

THE LORD'S PRAYER | WEEK 3 — KINGDOM

INTRODUCTION: Church, we're now in Week 3 of **PRAY & STAND**, seven weeks where we're learning to do two things together. On Sundays, through the Lord's Prayer, we're learning how to **PRAY**. On Wednesdays, through the Armor of God, we're learning how to **STAND**. And I hope you're beginning to see that these aren't two separate ideas. We pray because there is a Kingdom we're seeking, and we stand because there are spiritual forces that oppose the purposes of that Kingdom. **We PRAY for God's Kingdom to come, and we STAND against everything that resists the reign of the King.**

For the last two weeks, Jesus has been teaching us where prayer begins. We started with **"Our Father."** Before Jesus teaches us what to ask for, He teaches us who we're talking to. Your Father sees you. Your Father knows you. And through Jesus, you have been invited to come to Him. That's where prayer begins. And last week Pastor Joel took us into the next phrase: **"Hallowed be your name."** Father, let Your name be holy in my life. Let Your character become visible through me. Let me represent well the name that I carry.

But today the prayer takes another step. Because once I know that God is my Father, and once I recognize that His name is holy, I have to deal with something much more uncomfortable:

Who's actually in charge of my life?

Because it's possible to call Him Father and still want to run everything yourself. It's possible to sing about Jesus being Lord and then spend the rest of the week making sure He doesn't interfere too much with your

plans. It's possible to pray for God to bless your dreams, bless your family, bless your career, bless your finances, bless your plans—and never stop to ask whether the life we're asking Him to bless is actually surrendered to Him.

Jesus teaches us to pray differently.

SCRIPTURE READING — MATTHEW 6:9-13

Every week during this series, we're hearing the entire prayer Jesus gave us because we're not simply trying to memorize information about prayer. We're learning to pray.

Matthew 6:9-13: **"This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'"**

This is the Word of the Lord.

Today we're sitting with one sentence: **"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."**

And here's our **BIG IDEA: PRAYER ALIGNS OUR LIVES WITH GOD'S KINGDOM INSTEAD OF ASKING GOD TO BUILD OURS.**

That's what Kingdom prayer does. Prayer isn't primarily about getting God aligned with me. Prayer begins aligning me with God.

HISTORICAL & BIBLICAL CONTEXT

To understand what Jesus means when He says **“Your kingdom come,”** we need to understand what Jesus means by *kingdom*. When we hear the word kingdom, we usually think about a place. A kingdom has borders, land, a castle, maybe a throne. But when Scripture speaks about the Kingdom of God, the emphasis is not first on a location. It’s on **God’s reign and God’s rule.**

That’s why when Jesus begins His public ministry in Matthew 4:17, His announcement is: **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”** Jesus is announcing that God’s reign is breaking into the world in a new way because **the King has arrived.** And you see it everywhere Jesus goes. In **Luke 11:20**, Jesus says, “If I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.” Every time darkness is pushed back, every time someone is healed, every time somebody is forgiven, every time somebody is set free, we’re getting a glimpse of what happens when the King gets His way.

And this gives us one of the great tensions of the New Testament. Jesus can say that the Kingdom **has come near**, and then only a couple chapters later teach us to pray, **“Your kingdom come.”** Which is it? Has the Kingdom come, or is the Kingdom coming? **Yes.** That’s the biblical tension theologians sometimes describe as the **already and not yet** of the Kingdom. God’s Kingdom has already broken into history through Jesus Christ. The King has come. Sin is being forgiven. Demons are being driven out. Broken people are being restored. The Gospel is going to the nations. The Holy Spirit has been poured out. Jesus has risen from the dead.

The Kingdom is already here. But look around. Is everything on earth completely submitted to God’s will? No. Is there still sin? Yes. Is there still death? Yes. Injustice? Violence? Addiction? Brokenness? Rebellion?

Yes. Paul describes this tension in **1 Corinthians 15:25–26**. Jesus already reigns, but Paul says, “He must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.” Jesus reigns **now**, and yet there are still enemies awaiting their final destruction. The Kingdom is already here, but it is not yet here in its fullness.

So **the Kingdom is not yet here in its fullness. The King has come. The Kingdom has broken in. The Kingdom is still coming. And one day the King will make all things new.** That’s the promise of **Revelation 21:5**: “He who was seated on the throne said, ‘I am making everything new!’”

