

Heidelberg Catechism
Lord's Day 48

123. What is the second petition?

“Your kingdom come;” that is, so govern us by Your Word and Spirit, that we submit ourselves to 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 fullness of Your kingdom come,⁴ wherein You shall be all in all.⁵

[1] Ps. 119:5; 143:10. [2] Ps. 51:18; 122:6–7. [3] 1 Jn. 3:8; Rom. 16:20. [4] Rev. 22:17, 20; Rom. 8:22–23. [5] 1 Cor. 15:28; *Ps. 102:12–13; *Heb. 12:28; *Rev. 11:15; *1 Cor. 15:24.

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The second petition is, THY KINGDOM COME, contains nothing new, and yet there is good reason for distinguishing it from the first.

John Calvin, Institutes, XX, 42

I. In what sense does God's kingdom need to “come”?

A. God's kingdom is already established

*Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.*

Psalm 145.13

³⁴ *At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation;*
³⁵ *all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, “What have you done?”*

Daniel 4. 35-35

B. But God's kingdom is not yet visible, or seen in its fullness

“You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet.”

Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him.

Hebrews 2. 7-8

C. Two Errors

1. The kingdom of God is totally future
2. The kingdom of God is totally present

II. What is the kingdom of God?

We cannot separate the kingdom of God and the church of Jesus Christ.

“No one can have God for his Father, who does not have the Church for his mother.”

Cyprian (died 258AD)

*The kingdom of God is that in which God alone rules and exercises dominion over all creatures; **but especially does he govern and preserve the church**. This kingdom is universal. **The special kingdom of God—that which he exercises in his church** consists in sending the Son from the Father, from the very beginning of the world, that he might institute and preserve the ministry of the church, and accomplish his purposes by it—that he might gather a church from the whole human race by his word and Spirit—rule, preserve and defend it against all enemies—raise it from death, and at length, having cast all enemies into everlasting condemnation, adorn it with heavenly glory, that God may be all in all, and be praised eternally by the church.*

*And so we pray, Your kingdom come. The sense is, let your kingdom grow amongst us and increase by continual advances; and always by new accessions, O God, let **your kingdom which you have in your church**, be enlarged and multiplied.*

Zacharias Ursinus, Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism

... you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession...

1 Peter 2.9

... our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ...

Phil. 3.20

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone...

Eph. 2. 19-20

III. How/what should we pray for this kingdom?

- A. Obedience
- B. Preservation
- C. Increase
- D. Protection

God sets up His kingdom by humbling the world.

John Calvin

*The church shall never perish! Her dear Lord to defend,
to guide, sustain, and cherish, is with her to the end;*

*though there be those that hate her, and false sons in her pale,
against both foe and traitor she ever shall prevail.*

The Church is One Foundation