

Series: Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Prayer

Week and Title: Week 3 - The Kingdom

(re)Connecting

- Unless everyone in the Group was previously together (don't assume), ask each person to briefly introduce his/herself (name, family, occupation/homemaker, etc.) and one interesting, unusual, or unexpected thing about his/herself.
- What's got your attention today, and why?
- When was the last time you felt unbounded optimism?
- If you could bring back a fashion trend, what would it be, and why?

What We Believe

- Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-28. In your own words, what is God telling the church in this text?
- What does Paul mean when he says Christ is the *firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep*?
- What will Jesus do before delivering the Kingdom to God?
- Who/what is subject to Christ's reign?
- Read the Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 48. What is the Kingdom of God?
- Who are the Father's *Word and Spirit*? Are they worthy agents of the Father's rule? Why/why not?
- How does God preserve the church and make it grow?
- How does God destroy the devil's work and all rebellion against his kingdom?
- The catechism says that God will do all the things outlined in the answer to Q&A 123 until His kingdom fully comes. Has God's kingdom fully come? Has it come at all?

How God's Word Speaks to Our Lives

- Who has a role in the Kingdom of God? Is it just Pastors, Elders, Deacons, etc.?
- How has God called you to serve in His Kingdom? What has He called you to do?
- The catechism says that when we pray the Lord's Prayer, we are asking God to *rule* us. Why might people have a negative reaction to the idea of *being ruled*? What would you say to someone who objects to being *ruled*?
- What role, if any, do you play in preserving God's church and making it grow?
- What role, if any, do you play in destroying the devil's work?

How God's Word Speaks to Our Family

- 1 Corinthians 15:22 says, "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive." Why do all die in Adam? How are all made alive in Christ? What does this say about our relationship to Adam? What does it say about our relationship to Christ?
- How is your family obedient to Christ as King? How does your family fall short of obeying Christ as King?
- What struggles does your family avoid by being obedient to Christ? What struggles does your family face by being obedient to Christ?
- How can your Life Group help you and your family to be more obedient to Christ as King?

How God's Word Speaks to our Worship

- A *sacrament* is, "...an outward and visible sign, ordained (ordered/decreed) by Christ, setting forth and pledging an inward and spiritual blessing."¹ In the Reformed church, we recognize baptism and the Lord's Supper as *sacraments*. By what authority does Christ order the

¹ Coates, R. J. (1996). Sacraments. In D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, & D. J. Wiseman (Eds.), *New Bible dictionary* (3rd ed., p. 1034). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

church to observe the sacraments? What do the sacraments have to do with the Kingdom of God?

- Giving is an act of worship. Is giving money the only way we can give? How does giving grow the Kingdom of God?

Kingdom Building Opportunities

- How have the people of our nation modeled the Kingdom of God? How have the people of our nation rejected the Kingdom of God?
- What ministries of Hanford CRC are directly involved in Kingdom building? Have you seen God building his Kingdom through your participation in these ministries? If yes, how? If no, how can our ministries be more effective in partnering with God to build His Kingdom?

Scripture References

1 Co 15:20–28: 20 But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. 24 Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “all things are put in subjection,” it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. 28 When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

The Holy Bible: English Standard Version. (2016). (1 Co 15:20–28). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Creeds and Confessions

Lord's Day 48

Q & A 123

Q. What does the second petition mean?

A. "Your kingdom come" means:

Rule us by your Word and Spirit in such a way
that more and more we submit to you.¹

Preserve your church and make it grow.²

Destroy the devil's work;

destroy every force which revolts against you
and every conspiracy against your holy Word.³

Do this until your kingdom fully comes,
when you will be all in all.⁴

1 Ps. 119:5, 105; 143:10; Matt. 6:33

2 Ps. 122:6-9; Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:42-47

3 Rom. 16:20; 1 John 3:8

4 Rom. 8:22-23; 1 Cor. 15:28; Rev. 22:17, 20

Leader's Cheat Sheet

What is the Kingdom of God?

A kingdom in general is a form of civil government in which some one person possesses the chief power and authority, who, being possessed of greater and more excellent gifts and virtues than others, rules over all according to just, wholesome and certain laws by defending the good and punishing the wicked. The kingdom of God is that in which God alone rules and exercises dominion over all creatures; but especially does he govern and preserve the church. This kingdom is universal. The special kingdom of God—that which he exercises in his church consists in sending the Son from the Father, from the very beginning of the world, that he might institute and preserve the ministry of the church, and accomplish his purposes by it—that he might gather a church from the whole human race by his word and Spirit—rule, preserve and defend it against all enemies—raise it from death, and at length, having cast all enemies into everlasting condemnation, adorn it with heavenly glory, that God may be all in all, and be praised eternally by the church.

Ursinus, Z., & Williard, G. W. (1888). The Commentary of Dr. Zacharias Ursinus on the Heidelberg Catechism (pp. 632–633). Cincinnati, OH: Elm Street Printing Company.