

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Greetings from the parsonage! As we approach March, we are marching toward the cross with our Lord Jesus. Be sure to join us for our Lenten Rotation services (beginning Ash Wednesday, March 6) as we “Behold the Man,” our Lord Jesus, the God-man who will take our sins to the cross of Calvary for all of our sakes’. God’s blessings to you as you enter this period of penitent reflection on who you are as a sinner, and who Jesus is as God manifested among us!



We continue our study of the Second Petition of the Lord’s Prayer from Luther’s Large Catechism. Last month we read that “many, led by the Holy Spirit, may come into the kingdom of grace and become partakers of redemption, so that we may all remain together eternally in this kingdom that has now begun (BoC, p.447).”

Luther continues: ““The coming of God’s kingdom to us’ takes place in two ways: first it comes here, in time, through the Word and faith, and second, in eternity, it comes through the final revelation. Now, we ask for both of these things: that it may come to those who are not yet in it and that, by daily growth here and in eternal life hereafter, it may come to us who have attained it. All this is nothing more than to say: ‘Dear Father, we ask you first to give us your Word, so that the gospel may be properly preached throughout the world and then so that it may also be received in faith and may work and dwell in us, so that your kingdom may pervade among us through the Word and the power of the Holy Spirit and the devil’s kingdom may be destroyed so that he may have no right or power over us until finally his kingdom is utterly eradicated and sin, death, and hell wiped out, that we may live forever in perfect righteousness and blessedness (BoC, p.447).”

As you see, Luther could be a little long-winded; let’s break down what he wrote. God’s kingdom comes to us in two different ways. Now it comes to us in the Word that we hear and believe. Then, when our Lord Jesus returns, we will enter into all of its glory for life ever after.

The key to receiving both of these is faith, so we pray in this petition that God would send His Spirit so that we can hear and believe all of the gospel is for you and me. We already

have the Spirit at work in us through our baptism and continued hearing of the Word; but we also pray that those who have not heard the Gospel of Jesus might hear it and believe it.

We pray as ones who have “attained it” and who also desire “daily growth.” It is a both-and. We are saved through Jesus’ death and resurrection, and that is all that is needed for our salvation. At the same time, as ones who are forgiven and saved in Christ, by the faith we have we desire to continually learn and grow in the Word and Gospel. One who believes both has assurance of salvation and continues to learn at Jesus’ feet.

We continue to need the Word preached to us because while we have forgiveness and have assurance of salvation in Jesus’ works, we are still in the world, still have the devil prowling around us looking to devour us, and are still in sinful bodies. So we continue to pray to God to protect us—sending His holy angels to defend us from the Evil One, as Luther wrote in his Morning and Evening Prayers—until ““finally (the devil’s) kingdom is utterly eradicated and sin, death, and hell (are) wiped out (then) we may live forever in perfect righteousness and blessedness (BoC, p.447).””

God will continue to protect and defend us, and give us His kingdom through His Word and Sacraments, all because His Son paid for our sins on the cross of Calvary. All thanks be to God the Father through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Amen!

Your brother and under-Shepherd in Christ,

Pastor Josh