



The Senior Scene



Love people. Know Jesus. Live Transformed.

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Thy Kingdom Come

Thy kingdom come. (Matthew 6:10)

How often have we prayed these words? And when we do, most often our minds are on the future – when He returns triumphantly and ushers in His eternal kingdom. And of course, we are looking forward to that day. But these powerful and life-changing words also apply to our daily walk of faith in the here and now.

So, what else are we praying with these words? What is God's kingdom?

Jesus said that the kingdom is within you (Luke 17:21). God's kingdom is a spiritual one and we enter that kingdom the minute we give our lives to the Lord. So, when we pray "thy kingdom come," what we are also praying is for God's sovereign rule to be increasingly established in our hearts and lives right now. We are praying that we will live in increasing joyful submission to His rule.

Our society values personal achievement and self-sufficiency. We're encouraged to believe that we are in control. But when we willingly enter God's kingdom, we pray for Jesus to take His rightful place on the throne of our lives. As we become a servant in His kingdom, we are no longer a slave to the kingdom of sin and darkness. A new King reigns in our hearts and He immediately starts to conform us to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29). When we pray "Thy kingdom come," the Holy Spirit begins to establish God's kingly rule over every detail of our lives and enables us to say, He is Lord of all.

Jesus talks about the kingdom of God more than almost every other subject. Almost 120 times He says, "The kingdom of God is like..." and He teaches us about His kingdom – a kingdom that is diametrically opposite of any earthly kingdom. And in fact, Jesus says, "My kingdom is not of this world." God's kingdom is more than just a place—it's His reign over all the world throughout time and all eternity.

His kingdom is both "now" and "later." In Christ the kingdom has come now, and as we live into His presence, we can experience His power invading our life every day and overflowing onto those around us. But because God is still being patient with human rebellion, and things are far from the way they're supposed to be, there is also a "not yet" to the kingdom as He patiently waits and works for others to join His kingdom.

Jesus has inaugurated the kingdom, and through His life, death, and resurrection, He is reclaiming this fallen world for His kingdom. In the present, He is working to redeem and draw each of us to Himself. God's kingdom is present in Christ's reign in every believer's heart. For the future we have a promise of a perfect kingdom one day when His work in us will be complete, all evil will be destroyed, and God establishes the new heaven and new earth (Rev 21:1). We'll stand renewed and redeemed with Him for eternity.

Following the words "thy kingdom come," are the words "thy will be done." This implies there's still work to be done, to close the gap between the way things are and the way they someday will be. We who have experienced His transforming power by saying "Yes" to Jesus are invited to become citizens in His redemptive kingdom and to be His ambassadors to others.

So, when it seems that we are crushed under the tyranny of earthly "kingdoms", we can take heart in the words of the psalmist, "He still rules from heaven..." (11:4). Our hope-filled reality in a world of temporary authority, corruptible power, and political chaos is that we are citizens of a greater kingdom!

All of these things are in our hearts when we pray "Thy kingdom come."



The Power of Hymns



As a third grader, I learned to play the piano. My weekly lessons included typical scales and “finger work,” as my teacher called it. The black keys. The white keys. 88 in

all, remember! Added to the John Thompson workbooks (challenging) and occasional popular sheet music (more enjoyable and less challenging), my father insisted that I also learn two or three hymns —each week—of my own choosing.

At first, I thought my teacher would shun such a notion; however, to my negative surprise, she thought it was a “brilliant idea” and began fattening my piano workbook with more “Jesus songs” for me to learn. She and my dad clearly did not understand the mind of an upper elementary student-daughter who wanted to ride-her-bike as soon as practicing was o’er. More songs = more time on the bench. What were they thinking?!

Early on in my self-choosing of which hymns to tackle each week, I quickly discerned that hymns with flats (b) in the key signature were much easier to learn and to play than the ones with sharps (#). And the choruses without any flats or sharps (key of C) were my favorites of all. There was a definite “alacrity” in my playing of those songs, according to my teacher’s notes. (It wasn’t until later that I learned about transposing music to different keys, which would have come in handy at this point of my education. That was a lesson for a much older and more mature student.) Nonetheless, I started to enjoy lessons more, and even began to recognize and to delight in my new-found confidence while playing my selected songs.

Within three years my musical education was certainly not soaring, but from the feedback of my teacher and listening parents, it was definitely climbing at a healthy pace. The only problem was that the number of hymns with flats in the key signature had been culled and I was being forced to tackle those pesky F#--C#-G# songs in the hymnal. I ask: Why sing “O Worship the King All Glorious Above” (3 sharps, key of A) when you can just sing “My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less” (one flat, key of F)?

