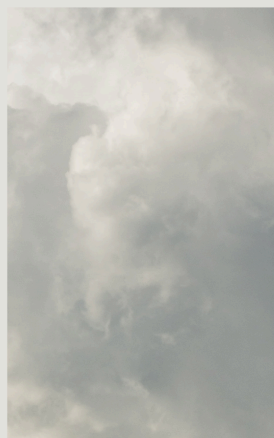


twenty-one

days of

prayer



The Kingdom Come

2025

A Journey through the
gospel of matthew

By Pastor Arthur Gonçalves



The Kingdom Come: 21 Days of Prayer

A Devotional Journey through the Gospel of Matthew

Dear Church Family,

As we prepare our hearts to study the Gospel of Matthew, I want to invite you into a special 21-day season of prayer titled "The Kingdom Come." This devotional is not simply an exercise in discipline but an invitation to deeper communion with Christ, our King. We believe that the King has come—and is coming again—and that His kingdom is both present and future. We live in the tension of the now and the not yet. And we live as His citizens, under His reign, in a world marked by darkness, distraction, and division.

This devotional was birthed during a precious season of rest. Over the course of my sabbatical, Jessica and I spent quiet mornings reading through the Gospel of Matthew together, reflecting on the reality of Christ's kingdom and what it means to live as His people today. Out of those moments—full of simplicity, honesty, prayer, and gospel clarity—came this burden to lead our church into a focused season of prayer together.

Prayer is the great weapon of the kingdom. Through prayer, we behold the King, advance the mission, and resist the enemy. My hope and prayer is that these 21 days will cultivate in us a greater awareness of the spiritual realities around us, stir our affections for Christ, and help us live with intentionality as kingdom citizens—in our homes, our work, our relationships, and our daily decisions.

This devotional is for all people: married, single, parents, children, teens, workers, students, and retirees. Each devotion includes a short Scripture passage from Matthew, a devotional reflection, and a prayer. I also encourage families to gather together and pray—there is no better way to teach children to pray than by praying together. Let's give ourselves to the One who gave everything for us. Let's seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

For the glory of the King,

Pastor Arthur Gonçalves

Day 1: The King Has Come

Matthew 1:21 "She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

The Gospel of Matthew opens not with a vague spiritual idea but with a thunderous declaration: the King has come. He is not a king of this world, draped in royal robes and surrounded by fanfare. He comes wrapped in swaddling cloths, born to a humble girl, announced by an angel. But make no mistake—this child is the long-awaited Messiah, the Savior-King sent to redeem His people.

Matthew 1:21 tells us why Jesus came: to save His people from their sins. The kingdom of God begins not with military conquest or cultural takeover, but with salvation. Our greatest enemy isn't external—it's internal. Sin separates us from God, enslaves us, and blinds us to our need for grace. But Jesus has come to deliver us.

During my sabbatical, Jessica and I were struck by how this reality changes everything. If Jesus truly came to save, then nothing is outside His power to redeem—our marriages, our children, our past failures, our present struggles. The kingdom begins where grace breaks in.

Have you welcomed this King? Not just as a historical figure or theological concept, but as your personal Savior and sovereign? Surrender is the doorway into the kingdom. His rule is not oppressive—it is freeing. His commands are not burdensome—they are life. As we begin this 21-day journey, let us lay down our crowns. Let us worship the One who came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.



Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for coming to rescue us. You are the King who saves. Teach us to live as Your redeemed people. Let Your reign begin in our hearts, reshape our homes, and redirect our days. We surrender all to You. Come reign in us. Amen.

Day 2: A Kingdom for the Broken

Matthew 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

From the moment Jesus opens His mouth in the Sermon on the Mount, we are reminded that His kingdom is not like this world. It is upside down—or perhaps more rightly, right side up. He begins with a blessing not for the strong, the successful, or the self-assured, but for the poor in spirit. To be poor in spirit is to know our need, to recognize our bankruptcy before God, to confess that we bring nothing but our sin and our need for mercy.

This is the kind of person the kingdom of heaven belongs to. Not the self-righteous, but the sinner who knows he needs grace. Not the proud, but the humble who cast themselves at the feet of Jesus. This is good news for every weary heart. It is good news for the addict, the anxious, the ashamed. It is good news for tired parents, for overwhelmed students, for burned-out workers.

