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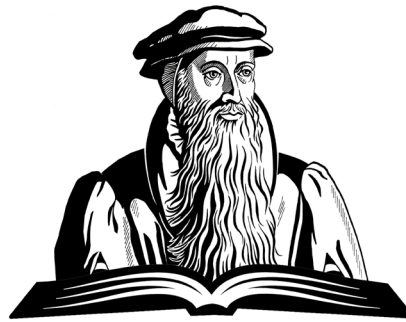
Shorter
CATECHISM

VIDEO LECTURE SERIES

by Rev. Jonathan Mattull

Lecture #55

**The Lord's Prayer:
The Second Petition**
Catechism Question 102



The John Knox Institute
of Higher Education

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Lecture #55

The Lord's Prayer: The Second Petition

Question 102: *What do we pray for in the second petition?*

Answer: *In the second petition (which is, "Thy kingdom come") we pray, That Satan's kingdom may be destroyed; and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it; and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.*

We continue our study of the *Shorter Catechism* and its treatment of the Lord's Prayer. In this lesson, we give attention to the second petition. As we do, we should remember the foundation provided us in the preface: "Our Father which art in heaven." As we do that, it helps us approach, as we remember, "with holy reverence and confidence," remembering that, as he is in heaven, he is able to provide us all that we seek, and so, though we see opposition and difficulty, and face temptation, we're directed to him who is able to provide. And as he is our Father through Jesus Christ, we come in a humble and needy way, and yet confident that he who cares for us through Christ is not only able to provide what we seek, but is willing to do the same, especially as we seek these things according to his will.

Well, from the first petition, "Hallowed be thy name," we now come to the second petition, and to help us is Question #102 from the *Shorter Catechism*: "What do we pray for in the second petition?" And the Answer: "In the second petition (which is, *Thy kingdom come*) we pray, That Satan's kingdom may be destroyed; and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it; and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened."

Well, the petition is found in Matthew 6, and verse 10, as well as in Luke 11, and verse 2. Whereas the first petition, "Hallowed be thy name," considered God more directly as himself—his name; this petition considers God more related to his way with others—his kingdom. It may be that you and I do not live in a kingdom; we live in a form of democracy or something else. Perhaps you and I have a president and congress, or a prime minister and parliament, or some other arrangement. Well, however that may be, we realize that a kingdom has a king that rules over his people. His word, his will is to guide and govern all things. And to withstand the king is to be guilty of treason. Well here, we are taught to remember that God is *the* great King, and as we realize this, we're taught to desire his reign, his authority, that his authority would be exercised throughout all the earth, and honored by all people. And as we are the ones coming unto him asking this, we're particularly asking him to bring his kingdom into our lives.

Well, for our lesson, let's look at three points: first, *A Kingdom to Destroy*; second, *A Kingdom*

to Advance; and third, *A Kingdom to Arrive*.

Well, first then, *A Kingdom to Destroy*. One reason we pray, “Thy kingdom come,” is because there is the absence of the full display of God’s reign at present in the lives of men. There’s another kingdom, a false kingdom, in fact, a rebellion that has the hearts, and minds, and lives of many, and these together are opposed to God. This stands opposed to God and his good and holy laws, and this false kingdom enslaves men and drags them to hell. It boasts of sin, and calls good evil, and evil good. And it’s overseen by none less than the father of lies, even Satan himself.

Paul acknowledged this when he wrote to the Ephesians, in chapter 2, verses 1 through 3. He’s remembering what believers once were in their sin, in their rebellion against God, and he writes, “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”

Notice just a few things: that this rebellion is universal to all men apart from God’s grace in Christ, so that even Paul says we all were once this way, he himself included. And that, in their sin, sinners are disobedient to God, and they’re fulfilling their wicked, sinful lusts. They’re rebels against the true King. However, also notice that they were following a false king. Here, Paul calls him the “prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” This is a reference to Satan, the father of lies, and the one who led mankind astray from the garden. Christ himself referred to Satan as “the prince of this world,” and he did so three times in the Gospel of John: chapter 12, verse 31; chapter 14, verse 30; and chapter 16, verse 11. Well, by this by this title, neither Jesus nor Paul meant that Satan is the highest ruler or equal to God. Rather, they’re acknowledging that he is the leader of a rebellion, and that he has set up a false and a wicked, and a deadly kingdom, in which all sinners participate through their rebellion.

