Text: Lord’s Prayer

**Introduction**

Luther didn’t create a catechism out of nowhere. Christianity has a long history of catechisms. The Questions and Answers format was borrowed from Classical education. The earliest catechism in large use was called the Didache – “The Teaching” – which was written and distributed somewhere around 100 AD. They quickly narrowed down to a list of things that every Christian should have memorized. And that was the 10 commandments, the Apostle’s Creed and the Lord’s Prayer. Except in the one’s the Luther inherited, the order was typically the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed and then the 10 commandments.

And that order tells you a bit about how they thought. They figured you prayed and first was a ritual prayer. Then you would come to understand the God you are praying to in the creed. Then you would understand what it meant to live. And I hope you can see why Luther hated that order. Any order that drops you off at the law to keep of your own accord wouldn’t work. So Luther put the law first with its demands. He put the gospel – the creed – next. And Luther’s idea of the Christian life is a life of prayer.

**Text**

And I’ve chose the 2nd petition as the example tonight. Your kingdom come. Because that is what the Christian life is supposed to be – life in the Kingdom.

And like his explanations to the commandments, his explanations to the petitions of the Lord’s Prayer follow a formula. The always assert a truth. Whatever we are praying for, our prayers are not magic incantations. “The Kingdom of God certainly comes by itself without our prayer.” God has promised that his Kingdom was present. And God keeps his promises. He doesn’t need us to prod him, nor is he waiting for some type of offering. That isn’t prayer.

We know that the promises of God are true. The ending of every answer to the creed – “This is most certainly true.” God has and will do these things. His Kingdom will come. The question is are we in that Kingdom. Our prayer in this petition is “that is may come to us also.” That’s the repeated pattern of each of these petitions. That God will do them is not in question. Whether we will accept them is. And we pray that when God acts, we would recognize and accept his grace.

Luther often goes on to ask rather pragmatic questions like “how does God’s Kingdom come?” We don’t want to miss this. And part of the good news is that we can’t really miss it. The Kingdom comes when “the Father give us His Holy Spirit.” And God has graciously poured out his Spirit at Pentecost. That Spirit is present whenever the Word is proclaimed. And you have heard that word in the creed. The Spirit works through the Holy Christian church, the communion of saint, the forgiveness of sins. We didn’t cover the Sacramental life, but the Spirit is present in your baptism. That water is not simple water only would be Luther’s phrase.

We can’t miss the coming of the Kingdom because the Holy Spirit calls all to Faith in Christ. But not all receive it. Not all are gathered and enlightend with his gifts. God’s Kingdom comes when we believe His holy Word. But some seed falls on hard soil.

The Kingdom also comes when because of our calling and gather and enlightening we are sanctified. When we “lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity.” But sometimes the seed falls on stony ground or thorny ground.

Our prayer is that the Kingdom would come to us also. That we might be good soil.

**Application**

And these are prayers that God is sure to answer. “If you who are evil know how to give good gifts, how much more will the Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

The Christian life has its times of study – when we watch and wait and prepare. It has its times of trial when we are called closer to God. Either closer to his forgiveness because we have strayed, or closer to his person in knowing how he sustains us even in the midst of the trial. But in this world the Christian life is one that knows prayer.

Ask and it will be given to you.

Oh what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

Our Father hears. Prayer is the invite to know your creator. To know that His Kingdom, is also yours.