

Hope Church October 11th 2026

Pray like Jesus #3

Matthew 6:9b-10

Last week we slowed down three words: Father. Our. In heaven.

- **Father** – I know who I'm talking to.
- **Our** – I know this isn't just about me.
- **In Heaven** – I know the brokenness I see isn't the only reality there is.

*** And we talked about CAESAR AUGUSTUS. Rome called him *Pater Patriae* – **Father of the Fatherland**.

*** But here's another fascinating piece of that story. In 9 BC cities in the Roman province of Asia even **reset their calendar** around AUGUSTUS' birthday. An *inscription* from PRIENE called his birth the beginning of good news for the world. ***

- Rome had a **FATHER**.
- Rome had a **KINGDOM**.
- And Rome had a **GOSPEL**.

And then a carpenter from Nazareth starts walking through Galilee. And Matthew tells us that Jesus was *proclaiming the Good News*. He is using words people already knew. But Jesus was telling a VERY DIFFERENT STORY. A story about **another King** and **another kind of kingdom**. And right there. In a world where Rome seemed to have all the power. Jesus taught his followers what I think might be the most dangerous sentences we can ever PRAY:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Matthew 6:9-10 NIV

*** One quick word about: **Hallowed be Your Name.**

*** We don't use the word *hallowed* very often. **ἁγιασθήτω** (hagiasthētō). It simply means:

May YOUR NAME **be treated as holy**. May people see You **for Who You really are**.

*** There is one little Greek word that keeps showing up here. **σου** (sou) – YOUR.

- YOUR **name**.
- YOUR **kingdom**.
- YOUR **will**.

And I think this is where the Lord's Prayer really gets uncomfortable. Because I'm quite happy praying *Our Father*. I love knowing that I have a FATHER who **knows me** and **loves me**. But then Jesus takes the prayer further. And suddenly this prayer asks more of me than I expected.

- YOUR **kingdom** – which means it isn't mine.
- YOUR **will** – which means I don't get the final word. God does.

*** Suddenly this prayer isn't simply comforting. **It's a prayer of surrender.**

*** **Your Kingdom come.**

*** The Greek word Jesus uses for KINGDOM is **βασιλεία** (basileia). When we hear the word KINGDOM, most of us picture a place. A country. A piece of land with borders around it. But the Greek word Jesus uses is less about a place and more **about a RULE. A REIGN**. It's about *who is King* and *what happens when that King is in charge*.

When Jesus teaches us to pray *Your kingdom come* he isn't saying: God, get me out of here and take me up there.

*** Jesus is TEACHING us to pray:

- Let your RULE become more visible here.

- Let this WORLD begin to look more like it does when You are King.

And this is where it gets interesting. Jesus began his ministry ANNOUNCING that the *Kingdom of Heaven* **has come near**. That God's kingdom is already breaking into our world. And you can see it wherever Jesus goes.

- The sick **is healed**.
- Hungry people **are fed**.
- Sinners **are forgiven**.

In the Gospels we start seeing *little glimpses* of what the **world looks like when God is King**.

But then Jesus teaches us in MATTHEW 6 to pray: *Your kingdom come*.

Why is Jesus inviting us to pray for something that's already here? Because it's here. **But it's not here in full yet**.

- PEOPLE still get cancer.
- MARRIAGES still fall apart.
- CHILDREN still go hungry.
- WARS still happen.

And brokenness isn't only out there. **It is in me too.** That is why I keep praying:

*** Father, let more of this world become what you intended it to be.

That means every time we pray *Your kingdom come*, there is **both hope and honesty** in that prayer.

- Hope because we've seen the kingdom in Jesus. We want God to do it again. To do it here. To do it in South Haven. To do it in my family. To do it in Hope Church. To do it in me.
- Honesty because this world isn't yet what it's supposed to be. **And neither am I.**

Because it's *easy to pray* for GOD'S KINGDOM to **come out there**. God, fix Washington.

Fix the culture. Fix them.

But Jesus brings the PRAYER **much closer**. Father, start here. Father, start with me.

Because I can't sincerely pray *Your kingdom come* while spending my life building mine.

And every one of us **has our own little kingdom**. Places in my life where I *prefer to be king*.

- KING of my time and my money and my reputation and my plans and my political ideologies and my comfort.
- KING of my **church** and my **music style** and my **seat** and my **preference** and my **way of doing things**.

And here's what makes this so CHALLENGING. I can be busy building my own little kingdom and still sound very spiritual while doing it. I can pray *Your kingdom come* when what I really mean is:

God, would you please bless the kingdom I've already built?

But *Your kingdom come* means I need to get off the throne. I heard somebody put it this way:

Your Kingdom come means my kingdom goes.

