

The Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory Matthew 6:13

Introduction

In May, 1787 – The American Constitutional Convention was convening – On June 28th of the year – progress had been so slow that Benjamin Franklin got up and addressed George Washington – president of the Convention.

Ben Franklin: "I have lived Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth – that God governs in the affairs of men".

He then moved that they invite some of the local clergy to come to the assembly to lead them in prayer for divine guidance.

God rules – let us pray to Him

That is essentially how the Lord's Prayer comes to a close with the doxology

Matthew 6:13 - 'For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.
Amen'

We just asked God to deliver us from evil

Is He able? [yes – all power and might are His]

Every tree / every mountain / every River / every molecule - belongs to Him

God's omnipotence / power gives us confidence in prayer

Jeremiah 32:17 - 'Ah Lord God! Behold, Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and by Thine outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for Thee.'

In our world – kings and presidents and other heads of state have a great amount of authority

The President holds as part of his job – nuclear codes that would be required to launch a nuclear missile – potentially killing millions

Russian President Vladimir Putin – started a war in the Ukraine – turning the lives of hundreds of thousands upside down – because he wanted to

Our President can open the strategic oil reserves – in the hopes of lowering gas prices at the pump

He is the Chief Executive / the Commander-in-Chief of our armed forces

President Bush ordered an invasion of Iraq based on the premise there were weapons of mass destruction there

That is a lot of power

But - in the end – nobody has more authority or power than God

I. **Thine is the Kingdom - v. 13**

The doxology sums up why we come to God in prayer: all is under His authority and power

The doxology affirms that God can give us this day our daily bread / forgive us / deliver us from evil - - - because He is greater than any barrier to those things

If there are barriers – He can remove them / if there is a challenge – God is up for the challenge!

William Hendriksen: 'Is it not entirely appropriate that we, the supplicants, having concluded our humble petitions, as it were turn our eyes upward again (as in the beginning of the prayer) in adoration, and concentrate our heart and mind on God's majesty and love, which constitute the basis of our confidence that the prayer will be heard.'

Phillip Ryken: 'Here at the end of the Lord's prayer, we acknowledge God as sovereign over everything in heaven and earth.'

i.e. – if it were not true that God was all powerful / ruled over all - - - then the very foundation of prayer becomes shaky and uncertain

God may want to answer my prayer – but ‘oh no’ – He cannot – because – after all there is another ruler with a greater dominion than the one God possesses / there is another ruler with greater power than God's

Satan does not have veto power over God / nobody does
It is God with whom we have to do

*** The very act of prayer to God – is an act of faith that says, ‘God – I believe you reign over all – and that is why I turn to you!

Even though sin has entered the creation for the intermediate period – it has not dislodged God from His throne or set Him aside from His position as ruler over the universe

Some Scripture which teaches the ongoing reign of God – even in the post-Fall world

Ps. 145:13 - 'Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endures throughout all generations.'

Ps. 45:6 - 'Thy throne O God is forever and ever; a scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Thy kingdom.'

Earthly kings and kingdoms come and go – but the rule of God is forever

Pharaoh's army might chase after Moses and the Israelites to the edge of the Red Sea – but God causes the sea to part so they can pass on dry land

Haman might have designs to destroy the Jews – but God had already put Esther in a position of power for such a time as that

Daniel 3 is one of the boldest challenges between an earthly ruler and the will and purpose of God

Nebuchadnezzar has set up his golden image and commanded all to bow down before it [something similar will take place in the Tribulation / image of the beast]

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego – have refused - - so they are brought before the king who gives them a 2nd chance

Daniel 3:15-18

Daniel 3:15 - 'What God is there who can deliver you out of my hand?'

Nebuchadnezzar is saying that his is the kingdom and the power – think about what you are doing!

Their response – you're not as mighty as you think you are!
Our God is able to deliver us

And we know – God does deliver them

They understood: Nebuchadnezzar was not in charge – God was over all

Psalm 103:19 - 'The Lord has established His throne in the heavens; and His sovereignty rules over all.'

II. Thine is the Power

Power belongs to God / Man is not sovereign

Man might want to do something – set out to do something – but be set back by circumstances beyond His control – no such constraints exist before God

James 4:13-15 - 'Come now, you who say, "Today or Tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit. Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead you ought to say, "if the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this or that."

It is God who has all power / not us

The Apostle Paul expressed this truth – in his missionary travels – he used language to reflect it

Acts 18:21 - 'But taking leave of them [he said], "I will return to you again if God wills." - He set sail from Ephesus.'

I Cor. 4:19 - 'But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills . . .'

