

# Sermon Starter – The Kingdom of God

Matthew 6:9-13, Matthew 6:28-34

## 1. Definition of the term “the Kingdom of God”

- a. The Kingdom of God (or the Kingdom of Heaven) is the rule of God on earth under the kingship of Jesus. The kingdom has come to earth with the coming of Christ, thus being present already now in time but culminating eventually in heaven with God. The benefits of God’s reign are upon God’s people now, but will be fully realized in eternity.

## 2. Exegesis of Matthew 6:9-13 and Matthew 6: 25-34

### a. Context

- i. Jesus mentioned the “kingdom” theme approximately fifty times in the book of Matthew. Obviously, it was a message that he wanted his hearers to hear and understand.
- ii. The Sermon on the Mount, which includes these two passages of scripture, is Jesus signature teaching lesson. Anabaptists take this sermon very seriously.

### b. Content

- i. The Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) highlights Jesus’ emphasis on prayer, considered a “spiritual” activity. Our communion with God comes through this activity.
- ii. The second reference (Matthew 6:25-34) has a much more practical emphasis; living in this world in a spirit of contentment and trust. There are many people in the world, including members in our Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches, who suffer daily challenges. Some suffer for their faith, others do not have enough to eat, still others experience hardship in terms of health or family concerns. In all of these and other difficult circumstances, God promises to provide for us, even though we are worried and afraid.
- iii. Together these two emphases, the spiritual and the practical, make for a balanced Christian life.
- iv. In praying the Lord’s Prayer, we are drawn into God’s agenda for this world. With the coming of God’s kingdom, God’s will, “as it is done in heaven”, is introduced and becoming increasingly real on earth. We, who pray this prayer, are agents of God’s “heavenly” plan and partners with God in answering this prayer.
- v. When we are faithful in applying kingdom priorities in our lives, Jesus makes an incredible promise: “all things will be given to you”. It is unclear to us how to specifically understand this statement, but the principle of God’s goodness and grace surely is part of the promise. Sometimes we may see it clearly evident in our lives; at other times we are reminded that some of God’s promises will be fully realized in the life to come.
- vi. To summarize, when we are kingdom members, seeking to do God’s kingdom

work, it will be reflected in our lifestyle. Concentrating on kingdom values, “as they are in heaven” and the righteousness of God as it is displayed on earth, the kingdom of God will begin to become a reality here in this world instead of merely a vision of a future heaven.

c. Outline

- i. Jesus instructs us to pray for the Kingdom (Matthew 6:9-10)
- ii. The Kingdom involves God’s will on earth (Matthew 6:10b)
- iii. The Kingdom of God is of primary importance in life (Matthew 6:33)
- iv. God promises to bless faithfulness (Matthew 6:33)

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