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Thine Is the Kingdom

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Series: Let God Be God

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INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

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The scenario went something like this. The king of Klaustrophobia was seated on his throne in the capitol city of Dullsville. He was surrounded by loyal subjects who had pledged to him their very lives. Every morning they would gather together and cry, "Long live the king! His is the kingdom; His wish is our command!" And so the kindly king reigned supreme in his kingdom, day after day after day. The kingdom was at peace. There was no hostility, no danger, no fear. As long as the kingdom was without conflict, the king's subjects lived in total submission to his reign.

One day a strange thing happened. The neighboring country of Evilsland invaded Klaustrophobia with the express intent of defeating the king and taking control of that peaceful little country. The king called out the army and made an appeal on national television for everyone to report to the armory to defend their tiny nation. That's when a strange thing happened. Only a handful of stragglers showed up to take up arms and defend the kingdom.

The invading enemy swarmed through the countryside. As the bewildered king begged his subjects to come to the front lines and defend their nation, he watched in disbelief as they, by the hundreds, fled in fear or hid in caves praying that somehow this bad dream would go away. Of course, it didn't. Once the captors had surrounded the little country, the members of the press interviewed one of the leading businessmen in the community. He was one of those who had pledged allegiance to the king in good times and had fled like a coward when the heat was on. When they asked why he did not heed the king's command to fight when the kingdom was in jeopardy, the once influential executive made this comment: "No one ever told me there might be a war."

The interviewer went on. "But you are in subjection to the king. His is the kingdom. Surely you understood that he was not

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only there to protect you and to provide for you, but to command you as well. If his is the kingdom, then shouldn't he have the right to lead you into battle?" "No," the frightened businessman replied, "his is the kingdom when all is well; but no one leads me into the enemy's fire." "But now you are the enemy's slave," the interviewer went on, "Is that not worse? Had you heeded the king's command, you could have been the victor. Now you will serve a wicked king, enslaved forever."

As they led the man off to prison, where he would serve an evil monarch in chains, this once influential man was heard muttering to himself, "No one tells me what to do". His captors were heard to reply, laughing, "No one indeed."

"Thine is the kingdom!" he cried (so long as the kingdom was peace and life).

"Mine is the kingdom!" he cried (as soon as the kingdom meant warfare and strife).

The King of Glory can identify with that problem! All too often, we are willing to acknowledge His lordship when we want Him to cater to our needs and respond to our wants. But let the storm clouds gather over the horizons of our lives, and let the thunder of life's tests shake the foundations of our faith, and we, like the members of that make-believe kingdom, are all too quick to flee the battle and hide in the comfortable caverns of the world rather than don the armor of God and take on the enemy at the sound of the trumpet.

His is the Kingdom! That means that He is the sovereign, undisputed Lord of the universe. It means that every flower on every hillside in every nation on every continent belongs to Him. His is the Kingdom! It means that every bird whose wings grace the skies between heaven and earth belongs to Him. His is the Kingdom! It means that every star that illuminates the dark of night and sends its signals of breathtaking light back to planet earth belongs to Him. His is the Kingdom! It means that every infant born to man, from the darkest of the jungle nights to the biggest city hospital lights belongs to Him. His is the Kingdom! No thunderclap resounds from the heavens but by His command. Nor does the frost of winter send its icy blast to cool the universe but by His command. His is the Kingdom!

That means God made everything in heaven and everything on earth. That means God owns everything in heaven and

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everything on earth; and that means God has the right to do as He pleases with everything in heaven and everything on earth... because He is the King and His is the Kingdom!

Knowing that ought to affect the way we live. And knowing that ought to affect the way we pray. We know that because our loving Savior called His followers together and sat them down one day on a Judean hillside and taught them how to pray. He didn't tell them; He taught them. He demonstrated for them in language anyone could understand the basic principles and the basic premises upon which the matter of communicating with God are built.