Thus, in order for God’s kingdom to come, and one reason we pray that God would bring his kingdom, is because Satan’s treasonous and wicked kingdom presently holds sway over many men. We see this destruction of Satan’s kingdom when it is that his darkness, and error, and lies are overcome by the truth of God’s Word. Where error, and sin, and profanity are overthrown by the truth unto holiness, and where sinners who are enslaved willingly to their lusts, are by God’s grace through Christ, both pardoned and purified.

And so here is encouragement. We already see the destruction of Satan’s kingdom taking place. Every time God’s Word goes forth, there’s light shining into the darkness. Every time a sinner is converted, there’s a further destruction to Satan’s kingdom. Every time God’s worship is more purely advanced, we see error and superstition, the trademarks of Satan’s kingdom overthrown. And so, we already have encouragement. And so we ought to be more encouraged to continue seeking the destruction of Satan’s kingdom. In the end, we rejoice to know that Satan’s kingdom will be entirely demolished. You’ll remember in the garden of Eden, how Satan led men captive to this rebellion.

And in the garden, God gave a promise when he was speaking, and he said that there would be the seed of the woman, whose heel would be bruised by the seed of the serpent, and yet this seed of the woman should crush or bruise the serpent’s head. Well, we see this most truly fulfilled in Christ. He was indeed bruised upon his heel, we might say, by the serpent, and that chiefly upon the cross, when Christ suffered a miserable torment of crucifixion, and being made a curse for his people. We also see that he rose again, and he has already begun, as it were, overthrowing Satan’s kingdom.

And one day, not only shall this wicked kingdom be defeated, it will be entirely annihilated and destroyed. Notice in Romans 16, and verse 20, Paul gives Christians this encouragement: “And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.” This is a great comfort that every believer has access to. God will crush Satan. He does so by Christ. But what a wonder, he blesses that we should enjoy the benefit that Satan will be crushed under our very feet.

Well, second, *A Kingdom to Advance*. Graciously, God does not just destroy Satan’s kingdom. If that were all that took place, all of us would be consumed in God’s righteous anger. Remember that in our own sin, we were willing participants in this rebellion. You and I are familiar with the term “gospel”—it’s frequently found throughout the Bible, and the term itself means “good news.” Interestingly, when Christ came preaching the gospel in his earthly ministry, we see in the Gospel of Mark this joining together of gospel good news and God’s kingdom. Notice Mark 1, verse 14 and 15: “Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.” The good news is not only that Satan’s kingdom is being destroyed and will ultimately be fully destroyed. It’s that God brings his kingdom of righteousness to sinners, and he calls sinners to abandon their rebellion. He calls sinners to cast off their self-righteousness, and freely to receive the kingdom of God through Jesus Christ. He does not call us to earn entrance into the kingdom. Rather, Christ himself brings it to us. And as you’ll be familiar elsewhere, in John 14, and verse 6, Christ says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” Our entrance into the kingdom of the Father is through the King, Jesus Christ, who is the Savior of sinners. And therefore, he calls us to believe this good news, not to offer up a price for it; not to try and prepare ourselves and make ourselves those who deserve such a kingdom; but to flee from our wickedness and our rebellion, and to turn from our sin, trusting in Jesus Christ. This is why it is called a “kingdom of grace.” It comes to us by God’s grace, and receives us graciously.