At this point in the narrative, I need to mention that once my piano skills were above mediocre for public consumption, I became the accompanist to my father’s song-leading every Sunday morning. His investment for all those lessons was my participation in said role, whether my enthusiasm trailed along or not. Since as a young adult he had led group singing at Allegheny County rallies in the city, his voice was always loud and rousing, with fast tempos and sudden switches to directions such as “only ladies for verse 2 now” or “acapella and in a whisper, folks.”

My horror met my adolescent smugness when one Sunday he opened the singing time to requests from the floor. (Pause.) Did he just say, “Requests now, everybody, just shout out the number and Jane will start us off”? I remember sweating. I remember fumbling. I remember trying to catch my father’s gaze, but he looked everywhere else and kept on singing, leading, praising, teaching me, challenging me, transforming my self-centeredness —over time— to an unspeakable joy that envelops me every time I sit down to play hymns.

. . . When I cannot sleep and it’s 3:17am, I sing hymns in my head as meditation, straining to remember all the verses which my dad insisted on singing.

. . . When the pain of bone ache from chemotherapy could not be dulled by medication, it was the whispering of hymns throughout the night that carried me to dawn.

. . . When there was a new Mather baby to rock to sleep, I could sustain a sixty-minute minimum of song.

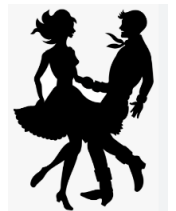
. . . When my father was near the end of his life, I would go over to my parents’ house and play hymns for him while he tried to rest. “Which one should I play?” I asked. “Anyone in the book, Peachie Lee. Anyone in the book.”

And so I did.

Janey Mather

2nd Thursday

We invite you to join us for the 2nd Thursday luncheon on October 10 at noon. Enjoy a delicious lunch of sloppy joes, cheesy hash browns, cole slaw, and brownies. After lunch, we are pleased to welcome the YNOTs square dancers for a demonstration of their dancing talent! Prepaid registration of \$10 for this luncheon is due by Friday, October 4.



And looking ahead to November, the luncheon will be on November 14. The menu will be a turkey dinner with all the fixin’s. And we will welcome back our own Rev Kev, Kevin Gourley, for a time of testimony and song. Prepaid registration of \$10 for this luncheon is due by Friday, November 8.

As with all the luncheons this season, our service project is North Hills Community Outreach. If you are able, please bring a non-perishable food item to donate to NHCO.

It Is No Secret

Stuart Hamblen

The chimes of time ring out the news
Another day is through
Someone slipped and fell
Was that someone you?
You may have longed for added strength
Your courage to renew
Do not be disheartened
For I have news for you

It is no secret what God can do
What he has done for others
He'll do for you
With arms wide open
He'll pardon you
It is no secret what God can do.

There is no night, for in His light
You'll never walk alone
You'll always feel at home
wherever you may roam
There is no power can conquer you
While God is on your side
Take Him at His promise
Don't run away and hide.

It is no secret what God can do
What he has done for others
He'll do for you
With arms wide open
He'll pardon you
It is no secret what God can do.

The story of this song is one that only God could have orchestrated. Carl Stuart Hamblen was born into the family of a Methodist minister. As a young man, Hamblen moved to Hollywood where he appeared in movies with stars such as Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, and John Wayne. He was also a singer and writer of 225 songs. His songs were recorded by many big-name artists including, Eddy Arnold, Johnny Cash, Rosemary Clooney, Kate Smith, Willie Nelson, and Elvis Presley. At one point he had his own radio show and was known as one of radio's first "singing cowboys." Hamblen was immersed in the Hollywood scene and lived a life of drinking and brawling and "destructive behavior."

This changed in 1949 when Billy Graham appeared on Hamblen's radio show to publicize his Los Angeles crusade. Graham invited Hamblen to attend the crusade. Initially, Hamblen refused, but his wife persuaded him to attend a service. Very early the

next morning, he requested a meeting with Graham, which was granted. As the two men spoke, Graham shared the gospel with Hamblen, and Hamblen surrendered his life to the Lord. Hamblen completely changed his lifestyle. He eventually lost his radio show when he refused to promote alcohol.