He taught them to pray unobtrusively, humbly, quietly. He taught them to pray worshipfully, adoringly, gratefully. He taught them to ask unselfishly, simply, and daily. He taught them to seek refuge confidently, graciously, expectantly. He taught them to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day, our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins, as we also forgive those who have sinned against us

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. (Matthew 6:9b-13b; Luke 11:2-4)

He taught them to pray like that! He taught us to pray like that!

He taught us to turn the tap of glory that releases the divine flow of the power of God by honoring the awesome Name of God and surrendering to the perfect will of God. Then, having pulled back the curtains of divine communication until the heavens were bared before the eyes of man, He taught man to conclude His times with God in a literal anthem of adoration. He said, "When you pray, finish like this..."

For thine is the kingdom and thine is the power and thine is the glory, forever. Amen. (Matthew 6:13c)

Now in many Bibles that phrase is in italics, or it is omitted, meaning that it is not found in all of the manuscripts. But it is in many, and it is obviously in perfect harmony with all of Scripture, a perfect reflection of the prayers of the Old Testament

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saints, and the obvious doxology to this incredible pattern of prayer. So we are concluding that it is not only a legitimate part of this prayer, but one of the most vital elements of this prayer; so for this lesson and the next two, we will examine under the microscope of Scripture the value of learning to pray and to praise like this.

Jesus said, “When you pray, pray like this...” He said, “once you have prayed, conclude like this...”

Conclude by lifting your heart to the heavenlies in absolute acknowledgment of the incredible Lordship of God (His is the Kingdom!), of the incredible awesomeness of God (His is the Power!), and of the incredible majesty of God (His is the Glory!). When you pray, pray like that; and you will emerge from the prayer closet with your heart so filled with God’s perspective that you will re-enter a real world with real hurts and real pain as a God-filled ambassador of another kingdom. Your eyes will be focused on the King! And to the King belongs all the praise and all the glory because His is the Kingdom! And that, of course, is the title for today’s study: “His is the Kingdom”. Our outline:

- I- What is the Kingdom?
- II- His is the Kingdom!
- III- Where is the Kingdom?
- IV- Thine is the Kingdom

WHAT IS THE KINGDOM?

The dictionary defines the word “kingdom” in several ways, but all of them communicate the same thought. Webster defines the word kingdom like this:

- a- politically organized community or major territorial unit having a monarchical form of government headed by a king or a queen;
- b- the eternal kingship of God;
- c- the realm in which God’s will is fulfilled;
- d- an area or sphere in which one holds a preeminent position.

So a kingdom is that sphere in which a king occupies preeminence and exercises authority. In a spiritual sense, it is recognized, even by the world, as the “realm in which God’s will is fulfilled.”

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HIS IS THE KINGDOM

A- His By Creation

If that, then, is what a kingdom is, and if all who live in a kingdom owe submission to that king, how do we know that the Kingdom in which we live belongs to God? First of all, let's remind ourselves that this world we live in and all who live in it belong to God. It is His Kingdom by creation.

In Genesis, chapter 1, God the Father spoke to God the Son and God the Spirit and said these words, "Let us make man in our image." From the dust of the earth God created man. From the side of man God created woman. From nothing God created every animal that walked, every insect that crawled, every fish that swam. God spoke and the trees became a reality—thousands upon thousands of different species, each with a divine distinction, each to teach a different spiritual truth. Every cloud would be handcrafted by the Master's touch. He is and was and ever shall be the origination of all things. Everything but sin originated with God. Everything good and everything complete comes from the Father of Lights, in whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning. God owns the world and all that inhabit the world by virtue of creation. Well the Psalmist wrote in Psalm 24:

The earth is the LORD'S and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein.