And until that day, Jesus teaches His people to pray: **“Your kingdom come.”**

1. SEEK HIS KINGDOM

Notice the first word: **“Your.”** Your Kingdom. Not mine. That one word exposes something in us because all of us are capable of building little kingdoms. My plans. My career. My comfort. My reputation. My family exactly the way I want it. My future. My ministry. My money. My schedule. My way.

And then sometimes prayer becomes the place where I bring God the blueprints for my kingdom and ask Him to provide the construction crew.

“God, here’s what I’m building. Would You bless it?” “God, here’s where I’m going. Would You open the doors?” “God, here’s the outcome I’ve decided would be best. Would You make it happen?” And God certainly

invites us to bring our desires to Him. We're going to see that clearly in Gethsemane. But Kingdom prayer asks a deeper question:

“Father, what are YOU building?” Because **prayer isn't inviting God into my plans; it's inviting me into His.**

Later in this very chapter Jesus says in Matthew 6:33, **“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”** Seek **first** His Kingdom. Before my comfort. Before my reputation. Before my plans. Before my agenda. And notice Jesus doesn't say, “Seek the Kingdom when you become a pastor.” The Kingdom belongs in every part of life. If you're a teacher, seek His Kingdom in your classroom. If you're raising children, seek His Kingdom in your home. If you're running a business, seek His Kingdom through the way you lead. If you're retired, seek His Kingdom with the years God has entrusted to you. If you're a student, seek His Kingdom on your campus.

The question changes from **“How can God help me build the life I want?”** to **“How can the life God has given me participate in what He is doing?”**

STORY PROMPT — WHEN GOD INTERRUPTED MY PLAN: Share about the season when I had my life figured out. I had a plan for what I was going to do, and pastoring was NOT part of it. In fact, I had already said no to being a pastor. Talk briefly about what I thought my future would look like, how God began disrupting that plan, and the moment/season when I realized God's plan for my life was different from mine. Emphasize: I had to decide whether I wanted God to bless the life I had planned or whether I was willing to surrender my plans to what He was building.

And I'm grateful today that God didn't just give me the life I had planned. Now, most of you, God is probably not calling you to be a pastor. That's not the point of my story. Pastoring happened to be part of my surrender.

The question is: What's part of yours? What plans have you made that God never asked you to make?

Maybe you've already decided what your career has to look like. Maybe you've already decided where you need to live, how much money you need to make, what success needs to look like, who you're going to marry, what your children's future needs to look like, when you're going to retire, or exactly how the next five or ten years are supposed to go.

James actually speaks directly to this. **James 4:13-15** says, "Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.'" And then James says, "Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.'" James isn't telling us not to make plans. **He's telling us not to make ourselves king over our plans.**

And none of those plans are necessarily bad. But here's the question: Have you actually asked the King? Because something can be good and still not be God's assignment for you. Sometimes we're asking God to bless something He never asked us to build. That's why Jesus doesn't teach us to pray, "My kingdom come. My will be done. God, help me build it."

He teaches us to pray: "YOUR Kingdom come. YOUR will be done."

And church, we're actually in a very interesting season to preach this because we're going to be talking a lot around here about Building for

the Future. We're talking about roofs and air conditioning and parking lots and ministry spaces and buildings. And I believe God is in it. And as we build, I want us to carry **Psalms 127:1** with us: "Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain."

We don't want to build something and then ask God to attach His name to it. **We want to discover what God is building and join Him in it.**

But as we enter this season, I don't just want you asking, "What is Light & Life building?"

I want you asking: "God, what do You want ME to build for the future?"

Have you actually asked Him? "God, what do You want from me?"

Maybe it's your treasure. Maybe it's your talent. Maybe it's your time. Maybe God has put something in your hands that He wants to use for something bigger than you.

1 Peter 4:10 says, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace." Notice that word: **received**. Whatever is in my hands was first placed there by God. So the Kingdom question isn't just, "What do I have?" It's, **"God, what did You give it to me for?"**

I'm not going to tell you what your answer should be. I want you to ask the King. Because if we're going to call this Building for the Future, we need to make sure we're not simply building what we want for the future. We want to build what God wants for the future.

