

Have It Your Way, Lord

Catechism Q/A 123 & 124

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I want to take a risk with you tonight.

I want to pray a radical prayer.

I want to pray a prayer that makes absolutely no sense in our politically correct culture of respect, tolerance and freedoms.

I want to pray the Lord's Prayer.

Let us pray together, saying -

All: Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.

All: Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.

All: For yours is the kingdom
and the power
and the glory forever.
Amen.

I want to focus with you tonight on the second and third petitions of the prayer - at least, that's how they are in Matthew 6. The Gospel of Luke in chapter 11 joins these two together.

"Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

First, though,
before getting into the radical stuff,
pause with me and be encouraged by the first lines of the prayer.

Our Father in heaven....
....Hallowed be your name.

1. ***Our Father in heaven....***

We begin this prayer in the context of ***relationship***.

Never, ever, ever may I forget that God LOVES me and has the absolute BEST in plan for me in His grand, eternal scheme.

Recently I met with someone working through some rather difficult stuff. He said to me -
"Jeremiah 29:11. Know it? That's my lifeline. It keeps me going. 'For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.'"

Never, ever, ever may I forget that I am His child!

AND – As His child – safe!

"See, says the LORD, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hand." (Isaiah 49:16)

"Our Father in heaven...."

2. ***Hallowed be your name....***

We pray this prayer in the context of ***wanting so see God glorified***.

The Bible suggests that the relationship between the heavenly Father and a believer is something like a marriage; it is a covenant.

The covenant of marriage is, first of all, not about self. In a healthy marriage a person is deeply delighted in seeing their beloved honored, complimented, praised, having their reputation enhanced.

And so, in spiritual marriage - the love relationship between a believer and the Lord - one of the greatest delights a believer can have is to see God honoured, complimented, praised; in seeing his reputation enhanced.

So we pray:

"Hallowed be your name."

"Our Father.....

....Hallowed be your name."

Yes - may it be so.

Friends in Jesus - let me invite you to take a few moments to spend a few moments of silent prayer and contemplation with your heavenly Father, who you desire to glorify.

Perhaps speaking to him - that is prayer

Perhaps just quietly savoring your relationship - that is contemplation.

[TIME OF SILENCE]

Father in heaven...

Hallowed be your name...

So may it be.

Always.

In that context, then, we move on to pray

..... Your kingdom come.....

..... Your will be done.....

And so, let's go to the catechism for guidance.

Catechism Q/A 123-124

Leader: What does the second request mean?

All: "Your kingdom come" means,
Rule us by your Word and Spirit in such a way
that more and more we submit to you.

All: Keep your church strong, and add to it.
Destroy the devil's work;
destroy every force which revolts against you
and every conspiracy against your Word.
Do this until your kingdom is so complete and perfect
that in it you are all in all.

Leader: What does the third request mean?

All: "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" means,

Help us and all people
to reject our own wills
and to obey your will without any back talk.
Your will alone is good.

All: Help us one and all to carry out the work we are called to,
as willingly and faithfully as the angels in heaven.

Let's sing together -

Song: "Your Will Be Done" SANC 198

Earlier I said that I want to take a risk with you tonight.

I want to pray a radical prayer.

I want to pray a prayer that makes absolutely no sense in our politically correct culture of respect, tolerance and freedoms.

Can you see how that is so?

This is a prayer that deals with issues
of authority
of conquest
of domination
of surrender
of destruction.

Talk about being **SO** incorrect, eh?

It is a prayer that, on one hand, has an eye sweeping out in big picture terms across the globe.
And it has another eye looking carefully in the mirror, close to home, personal.

Let us, this evening, prayerfully consider both.

Beginning with the big picture.

I invite you to go back in your mind's eye.

Way back.

All the way back to the Garden of Eden.

See there the Kingdom of God in full glory.

See all of creation responding to, honouring, and obeying God.

See people managing creations' resources and beginning to develop them as caretakers
mandated to do so by the King and Creator.

See them living in harmony with each other in the way God prescribed.

And then - see that other kingdom - the other regime with whom we have to reckon. See the rebel regime; one that has invaded the territory and seeks to destroy, everything of God's holy regime; of God's holy Kingdom.

It is the kingdom, the regime, of darkness, led and controlled by the one whom Luther labelled "*the prince of darkness grim.*"

See this regime invading and establishing a beachhead with the seduction of our first human parents, and quickly spreading its evil tentacles to inflict death, disease, destruction, and rebellion against God throughout every corner of creation.

You can see the rest of history in the context of these two forces stand locked in battle -
the devil seeking to hang on, and God seeking to drive him out,
to destroy him
to restore His Kingdom to its original and total beauty.

It is this conflict which forms the core of Scripture's story.

And it is this conflict which leads us to pray,

"Our Father in heaven..... Your kingdom come!"

Destroy the devil's work.

Destroy every evil force which revolts against you and every conspiracy against your

Word.

..... ***Your Kingdom come!!***

We pray that Satan, who has had the run of creation since the Fall, and who has held many people and countries and forces under his seductive sway, would be destroyed.

