



March 25, 2017
The Lord's Prayer, The Second Petition
"Your kingdom come..."

[Read Matthew 25:14-30](#)

"In fact, God's kingdom comes on its own without our prayer, but we ask in this prayer that it may also come to us." (Martin Luther, *Small Catechism*)

Brennan Manning, one of my favorite writers, often asked, "Are you willing to allow God to be as good to you as God wants to be?" His question reverses what we think is often the problem. We might think that we ask God for too much. So we should tone down our requests and be satisfied with what we get. Manning says that is precisely backwards. Our problem is rarely that we ask too much of God. Our problem is usually that we ask too little.

The "ask" doesn't get much bigger than this petition, does it? "Let your kingdom come." Is that too much to ask? Manning finds himself in agreement with Martin Luther. Do we ask for too much in this petition? Not at all! Luther responds. God

claims the honor of giving far more abundantly and liberally than anyone can comprehend—like an eternal, inexhaustible fountain which, the more it gushes forth and overflows, the more it continues to give. He desires of us nothing more ardently than that we ask many and great things of him; and on the contrary, he is angered if we do not ask and demand confidently. (*Large Catechism*, paragraph 55).

The Parable of the Talents encourages us to "ask big" as well. The cautious slave does not trust the goodness of the Master. But that is precisely the nature of faith as trust. It is not adequate to believe that God merely exists. Even Satan has that much faith. The real question is whether or not God is *good*. If God is not good, then our trust is foolishness.

Luther reminds us that "asking big" is the real action of the faithful disciple. And there is no bigger "ask" than praying "Your kingdom come." In the *Large Catechism*, Luther puts it this way. "Therefore we must strengthen ourselves against unbelief and let the kingdom of God be the first thing for which we pray. Then, surely we shall have all other things in abundance..."

Luther reminds us of our Lord's words in the Sermon on the Mount: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness..." Everything else is small potatoes compared to that prayer. "Are you willing to allow God to be as good to you as God wants to be?" That's a question to ask and answer in prayer every day.

Let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, send your Holy Spirit into my heart today to create the gift of faith. Give me the bold faith to make the "big ask" and trust you for the rest. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Do something: Consider a Lenten gift to the general fund of the Western Iowa Synod, ELCA, for our greater mission together. Memo the check "Synod giving" and put it in the offering plate.

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