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Transcribed Message
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Matthew 6:10

Well, it doesn't really need much of a reminder that we live in a broken and fallen world. We live in a world that is seemingly increasingly filled with evil, evil people and events and circumstances. You don't even have to go back that far to the terrible tragedy in Santa Fe High School in Texas just a couple of weeks ago and the tragedy that interrupted those lives and those families. Even this week thinking that that might be the thing that dominated the news. We have the incident in Indiana and even in our own city. All around us as we watch the news, as we look in the newspaper, as we see online news sources, it seems very much at times that evil is running rampant, that bad people are doing bad things at an increasingly alarming rate. One could easily wonder why do these things happen and who is in charge? Who is in control? Who is supposed to be making sure that these kinds of things aren't taking place? It is very interesting that the Bible doesn't give us very much help in answering the first question of why. If you want to have a firsthand look at someone who tried that question it was Job. He didn't get anywhere near the response he wanted but he got an incredible response. The Bible does say a lot about the second. The Bible says an awful lot about who's in control and who is in charge, who is running this place. The Bible makes it absolutely clear that it is none other than God Himself. Until that day when evil is done away with, and that day is coming...the Bible makes it very clear that while we live in an evil time, evil will not survive. It will not go on indefinitely. Jesus says until that day comes this is what we're supposed to pray. Our Father, who are in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come and Your will be done.

Matthew 6:10 is our verse this morning. Submitting to the Lordship of Christ in every area of life might very well be our way of saying this is the first evidence that we can offer that we're fulfilling that request that we looked at this last Sunday – hallowed be Thy name. Remember we said last week that the opening petition is really the one

that dominates the whole prayer. It is that opening petition of Father, we want Your name to be great. We want fame to come to Your name. That becomes the focal point of every other request that follows, the first of which is this one here this morning.

Let's review quickly. The Lord's prayer, as we've seen it unfold before us, we have noted that it is simple and yet it is profound. It's simple enough for a small child to memorize and recite, but it is so profound that since Jesus gave us this teaching theologians and students of the Bible have grappled to understand its message, its breadth and width. It's both brief and comprehensive. You can say it in 25 seconds. We just did, and yet it gives us an outline. It gives us a path. It gives us a framework for really entering into the entire work and purposes of God. It gives us a framework for all that God wants us to pursue as we come to Him in prayer.

Then thirdly it's about access and it's about adoration. It's about access and it's about adoration. It's about access. We just prayed about that. The fact that we have access and are able to call the King of Kings and the Lord of the universe our Father, our Abba, the one that we have this personal intimate relationship with. Why do we have that? We have that because we have access through Christ. We've been adopted in the family, but there's also this matter of adoration. God, let your character, let your work, let your name become famous is really what we're asking. We want God's name and His fame to be great and for it to grow. So this morning we carry on and it is all about God's program.

Let's look at God's program. Let's begin by understanding something of God's kingdom. Your kingdom come and Your will be done. What are we talking about when we're talking about God's kingdom? Let's look. What does that mean? What does it mean? When you hear the word "kingdom", what are the words that pop up in your head? So I say kingdom, you might very well think of a king. You might think of someone who rules and reigns. You might think of a kingdom in terms of an area, the domain over which this king and this kingdom extends. Those are some words that definitely come to our minds.

Here's what I want you want to see. This idea of kingdom is a consistent theme throughout all of Scripture. This idea of kingdom starts in Genesis 1 and it doesn't end until Revelation 22. In one sense, as we come to this prayer we need to acknowledge

right at the outset that there has always been a king and there's always been a kingdom. Yet Jesus is calling us to a very specific thing here. We could go back to Genesis chapter 1:1. Here God breaks in if you will and creates and brings all of us into space, time and history when we read in the beginning Elohim God created the heavens and the earth. We're immediately confronted with the very first verse of the Bible that God created it, that God owns it, that God rules it, that He's the one who is over all of these things. The Bible doesn't give us any leeway on that either. Psalm 103:19 says the Lord has established His throne in the heavens and His kingdom rules over all. Listen to Psalm 145:13 – Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and Your dominion endures throughout all generations. Remember Daniel and his encounter with Nebuchadnezzar? Nebuchadnezzar goes through that period of time where God's judgment literally causes him to lose his mind and when he comes back to his senses this is what he says: "I Nebuchadnezzar lifted my eyes to heaven and my reason returned to me and I blessed the Most High and I praised and honored Him who lives forever, for His dominion is an everlasting dominion and His kingdom endures from generation to generation."