It is not a gentle prayer.

It is not an inclusive prayer.

No, Virginia, it is not all that politically correct in our sanitized Canada.

It is a prayer for God's power to be all-controlling.

And it is a prayer we utter in hope.

For Jesus said in Luke 10 -

"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."

In other words –

the accuser **has** been hurled down!

Get that?

The final outcome of the battle between the kingdoms, between the regimes, has **already** been decided.

God cannot

and will not

lose.

Victory is assured.

Satan and his hoards will be defeated!

And yet there will battles and skirmishes before the end.

Even bloody ones.

Just like the outcome of World War II was decided on June 6, 1944 D-Day when allied forces invaded Europe. And yet the bloodiest fighting and the most intense suffering for the people of Europe was still to come before V-Day – May 8, 1945 when the Axis forces finally surrendered unconditionally.

D-Day for the Kingdom of God came when Jesus invaded earth - it is the time of the cross and Easter.

He has since sent holy power through the Spirit to equip, protect, and guide the soldiers of His kingdom -

- believers

- you and me
in the ongoing and very bloody battle to capture the entire house of creation.

But V-Day still lies in the future, the day when the skies will be peeled back and the heavenly dimension of reality will enter our dimension;
the trumpet shall sound and the hosts of heaven will descend and Christ shall return and the final end will be declared.

Rest assured of this one thing -
Satan **will** be totally crushed and all his armies with him.

Thy Kingdom come!!

It is the prayer of spiritual warfare.
It is our prayer - the prayer of warriors.

To pray *Thy kingdom come* is to pray the power of God and the presence of God down into the boardrooms of our large corporations.

It is to pray that God's powerful Spirit will work in the field of labor relations.

It is to pray for the powerful work of Jesus to be present in politics.

It is to pray that the restoring work of Jesus would be carried into every corner of creation that has been corrupted and distorted by evil.

It is to pray that strength and wisdom and direction and motivation be given to Christians

- to Kingdom workers -

as they wrestle against the powers of darkness.

As we did a little earlier, may I now invite you to take a few moments to quietly pray *Thy kingdom come*, contemplating the context of that prayer.

[SILENT PRAYER & CONTEMPLATION]

Our Father in heaven...

....hallowed be your name....

....your kingdom come....

So may it be...

Always...

Our Father....

....your will be done.

Now we get personal.

YOUR will...

Jesus prayed this prayer in Gethsemane. And it meant letting go of everything that would, on the surface, seem to work in his own favour.

It meant Jesus had to stay and await the arrival of Judas.

It meant that Jesus had to pick up the cross and carry it to Golgotha.

It meant remaining silent even as legions of angels stood poised ready to rescue him if but one word were uttered (Mt 26:53)

Your will be done.

There are two equally important things at work when we pray this prayer, a negative one and a positive one:

- a. Letting go our desires
- b. Picking up and carrying God's desires

Your will be done, not mine.

Which affects how you handle the TV remote control. If you can't imagine Jesus sitting beside you, comfortably watching the show that's on right now.... why are you watching it?

If you can't imagine Jesus having a good time shopping in the store where you're planning to go.... why are you going there?

Can you imagine Jesus nodding in affirmation as you hold the grudge against that certain person? If not.... why do you savor it so?

YOUR WILL be done...

Your will **BE DONE...**

Words are fine. But eventually they **MUST** be translated into actions.

For example, one can talk about diving, the aerodynamics of diving, the construction of diving towers and diving boards, the hydraulics of water, the fashion of diving apparel, the judging of diving, high tower diving vs low springboard, recreation vs competitive diving, the psychology of diving...

One can talk all day, but it all amounts to nothing until some brave soul actually climbs the ladder, walks out to the edge of the board, and jumps off.

Matthew 12:50: *"For whoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, that one is my brother and sister and mother."*

Step by step.

Remember the song by Rich Mullins -

"Oh God, you are my God. And I will ever praise you.

Oh God, you are my God. And I will ever praise you.

I will seek you in the morning.

And I will learn to walk in your way.

And.....

step by step

you'll lead me.

And I will follow you all of my days."

So - Monday is just around the corner.

I wonder what the next step in obedience is that God will want you to take?

Is there a little voice inside, speaking right now, challenging you about a certain part of your behaviour?

Or do you see a picture of someone - perhaps someone you need to visit?

Have you been wondering about getting involved in a new activity of one sort or another;
perhaps you can't get it out of your mind;
but you keep hesitating?

I don't want to ask you to be dumping all over yourself for every single area of your life that needs
shining up, or growth, or pruning.
Just one area that God may be pointing out right now.

Like we've done already twice before, I invite you to take some time in the quiet of this evening's
darkness for silent prayer and contemplation.

Praying -
Your will.....
be done.....

[Silent Prayer & Contemplation]

Our Father in heaven....
....hallowed be your name....
....your kingdom come....
....your will be done on earth as it is in heaven....

So may it be...
Always...