And let's be clear: We are not building Light & Life's kingdom. If all we end up with is nicer buildings, we missed it. The buildings are tools. The campus is a tool. The ministries are tools. The building isn't the

Kingdom. The building serves the Kingdom. We're building because there are people who need Jesus, children who need discipling, teenagers who need a place to encounter Christ, families who need healing, people who need freedom, churches that need planting, and nations that still need reaching.

So before we ask God to bless what we're building, let's ask: "Father, what are YOU building?" And then have enough faith to ask: "What do You want from me?" Because prayer isn't inviting God into my plans; it's inviting me into His. Your Kingdom come..

2. SURRENDER TO HIS WILL

Then Jesus takes us deeper: **"Your will be done."**

If "Your kingdom come" confronts **whose kingdom I'm building**, "Your will be done" confronts **who is actually in control**.

And this is where prayer can become uncomfortable because prayer isn't only the place where I tell God what I want. **Prayer is also the place where God reshapes what I want.**

We talked about this in Week 1: you cannot continually pray **"Your will be done"** while insisting on your own way. Some of us want God's will—as long as God's will looks like our will. "God, Your will be done. And just so we're clear, here's what Your will should probably be." We laugh, but we do this!

We pray about the relationship, but we've already decided how it needs to turn out. We pray about the job, but we've already decided which door God needs to open. We pray about our children, but we've already

written the story we want God to give them. We pray about our future while quietly telling God which answers are acceptable.

But **surrender doesn't mean I stop telling God what I want. It means what I want stops being Lord.**

Nobody demonstrates this more beautifully than Jesus. Years after Jesus taught His disciples to pray **"Your will be done,"** He entered the Garden of Gethsemane knowing the cross was before Him. Matthew 26:39 says He fell with His face to the ground and prayed: **"My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."**

Do you hear the Lord's Prayer?

Matthew 6: **"Your will be done."** Matthew 26: **"Not as I will, but as you will."** **Jesus didn't teach us a prayer He wasn't willing to live.** And notice what Jesus does not do. He doesn't pretend He doesn't have a desire. He says it plainly: **"May this cup be taken from me."** That's important for somebody because you may have thought surrender means you're not allowed to want anything.

No. Tell your Father. "Father, I want this marriage healed." "Father, I want this door to open." "Father, I want my child to come home." "Father, I want healing." "Father, I want this situation to change."

Jesus shows us that faith doesn't mean having no preference. **Faith means trusting God with your preference.**

And then comes one of the holiest words you can ever pray: **Yet.**

“Father, here’s what I want...yet.” “Here’s what I’m hoping for...yet.”
“Here’s the answer I’ve been praying for...yet.” **“Not as I will, but as You will.”**

Church, **you haven’t fully prayed “Your will be done” until you’ve given God permission to say no to yours.** That’s surrender.

And biblical surrender isn’t passive resignation. It’s not throwing your hands up and saying, “Whatever.” Surrender is active trust. It’s saying, “Father, I believe You are good enough, wise enough and faithful enough that I can obey You even when I don’t understand You.”

STORY PROMPT 2 Sons & A Sister that I love like a Daughter:

And this is where holiness enters the Lord’s Prayer. From a Wesleyan perspective, holiness isn’t simply avoiding sinful behavior. Holiness is a heart increasingly surrendered in love to God. God doesn’t merely want to modify some behaviors while I remain king of my life. He wants my heart.

And actually, if we back up one verse, listen to how Paul gets there. **Romans 12:1** says, “Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.” **Before Paul talks about discerning God’s will, he talks about surrendering ourselves to God.**

That’s why Romans 12:2 says, **“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”** Then Paul says, **“Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”**

Surrender. Transformation. Discernment.

I surrender myself to God. God transforms me. And as He transforms me, I increasingly learn to recognize and desire His will.

And **Philippians 2:13** reminds us that we don't do this alone: "It is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose."

That's grace. God is at work within us, shaping our desires and empowering our obedience.

Prayer is one of the places where that transformation happens. **Prayer doesn't just change circumstances. Prayer changes the person praying.** Your will be done.

3. LIVE HEAVEN ON EARTH

Then Jesus gives us this extraordinary phrase: **"On earth as it is in heaven."**

Think about what we're asking. How is God's will done in heaven? **Psalms 103:19-21** says, "The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all," and then describes His heavenly servants as those "who obey his word."

Completely. Joyfully. Without resistance. Nobody in heaven is negotiating with God about whether He's really Lord.

