

Teach us to Pray (3)

Chat with the Children

- Who is in charge?
 - keep asking the question, pursuing the difference between who **seems to be in charge** and who is **actually in control**
- We are thinking about **God's kingdom** today:
 - sometimes he doesn't seem to be in charge, but actually is...
 - and sometimes people say God is in charge, but actually they aren't letting him be...
- And what does it mean to pray **may your kingdom come!**

Introduction

- Domain name registration on the internet...
 - the part of the net where the authority of the registrar for that domain is recognised
 - they get to say which names are registered, or not

"May your kingdom come"

- **Kingdom = King's Domain**
 - prayer that this kingdom would come... what do we mean?

Parable of the Sower

- Parable of the sower is one of several that Jesus tells that describe **(some aspect of)** the kingdom
 - it is not itself a full description!
 - points to varying responses being part of what happens in the kingdom
 - points to response to God's word, the gospel message, being critical to participation in the kingdom
- The second, briefer parable of seed growing points up how the kingdom grows:
 - in ways obscure from human understanding and under God's control
- This morning:
 - think a little about what "the Kingdom" is
 - and connect that briefly to the Lord's prayer
 - I suspect we will need to come back to this next week!

What is the Kingdom?

- *"What is the Kingdom?" slide*
- Where God rules
 - not place, but people
 - not visible directly, but through signs
 - like air is not visible directly, but through its effects
- When Jesus came there were signs of the kingdom...
 - eg Jesus' response to John the Baptist's questions in Luke 7:22
 - *So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor." (Luke 7:22)*
 - there is change in people and their situations

Who is part of the Kingdom?

- *"Who is part of the Kingdom?" slide*
- Those who receive the word gladly!

Where is the Kingdom?

- *"Where is the Kingdom?" slide*
- The coming of the kingdom - snippet in Luke 17:20-21
 - *Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you."* (Luke 17:20-21)
 - so not Christendom
 - not even the visible, official church!
 - but in the Church, God's people
 - in hearts given over to living for him

When will the Kingdom come?

- *"When will the Kingdom come?" slide*

Now

- *(Mark 9:1) And he said to them, "I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."*
- Also in Luke 17 snippet above, *"the kingdom of God is within you..."*

Not yet

- There is a day of harvest still ahead - see, eg, v.29
- Those two timescales of expectation are still around today...
 - have to live within the tension of God bringing the kingdom now, and the NT images all being ones of growth - eg seed, mustard plant, etc
 - but also the present reality of rebellion against God's rule that we see all around us
 - and the knowledge that one day God's rule will be fully realised

Why is the Kingdom?

- *"Why is the Kingdom?" slide*
- And what do we mean when we pray *"your kingdom come"*?
- Kingdom and Covenant