So we're not surprised when we get to Revelation 22 and what do you suppose is in Revelation 22? A king and a throne. You start off in Genesis 1:1 and you have God declaring that He is the king, the creator, the owner, the ruler and the one who runs it. Then you get to Revelation and there Jesus is sitting on the throne. But in between Genesis 1 and Revelation 22, something is terribly wrong. In between God creating and stating at the end everything looks good, everything is very good and Revelation 22 with this wonderful consummation and the king and the throne and the glory, in between those chapters something has gone terribly wrong. The subjects of the kingdom have gone over to the other side, and they have followed the usurper to the king. We know who they are. They're Adam and Eve. They're us. We joined with the opposing kingdom. We rebelled against the king. Genesis 3 is abundantly clear that with that choice and with that decision there came separation and death and chaos and evil. There came all manner of brokenness to humanity. That's the bad news.

Here's the good news. None of that took our Lord by surprise. God wasn't surprised at all when that happened. When Adam and Eve listened to the voice of the

serpent instead of the voice of the Spirit, it did not take God by surprise. He was not caught off guard for a moment. What we read in the rest of this book from Genesis 3 all the way to Revelation 22 is the story of God and His redemptive work and His work of restoration and renewal in the heart of men and women. That's the good news. That's the story that God wants us to understand. While we have rebelled against the king, the king intervening on our behalf is now seeking after us to find us and call us to be His children and to be in His family.

It is that King and His kingdom that we look at next. The coming of this king and his kingdom. All through the Old Testament we have this story line that develops about the promised one. It goes back to Genesis 3:15 when God pronounces the judgment upon the serpent and says there is going to come one who is going to crush your head, Satan. He is going to crush your head, serpent, even though you will bruise his heel. That was the first proclamation of the gospel. It was the first indicator that the king was coming and He would bring again renewal and restoration to the people of God. All the story of the Old Testament tells about this.

In Genesis 12, what does God do? He calls a man named Abram out of Ur and renames him Abraham. He says Abraham, through you there is going to come a nation and there's going to come a kingdom. There's going to come a people. There is going to come a rescuer, a blessing to the whole world. That was already God laying out His plan. The nation of Israel is called what? They're called a kingdom of priests. They're a kingdom of priests because they have a king who rules over them. The Messiah, right? So then you get to the New Testament in the book of Matthew right where we are and that King is here. Jesus announces that He is the Messiah.

Remember our five words that give us the entire story of the Bible? Anticipation. There is anticipation. The whole Old Testament is looking forward to this coming rescuer. Then we get to the New Testament and the Gospels and there He is. He is manifesting Himself. That's why John the Baptist and Jesus would say the kingdom is here. Here is the Messiah, the promised one. The book of Acts is all about proclamation. The Epistles is explanation and explaining what this means. Then we get to Revelation and it's consummation. The king has come back! The story that God is unfolding is fulfilled and realized in great glory and splendor.

Do you know what happens after Jesus brings the disciples together on the Mount of Ascension? Do you know before He leaves them what they asked Him? Their last question to Him is what? Jesus, You died. You've been raised again. Jesus, here You are. Is this the time? Is the kingdom here? They thought this was it. They wanted to know that the kingdom had come upon them and that this was the moment. Jesus said it's not for you to know. The times and the season? That's for the Father to know. And He was caught up and He was ascended into glory. Here's the reality. Whatever your view of end time events is, we live in between the ascension and the second coming. We live with this idea that already it is here but not yet in the way that God intends. That's why Jesus says in the fourth chapter of Matthew's Gospel and verse 17. For Jesus began to preach saying repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And then in in 4:23 "He went throughout Galilee teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom." The King is here. He is manifest. This long anticipated one has arrived.

So what are we doing when we pray as Jesus instructed us to do so in light of what we've just said about this idea of kingdom? What are we asking when we pray Father, Your kingdom come? Let's look at that. This idea of living in between the already and not yet. What are we wanting for God to do? Well, it seems to me we're wanting for there to be an ever increasing expansion of the gospel. Listen to what Paul says in Colossians chapter 1 and in verse 13: "He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son." Do you see what happens? Wherever the Gospel is proclaimed, wherever the gospel is heard, wherever the gospel is received, wherever the gospel is believed there's a kingdom transfer that takes place. The Bible describes the kingdom transfer as being transferred from a kingdom of darkness into a kingdom of light. When you believe the gospel, you are transferred from one kingdom into another. You're transferred from the kingdom of death into a kingdom of life. You move from a kingdom that is filled with rebels in a state of rebellion against the king and you move into a kingdom where the people and their hearts are to obey and submit to this king. So there is kingdom transfer.

