



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done

Week of 6.29.20

By Kellie Anderson

I love good words. The right words, carefully chosen, perfectly crafted, just thrill me. They resonate with and stir something in my soul. As a matter of fact, I usually know within the first page of a book if the author has the gift to write like that. Words have such power over me. This morning it was these words:

A sworn allegiance. An act of treason. A victory cry.

Something in my heart – that something that always wants to reject the status quo – some rebellious part of me felt that familiar thrill. I don't know if I've ever equated being a Christ follower with being a rebel.

How about you?

1) When you pray the Lord's Prayer and you really think about the words:

YOUR will be done. YOUR kingdom come -- on earth as it is in Heaven.

Do you feel a thrill? Or do you feel fear? Why do you think Randy said that these words are the most threatening ones in the Lord's Prayer (maybe in all of scripture?)

2) Augustine of Hippo wrote his book *The City of God* in 426 AD! Historically that is just the blink of an eye following Christ's resurrection and the earliest days of the church. The book was written as a response to the idea that Christianity led to Rome's decline and describes God's kingdom. Randy said the City of God is made up of grace, love, truth, peace, justice, mercy, righteousness, and holiness. Have you ever had a glimpse of that city? How does this contrast with the City of Man?

3) According to Wikipedia an oath of allegiance happens when a “subject or citizen acknowledges a duty of allegiance and swears loyalty to a monarch or country.” How is the Lord’s Prayer a sworn allegiance? If you have sworn your allegiance to God how does that impact your relationship to or status in other people groups to which you might belong? Does one challenge your loyalty to the other?

4) Boundary lines between countries, states, counties, etc. have a major impact on our lives. So it is with the “boundary lines” between the City of God and the City of Man. Where are you residing right now? Where do you place your allegiance? Is it possible to live a satisfying life with one foot on each side of that boundary?

5) Praying the Lord’s Prayer is an act of treason against the City of Man. When Jesus tells us how to pray, he actually tells us to turn our backs on and renounce our citizenship there. What would that look like in your life right now? Would your answer help explain why this prayer might be the most threatening words in scripture?

6) Finally, the Lord’s Prayer is a cry of victory. What does that mean to you? Where have you experienced victory in your life? Do you allow others to hear your victory cry? What do they hear from you?

“Capture rebels and adopt them as sons and daughters...” More words to thrill my wayward heart! Imagine Jesus being on a search and rescue mission for YOU! This world is not our home. You might say that we are captives here – and (let’s be honest) we are NOT necessarily always being held against our will, are we? Actually we often plop ourselves down right in the middle of the City of Man, build our own little house of sticks, and take up residency without much thought. But like a carnival, the mid-way attractions are just temporary. Kinda dirty. Kinda gross. Possibly (thrillingly?) unsafe. Ridiculously costly. It looks like shiny bright sparkly fun against the dark sky. But have you ever seen a field after the carnival has moved on? Not a very pretty sight.

Our souls may yearn for the coming City of God while we live here and now in the City of Man with all of its attractions. Even though we feel like we don’t really belong here, we can’t get ourselves out of this place. We may have walked in, but we need someone to carry us out. Look out the window, friends. Jesus has shown up. He wants to capture you and then adopt you as sons and daughters of His FATHER – our Father. Why don’t you stop running, turn around, and walk right into his strong carpenter’s arms and let him take you home?