

**YOUR KINGDOM COME, YOUR WILL BE DONE,
ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN**

**KINGDOM GIFTS
In Our Hands**



So this weeks reflection brings us to the end of our series on Thy Kingdom Come, where over the last 3 weeks we have looked at Kingdom Living, Kingdom Praises, Kingdom Goals and finally today Kingdom Gifts. What a generous God we have!

SB: 813

**For I'm building a people of power
For I'm making a people of praise
That will move through
this land by My Spirit
And will glorify
My precious Name**

**Build Your church Lord
Make us strong Lord
Join our hearts Lord
Through Your Son
Make us one Lord
In Your body
In the kingdom of Your Son**

A beautiful picture of the Church - the power, praise, strength and unity that glorifies the name of Jesus, to be seen in and through his people, that is you and me and every person who has declared Jesus as Saviour and Lord of their lives.

Colossians 1:12-14

¹² Your hearts can soar with joyful gratitude when you think of how God made you worthy to receive the glorious inheritance freely given to us by living in the light. ¹³For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, ¹⁴ who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins.

When we think of the gifts of the Kingdom, it's helpful to remember they are for the glorification [adoration, exaltation, lifting up] of Jesus and for the encouragement and building up of the church, as a whole, to grow to maturity in Christ. In Peter's first letter 4:10-11 we see him encouraging believers to use the varied gifts '*...so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.*'

Kingdom Gifts are gifted to us by the Father, through the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. As these gifts are used, we live out [declare] our worship to Jesus and bear witness to the power of His love, through the redemption that is being worked out by the grace of God, in our lives individually and collectively as 'church'.

Gracious God, we pray that You would give us the knowledge and insight that comes from You alone.

May we know Your will in all things, and may our lives bring honour to Your name.

Strengthen us with Your infinite power, according to Your glorious might, so that we would have everything we need to endure hardship with patience and joy.

We praise You for rescuing us from the powers of darkness, and bringing us into Your kingdom of light.

We praise You that we can share in the inheritance that belongs to Your people.

And we praise You that, through the blood of Your Son, Jesus Christ, we have been redeemed and set free from our sins.

All praise to You, gracious and merciful God. Amen.

Lord, we pray your Kingdom Come - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2q0QC4arRjM>

SB:143 v1-2

I THINK, when I read that sweet
story of old,
When Jesus was here among men,
How He called little children as
lambs to His fold,
I should like to have been
with them then.
I wish that His hands had been
placed on my head,
That His arm had been thrown
around me,
And that I might have seen
His kind look when He said:
“Let the little ones come unto Me!”

Yet still to His footstool in prayer
I may go
And ask for a share in His love;
And if I now earnestly seek
Him below,
I shall see Him and hear Him above,
In that beautiful place He is
gone to prepare
For all who are washed
and forgiven;
And many dear children are gathering
there,
For of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.

THE PRIMARY KINGDOM GIFT IS JESUS HIMSELF - *‘For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.’ Jn3:16-17 NIV*

In these verses we see God gifting a Saviour to the world, who through faith in him gifts believers eternal life. Another version says this - *For this is how much God loved the world—he gave his one and only, unique Son as a gift. So now everyone who believes in him will never perish but experience everlasting life. ¹⁷ “God did not send his Son into the world to judge and condemn the world, but to be its Saviour and rescue it!*

God gifts the world a Saviour with a purpose - to rescue the world from its own self destruction of fear, disunity, inequality, corruption and abuse of power - the cost of which is spiritual death *'For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.'* Rom6:23

With faith in the death **and** resurrection of Jesus, we are led from spiritual blindness [death] into spiritual sight [eternal life] where today, we can start living *'life in all its fullness'* Jn10:10

Through receiving the gift of sacrificial and redemptive love, forgiveness, mercy and grace of God in Jesus, He gifts the peace, joy and hope of His kingdom and we become people of the Kingdom of God *'For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, ¹⁴who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins.'* Col 1:13-14.

Reflection Questions:

- What are the differences of living in the kingdom of darkness and living in the Kingdom of Jesus?
- What is required to move from living in the kingdom of darkness to living in the Kingdom of Jesus?
- What signs of peace, hope and joy can you see today in your own life, the life of the Corps and the wider Church?

THE SECOND KINGDOM GIFT IS THE CHURCH. After Jesus went back to heaven Acts1:9-10 [Ascension], from where he had come [Incarnation] John 1, he then, as promised, sent the Holy Spirit Acts 2, who in the act of filling everyone who was present with power v4 gave birth to the Church. In other words, those now empowered by the Holy Spirit, carried the truth and power of the gospel with them and were sent into the world to be witnesses [to tell] to the Good News of Jesus, just as Jesus had promised in Acts1:8 **The Church is a gift of the Holy Spirit to show and be Jesus to the world.**

Paul, writing to the church in Ephesus highlights the Kingdom Gifts that Jesus gifted to the Church at the Ascension and he begins by emphasising unity.

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ²Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

⁷But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. ⁸This is why it says "When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people" ⁹(What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions^[c]? ¹⁰He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)

¹¹ So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

It's easy to get focussed on the gift lists found in the letters of the new testament e.g Rom12:6-8, 1Cor12:4-11, yet these are mostly gifts given to individuals. However, in these Ephesian verses it is the Church itself that is gifted by Christ and given 5 elements that work in unity to bring believers into full maturity of faith in Jesus. This means, the functions of *Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher* are to be lived and worked out in the very life and operations of the church, not just in the lives of individual Christians.

Do you know your spiritual gifts? Are you using them? If not - would you like to?

The Church and therefore all Christians, have been gifted a responsibility to proclaim and live out the Kingdom of God. Only as we use and employ the Kingdom gifts to the Church, along with the Kingdom gifts to individuals are we empowered to share the good news of Jesus in word and action. Only as we bear witness to the truth and power of the gospel working in our own lives, to this world, will we open the invitation to become part of the Kingdom of Jesus, where people can see a different vision for life and leave behind the self-destruction of the kingdom of darkness. Only as we respond to the call of the Kingdom will we fulfil our responsibility as children of light.

HEAR THE CALL OF THE KINGDOM

Lift your eyes to the King
Let His song rise within you
As a fragrant offering
Of how God rich in mercy
Came in Christ to redeem
All who trust in His unfailing grace

Hear the call of the Kingdom
To be children of light
With the mercy of heaven
The humility of Christ
Walking justly before Him
Loving all that is right
That the life of Christ may shine
through us

In this world: **Kingdom Living.**
In our mouths: **Kingdom Praises.**
In our hearts: **Kingdom Goals.**
In our hands: **Kingdom Gifts.**

King of Heaven
we will answer the call
We will follow
bringing hope to the world
Filled with passion,
filled with power to proclaim
Salvation in Jesus' name

Hear the call of the Kingdom
To reach out to the lost
With the Father's compassion
In the wonder of the cross
Bringing peace and forgiveness
And a hope yet to come
Let the nations put their trust in Him

Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on
earth as it is in heaven!
**For Yours is the Kingdom, and Yours is
the Power, and Yours is the Glory for
ever and ever. Amen**