Remember Jesus's encounter with Nicodemus when he said to Nicodemus, this gifted religious teacher, one who clearly knew that the Scriptures well but he didn't

understand the concept of being born again? He didn't understand what it was that he needed to do. He thought he had to work his way to heaven. Jesus said Nicodemus, unless you are born again you cannot see the kingdom of God. You can't see it unless you're transferred from one kingdom into another. In Matthew 28 Jesus says all authority in heaven and earth is given to Me. What is that? That is the declaration of the King. All authority has been given to Me. Now what you do? You go and you make disciples of all the nations. So what do we pray when we pray Father, Your kingdom come? We're asking for the advance of the gospel. We're asking for the expansion of the gospel.

Do we have anything to do with it? Do we have any part in that? God has given us a part of this. Now let's be clear. We're not bringing in the kingdom. It is not on us to bring in God's kingdom. We can't do that anymore than we can save ourselves. God is the one who is going to take His gospel and by His spirit is going to bring it to a heart. He's going to have tilled that soil and watered that Word. He's going to bring that new life by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. But we had a part in that. Literally when we're praying Father, Your kingdom come, we should be praying God, give me opportunities. Give me eyes to see what is around me. Give me the ability to see people who You put in my path. Father, when those opportunities are there, give me a boldness of heart to say something that might point them to spiritual truth and spiritual reality, that might help facilitate their transfer out of darkness into light and from death into life. Give me that kind of boldness, that kind of clarity. Father, those people I work with every day. They're destined for a Christless eternity in hell apart from the work of the gospel. My neighbors who live right around me, who I see maybe every day, those people need Christ. Members of my family that don't yet know the truth of the gospel or my friends. That's what we're praying. We're praying that there would be an expansion of the gospel.

Secondly, we're praying for an ever increasing submission to the Lordship of Christ. What is that? If you had one word to describe that statement, what word would it be? Discipleship. This is discipleship. Let there be an ever increasing submission to the Lordship of Christ so that people and especially ourselves are growing in our walk with God. Covenant Community Church should be afflicted with maturitis. There should be a

great outbreak, an uncontrolled outbreak of maturitis, that is that we're maturing in Christ. It is not a bad thing. It's a good thing. You want to have maturitis. That's what we are asking for here. We come to faith in Christ. That's the first step. Then the Holy Spirit of God takes up residence within our life in our heart. It's the Holy Spirit's job from that point on to bring conviction to us, to bring an understanding of the truth. Then of course with that correction, with that conviction the Holy Spirit is going to take this Word that I'm pouring into my life and He is going to bring through that Word a shaping and informing of my conscience and my mind and my heart and my will so that I am increasingly a disciple of Christ. I am increasingly one who is submitting in every area of my life to the Lordship of Christ. That is what Jesus says in Matthew 6:33 when He says seek first the kingdom of God. Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all of this other stuff will take care of itself. If we seek first of all this other stuff, we miss out on the very thing that God intends for us to realize. Colossians 3:1 – set your affection on things above not on things on the earth. Romans 14:17 – for the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking. That's news to a lot of people. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. That's what's important.

John Calvin said: "It is our responsibility to live out the invisible and make it visible." Isn't that great? Our job as disciples is to make the invisible visible. Set your affection on things above. Why? Because you have a clarity and understanding of the invisible, of the spiritual. Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Why would you do that? Because you understand that this stuff is not real. This stuff is all going to be burned up and gone at the end of the time. If you give your heart and you pursue this earthly stuff, at the end of the day you miss out on the most important stuff.

The New Testament is filled with prayers like what we're talking about here in terms of the expansion of the kingdom. The New Testament is filled with prayers for the gospel to advance. The New Testament is filled with prayers for God's people to submit increasingly to the Lordship of Christ. Do you know what you do not find the New Testament filled with in terms of the prayers that are listed and recorded for us? There is no preoccupation with the things of this physical body and of the physical things around us. It's striking. It's striking the difference between the way we pray and how

occupied we can be with this life and the visible things of this life, and how distinctively different are the recorded prayers of the Holy Spirit of God in Scripture about the kingdom of God. Study the prayers of Paul sometime. They are an incredible wealth of spiritual truth. So we're praying. We're praying for God's kingdom to come.

