

Thy Kingdom Come

John 18:28-40

Trinity Lutheran – Kearney, Missouri

March 3, 2010 – Wednesday of Lent II

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In the name of the Father, and of † the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. As we continue our examination of the Lord's Prayer, consider what it means when you pray for God's kingdom to come. There's a problem, isn't there? It's impossible to see God's glorious reign on earth – or where His kingdom begins and ends. After all, it isn't as if this kingdom was on display with all the pomp and circumstance of earthly kingdoms such as Pontius Pilate's – with all its attendants, magnificence, wealth and power. But Look carefully. God's reign and kingdom *is* standing there before Pilate. God's reign and kingdom is Jesus, King of kings and Lord of lords, God in human flesh, "who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man."

But see how pathetic this reign and kingdom look to us – betrayed, arrested, denied, and on trial in Pilate's court. And once Pilate's soldiers get a hold of Him, He'll look even less kingly – beaten to a pulp, the flesh of His back mercilessly flogged and ripped, mocked, wearing a purple robe and a crown of thorns, looking to be nothing more than a fake king ruling in a fraudulent kingdom. The Governor, of course, will investigate whether or not He really is a king. He'll look to see if He has a kingdom. And Jesus will confess that He is a King indeed – though not of this world. And yet He is still King of kings and Lord of lords, the One who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven. He is a Monarch, a Suffering Servant kind of king who came down from heaven not for Himself, but *for you* – who came

to procure salvation for you, me, and all humanity on Good Friday at Mount Calvary.

This Kingdom-of-God Jesus comes down from heaven to annex the entire world to Himself in His bloody Good Friday wounds – to draw all men to Himself as He's lifted high upon His throne: the Tree of the cross! And it's from that tree-crossed throne that He rules. Behold His reign as He's delivered into the hands of sinners to suffer, die, and bear in His own body an entire world of sin so that He might atone for it all – every last bit of it. "It is finished," the King declares. And in this finishing the head of the ancient, wicked dragon named Satan is crushed. Death's deep dark chill loses its crushing grip so that hell is no longer reserved for you.

And all this, Jesus teaches, all this is done without your praying – without your help – and Without your advice or consent. He just goes and does it – willingly and lovingly – all while we were still ungodly sinners – and long before we knew about this One who would come to take our sin away. So what's the point of your praying: "Thy kingdom come?" Well, that's how Jesus teaches faith to pray – with boldness and confidence that our heavenly Father will be true to His promise to give good gifts to His children – to us. So, when you pray: "Thy kingdom come," you're doing nothing more than begging the Father to bring and reveal Christ's gracious reign into your life and living here in this world.

So you pray: "Thy kingdom come," and Christ manifests His Calvary reign over you here in time. In Baptism God puts His holy name on you. And in that name, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the Father gives Him-

self to you totally and completely in His son. In that washing of water with the Word of Christ, God gives you new birth from above and makes you into a new creation. There in that water you're buried with Christ into His all-atoning death and raised up with Him to live a new life – a life of faith. And in this life God is not miserly with His mercy, for in it Jesus lords His Good Friday forgiveness over you, your life and your death. He reveals and gives it all to you in the Supper along with His body and blood given and shed for the forgiveness of your sins. There in the Sacrament God gives and does exactly

what He says, as He rescues you from the dominion of darkness and brings you into the kingdom of the Son He loves in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” What a kingdom God has given to you! What a King! What a Savior, that He would bestow on you such an eternal, priceless treasure, and everything He Himself possesses – and all to possess you! In the Name of Jesus. Amen.

And now that peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in that one true faith in Christ Jesus, unto life everlasting. Amen.