

Your Kingdom Come in This Church

Text: Matthew 6:10

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

This petition is part of the greatest sermon ever preached by the greatest preacher who ever preached and the least practiced sermon in His church. Chs. 5-7. This sentence is from a kingdom prayer. It is designed to help a citizen of the Kingdom to know how to pray. Matthew 5:3. It was prefaced by “Hallowed be your name,” His name is to be revered. His name will be exalted as more and more people come to faith in His one and only son, Jesus. God will receive glory when His final rule is established and His rule is universally obeyed. SO WHEN YOU AND I PRAY THIS PRAYER WE ARE COMMITTED TO CARRYING OUT THE ROLE OF EXPANDING THE KINGDOM. This is not a prayer to get things done in heaven. God rules in heaven. It is a prayer for the achievement of His work on earth. BY THE WAY THERE ARE NO SINGULAR PRONOUNS IN THIS PRAYER. It is a prayer for the gathered believers. Notice the pronouns, our and us.

One man who drew many to hear the Word of God understood the application of this verse. He was John. How did this prayer affect John the baptizer?

1. Matthew 3:1-2, 5-6 speaks of great crowds who listened, repented and were baptized. BUT ANOTHER PREACHER BEGAN TO SPEAK, the Preacher from Nazareth. His message was full of grace and authenticity as though he came from the very presence of God. And John's crowd began to dwindle, John's disciples reported that Peter, James, Nathaniel, Andrew, John and a number of others are leaving us and are following Jesus. You need to have been a preacher to fully appreciate the inner pain of watching your audience leave because there's a new preacher on the block. Let's see how John handled it.
2. Read John 3:26-30: The Kingdom preacher and the church that is committed to the kingdom prayer will understand why John said these words. [My personal inconsistency in becoming a “Kingdom Thinker” is spotty and not a model for the communicator who wants to use this message. It is offered to trigger experiences in your life where you played the role of a catalyst in kingdom building. I am not describing these events fully as I will when I preach the sermon, but giving you ideas.]

A middle school student who came to the time release class (in Dallas you could receive credit by studying Bible survey classes at your church called release time.) said after the class, “Pastor there is a for sale sign on the church across from our school. It is a large building.” Before going home that evening I went by and walked around the well maintained Presbyterian building. Then I knelt on the front lawn and asked the Lord to give us that facility. The next day I called the number and was somewhat shocked to hear these words, “Jefferson Street Auto. This is Jack May speaking.” I met with him in the afternoon with one of our members. We were seated on a

bench seat taken from an old car. After my story of how we needed a larger building, he said, "Reverend, I know that we can work with you so that you can purchase the church." The next story will be our desire to find a congregation that would enjoy our small converted funeral home. It became the first American Indian Church building in Dallas, TX.

Our church grew and started a Bible Institute. Eleven acres were purchased and a larger facility was built. Two African American churches were able to purchase the properties we had acquired. We helped start a college for African American preachers. [These were the days in which segregation was the order of the day much to my sadness, but that practice eventually necessitated my move to San Francisco. Nevertheless we were helping the Kingdom expand.

In 1982 a Homiletic professor, Dr. Craig Skinner, wrote a letter explaining to me that he and his wife were moving from Talbot Seminary to the Golden Gate Seminary in Mill Valley, CA. He suggested that the First Baptist Church of San Francisco become dually aligned with The Southern Baptist Denomination. He believed that it would give students and professors of ministering in the center of Dallas. I was somewhat shocked that the church board was open to the matter and agreed that we should begin praying about it. Well, after a year it happened and was a very kingdom like relationship between the two denominations

Kingdom building began to be a continuing journey for me and the FBC/SF. We helped believers form the first Portuguese church. (I can't remember if it were the first west of the Mississippi, or America, but certainly in CA.) Then the first of two Eritrean churches, and five Filipino churches.

I wish that I could say this was my vision, but at times I hardly knew what I was doing. Just trying to do the right thing was more or less the guideline that I followed. Charles Spurgeon said that in every trade there is a risk. To take on the sponsorship of five emigrant pastors from the Philippines was one of those risks.

But kingdom building became a mindset with me. Little did I know that God was preparing me as a catalyst for a situation in Antioch, CA. In 2007 I had accepted an invitation to be a two day a week interim minister at a church where we live. There were only forty to fifty people in attendance. After eleven months of preaching to these lovely but tired people I was totally weary of it all. But I met a very fine pastor in "In and Out" (a popular hamburger place). I introduced myself and explained that I had often heard him preach when I was not preaching. He asked me what I was doing. After a few minutes of hearing my confusion, I'm sure he must have thought, "this guy doesn't have any idea what he's doing." But he suggested we meet again soon. Well, in a period of six weeks a proposal emerged to be one church in two locations. His church with an attendance of over 3500 is connected with the Baptist General Conference. Our small membership voted 96% to give the facilities and assets to the larger church. My denomination leader said, "I think this is a miracle from God" and signed off on their legal

right to the property. Now because of kingdom thinking from both churches, there has been a fantastic refurbishing of the facilities and an attendance of nearly two hundred in the two morning services.

Thank you John for that kingdom truth. Jesus, must increase, but I must decrease. And thank you Jesus for your sacrifice for the kingdom to exist. You prefaced your great sacrifice with the words, "Yet not as I will, but as you will." Matthew 26:39

I think that there is no great gain without a little loss. *Laura Ingalls Wilder*