So Jesus teaches us to pray: **"Father, let it increasingly become here what it is there."**

Now, we need to be careful. Jesus isn't teaching that we're going to create the fullness of heaven on earth through human effort. Scripture points us toward the return of Jesus, the resurrection of the dead, the

final defeat of evil and the renewal of creation. We are still waiting for the day Revelation describes when God makes **“everything new.”**

But Christianity isn't merely sitting around waiting to escape earth and go to heaven either. Jesus teaches us to pray for **the reality of God's reign to become visible here and now.**

And this is where **PRAY & STAND** comes together. **We PRAY for His Kingdom to come, and we STAND against everything that resists the reign of the King.**

So what does “on earth as it is in heaven” look like? Where there is hatred, Kingdom people bring love.

- “Where there is hatred, Kingdom people bring love.” **John 13:35** — “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”
- “Where there is unforgiveness, Kingdom people practice forgiveness.” **Ephesians 4:32** — “Forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”
- “Where there is division, Kingdom people become peacemakers.” **Matthew 5:9** — “Blessed are the peacemakers.”
- “Where there is injustice, Kingdom people pursue what is right.” **Micah 6:8** — “Act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”
- “Where there is bondage, we proclaim freedom in Jesus.” **Luke 4:18** — “He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners.”
- “Where there is darkness, we shine light.” **Matthew 5:14** — “You are the light of the world.”

And **Romans 14:17** says, “The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Not because we believe we can manufacture heaven ourselves. Because **we belong to the King.**

Last week we prayed, “**Father, make Your character visible through me.**” This week we’re praying: “**Father, make Your Kingdom visible through me.**”

What if “on earth as it is in heaven” starts at your address? What if it starts in your marriage? What if it starts with how you speak to your children? What if it starts with the person you’ve refused to forgive? What if it starts in the workplace everybody complains about? What if it starts in your neighborhood?

We can spend a lot of time praying for God to change the world while resisting the change God wants to make in us. **Don’t just pray for God’s Kingdom to come around you. Surrender to God’s Kingdom within you.**

Because Kingdom prayer eventually asks: “**King Jesus, where in my life are You still being resisted?**”

GOSPEL CONNECTION — JESUS IS THE KING

And here’s the good news: Jesus didn’t merely come announcing a Kingdom. **He is the King.** Everywhere Jesus went, people received glimpses of what happens when the King reigns. Sick bodies were healed. Sinners were forgiven. Demons fled. Outsiders were welcomed. The broken were restored. The lost were found.

The Kingdom wasn't an abstract theological concept. **The King was standing in front of them.**

But here's what nobody expected: this King would establish His Kingdom through a cross. The kingdoms of this world gain power by taking. **Jesus revealed His Kingdom by giving Himself away.**

The King put on a crown—but it was made of thorns. **John 19:2-3** tells us the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, mocking Him: "Hail, king of the Jews!" They mocked Him as King without realizing **they were standing before the King.** The King was lifted up—but He was lifted onto a cross. And there Jesus took upon Himself our sin, our rebellion and all the ways we have said to God, **"My kingdom come. My will be done."** And Jesus died. But on the third day, **the King got up.** Sin couldn't defeat Him. Death couldn't hold Him. The grave couldn't keep Him. Jesus Christ is alive. And because He lives, when we pray **"Your kingdom come,"** we're not hoping Jesus might eventually become King. **Jesus is King.**

Philippians 2 says that one day **"every knee should bow"** and **"every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord."**

That's where history is going. And that's why we can PRAY. That's why we can STAND. **We don't stand hoping Jesus might win. We stand because Jesus Christ has already conquered sin, death and the grave.**

And yet until the day His Kingdom comes in fullness, the Church keeps praying: **"Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."**

BOTTOM LINE

So here's where I want this message to land: **THE KINGDOM COMES CLOSEST WHEN THE KING GETS HIS WAY IN ME.**

Before I pray about everybody else, start with me. Before I pray about what's wrong with the world, start with me. Before I ask You to change my spouse, my children, my boss, my circumstances—

King Jesus, start with me. Because the greatest obstacle to God's will in my life is often the part of my life I haven't surrendered.

CHALLENGE — OPEN YOUR HANDS

So here's our challenge this week. I want you to identify **one area you're trying to control**. Not ten. One. Maybe it's your children. Maybe it's your marriage. Maybe it's your finances. Maybe it's your career. Maybe it's your future. Maybe it's a relationship. Maybe it's your health. Maybe it's a ministry. Maybe there's an outcome you've already decided God needs to give you.