And there's ANOTHER TEMPTATION here. It's believing that *God's kingdom comes* when my side gets enough power. Get the right people in charge. Win enough battles. Gain enough influence. **And then we'll fix everything.**

But that isn't how Jesus brought his kingdom. Satan offered Jesus all the KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD and **Jesus said no**. Because Jesus doesn't build his kingdom the *way the world builds kingdoms*. His kingdom comes THROUGH a cross and THROUGH mercy and THROUGH serving and THROUGH peacemaking and THROUGH people who even learn to love their enemies.

We need to be careful that we NEVER CONFUSE God's kingdom with **our side winning**. Because no flag and no political party and no politician can ever claim to be the *Kingdom of God*.

*** Jesus is King. And only the King can bring his kingdom.

When Jesus asks me to let go of my little kingdom, he isn't asking me to **give up on something better**. He's *inviting* me to give up my TINY LITTLE THRONE for a place in His Kingdom.

*** **Take-home #1:** Your Kingdom come means my kingdom goes.

*** **Your Will be done.**

*** And then Jesus goes even deeper. The GREEK WORD for **will** is **θέλημα** (thelēma). It means someone's desire or purpose or intention.

When Jesus teaches us to pray *Your will be done* he's inviting us to say: Father, I want what You want. Not just in the WORLD AROUND ME, but **in my own life** too.

*** On TUESDAY, **Lyne was playing in Regionals**. And as her coach, I'm allowed to caddie for her. Which is wonderful. Because what teenage daughter doesn't want her dad walking beside her for six hours telling her what to do?

At one point, she had an UPHILL SHOT INTO THE GREEN. Normally from that distance, *she would hit an 8-iron*. But the green **was uphill**. There was a **little breeze**. It was **cool**. And I knew the ball wasn't going to travel quite as far.

*** I looked at everything and said: I think you need a 7-iron. She looked at me. Looked at the club. Looked back at me. And I could tell immediately. *She was NOT convinced*. **But she took the 7-iron**.

And here's the thing. There's a difference between taking the club and **trusting the call**. She stood over that ball with a 7-iron in her hands and **an 8-**

iron in her heart. She DIDN'T COMMIT to the shot. Didn't make *her normal swing*. And the ball came up short of the green.

Now, everything inside me wanted to say: **SEE! I TOLD YOU!** But apparently, that's not CONSIDERED good caddying. Or good parenting. And probably not a great strategy in marriage either!

I kept my mouth shut. Which probably was a modern-day miracle. But I must give her credit. She *recovered beautifully* and *walked away with a bogey*. And the 2nd lowest post-season score in school history!

But afterward I kept thinking about that moment. Because I WONDER how often **I do the same thing with God**.

- I ASK God to guide me.
- I PRAY for His will to be done.

But most of the time I already have a **pretty good idea of what I WANT Him to say**. And when following Him MEANS doing something different from what I had in mind, that's when *it gets difficult*.

- Because I can do what God asks me to do **without ever really trusting Him**.

- I can go through the MOTIONS OF OBEDIENCE while *my heart is still holding on to what I want.*

Now, to be fair, I've given Lyne some bad club advice over the years. She probably has a list.

I contest most of it. I think she just didn't hear me correctly. But here's the DIFFERENCE.

God isn't a caddie giving me His best guess. He's my Father.

- He sees what I cannot see.
- He knows what I don't know.
- And He loves me more than I can begin to understand.

When I pray *Your will be done* I'm learning to say:

Father, I trust You more than I trust myself.

And that's not always easy. Because I WANT God to guide me. I'm just not always sure I

want Him to take me somewhere I hadn't planned on going. Sometimes I want His direction, *only if it agrees with mine.*

- But Jesus doesn't teach us to pray: Father, would You please bless what I've already decided?

- He teaches us to pray: YOUR WILL BE DONE.

And there's something important we need to understand about those words. Because we've talked about this before and I don't want to spend too much time here. But praying *Your will be done* doesn't mean that everything that happens in this broken world is exactly what God wants. If EVERYTHING HAPPENING ON EARTH were already **exactly as God desires**, why would Jesus teach us to pray *Your will be done ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN?*

We pray it because earth does not yet look like heaven.

- There is *still cancer*.
- There is *still violence*.
- There is *still sin and suffering and death*.

But God is **still sovereign**. NOTHING **catches God by surprise**. NOTHING is **beyond his authority**. And there is NOTHING so broken that God **cannot redeem it**.

This prayer isn't asking me to look at everything broken and somehow call it good. It's asking God **to make things right**.

- But it's not just a PRAYER about *what needs to change OUT THERE*.
- It's also a PRAYER about *what needs to change IN ME*.

