

REFORMED CHURCH CLANWILLIAM : SUNDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2013 EVENING SERVICE

Sing before: 48:1, 4

Let us commence this meeting with God by declaring openly to one another and to God:

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Beloved grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, through the mighty working of God the Holy Spirit.

Amen

Psalm of praise: 33:1, 7

Prayer:

- **Doxology**
- **Worship**
- **Confession of sins**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Gratitude**
- **Prayer for the need of the congregation of the church, the authorities and the sinful world and appeal to God's promises**
- **General prayer**
- **Enlightenment from the Holy Spirit for the sake of the ministry of the Word.**

Amen

Psalm 89:7

Scripture reading: Isaiah 33

Scripture text: Isaiah 33:22; Heidelberg Catechism Sunday 48

22 (For the Lord is our Judge, The Lord is our Lawgiver, The Lord is our King; He will save us);
(Isaiah 33:22)

The Lord is our King and He will save us. The Lord reigns and He has a kingdom.

- We also pray in the Lord's Prayer that our heavenly Father must let his kingdom come.
- The Lord's Prayer in this petition connects with the prophecy of Isaiah. But we must always bear in mind that the Lord God is a Triune God and that what the Father reveals to us about Himself also applies to the Son and the Holy Spirit.

In this sermon we consider the following:

1. **The Lord Jesus is the King of the kingdom of God.**
2. **What do we pray for in praying for the kingdom of God?**
3. **The victory over the devil.**

1. The Lord Jesus is the King of the kingdom of God

Jesus Christ reigns over the Kingdom of the Father.

- Before His birth on earth it was proclaimed that He would be named the Son of the Most High.
- To Him the Lord God would give the throne of his father David and He would be King forever and his kingdom would never end.
- This is a promise the Lord made to David that is being fulfilled.

For us the significance of all this is that we belong to Jesus Christ.

- Hence we are part of this kingdom that goes beyond time and peoples.
- The question is: Are we aware of this? To what extent do we submit to this King who, without doubt, is more powerful than any power of which we know?

Let us consider this issue from the point of view of a true believer and test ourselves to see whether we are still on course or how far we have come adrift.

Let us first consider the King who reigns.

- We confess that Jesus Christ is the eternal King of the church.
- We confess that His reign is so wide and inclusive that there is nothing that is not encompassed by it.
- We believe that He is the King promised throughout the Old Testament and who eventually did come.
- We also believe that he will return to found His Kingdom in perfection and eternally.
 - In Luke 1:32 it is written that Jesus Christ will be great which means that Jesus is God of heaven and earth and that when He returns we shall see it perfectly.

We believe in particular He will move us – His elect – through the power of His grace, to repent.

- This He does through His Word and His Spirit.
 - We read His Word and we hear it and at the same time His Spirit subjects us to Him so that from the depths of our heart we want to obey Him.

It is therefore obvious why the reign of the King Jesus Christ is seen differently by people.

- Those who hate Him will feel threatened because they do not want to obey Him and do not wish to be subjected to His will.
- On the other hand, the true believer values the reign of this King because in it he sees the guarantee and certainty of all things.
 - This person has the marvelous feeling of joy in his heart because he knows that his life and future are safe and that even his daily life is safeguarded by the power and wisdom of this eternal Ruler.
 - The true believer also feels the rule and kingship of the Lord more and more because he feels how the Lord increasingly subjects him to His reign.
 - And this moves the true believer to subject himself more and more to the Lord, to renounce his sinful life and to grow in his faith so that in him a life grows that grows towards perfection.

2. What do we pray for in praying for the kingdom of God?

The closer we get to perfection and try to become perfect, the more we realize the danger we live in.

- We are in real danger, because our life is encircled by an invisible world. And in this invisible world there are many powers against which we can do little.
- Hence we must pray for deliverance. We must pray for protection under God's power.
- We must also pray that the Lord should help us in our weakness, so that we may conquer sin. That is - that the kingdom of God should come.

When we pray that we may be safeguarded in God's peace and that it should be a reality in our life, then it touches upon two eras.

- It touches our present life.
- It also touches the hereafter.
- The one era flows into the other.
- Actually there is only one era that is distinguished in two phases.

If in the hereafter we want to be in the kingdom of God, then we must in this life fight evil.

- That can only be if God protects us against the evil works of Satan.
- We alone in our strength do not amount to much against Satan.

We also pray that the Lord should preserve His church and increase it, because there are people who agree on these issues and have the same belief.

- We pray that the Lord shall bring together all that share this belief so that we can do battle in unity. That is how the church will grow.
- We also know that the church is at the center of God's Covenant and therefore also the center of His kingdom because in the church we find the people with whom God has established His Covenant of grace in Jesus Christ.
- These are the people who believe in God's love and protection.

God's kingdom also comes through our knowledge.

- Therefore we must pray that the Lord will increase our knowledge so that we may know the truth.
- And that if we fail to know what we should know, that we might move towards the truth.

All this takes place in different ways, but the Holy Spirit works every one and to the church the crux is the fruit of the ministering.

3. The victory over the devil

We read in John 12:31 and 16:11 that the King of the church Jesus Christ says that the prince of this world will be driven out.

"Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out". (John 12:31)

"In regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer, and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned".

(John 16:10-11)

And this happened when the Lord Jesus with His death on the cross conquered the devil and now rules him daily.

But it is also true that we are in daily conflict with the devil. Because the Lord Jesus employs us in our repentance to limit the works of the devil.

- One side of repentance is that one beats off the devil's onslaught, breaks with sin and returns in faith to God.
- This we can do only if we know what it is about, in the Word of God and in His revelation. That is it what the ministry is about.

The fruit of the ministry is that through the ministry we learn the revelation of God in His almighty, grace and judgment.

- In the ministry of the Word we hear from the Lord what He expects of us and how He empowers us to do these things and then we go and actually do it.
- In so doing we distance ourselves more and more from what is wrong and evil and move forward on the path of salvation.

In this way the kingdom of God comes into our lives – not always visible but definitely there.

- Firstly because God Himself builds His kingdom.
- But secondly, also because the Lord employs us in it.

Presently we live in the stage that the kingdom of God is being built.

- He finalizes it perfectly at the end of time when He returns on the clouds.
- At that moment the church which presently is a struggling church will change into a victorious church – the church in its victory.

The glory for the victory does not belong to the people but belongs to the King of the church, because His reign made the victory possible.

- In His reign the decisive moments in the victory of the church are always His work – especially His atoning sacrifice on the cross and His victory over death with His resurrection.

When the King of the church comes on the clouds, we shall be perfect and live forever, in so much glory that no man can tell of it. Brothers and sisters how do these matters touch you?

- Believe these matters and feel them in your lives.
- That is what we confess in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Lord's day 48. Let us read it together.

Question 123. What is the second petition?

A: Thy kingdom come. That is: so govern us by Your word and Spirit, that we submit ourselves unto You always more and more;1 preserve and increase Your Church;2 destroy the works of the devil, every power that exalts itself against you, and all wicked devices formed against Your holy Word,3 until the full coming of Your kingdom, wherein You shall be all in all.4

1Ps 119:5; 105; 143:10; Mt 6:33;2 Ps 51:18, 122:6-9; Mt 16:18; Acts 2:42-47;3 Rom 16:20; 1 Jn3:8;4 Rom 8:22-23; 1 Cor 15:28; Rev 22:17, 20

Amen.

Closing prayer.

Closing Song: Scripture Versification 28B:

The Lord bless and keep you, the Lord make his face shine on you, the Lord turn His countenance to you and give peace.

Amen

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 Scripture Modern King James Version