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Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

James 4:10

Best. Prayer. Ever. – YOUR Kingdom Come

When you pray the Lord's Prayer you start off by saying, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come..." Nowadays we don't know much about kingdoms because we live in a democracy. We don't have a king. We have a president. The big difference between the two is a president has power, but not absolute power. He still needs to go through the legal checks and balances of our governmental processes. But a king can do whatever he wants.

That's the thing. That's what we want. We want to be king. We want to be in control of our lives. We want other people to do what we tell them to do. Most of the time we live by the motto, "My kingdom come!" And that's a very dangerous way to live.

A powerful king named Nebuchadnezzar used to live that way. His history is written in the book of Daniel. One night King Neb had a dream that freaked him out. He called Daniel in to interpret it for him. Daniel revealed the meaning of the dream and said the bottom line was Nebuchadnezzar had become pretty powerful but also pretty arrogant. And if he didn't repent and start giving God the glory, his entire kingdom would be stripped from him. But if he turned to God in repentance, God would give it all back.

A year later Neb stepped out onto the roof of his royal palace and he looked out over his kingdom and said, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?" (Daniel 4:30). Doesn't sound too humble does it? Immediately God took away his royal authority. He was driven away from people and ate grass like animals. His hair grew really long and his fingernails were like bird claws.


God took Neb's kingdom away until one day Neb prayed, "Your kingdom come." He said, "His dominion is an eternal

dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the peoples on earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: What have you done?" (Daniel 4:34-35). At that humble moment of enlightenment when Neb recognized that God is the King of the World, God restored Neb's kingdom to him.

Like Neb, we all struggle with pride and the desire for power and control. But it's not until we humbly recognize that Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords that we will be lifted up. "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up." (James 4:10). This is why we pray, "Your kingdom come," not "My kingdom come."

Prayer:

Lord God, teach me to pray for your kingdom and your rule. I find myself wanting what I want. I find myself longing for a kingdom where I am king. Teach me to repent, to humble myself and lean on you and your rule in all things. Your kingdom is the one of which I want to be a part. Bring it to me. Send it to others. Rule over all things for me and my good. Amen.

Teen  Devotions are brought to you by WELS Commission on Youth and Family Ministry.

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