It is good news for all who know they cannot fix themselves.

During sabbatical, Jessica and I often paused at this verse. We realized how often we try to “clean ourselves up” before coming to Jesus. But this verse frees us. We don’t ascend to the kingdom through effort—we enter low, bowed down in repentance and worship. And this has real-life implications. It shapes how we approach parenting—not with self-sufficiency, but with prayerful dependence. It shapes how we view singleness—not as something to fix, but as a calling to be filled. It changes how we work—not for identity, but from identity as children of the King.

The King is near to the broken. And His kingdom is for them. Let us teach our children this. Let us model it in our families. Let us pray today with honest hearts, trusting that grace meets us not at the top, but at the bottom.



Prayer: Gracious King, thank You for welcoming the poor in spirit. We confess our need. We are not enough, but You are. Help us to walk humbly before You, trusting in Your mercy, and teaching our children to do the same. Let Your kingdom come in our weakness and display Your strength. Amen.

Day 3: Hungering for the Kingdom

Matthew 5:6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

Everyone is hungry for something. Some hunger for approval. Others hunger for comfort or power or control. But in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus calls us to hunger and thirst for something far greater—righteousness. That is, to crave right standing with God and a life that reflects His character. It's the kind of longing that drives a person to prayer, to Scripture, to confession, and to action.

Kingdom citizens are not apathetic—they are desperate. They are not self-satisfied—they are spiritually hungry. They know that only the righteousness of Christ can satisfy their soul, and they long to be more like Him. During sabbatical, Jessica and I reflected on what it means to hunger together—for more of God's presence in our home, for more prayer in our marriage, and for more gospel fruit in our parenting. That hunger shaped our mornings and reoriented our desires.

This beatitude invites each of us to examine what we are truly craving. Are our hearts stirred for holiness? Are our appetites shaped by the Word, or dulled by the world? When we hunger for righteousness, God promises satisfaction—not in the fleeting way of this world, but in the deep, soul-restoring way only Christ can give.

Parents, model this hunger to your children. Let them see you longing for the Lord. Talk about righteousness over dinner. Teens, seek friends who stir that same hunger. Workers, pursue integrity as a sign of your kingdom citizenship. Pray that the Spirit would increase your appetite for what pleases the King.



Prayer: Lord, give us holy hunger. Help us to desire what is right in Your eyes more than what is easy or popular. Teach our hearts to crave Your righteousness and be satisfied in You alone. Let our homes, friendships, and work be marked by a longing for what is good and true. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 4: Peacemakers in a Hostile World

Matthew 5:9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

In a world marked by conflict—whether it's between nations, neighbors, spouses, or siblings—the call of Jesus is radical: Blessed are the peacemakers. Not peacekeepers who avoid hard conversations. Not passive observers who turn a blind eye. But peacemakers—those who move toward conflict with gospel courage and kingdom grace.

Why? Because peacemaking is what the King does. Through His blood, Jesus has made peace between God and sinners. And now, He calls us to be agents of reconciliation—declaring peace, embodying peace, and pursuing peace in all areas of life.

Peacemaking starts at home. It starts with humble apologies between spouses, gentle correction with our children, and patient conversations with those who frustrate us.

It continues in the workplace, where we resist gossip and speak truth in love. It expands to our church, where unity is not an option but a reflection of the gospel we believe. During sabbatical, Jessica and I saw how easily the enemy uses division to disrupt households and hinder ministry. But when peace reigns—real, Christ-centered peace—the kingdom shines bright.

Are there unresolved tensions in your life? Ask the Spirit to help you be the first to seek peace. Teach your children the beauty of forgiveness. Model it in front of them. The world may admire power, but the sons and daughters of God are marked by peace.



Prayer: Father, You have made peace with us through Your Son. Help us now to be peacemakers in our homes, our church, and our community. Forgive us for the times we've chosen silence over reconciliation or comfort over truth. Let Your peace rule in our hearts and overflow through our lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 5: Salt and Light

Matthew 5:14 *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden."*

The Sermon on the Mount doesn't just shape our internal character—it defines our public witness. Jesus declares, "You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world." That is not a challenge—it's a reality for every citizen of the kingdom. The only question is: are we living it out?