One day, he and his wife were visiting a friend from his Hollywood days that he had not seen in a while. The friend asked about Hamblen's changed ways. In the conversation, Hamblen made the impromptu remark, "it's no secret what God can do in a man's life." A couple of hours later, as they were leaving the friend's house, he said, "Stuart, you ought to write a song about it is no secret what God can do. That is a beautiful thought." Who was Stuart's friend that offered this encouragement? None other than John Wayne.

Hamblen went home and began thinking about it. He sat down at their organ just as the clock began chiming the midnight hour, and he was inspired with the first line of the song. He kept writing until the song was finished. When he glanced at the clock, it was only 17 minutes after midnight! He thought the clock had stopped. He had never written a song before in less than 3 or 4 hours.

"It Is No Secret" was written and recorded in 1950. Numerous artists have recorded the song since, including Johnny Cash, George Beverly Shea, and Elvis Presley. It is the first "cross over" song to reach #1 on the gospel, country, and pop charts! Imagine a pop song that speaks about God's restorative power!

Once while visiting England, Hamblen asked why the BBC would not play his song. They told him it was because it mentioned God. And Hamblen reminded them that their national anthem was "God Save the Queen." They began playing it and it soon became a favorite there also. The song has been translated into more than 50 languages and is a worldwide favorite. Perhaps the tribute that best illustrates the song's impact is that the original manuscript of the song is buried in the cornerstone of the Copyright Building of the Library of Congress.

God's willingness to restore each of us. That's no secret. And that is good news.



Fun and Games - The leftover letters reveal this month's Scripture.

E	O	A	G	O	F	I	S	H	C	D	N	A	L	Y	D	N	A	C
S	E	P	B	U	N	C	O	B	P	I	K	S	H	O	F	Y	O	U
E	L	L	E	S	E	H	O	Y	P	I	C	T	I	O	N	A	R	Y
Q	K	U	B	R	L	S	R	S	U	K	O	L	B	D	U	S	E	E
U	R	W	H	U	A	R	S	S	E	N	R	O	B	E	L	L	I	M
E	I	A	T	E	O	T	C	W	V	E	G	R	G	I	G	C	I	F
N	W	B	T	S	Y	R	I	O	H	G	M	E	F	G	H	P	U	H
C	Q	A	A	V	A	E	T	O	L	O	E	E	I	E	A	R	E	B
E	C	T	E	B	I	V	E	E	N	Z	D	W	C	R	T	O	U	S
E	R	T	B	E	D	I	R	O	T	T	E	K	C	I	T	K	V	E
O	T	L	N	H	E	R	P	H	W	L	E	H	S	S	I	R	U	A
S	E	E	O	F	A	O	A	I	C	R	E	E	I	M	U	T	P	H
F	U	S	I	U	L	Y	S	N	S	E	I	N	M	O	S	A	W	E
L	C	H	T	Y	S	T	U	T	S	R	O	U	F	E	R	W	O	S
H	H	I	A	A	E	R	D	I	O	M	R	T	D	T	U	S	R	A
C	R	P	V	R	O	F	G	G	M	Y	C	I	E	S	P	O	D	R
N	E	D	A	K	S	I	R	A	R	E	A	S	E	S	L	R	S	H
I	S	T	R	A	T	E	G	O	N	M	U	O	G	R	A	A	C	P
L	C	E	G	E	T	K	M	N	D	O	N	J	I	C	I	N	I	H
F	H	U	G	T	C	E	O	L	M	I	E	T	K	S	V	V	A	C
R	E	L	A	A	M	C	O	I	M	N	O	O	U	S	I	O	F	T
O	S	C	B	I	N	G	O	O	G	R	P	O	K	E	R	N	M	A
S	S	X	S	R	E	D	D	A	L	D	N	A	S	E	T	U	H	C

AGGRAVATION

BACKGAMMON

BATTLESHIP

BINGO

BLOKUS

BOGGLE

BUNCO

CANDYLAND

CATCH PHRASE

CHECKERS

CHESS

CHUTES AND LADDERS



CLUE

CONNECT FOUR

DOMINOES

EUCHRE

FLINCH

GO FISH

GUESS WHO

JENGA

LIFE

MEMORY

MILLE BORNES

MONOPOLY



MOUSE TRAP

OLD MAID

OPERATION

PARCHEESI

PICTIONARY

POKER

QWIRKLE

RACKO

RISK

RUMMIKUB

SCATTERGORIES

SCRABBLE



SEQUENCE

SKIPBO

SORRY

STRATEGO

TICKET TO RIDE

TRIVIAL PURSUIT

TROUBLE

TWISTER

UNCLE WIGGLEY

UNO

UPWORDS

YAHTZEE