Thirdly, we're praying for the consummation of God's eternal purpose. What is the consummation of God's eternal purpose? The second coming of Christ. With all that will happen in regard to those end time events, that's the goal, the climax, the apex of history. The return of Christ, the return of the King to rightfully claim what is His. That's why Paul says in 1 Corinthians 16:22 "Our Lord, come". That's why the writer John in Revelation 22:20 says "Come, Lord Jesus". They wanted to see the consummation of God's eternal purpose. So when we pray pray Your kingdom come, we're stepping into the world of "already" and recognizing the "not yet" that is yet to come. We're praying for Jesus to come back. We're praying for the gospel to advance. We're praying for our hearts to be in greater submission to the King of Kings. So we pray for God's fame. We pray for his fame to be great. We want his name to be hallowed. And you know what? Right in keeping with that the first thing out of our mouth after we're praying for His name to be made great is Father, we want Your kingdom to come. We want You to be visibly seen in our lives and the way that we live. Those invisible realities? We want you to make them visible in our life so that they're more real than the stuff of this world. Nothing will lead you to greater despair and greater discouragement than when the things of this world becomes more real and more weighty and more important to you than the eternal invisible realities. That is a path to discouragement. A path to encouragement and maturity is to see a greater glory and value in that which is invisible. That's why we walk by faith. We want that to come.

The next thing we want is Your will to be done. Let's look at that phrase. Your will to be done. Understanding God's will. What do we know about God's will? What does it mean? Let's start there again. The Bible talks about the will of God in at least a couple of different ways. There might be others that people suggest, but these are the two primary ways I think that we can see the will of God in the Bible. The first is what is called the decretive will of God. The decretive will of God simply comes from the word "decree". It is what God has decreed. It could also be understood as being the secret

will of God. Now why is it the secret will of God? Because we don't know it in advance. The only way we know the decretive will of God is in the rearview mirror of life. We see what has happened behind us and we understand that God, being who He is, is the one who has ordained these things. We don't see them in advance but we do understand that God is the one who is on the throne. He is the one who is ruling. He's the one who is bringing this to pass because we know in Psalm 135:6 that whatever the Lord pleases He does in heaven and on earth. What is that? That's the decretive will of God. That is what God has determined that will happen. Remember that statement of Nebuchadnezzar? "All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing and He does according to His will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay His hand or say to Him what have you done?" Listen to that again. "He does according to His will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." That is the decretive will of God. God in eternity past – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – evidently as we understand Scripture made certain determinations, certain decrees with regard to the unfolding of the will of God.

The second idea of will though is preceptive will. The preceptive will of God. We can think of this as the revealed will of God. How do you suppose we know the revealed will of God? There's only one way to know. It is right here. The precepts of Scripture. The commands of Scripture. The directives of Scripture to our life. That's the preceptive will of God. What about this matter? Is this preceptive will of God always done? Is the preceptive will of God always obeyed? If we can say with confidence the decretive will of God is going to happen, it is purposed by God and none can stay His hand, what about the preceptive will? Here is a will of God. Is this will of God always done? Is this will of God always realized? The preceptive will of God is not always done. It certainly is not done in the world. What is it that the world thinks about the preceptive will of God? When do they think about the Bible? They think by and large we're a bunch of nuts. They think we're crazy. If we're believing in invisible things, we must have something missing. The very thing that we are encouraged to do and make the invisible visible they look at us and say you guys have lost it. So the preceptive will of God is never going to be done by the world.

So let me ask it this way. What about by believers? Is the preceptive will of God always done by believers? Sadly, the preceptive will of God is not always done in our lives. That's why we're praying. We're praying. We not only want Your kingdom to come but we want Your will to be done. How is God's will done in heaven as it is on earth? How is God's will done in heaven? It's done completely. It's done purposefully. It's done joyfully. It is done in every way that it should be done. So that's what we're praying. Father, we want in our lives for Your will to be done, this same joyful, willful, complete way as it is in heaven.