Well, of this kingdom, Christ is the appointed King. He is the ruler and the governor. Remember, as the Redeemer of God’s elect, he is the Prophet, the Priest, and the King. And as King, he’s enthroned over the whole of his church even now. There are many things that come to mind. Remember that he is ascended up into the throne room of heaven, and is seated now at the right hand in the position of power and authority of the Father, and he’s been seated on a throne of grace. We hear of his kingship in Matthew 28, and of his great, verses 18 through 20: “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Notice, he’s the King. All power, all authority is his. There’s none greater, as it were. It’s his Word which must be taught. He sends forth his ambassadors, the apostles and ministers of the gospel, to go and teach, not their own thoughts, but rather, his thoughts. And they’re then to disciple and bring them into his kingdom, and keep them in that kingdom. And so you can listen, and you can hear what the *Catechism* is speaking of, that by his grace, we’ve been brought in and kept in this kingdom of grace. And you see that in the great commission, the preaching of the gospel recorded in the book of Acts, and the many appeals, and exhortations, and warnings that are given to us throughout the Scriptures, and especially in the New Testament epistles. What Christ is doing is he’s gathering in a people, and he’s building them up in that kingdom, and he’s keeping them in that kingdom, and he’s doing so all by his grace.

In Psalm 45, we sing of this. We don't have time to go through the whole Psalm, though I encourage you, if you want a good picture of the King and his kingdom, spend time meditating on Psalm 45. Notice the first three verses: "To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil, A Song of loves" (subtitle). "My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer. Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty." The heart of one renewed, who trusts in and loves Christ is taken up with the beauty and glory of Christ, and longs to see his kingdom advance. "Gird on thy sword." And likewise, the shafts, the arrows, that he shoots will bring a people into subjection unto him, and he will advance his kingdom. Oh, what a great blessing!

Christ has appointed ordinances to govern and strengthen his kingdom. He's given the preaching of his Word, the sacraments and prayer, as we've seen. He's given ministers to administer these things; elders and deacons as well to help shepherd, guide, and support his cause. After he rose again, he strengthens his kingdom by giving gifts to the church after his ascension. And when he was seated at the right hand of the Father, as Paul expresses, he then sent gifts, namely officers, to the church. Notice Ephesians 4, verse 11: "And he"—speaking of Christ—"gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." And these, of course, as he goes on to say, were meant for the service of the church, for the building up of the church. In other words, Christ cares for his kingdom by these officers he gives. Some were temporary and extraordinary, as apostles, prophets, and evangelists. Others continue to this day, as pastors and teachers, together with, as the rest of the New Testament teaches, elders and deacons. All of these are given, not only to gather in a people, but to protect and keep, and preserve that people. And all of them are given by the King.

So Christ particularly blesses his people through these gifts, and cares for them by him. And he particularly blesses the preaching of the gospel. Paul indicates this, in Romans 10, verses 13 through 17: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." This, then—the preaching of the Word of God—is the preeminent way that Christ gathers in his people, and preserves and protects them. So one thing we can say is that if you and I desire to know this kingdom of grace, we should make a priority of the preaching of his Word. This is how he advances and keeps people in his kingdom. So notice that we pray that "the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it." And he does this by his blessing of the preaching. By his grace, God brings us in and keeps us in through the preaching of Jesus Christ.

Well, third then, *A Kingdom to Arrive*. God's kingdom of grace continues to advance by the preaching of the gospel, and it will do so until the last day. At times, there are great advances through revival, as the Lord particularly pours out his Spirit, and blesses the preaching of his Word, and brings many unto himself. Other times, there's seasons of declension. Compromises seem to grow, and there's a worldliness that characterizes even the visible church. However, when we step back and survey the whole of God's work throughout history, we can see that there is an

advance of God's kingdom throughout the nations. This encourages us. However, we must admit that not everything is as it should be. Even in the best of congregations and the best of Christians, there are imperfections, and compromises, and sins. The godliest saint in this world mourns his sin and longs for perfection, not only for his own enjoyment, but also for God's great glory. Well the good news is that the kingdom of grace begun in this life will be perfected in the end. This is the kingdom that we're longing for. It's not a different kingdom. It's the same kingdom that Christ has established in this world gathering sinners unto himself, building them up, and finally on the last day, that kingdom will be perfected in glory.