What are you holding with a clenched fist? **IMAGE: THE TIGHTER YOU GRIP IT with a water bottle**

What are you holding with a clenched fist?"

[Turn to one of the pastors.] "Pastor, hand me that water bottle for a second."

[Take the bottle and hold it loosely in an open hand.]

"See, I've just been **given something good**. There are all kinds of good things I can do with this. I can drink it when I'm thirsty. I can give it to somebody else who's thirsty. I can pour it on a plant and help

something grow. As long as I hold it like this, what I've been given can be used for what it was intended for."

[Look at the bottle.]

"And God has put some good things in your hands too. Your family. Your children. Your marriage. Your career. Your resources. Your opportunities. Your ministry. Your dreams. Your future. And there's nothing wrong with loving what God has given you. **The problem comes when I love the gift so much that I start trying to control it.**"

[Begin squeezing the bottle.]

"Because I don't want to lose it. I don't want anything to happen to it. I need it to turn out the way I planned. So I hold it a little tighter."

[Squeeze harder.] "And a little tighter. And a little tighter."

[Crush the bottle. Then pause and hold it up.] "Until eventually, **the very thing I was trying to protect is being crushed by my need to control it.**"

James 1:17 says, "Every good and perfect gift is from above." And Paul asks an incredible question in **1 Corinthians 4:7: "What do you have that you did not receive?"**

[Hold up the crushed bottle.] Think about that. **What do you have that you did not receive?** Your gifts. Your opportunities. Your resources. Your influence. Your family. Your future. Even the breath in your lungs. **If I received it from God, then I'm a steward before I'm an owner.**

The problem was never the gift. The problem was my grip.” “Maybe that’s why Jesus teaches us to pray: **‘YOUR Kingdom come. YOUR will be done.’** Because you cannot pray with a clenched fist.”

David understood this. When Israel gave toward the temple, David prayed in **1 Chronicles 29:14**, “Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.”

[Open your hand.] **That's surrender.** “God, You put it in my hand. And because it came from Your hand, **I can trust You enough to put it back in Yours.**”

INVITATION

I want to invite you to do something physical today. Just open your hands. There’s nothing magical about this posture. An open hand doesn’t automatically make you surrendered. But sometimes our body helps us express what our soul is trying to say.

“Father, this is what I want.” Open your hands. “This is what I’ve been trying to control.” Open your hands. “This is what I’m afraid to trust You with.” Open your hands. And now: **“Your kingdom come. Your will be done.”**

ALTAR RESPONSE

And maybe for some of us today, the first surrender isn’t an outcome. It’s our entire life. You’ve been trying to be king. You’ve been running your own life, carrying your own sin, choosing your own way. And today Jesus is inviting you into His Kingdom. That's exactly how **Colossians 1:13–14** describes salvation: God “has rescued us from the dominion of

darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

The good news is that the King died for you and rose again. You can turn from your sin, put your faith in Jesus Christ, and receive the new life He offers. He forgives. He restores. He makes us new. And whether you’re surrendering your life to Jesus for the first time or surrendering an area you’ve taken back for the hundredth time, our prayer is the same: **King Jesus, reign in me. IF THAT’S YOU WOULD YOU RAISE YOUR HAND?**

WEEKLY COMMISSION

Church, we’re continuing our seven-week challenge: **pray the Lord’s Prayer every day**. But this week, when you reach **“Your kingdom come, your will be done,”** slow down.

Don’t rush past it. Ask: **“Father, where am I resisting Your reign?”**

Then name what you’re holding. Open your hands.

And pray: **“Your kingdom come. Your will be done. Start with me.”**

And when you’ve prayed—**stand**. Live this week as someone who belongs to another Kingdom and follows another King.

TRINITARIAN BENEDICTION

Church, receive this blessing.

May **God the Father**, whose Kingdom is everlasting and whose will is good, teach you to trust Him with everything you cannot control. May **Jesus Christ the Son**, the crucified and risen King, reign over every part of your life and make His Kingdom visible through you. And may **the**

Holy Spirit fill you with power to pray, courage to surrender, and strength to stand until God's Kingdom comes in all its fullness.

Go as people of the Kingdom. **Pray faithfully. Stand firmly. Live surrendered.** In the name of the **Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**