Let's look at what we're asking for. Specifically, we're asking for God's will to be done. I want to suggest three things that this could very easily include and have practical application for us. First, to start personally, God, let Your will be done in me. Let Your will be done in me. This is the personal desire of my heart. The only way you're going to get there is step back and say how it is that I know the will of God for my life. We have to be people of the book. When Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 4 verse 3 this is the will of God for your life. That's a pretty clear statement. We ought to know what follows that. 1 Thessalonians 4:3 – this is the will of God for your life, that you abstain from sexual immorality. You've got hundreds of statements like that in the Bible in which God is saying this is My will for your life. It is amazing how much time we spend in pursuit and worry and anxiety about the will of God in areas that are probably more related to the unknown than the known. Here it is. It's all there before us but we have to know the Word. If we don't know the Word, we aren't going to know the will of God for our life. Jesus said in the garden not My will, Father, but Yours be done. Not My will but Yours. The psalmist says in Psalm 40 I delight to do Your will. Your law, God, is in my heart. We have to know the Word. We have to walk in the Spirit.

Secondly, God, let Your will be done in us, in the church. We ought to pray that God's will would be being done in the life of our church, that we would be a body of believers increasingly walking in submission to the Lordship of Christ, submitting ourselves to each other, loving each other and doing all the things that God has called us to do. Remember that statement from last week, the prayer list? I would just lift it up again. Father, within us give us undistracted hearts to worship You. Reveal to us the wonders of Your Word. Deepen our faith and joy in the gospel. Cause us to treasure

Your Bride. Cause us to encourage each other and build each other up. Protect us from evil men and evil ideas. Guide our leadership as a shepherd. Equip us for Your mission. All of those things are specific things that we can be praying for each other and for us as a body so that we will be doing the will of God.

Finally, let Your will be done in the nation. Let Your will be done in the nations. Wow. Do you see again how missional, how global the view that Jesus brings to us from the Lord's prayer? This isn't just something that I claim for myself. This is a view of the world around us. We want His name to have great fame, not just in our lives, not just in our church, but in our city, in our state, in the world. We want God's will to be done not just in our lives, not just in our family, not just in our church, but in the nations. God, we pray for our own nation. We pray for our own president. We pray for our own leaders. those things that you have commanded us to do, those things that you said this is the will for your life. How about praying for believers and for the country of North Korea? Here we are on the precipice of what could be a huge breakthrough. Why would it not be the heart of the people of God that we would be praying for God's name to have fame in North Korea in a way that it hasn't had for generations, for this country to potentially be open to the gospel? You can add to that the country of Iran. How about China? How about praying for the country of Ireland who this morning as we watched the news yesterday thousands of people in the streets celebrating that they have now undone their Constitution and they can freely begin to take the lives of innocent children in the womb, celebrating the throwing off the shackles of abortion? What a heartbreaking scene to see what is what looks like a party celebrating a culture of death. Tragic. The Ukraine, Belarus, Thailand, Mozambique, Mexico – all these places where we have people from Covenant doing ministry. We ought to be praying for the nations. That's what Jesus is calling us to. Listen. When you submit to the Lordship of Christ, that is the first step in saying God, more than anything else I want Your name to be hallowed. I want Your fame to be great.

So what do we take away? In light of what Jesus tells us here, it seems to me we could summarize it this way. There's no such thing as being so heavenly minded that you're of no earthly good. That is kind of a cliché I guess of some sorts that's been around so long. Don't be so heavenly minded that you're of no earthly good. That isn't

even possible. The more heavenly minded you are, the more earthly good you are because the more likely you are to be making the invisible visible in your life. The very thing that Christ calls us to. So we want to keep our eyes on the King.

You know, my friends, this prayer that we are all so familiar with that begins with that opening statement “our Father” is a reality in our experience and in our life only if we have put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ. If you've never put your faith and trust in Christ, if you have thought that the way to heaven is that you earn it because nobody gets a free lunch. Nobody get something for nothing. If you think that God's desire is for you to earn heaven by your efforts and your works, well I have to give you some bad news. That is absolutely an impossibility. What God requires of us is 100% perfection. The Bible says all of us fall short of that because all of us have sinned. The Bible says that the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life. Kingdom transfer through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let's pray. Father, we ask again this morning for Your kingdom to come and for Your will to be done on earth, in our lives, in our church, in our nation, in our world as it is in heaven. Father, our desire right now would be for You to open up somebody's spiritual eyes so that they would see Jesus as Your Son and they would see Him as their Savior, that they would experience a transformation of life that would be eternal, taken from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, from death, father, to life. We ask that Your Holy Spirit in these moments as we close would make that increasingly clear and that there would be belief in that what Jesus did was all that was necessary. Lord, thank You for this opportunity to lift up Your name in Jesus's name. Amen.