The believer certainly looks forward to the privilege awaiting him at death. You'll remember from a previous lesson, that "the souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection" (Question #37). For the believer, death brings many blessings. And yet, these blessings are not the glory that is to come in its fulness. In the end, it's at the resurrection, when Christ returns, that this kingdom of grace is ultimately perfected. What Christ has begun will be perfected at his second coming. The King was crucified in shame; he was raised in glory; he ascended in glory; he's seated in glory. And yet even creation, as Paul tells us, still groans for the revelation of the sons of God, when it is his kingdom shall be manifested clearly and most gloriously (Romans 8:22–23). And this will take place when Christ returns.

The hope of the Christian is not death, though there are many blessings; it's the return of Christ, and the glory that shall then be. At that day, his people, who were maligned by the world and even terrorized by Satan, will stand victorious in glory. This is a certain day coming, and it's this which leads us to cry out, not only for the advance of the kingdom of grace, but we cry out for the coming of his kingdom of glory, "Thy kingdom come." We see it in the Apostle John, at the end of the book of Revelation. Revelation 22, and verse 20: "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Similarly, we think of Christ's return, as we see him there as he is. It's then that we will witness the whole of the universe giving honor to him. The glory he will give to us in his grace will be unimaginable at present. All of this makes our longing increase, "Thy kingdom come." This is the great longing and hope of every single believer. The glorious sight of God in Christ Jesus, and the glorious new heaven and the new earth which he has purchased and is preparing for us.

Well, with that before us as we close, let me help you see something. The best the world has to offer is nothing compared to the glory that is to come. This then should create within us this longing that Christ is teaching us to bring to the Father. However rich we may be, however healthy we may be, however happy we may be in this world, there is something far superior to come when the glory of Christ shall be made known throughout the earth. This also should comfort us in our distresses. If we're a believer, and we suffer in our bodies, or in our souls, or in our families, or whatever our circumstances are, should it not increase this desire: "Thy kingdom come."

Well, likewise, as we see the strength of false religion in our day; perhaps you are surrounded by all manner of idolatry and wickedness. This should grieve our souls, but it should not cause us to lose hope. The growth of atheism, and all manner of open displays of sin—this is difficult, saddening, and grievous to us. It angers us that God's honor should be so dishonored, and it grieves us that souls should be enslaved unto their own destruction. But we shouldn't lose hope, because God has a kingdom of grace that he brings by the preaching of the gospel. This petition gives us help in our sorrows and distresses. "Thy kingdom come;" when you see discouraging sights of sin, God has a kingdom and he has promised to advance it in this world. And as we remember this,

it quickens us then to call upon him, not in our own strength, but rather by his grace, to bring his kingdom to overthrow Satan, to establish his kingdom, truly, sincerely, and powerfully converting sinners and building up saints. Let us be much in prayer.

I want you to think of unconverted family—perhaps your parents, a sibling, a brother or sister, or a friend. They are willingly enslaved and serving Satan. And you and I, we must tell them of Christ and warn them of the wrath to come. The only hope of their being delivered is as God answers this petition, “Thy kingdom come.” And so as you think about them, and as your heart yearns for them, let it fill your heart, that it may be poured out to God, “Oh God, let thy kingdom come.”

Even as we experience the strength of sin in our own souls, and we’re ashamed by it, and we see still evidence of the reality of Satan’s work in our lives in our own sins that we come to God in our own weakness. And what are we to say? “Oh here, Lord, is yet still a place for your kingdom to come.” What an encouragement that is, that as we face discouragement, we have a petition that draws us to God, through Christ, that he would bring his kingdom with power and grace, as we await the coming of the kingdom of his glory.