For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah
(Psalm 24:1,2,7,8,10)

This world belongs to God by virtue of creation. So in a natural sense, every creature on this globe owes homage to Him. His is The Kingdom! He has established it upon the seas and founded it upon the floods. This world belongs to Almighty God. If He chooses to pour the delightful showers of His love upon it, He has that right. His is the Kingdom! If He chooses to call back the clouds into the heavens and allow the earth to grow parched and dry, He has that right. His is the Kingdom! Should

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He desire to magnify His name through the winds of winter, He has that right. His is the Kingdom! The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein. His ways are higher than ours, and more precious than ours, and are beyond our understanding. But this earth and all that is in it belongs to the Creator God by virtue of His being the Creator God, and until and unless man bows before His throne in fond acceptance of that reality, he will miss the perfect rest and imputed power that come from trusting the One who owns it all. His is the Kingdom! Period. One day everyone will acknowledge that. One day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that His is the Kingdom! Until then, whether we acknowledge it or not, this world and everything in it belongs to Him.

B- His By Atonement

His is the Kingdom by virtue of Christ's atoning death. The Apostle Paul wrote these words to the saints at Corinth:

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

(I Corinthians 6:19,20)

Your body belongs to God. Paul just said so. That means that if He chooses to allow it to experience pain, that's His business. He knows what's best. That means that if He chooses to make it a certain way to maximize the demonstration of His Glory, it is His to do with as He sees fit. Your body belongs to God. Your spirit belongs to God, as well. Paul just said so. That means that if He chooses to bring into your life circumstances you do not like, in order to develop in you qualities you need, He has that right. Your spirit belongs to God. Not only because God created you; but because, even when you were alienated from God by sin, His incredible love forced Him to come to where you were to consider the cost of buying you back from the slave market of sin, and to willingly pay the price that you might become twice-born. You are his because He created you, and you are His because He redeemed you at Calvary. His is the Kingdom!

C- His By Choice

You are His because you chose to be. God did not force you to become His child. He longed for you to come to Him. He paid

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the entire price for you to come to Him. He called to you. He drew you. He loved you. But He would not force you. The entire body of Scripture sings a melody of grace to the free will of man. God did it all! But man is given the delightful choice to receive it. Thus, the Holy Spirit wrote in John, chapter one:

He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the sons of God. (John 1:11,12)

Whoever receives the Son has life. By choice. You are His because He made you. You are His because He saved you, and you are His because you chose to receive Him into your heart. Therefore, there is no mistaking the fact that His is the Kingdom!

WHERE IS THE KINGDOM?

The final question we must ask, then, if we are assured that His is the Kingdom, is just where is the Kingdom He owns? Is it on this earth? Is it in heaven? Is it in neither? Is it in both? Can we know where it is? The answers are yes, yes, no, yes, and, of course.

A- The Physical Kingdom

First of all, as we have already discussed, this earth and all that is in it belongs to God. One day every one who lives on this planet will acknowledge that openly. The King of Kings will be Lord of Lords. But until then, we live in a world that is in open rebellion to its King. It has temporarily thrown aside His Kingdom and has pledged its allegiance, to another; one who has as his avowed goal the destruction of the Kingdom of God. Satan reigns on this earth today; sin is the order of the day, and anarchy has replaced the monarchy of God. The devil led a revolution, and man has followed him like sheep who have gone astray. In fact, all we like sheep have gone astray and have turned every one to his own way. This world will one day be the headquarters for the Kingdom of God again. Satan will be put aside. Man will be brought under the dominion of God, and God will rule with a rod of iron. But for now, though this world represents the location of God's physical kingdom, those who live in it cannot recognize it because they have revolted against His authority. His is the Kingdom, but the King is not served. Not yet.

B- God's Spiritual Kingdom

For now, God has moved His Kingdom underground. He still operates on this earth, but He has moved into the realm of the Spirit; and since His ultimate objectives are spiritual, He has simply determined to work internally in the lives of men and women. While this world erupts in immorality and rebellion and fear, God quietly offers to all who will come a kingdom within that replaces immorality with purity, rebellion with submission, fear with faith. Supernaturally, God offers to man an opportunity to live in this alien world with the very presence of God Himself inhabiting our human bodies. Thus, even while we exist physically in a world that resists the hand of God and refutes the Word of God, we can, by letting God live in us, live peacefully and at rest amidst the tumult. His is the Kingdom! A kingdom of the heart; a kingdom wherein God not only brings good out of evil by translating it into the spiritual realm. He uses the very things Satan intends to destroy us to build in us His very own likeness. His is the Kingdom! And He will never leave us or forsake us. We may live in this world until He comes, but He will live in us as long as we live in this world. Praise God!