He knew that all man's plans are ultimately subject to God

Jesus displayed God's awesome power in different scenes in the Gospels

One such scene was the calming of the sea

Mark 4:35-41

While out at sea – a sudden storm strikes - - - it's a doozy

Matthew describes the storm as a σεισμος – a word we get earthquakes from

Back in the eighties – archeologists found an ancient fishing boat near the Sea of Galilee – and they have dated it to the first century - - - around the time of Christ

The boat the disciples had may have been similar – or not - - - but this one discovered was about 27 feet long - - - so – this could have been a sizeable boat

We shouldn't picture the disciples in a little row boat

First thing we should notice:

It was not a mistake that the disciples were here in the storm

Jesus wanted to use this storm to teach them about who He is and what He can do – showing them that they should trust Him

God could give us storm free lives – but then we wouldn't learn how to trust Him thru the storms – or get to see that His power is greater than the storm

Storms remind us we are not in control

In life – many people reach for ways to feel more in control of their environments / they build up large bank accounts / they buy every kind of insurance - - - they have survival food in a bomb shelter – they become people manipulators in relationships / they may succumb to an eating disorder - - - they want to feel in control in a world where they are not in control

Control is an illusion - - - the storm reminds us of that - - - it blows down our man made castles of security

However – the storm also mercifully points us to the only One who is in control- - - He invites us to trust Him

The disciples are in full on panic mode!

We can be glad for stories like this in the Bible - - - Jesus works with people like this!

Jesus calms the storm!

The disciples had not yet seen this type of a display of Jesus' power

Their reaction reflects this

Wait – what just happened?
They can't explain this

The uncontrollable just took orders from Jesus

Who is this man?

He's the One who can calm the sea with a word

Jeremiah 32:17 - 'Ah Lord God! Behold, Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and by Thine outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for Thee.'

Even at the cross Jesus pointed to His power / being in charge

At His arrest – He spoke to the disciples and said – ‘don't you realize I can call upon My Father and have legions of angels at my disposal?’

He went thru the crucifixion on purpose

Jesus did not die because He underestimated the opposition of the Jews – or because Judas sold Him out / or He was outmanned in the Garden - - - He died ultimately out of love for sinners – who needed a Savior

He laid down His life - - - because that is what it would take to save us from our sins

John 10:11- 'I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.'

He died for sinners - - - making perfect atonement – that all who call upon the name of the Lord will indeed be saved

III. Thine is the Glory - John 11

A clear reminder that we are not sovereign is the reality of death – we can't even keep ourselves alive – even if we exert all our efforts and energies and wisdom to that end

But – God is the One who raises the dead

John 11:38-44

This resurrection was more than just a display of raw power - - - it displayed the glory of God

John 11:4 - 'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it.'

In the glorification of Christ is the glorification of God the Father

For most of the people here – Jesus was too late to do anything – v. 32

John 11:35 - 'Jesus wept.'

He is deeply moved by the sight of mourning and grief

We see Jesus' great sympathy for His sheep here

Those around believed He could do nothing for Lazarus now – it's too late

Their view of Jesus is too contracted – too small

He is about to change that

Jesus spoke with a loud voice

He cried out, 'LAZARUS – COME FORTH'

At that moment Lazarus' body came back to life – blood began pumping thru His arteries and veins – tissue restored – the breath of life once again filled his lungs – his limbs began to move

It was a stunning miracle

Out from the tomb he came still wrapped in grave clothes

The miracle was a display of the power of Christ / and of the glory of God

The only proper response is to give God the glory!

In the Scriptures we never see a God who has lost His glory

We see Adam and Eve being kicked out of the Garden of Eden – at the Fall – they lost glory

We see all humanity with a diminished glory – Rom. 3:23

We see the glory departing – from Israel – in the days of Ezekiel

We see the glory departing from Israel in the days of Eli / Hophni / Phineas – when the ark was captured and one of the wives names the son – Ichabod – meaning the glory has gone

But nowhere do we ever see that God ever became less glorious because sin entered the world

There is coming a day when evil will be no more!

We are in the middle of the story

Peter Kreeft: 'There will come a day when God will settle accounts and people will be held responsible for the evil they've perpetrated and the suffering they've caused. Criticizing God for not doing it right now is like reading half a novel and criticizing the author for not resolving the plot.'

The ultimate outcome of the judgment of God will be to vindicate His glory – it will show Him to be the One who is completely holy and who abhors sin

It will also magnify the glory of His grace – in forgiving sinners thru the cross of Calvary

Conclusion

A story is told of a wise and benevolent king who was loved and honored by his subjects. One morning each week he opened his throne room to the general public. On that morning he would hear grievances and listen to petitions, making himself available to meet the needs of his people. There was one man who faithfully came to see the king week after week. Yet he never bothered the king with a single complaint or request. He simply stood at the back of the throne room. After a while this began to puzzle the king. Who was this man who came every week? And why did he come, if not to ask for help?

One day the king summoned the man to approach his throne and inquired after his business. “Your majesty” – the man said, ‘When I was a young man, I committed a crime and I was sentenced to death. Yet as I was dragged thru the streets to the gallows, I saw you riding on your horse and I cried out for mercy. Since I was such a young man you granted me a royal pardon and commanded me to be released. That is why I come to stand in your presence every week. I do not come to ask for anything. What more could I ask for? You have already given me my life and my freedom. I come only to pay you homage, to honor you as your devoted servant.’

Doxologies are the response of those who come to honor God for His salvation

‘Praise God from whom all blessings flow’ – especially my salvation