**Reformation 500 WEEK 48: Heidelberg Catechism QA 123**

**Question 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; preserve and increase Your Church; destroy the works of the devil, every power that exalts itself against You, and all wicked devices formed against Your holy Word, until the fullness of Your kingdom come, wherein You shall be all in all.**

We learned from Questions 50-51 that the Lord Jesus Christ has a universal kingdom over all things (Eph. 1:20-23). He is “the ruler over the kings of the earth” (Rev. 1:5). “He is the head of the whole world by way of dominion, but a head to the church by way of union and special influence (John 17:2).… The Church is His special care and charge. He rules the world for its good” (Flavel, *The Mystery of Providence*, 27). We learned that Christ rules us through the ministry of His Word and Spirit (Eph. 4:7-13), that He preserves His ministry, gives His Church resting places, makes His Word effectual to the conversion of the elect (Rom. 10:17). He will defend us against all enemies (the devil, the evil world, and our inborn sin), and He will at length bring us to heavenly glory. “For He must reign, until He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (1 Cor. 15:25-26).

Jesus said this spiritual kingdom will increase and spread to all nations (Matt. 13:31-32). It comes to us, first, “by conversion, when some are converted to God, who grants to them faith and repentance [Col. 1:13].” Secondly, “when the godly make progress in holiness [Rom. 14:17; Rev. 22:11];” and ultimately, “by the perfection and glorification of the church at the second coming of Christ [Eph. 5:27]” (Ursinus, 636).

Therefore, when we pray, “Your kingdom come,” we desire that “this kingdom may come, increase and be defended …. we desire both that it may be established among and in us in this life, and that it may be brought to its highest and ultimate development in the life to come [1 Cor. 15:28]” (Ursinus, 633).

We desire and pray, first, that God may “so govern us by Your Word and Spirit, that we submit ourselves to You always more and more.” “Oh, that my ways were directed to keep Your commandments” (Ps. 119:5; see also verse 35). Second, “preserve and increase Your Church.” “Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; build the walls of Jerusalem” (Ps. 51:18; cf. Heb. 12:22-24). Third, “destroy the works of the devil, every power that exalts itself against You, and all wicked devices formed against Your holy Word.” “Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered; let those who hate Him flee before Him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God” (Ps. 68:1-2). “May sinners be consumed from the earth, and the wicked be no more” (Ps. 104:35). Fourth, cause “the fullness of Your kingdom to come, wherein You shall be all in all [1 Cor. 15:28].” “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev. 22:20).

“We ought to pray that the kingdom of God may come both as to its commencement and ultimate development,” first, “for the sanctification and hallowing of His name; for that we may sanctify the name of God, it is necessary that He should rule us by His Word and Spirit.” Second, for “our comfort and salvation. God gives this kingdom to none except those who desire and pray for it, just as He gives His Holy Spirit to none but such as desire Him [Luke 11:13]” (Ursinus, 636).

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