C- The Kingdom To Come

But there is a third Kingdom, the Kingdom yet to come. This is the Kingdom wherein the King will not only rule the hearts of men, but wherein all who have been redeemed will gather together in His glorious presence and adore Him forever and forever the way God intended us to do before the fall.

In that kingdom, pain will be gone. In that kingdom, sin will be eradicated. In that kingdom, death will be swallowed up in victory. In that kingdom, suffering will be banished from our presence as the presence of God sweeps away once and for all, all that will hinder or harm or hurt, and we shall dwell with him forever and ever and ever.

That day is coming, Beloved. It is that day for which we live. It is because of that day that we endure suffering as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is because of that day that we labor in the vineyard of the King, becoming not weary in well-doing. It is because of that day that we quietly lay up treasures in heaven where moth and rust cannot corrupt and where thieves cannot break through and steal.

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It is for that day that all of mankind stands on tip-toe anxiously peering into the future, longing for redemption. That day is coming. It is coming suddenly like a thief in the night. It is coming like the wind and the fire, powerfully. But it is coming most assuredly, Beloved, because He is coming! And His is the Kingdom...forever.

- 1- So this world we live in belongs to God by virtue of creation. His is the Kingdom!
- 2- This world belongs to God by virtue of redemption. His is the Kingdom!
- 3- We belong to God by virtue of choice. His is the Kingdom!
- 4- This world is His kingdom in rebellion, but still it is His.
- 5- Our hearts represent His Kingdom in the making.

And one day soon, the eastern skies will be pulled apart like curtains in the heavens, and we shall meet Him face to face; and there will be a new Heaven and a new earth, and a new Kingdom will be ours forever. His will be the Kingdom for all eternity.

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What are you saying, then, when you sing the doxology of the Kingdom as you conclude your prayers? You are saying, "I belong to God; He made me. I belong to God; He redeemed me. I belong to God; I received Him."

You are saying, "This world is His; He owns it. My life is His; He purchased it. Eternity is His; He will reign over it." His is the Kingdom!

When you pray "Thine is the Kingdom!", you are submitting without reservation to the Kingship of God. You are, like those subjects in the illustration at the beginning of this lesson, bowing before the one who owns you and acknowledging His ownership.

The issue, however, is not what words you say when you are residing in the quiet place, but what action you take when you are struggling in the marketplace. The issue is not simply, "Is He your King at the altar of worship?"; but "is He your King when the bullets begin to fly, and the bombs begin to fall, and the devil begins to harass you and persecute you and dare you to defy your God?"

It is at that point in your day, at that point in your life, that

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this phrase really begins to make sense. It is when the King has blown His trumpet and called you onto the battlefield of life and said, “Child, if you are mine, put on the armor,” that this phrase means what it was intended to mean. It is then that we are to shout triumphantly, “Thine is the Kingdom!” It is then, when the powers of darkness are hovering overhead, daring you to flee the conflict, that you need to stop whatever you are doing, point your heart heavenward, and triumphantly cry, “Thine is the Kingdom!”

When you do that, heaven touches earth again. Your will surrenders to God’s again. His ownership becomes real again. Whatever He chooses to do becomes wonderful again...because He is the King; and as King, whatever He does is best.

For...

His is the kingdom, Beloved;
Shout it with gladness again
“The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof
And all that dwell therein.”

His is the kingdom, Beloved;
He owns it, and He owns you!
And because He does, He has the right
To do what He wants to do!

He can take you and remake you
And before your journey’s done
If need be He can break you
To make you like His Son

So, dear Christian, don’t resist Him
The victory’s yours to own;
For His is the Kingdom, Beloved,
And the King is still on the Throne!

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