just like it does in heaven. If I was going to ask for coconut palms to grow here like they do in the pacific islands, well that would mean I would want something to happen that isn't happening at that moment.

That is what **as it is** means.

It means we want something to happen that does not happen fully yet. There might be a glimpse of it. There might be a taste of what is to come. But it does not happen in full at the moment.

Now if God was reigning in full, if God's will was being done in full on earth then the prayer would be different, it would be a prayer of thanksgiving to God for what had happened. It would be thank you God that your kingdom has come and thank you God that your will is done on earth and in heaven. But that is not the prayer, instead there is an aspect of the future in this prayer. It looks forward, it is praying for something that does not always happen.

That means God does not always reign here on earth, that means God's will does not always happen here on earth. Things sometimes happen here on earth that are not part of God's kingdom, that are not part of God's will.

Yes God always turns whatever happens to good. God will recreate no matter what.

Whenever something bad happens, God will work to make sure that good will come from it.

Whatever happens God's eternal plans are not thrown out. God is above what we might do, or what might happen here on earth.

God is beyond time, God knows what is going to happen, we are not going to be tested more than we can withstand. Sometimes, occasionally God has given a

prophetic word to let people know that something bad is going to happen. All of those things are true.

But God's will does not always happen here on earth. Things sometimes happen to us and those that we love that are not part of God's kingdom, that are not part of God's rule, that are not part of God's will.

God's kingdom is **to come**, God's will is to **be done**. And those words mean that God's kingdom has not fully come yet, God does not fully reign with all of God's love, wisdom and power here on earth at the moment. And that means God's will is not fully done here on earth right now.

There are things that happen that God allows to happen, that God permits to happen but that are not the will of God.

Instead God's will is done and God fully reigns in heaven.

It is not till Jesus comes again that God's kingdom will fully come in all its power. It is not till right near the end of the bible in Revelation 11:15, that we are told, that after the seventh angel blows his trumpet there will be loud voices calling from heaven, declaring.

*"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord
and of his Messiah,
and he will reign forever and ever."*²

That is when the kingdom of the world, the earth, where we live will fully become God's kingdom. It will not totally happen until then.

That is when God's kingdom will have come in all its power, that is when what happens on earth will be like what happens in heaven. That will be when God reigns on earth. That is when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that

² *The Holy Bible : New Revised Standard Version*. 1989 (Re 11:15). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Jesus Christ is Lord. That is when, for those who love God and who follow him there will be no more mourning, no more crying and no more pain. That is when God's values, God's righteousness, God's love, compassion and justice will be shown everywhere.

That is when for those people who are "in Christ", who love God and who follow him, they will experience death being defeated. That is what God's kingdom coming in full will be like. That is what God's will being done will be like.

Since the victory has been won. It happened when Jesus died and rose again. That is when death was defeated. But our full experience of that needs to wait till Jesus comes again.

We will not see the kingdom of God and the rule of God in all its fullness and all of its glory until then. That is when we will see God's will being done.

For all of the people who say, if there is a God why does this happen, why does that happen. Why is there suffering, why is there death. That just does not seem right. Well, when Jesus comes again, when the kingdom of God comes in all its fullness, then God's will will be done. Then we will see all the glorious things that happen whenever God rules.

So we are in this time when we know what will happen. We know that the victory has been won over death. We know God's kingdom will come, but it has not come fully yet. We still experience pain and suffering.

So does that mean we need to wait till Jesus comes again before experiencing anything of God's kingdom?

Is it just something to look forward to for the future?

Should we hide away until then?

And to that I can say no.

There are things that we can experience now.

God, God's rule and God's will are not just things wrapped up in a box that is there for sometime in the future.

There are glimpses we can get now of the kingdom of God.

Jesus often used phrases like the kingdom of God has come near, and the kingdom of God has come to you. Phrases that were used when the values of the kingdom of God, God's righteousness, compassion, love and justice were shown.

They were also phrases that were used when occasionally people experienced miraculous healing from God. Since sometimes, occasionally it does happen.

Things like that provide glimpses of the kingdom of God. They provide sign posts that point to God.

Romans 14:17 says that

The kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit³

There are times when we do experience God and God's righteousness, love, compassion and justice. There are times when God's will is done, there are times when God's values shine through into our world. There are occasionally times when God does provide miraculous healing. Those times provide glimpses of the kingdom of God.

³ *The Holy Bible : New Revised Standard Version*. 1989 (Ro 14:17). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

After all the Lord's prayer talks about praying that God's will would be done, that God's kingdom would come here on earth. It is praying for those things that we get glimpses of.

Whenever God's will happens, whenever God's values shine through. In those times, then the kingdom of God draws near, and we get a glimpse of the kingdom of God here on earth.

In those times, it is as if heaven and earth touch and everybody gets just a little insight of what is to come.

It is like we get a window into what heaven, and the kingdom of God is like. I am inside in the church at the moment, I am not outside. But by looking through a window I can see the colours, the sunshine, the grass and I can have an understanding of what being outside would be like.

Whenever God's values shine through, whenever the will of God is done, whenever heaven and earth almost touch, those are the times when the kingdom of God draws near.

As followers of Jesus, we do look forward to what is to come with great anticipation. It will be wonderful to see and to experience the kingdom of God in all its fullness. That is something to look forward to - the coming of the kingdom of God.

But today is today, we are not living in the future.

Today we only have glimpses of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is near. There are also times when we experience things that are not the will of God, and for those things, God will work them through so good comes out from them.

But today we can experience a taste of the values of God, the righteousness, the peace and the joy of God.

And we can also show a glimpse to others about what those values are like.

Not by what we do in our own strength. We can't do it on our own.

But the Holy Spirit has been given to us as a promise of things to come.

A down payment, a deposit an instalment.

And we can show others what the values of God are like. What righteousness, peace and the joy of God are like.

And by our prayers and actions we can echo the words of Jesus.

Your kingdom come.
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven

Prayer...

Let us pray the Lord's prayer together.

Our Father who is in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your Kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom,
the power and the glory.
For ever and ever.
Amen.