

What is the kingdom of God?

- **Matthew 3:2** “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
- **Matthew 4:17** From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
- **Matthew 10:6-8** but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷ And as you go, ^[a]preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven ^[b]has come near.’
- **Matthew 12:28** But if I cast out the demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

The kingdom of God refers to more than just where God reigns at in Heaven and on earth because we see the aforementioned verses indicating that the coming of Christ is speaking about the breaking through of the kingdom during the earthly ministry of Christ. The kingdom of God refers to the Messiah’s reign which inaugurated at His first advent, is currently ongoing, and will be consummated in fullness at His second coming. Through Christ’s coming and His ascension, the kingdom of God is already, but not fully yet.

Just prior to His ascension, His disciples last question is about Jesus restoring the kingdom to Israel.

- **Acts 1:6-8** So, when they had come together, they *began* asking Him, saying, “Lord, is it at this time that You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ But He said to them, “It is not for you to know periods of time or appointed times which the Father has set by His own authority; ⁸ but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and Samaria, and as far as the remotest part of the earth.”

With His ascension into Heaven, the Son of Man takes His throne and begins to reign! He is reigning now and has all authority in Heaven and on earth. He will one day return to consummate the kingdom a His second coming.

- **Daniel 7:13-14** “I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. ¹⁴ “And to Him was given dominion, Glory and ^[a]a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* ^[b]language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.
- **Psalms 110:1-2** The Lord says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.” ² The Lord will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion, *saying*, “Rule in the midst of Your enemies.”

At the return of Christ the kingdom will be consummated for all eternity

- **1 Corinthians 15:20-24** But the fact is, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. ²¹ For since by a man death *came*, by a man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in ^[a]Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming, ²⁴ then *comes* the end, when He hands over the kingdom to *our* God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.
- **Daniel 2:44** In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and *that* kingdom will not be ^[a]left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.
- **2 Timothy 4:1** I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom.
- **Revelation 11:15** Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord and of His ^[b]Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.”

Jesus tells us to petition in prayer that His kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. He is reigning in Heaven, and all are in perfect submission to Him as King. We are to pray for the advancement of His kingdom on earth as His sheepfold grows. Christians are to seek the things concerning the things of God and His kingdom. We are to pray and earnestly seek the day when Christ returns to consummate His kingdom as He reigns forever. As Christians on earth we are to show in every aspect of our lives Christ's kingship and His kingdom including in our marriages, jobs, etc. We cannot honestly pray "your kingdom come" which speaks to the rule and kingship of Christ if there are areas in our lives where we don't have Him in complete kingship and rule. Let us examine our lives and as the Holy Spirit searches us, let us resolve to not have an aspect where the sovereign King of Kings is not reigning supreme.

- **Luke 12:31** But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you.
 - The disciples were already in the kingdom of God (as we are- **Colossians 1:13**), but were encouraged to seek the things concerning God and His kingdom while on earth.

Your will be done

There are two different wills that we must distinguish between.

- 1.) Decretive will- Also known as efficacious will whereby God decrees things to come to pass by His sovereignty. This is also referred to as the hidden will of God as we can not fully know His decretive will.
- 2.) Preceptive will- this speaks to will of God that has been revealed to us in scripture including in His Law commands.

God's will for our lives

So often Christians inquire about what God's will for their life is including with relationships, jobs, etc. The hidden will of God is unknown, and we cannot fully know what God has ordained for our lives. When do not know the eternal decrees of God, we must trust Him and pray that His will be done which is a prayer of surrender, trust, and worship. However, we do know the will of God in our lives: sanctification. The will of God as revealed in scripture is our sanctification (**1 Thess 4:3**) as we are to be conformed to the image of God (**Romans 8:29**). We may not know the will of God currently in whatever aspect of life we are in, but we do know that His will is for us to be obedient and grow in sanctification. Once we seek sanctification and obedience, all other things will fall into place. The petition for His will to be done in this context primarily refers to His revealed will in His scripture to be done in our lives. This is a prayer for obedience and sanctification. As all creatures in Heaven obey Him, we on this earth should have the same prayer.

- **John 14:15** "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."

We see how the model of prayer that Jesus is teaching builds on itself. We must first realize whom we are praying to and the privilege it is to call the eternal God our Father. We are then to pray that we reverence His name as holy in our mouths and also in our actions. As the desire to make His name hallowed in our lives grows, we will then desire and pray that His kingdom and rule will be in every aspect of our lives. Him being in complete rule and kingship in all aspects of our lives will result in a desire and growth in our obedience to His will that is revealed in His Word which is sanctification. Jesus is teaching a model for prayer in this verse, but He also showed us by example when in the garden He prayed "your will be done" as Christ was desiring the eternal will of the Father be accomplished as He lived a life of full obedience to the Law and to the Father. Christ inaugurated the kingdom at His first coming and is reigning now, waiting for the day He returns to consummate the kingdom. While we are on earth let us our lives reflect His kingship in all aspects of our lives. Let our lives also reflect our surrender to His efficacious and preceptive wills as we trust His will eternal decrees and long for sanctification in our lives. Let our petition be as instructed by our Lord in His sermon on the mount "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

