

Leader's Guide - Matthew 6: 9-13 "Kingdom, Power, Glory"

Read Matthew 6:9-13

The last line of the Lord's prayer – For yours is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen. – is a prayer of repose. A prayer of rest. A prayer communicating where our ultimate joy, peace, hope and security rests.

1. C.S. Lewis in his sermon "The weight of glory" spoke of the reality that if we mistake the joy these things (be it money, career, relationship, power, recognition etc.) give us for the real thing that we will make these things into dumb idols breaking the hearts of the worshippers. They were only meant to point us to the ultimate. What are some of the things you root your joy, peace, hope, security on? How has the seismic event of Covid 19 exposes them to not be the secure foundations we thought them to be? How is it impacting you?

This is a personal reflection question where all answers are acceptable.

2. In his article in Time magazine Anglican scholar N.T. Wright invited Christians in the midst of this pandemic to lament. What are you most lamenting at this time?

This is a personal reflection question where all answers are acceptable.

(Kingdom) Read John 20:1-9; 26-28

3. In light of the resurrection we lament with hope. Each of the resurrection stories found in the gospels begin with the words "on the first day of the week". This is a reference to the book of Genesis, in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, which began on the first day. In the resurrection we are looking at the dawn of a new creation, God's kingdom being made manifest, and beginning to advance. What does it look like to lament during this time with the hope of a new creation?

It both increases our lament and mixes it with hope.

The follower of Jesus is lamenting the difference not between what was and what is but between what is and what should be. We lament that God's kingdom rule has not put everything back into its proper place.

There is hope in light of the resurrection that God's Kingdom will indeed come when he returns again to make everything new.

(Power) Read Ephesians 1:15-20

4. According to the Lord's prayer what can we trust that God is at work in us accomplishing? How does a firm belief in the bodily resurrection of Jesus impact our trust in those promises?

All of the verbs in the Lord's prayer are in the imperative they are commands not requests. They are in the passive imperative meaning in it we are commanding the only one who can bring them about.

Hallow your name – make your character and purposes known upon the earth.

Your Kingdom come – bring all things under your rule for when things get under your rule they get healed.

Do your will – shape my life and my will in accordance with your kingdom purposes.

Give us this day – give me everything that I need to sustain my material reality.

Forgive us – allow me to experience your forgiveness that I in turn can be brought to forgive others.

Lead us not into temptation – every trial we face can be a test or temptation (same word) – so everything we face can be a situation where we are shaped to more and more reflect the character of God – to refine in us love joy peace patience kindness goodness self-control – or can be a situation that the Devil uses to tempt us away from the living God. We are asking those situations to remain a test and for God to deliver us from the evil one who can make such tests into temptations.

A belief in the bodily resurrection of Jesus deepens my trust not only in these promises but in the other promises of God. If he has the power to raise the dead, everything else is possible.

(Glory) Read Philippians 3:20-21; 2 Corinthians 4:17

5. If Jesus' resurrected body expresses what our resurrection body will look like from the John passage and your memory of the other resurrection appearances of Jesus, what will our resurrected body be like?

Material – he can eat, be touched, engage – and yet not bound by physical limits (he can pass through walls)

Recognizable – it will be him, it will be her, it will be them, it will be you.

Imperishable – death nor decay will touch it again

6. Jesus' resurrected body included the wounds of his crucifixion. Paul in reflecting on the resurrection says that our current sufferings are preparing us for an eternal weight of glory. What do you think this might look like? How does this help you face our current circumstances?

In the sermon Tim used three images that might help you reflect on it.

- 1. (Tim Keller illus.) If you have a piece of pie on the table you can get rid of it by throwing it out or by eating it – if you eat it it becomes part of your energy and life. The resurrection doesn't do away with suffering – it includes it – consumes it.*
- 2. After the lockdown is lifted and you are able to do things and be with people you aren't with now – you are going to enjoy them and appreciate them in a way you never did before. In a way the sorrow will increase the joy.*
- 3. In the movie signs all of the terrible things that happened to the main character were part of the eventual deliverance of the entire world.*

This is a profound mystery but the resurrection will include, explain, redeem, and subsume every sorrow, tragedy, disappointment – which in the end will be a much more fitting defeat of evil. The sorrow will increase the glory and the joy – preparing us for an eternal weight of glory.