

KOH



When we pray “The Lord’s Prayer” what we are asking for is that God enact His Kingdom right here on earth but I would ask the question, “Do we know what we are asking for?”. Jesus spent a lot of time describing His vision of the Kingdom of God and after all He is the only one we know who has lived there. Problem is, most of His descriptions are a bit cryptic and require some amount of deliberation but Proverbs 25:2 says, *“It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings.”*, so I guess that if you want to know what you are really praying for you might want to determine what Jesus’s vision of heaven is. Jesus reinforces this position in Matthew 13:10-15, *“The disciples came to him and asked, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?” He replied, “Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. This is why I speak to them in parables: “Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: “You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.””* Taking all that into consideration it might behoove us to climb down on our knees and beg God for a heart that isn’t “Calloused” and eyes that are “Open” and “Perceptive”.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like going to the stadium, Jesus buys your ticket to enter and see the game, but what if you want a hotdog and a beer. That might be extra. Is Jesus obligated to give you the extras?

When Jesus started His ministry, it wasn’t about Him dying for our sins but it was about the Kingdom of Heaven and in Mark 1:15 He said just that but no one understood that what He was talking about was a “Kingdom of the Heart” and perhaps even today few understand. Jesus said that “The Kingdom of Heaven” is like a Mustard Seed, that it would grow to an enormous size and accommodate many but in pretty much the same breath He pointed out that those seeds needed a sower. Did He say that He was going to be the sower or is that your responsibility? He compared “The Kingdom” to Yeast, but then mentioned that someone had put the effort into mixing that yeast into the dough. Probably we all know what Jesus said just before He was taken up into Heaven (Matthew 28:16-20), the go therefore part was not meant only for the Disciples but for every individual who lays claim to being Christian and you should never say, “I don’t know how to do Evangelism” because you do it with every word out of your mouth, every activity you do and if you’re not any different than the people around you who don’t lay claim to being a Christian then what incentive do they have to become one.

When the “Rich Young Ruler” asked Jesus about “Eternal Life” (Mark 10:17-27, Matthew 19:16-22), Jesus’s response disappointed him but Jesus pointed out in Matthew 13:44-46 that to pursue the “Kingdom” you ought to be ready to abandon your bonds with worldly possessions to accomplish that. Where do you stand on that issue? In Matthew 13 Jesus declares that you don’t actually lose your wealth but rather exchange it for “Kingdom Wealth” and as He points out in Matthew 25:14-30, when the householder dispersed wealth to three of his servants and then left them to their devices. On his return the servants had to give account of their wealth, those who performed well were rewarded and those who did nothing were punished. So it is Jesus didn’t want to know what the Young Ruler didn’t do He wanted to know what he would do to accomplish the Kingdom he wished to inhabit.

Your wealth isn't just about Money, and Jesus addresses that issue in Matthew 25:34-40 where He invites the "Righteous" into His Kingdom and commends them for dispensing food, drink, hospitality, clothing, medication and visitation even to "The Least of My Brethren". The story that Jesus told about the Samaritan and the person injured by robbers, shows us that first we can't let class prevent us from humanitarian activities and second that "Loving One Another" should be "Up Close & Personal" even when it's difficult.

Some questions you might want to answer would be: 1. What do you envision the Kingdom on Earth might look like and does it coincide with any of the descriptions of Jesus? 2. What are you willing to do in order to bring about this Kingdom on Earth? 3. Do you understand all the directives that Jesus gave that would enhance the advent or existence of this Kingdom? 4. Are you willing to put that much effort into this or would you rather wait until you die to see the Kingdom and is that prudent.

"Nobody's Perfect", you might say but Paul said in (Romans 6:1-2) *"What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?"*. That having been said, we all know that we have the Holy Spirit that if we listen to, will help us to break the bondage of sin and move closer to that Kingdom and the "Love one another as Jesus has Loved us"

With the sacrifice that Jesus made to bring us into a right standing with God fresh in our minds, let us ask the question, "What personal Sacrifice am I willing to make to accomplish the initialization of the Kingdom of Heaven right here on Earth?". Remembering that while Jesus's sacrifice lays open the door to the Kingdom of Heaven, your adherence to Jesus's directive in (Mark 12:29-31) will generate Jesus's response of (34) *"When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions."* and achieving the Kingdom of Heaven right here on Earth. Is this a challenge? Apparently, since everyone stopped asking questions at that point. Is this a challenge now? Apparently, since few are willing to make the sacrifice to even attempt achieving it. Unlike the common perception of "Religion", Jesus wanted you to understand that it isn't "Jesus died for me, I get to go to Heaven when I die and all I need to do now is to be as good a person as I can" but rather like those of First Century Christianity, because you "Love" Jesus and what He did for you, you will live sacrificially and intentionally in worship of God and for the benefit of the other residents of this planet.