



Second Petition—Thy kingdom come

When Jesus talks about His kingdom, the typical assumptions that one might have do not always apply. He was not talking immediately about a temporal kingdom with a visible ruler. Jesus was not talking about a type of government that we would pay taxes to, or fight in their army. Rather, Jesus was suggesting something far deeper and rather more complex.

What does this mean? The kingdom of God certainly comes by itself without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may come to us also.

How does God's kingdom come? God's kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity.

Theologically this is one of those times when we talk about the now and the not yet. Christ's kingdom is among us now, yet not fully. The fullness of that kingdom will only be fully manifested when Jesus returns to rule over all of creation, re-created and restored. Paul suggests this in Colossians 1:13-14 when he states that "(Jesus) has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." In this passage, Paul points to Christ's kingdom by speaking of how we have been delivered now while hinting at our full deliverance, which is yet to come.

In this life, we will always live in this tension. We are made a part of God's kingdom and are a part of that kingdom taking shape through our vocational acts of service to one another. Yet, until we join with the heavenly choirs, this coming of God's kingdom will never be fully realized. So, as disciples, we are therefore tasked to serve one another and bring glimpses of God's kingdom into focus in the lives of those around us.

Thoughts for Reflection