Let Your will be done in this world. **And start with me.**

*** Jesus showed us in Gethsemane what surrender looks like when life REALLY hurts. When the stakes are really high.

Matthew tells us that Jesus was so overwhelmed with sorrow that He said He felt close to death. And then He fell on His face and prayed: My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me.

Think about that for a moment. This is JESUS. **He knows what's coming.** *He knows what the cross will mean.* And He's NOT PRETENDING that *any of this is easy*. He tells His Father **exactly what's on His heart.**

- Father, *if there's another way.*
- But then come these words: **Yet not as I will, but as You will.**
- And a little later, He prays: **My Father...may Your will be done.**

*** MATTHEW uses the same Greek words Jesus taught His disciples in the Lord's

Prayer: **γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου** – Your will be done.

Jesus is praying the very prayer He taught us. Only now He's not teaching it on a hillside.

HE'S LIVING IT IN THE GARDEN. KNOWING that a **cross is waiting for Him.**

And I think there's something incredibly important for us to understand here.

- Surrender doesn't mean PRETENDING I don't have desires of my own. **Jesus didn't.** He asked for anything but the cross.
- Surrender doesn't mean PRETENDING that following God's will is always easy. **It wasn't for Jesus.** He was sweating blood out of fear.
- And surrender certainly doesn't mean throwing up my hands and saying:
Whatever. I don't care anymore. **Jesus cared deeply.**

Surrender means I can come to God with everything that's on my heart. My fears and my questions and even the things I desperately wish were different. And still say: **Father, this is what I want. But more than anything, I want to trust You.**

*** Because *Your will be done* isn't a prayer of resignation. It's a **prayer of trust.**

But don't miss the grace here. God isn't asking us to go somewhere Jesus hasn't already been. When I pray *Your will be done*, I'm not walking into the dark alone. **I'm following Jesus** on the road He has already walked ahead of us.

*** **Take-home #2:** Your will be done isn't giving up. It's trusting the Father more than I trust myself.

*** **On earth as it is in Heaven.**

Remember what we talked about last week? Our faith isn't simply about how do I get from down here to up there? Jesus teaches us to PRAY for God's reality to reshape ours. YOUR **name**. YOUR **kingdom**. YOUR **will**. HERE.

The Bible doesn't end with *everybody escaping earth*.

- It ends with creation restored.
- God **dwelling with** his people.
- Tears wiped away.
- Death **defeated**.
- *Everything made new*.

And Jesus invites us to start living that future now.

*** PHILIP YANCEY believes PRAYER almost **works like a boomerang**. *You throw the prayer toward God* and suddenly it comes FLYING BACK AT YOU.

- Father, care for my lonely neighbor – **maybe you should go knock on the door**.

- Father, feed the hungry – **maybe you should go buy some groceries.**
- Father, bring reconciliation – **maybe you need to go make that phone call.**
- Father, let your kingdom come in South Haven – **You're already living in South Haven.**

*** Because when we pray *on earth as it is in heaven*, we aren't ONLY asking God to do something. We're MAKING **ourselves available** to be part of what he's doing.

And what if we prayed that for HOPE CHURCH? **Let this church give people a glimpse of your kingdom.** What would that look like?

- Relentless grace.
- Truth without cruelty.
- Conviction without arrogance.
- The lonely finding family.

Imagine somebody walking out of HOPE CHURCH saying: I'm still not sure what I believe about all of this. But there's something about what I experienced here today that makes me want to come back and find out more.

Maybe that's a little glimpse of on earth as it is in heaven.

MATTHEW 6 CHALLENGE #3 — OPEN HANDS

- Week one: Find your pantry.
- Week two: Father. Our. In heaven.
- This week: Open your hands.

Every day this week, start with your fists closed. And name what you're holding onto.

Maybe it's a **decision** or a **relationship** or **your future** or **your kids** or **your reputation** or **something you're afraid of losing** or **something you desperately want**.

Your little kingdom.

- And pray: *Father, may your kingdom come here*. Then slowly open your hands.

Palms up.

- And pray: *Not my will, but yours be done*.

Maybe you'll need to pray it again. That's okay. Jesus did. And then ask one final question:

Father, where can you use me to bring a little bit of heaven to earth today?

And when something comes to mind go and do that.

Closed fists. Open hands. One small step.

Two thousand years ago, **Rome carved its gospel into stone**. Augustus was FATHER. Rome was the KINGDOM. His birthday was GOOD NEWS for the world. *Where is that kingdom now?*

It's in ruins. Confined to museums. We read about it in history books.

But this morning, all over the world in churches and homes and in cathedrals and prison cells and in Africa and Asia and Europe and right here in South Haven, *people are still praying the words of a carpenter from Nazareth:*

Your kingdom come. Your will be done.

Prayer isn't getting God to do my will. Prayer is learning to trust his. **And I can trust his will because I know my Father.**