

Day 3 – Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven

Preparing: *Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it yields a rich harvest.* - John 12:24

Pausing: A time of silent resting in God's presence.

Reading: Mark 1:14-15; 10:13-23

Reflecting: So our first greatest desire is to hallow God's name. Our second and third desires we will consider together. We do so because God's kingdom comes, it is present, when God's will is done. As we consider a kingdom coming, well might we ask, what kind of king comes with it?! Our experience with kings, as well as with other kinds of leaders, has not always been positive. Their rule can be severe, authoritarian, and self-serving. Rather than joy and anticipation, they fill us with anxiety and apprehension.

But God's arriving reign comes in and through the person of King Jesus. His program spells liberation, deliverance, and life, not slavery, domination, and death. Where people are delivered from oppression, where justice breaks in, where death and mourning and crying and pain are relieved, God's kingdom is present. Certainly, much brokenness remains. The virus of sin is still alive and active in our world. The kingdom of God is not here in all of its fullness. We get glimpses of it but don't yet experience it in the way we will when Jesus returns.

In the meantime, we can pray that more and more of God's kingdom would not only take over more and more of our world, but also that it would take over more and more of our individual lives. This happens, according to Jesus, as we turn from our sin and put his will into practice. In that vein, we need to be aware of the strong pull the many alternative kingdoms in our world have as they vie for our attention and affection. Our economic well-being is certainly one that Jesus highlights in the experience of a wealthy man who came to him. But the man was unable to surrender what Jesus points out had become his god, that thing in which he has placed his ultimate trust – his wealth.

In the gospels, Jesus points out other alternative kingdoms as well. For instance, we see reputation as being the god of a religious leader named Nicodemus. He comes to Jesus at night, so afraid of what others might think about him if they knew where he had gone. And relationships have become the ultimate source of satisfaction for the Samaritan woman who Jesus meets at a well (Jn. 3 and 4). Worth noting is that the refusal of Jesus' invitation made the wealthy man sad. The dramatic news of Lent, and now Holy Week, is that there can be no new life without first experiencing a death, no real feasting unless there has been fasting, no resurrection without first a crucifixion. The kingdom promise of Jesus is that it is in surrender to God's will that we can be glad.

Reflection Questions:

- 1. What situations reveal to you the presence of God's kingdom? It's absence?**
- 2. How do you feel about Jesus being your king?**
- 3. What kind of alternative kingdoms do you notice vying for your attention and affection?**
- 4. As you pray this phrase of the prayer, does it raise a particular place in your life where you might need to die in order to really live? Talk to Jesus about that...**

Singing/Listening: [Cornerstone](#) (click to listen)

Praying: O God who sits enthroned over the flood, help me to live in the present with you as my king and my cornerstone . . .