Salt in the ancient world wasn't just seasoning—it preserved, purified, and protected. Light pushes back the darkness, guiding and illuminating the path ahead. As kingdom citizens, we are called to be a preserving influence and a beacon of gospel clarity in a broken world.

That starts at home. Salt looks like words of grace in tense moments, honesty in small things, and sacrifice for others' good. Light shines when we forgive instead of retaliate, serve without seeking credit, or speak of Jesus when silence would be safer.

But here's the tension: salt that loses its saltiness is useless. Light hidden under a basket is ineffective. Christ calls us to bold, visible lives—not self-promoting, but Christ-exalting. During sabbatical, Jessica and I realized how easy it is to let the light dim—not out of rebellion, but from exhaustion or distraction. Yet this world desperately needs the preserving, healing, hopeful presence of kingdom people. Your children are watching. Your neighbors are listening. Your coworkers are noticing. The King has placed you where you are—for such a time as this.

Don't dim the light. Don't dilute the salt. Let your life reflect the King who lives in you.



Prayer: *Jesus, You are the true Light. Shine through me. Let my home, my work, and my relationships carry the fragrance of Your kingdom. Help me live with courage, clarity, and compassion. Make me salt in a decaying world and light in dark places—so that others may see and glorify You. Amen.*

Day 6: Kingdom Priorities

Matthew 6:33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

Jesus knows our hearts. He knows how prone we are to anxiety—especially about money, the future, our children, our health, or our reputation. And so in Matthew 6, He does not scold our worries—He redirects them. He reminds us that our greatest need is not control but surrender. "Seek first the kingdom of God..."

To seek the kingdom means to pursue Christ's reign and righteousness in every area of life—where He rules over our values, our habits, our priorities, and our plans. It means putting what matters to Him above what matters to us. This is not about doing more. It's about reordering what already is. The question is not "Am I busy?"—but "What am I busy with?" Jesus invites us to a rhythm where kingdom purposes lead and all else flows from there.

For Jessica and me, this truth became very personal during sabbatical. We had to ask, "What's filling our calendar that doesn't reflect kingdom priorities?" We re-evaluated how we rest, how we disciple our children, and how we give attention to our marriage and ministry—not as duties, but as responses to grace.

When the kingdom comes first, everything else falls into place. It doesn't mean life becomes easy—but it becomes rightly ordered. Our affections align with heaven. Our burdens rest on Christ. Our families flourish under God's rule.

Let this verse set the tone for your day. Before email, before news, before hustle—seek Him. Prioritize prayer. Start conversations about Christ at your table. Use your resources for eternal return. The world says, "Seek success." Jesus says, "Seek Me."



Prayer: Father, forgive me for seeking lesser things. I want Your kingdom first—Your will above my own. Reorder my days, my home, and my heart around Your reign. Satisfy me with what truly matters. Teach me to live in light of heaven. Amen.

Day 7: The Secret Weapon

Matthew 6:6 *"But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret."*

Prayer is not a performance. It's not a platform to impress others. It's not even primarily about getting what we want. Prayer is communion.

Jesus, in teaching His disciples how not to pray, invites them into the beauty of secrecy: Go into your room... shut the door... and pray to your Father who is in secret.

The world teaches us to broadcast our best moments. Jesus tells us to seek the Father in our quiet ones.

Why? Because that's where relationships are forged. That's where trust deepens. That's where real power flows—not from crowds, but from communion.

When was the last time you shut the door—literally or figuratively—and just sat with God? No phone. No noise. No checklist. Just quiet. Just prayer.

During sabbatical, Jessica and I rediscovered the sweetness of hidden moments with God. There were no sermons to prepare, no ministries to manage—just mornings with Scripture and stillness. We remembered that the vitality of our ministry is tied to the vibrancy of our intimacy with Christ.

The same is true for your parenting, your marriage, your leadership, and your personal walk. Prayer is the great weapon of the kingdom, not because it changes circumstances first, but because it changes hearts. What if your children grew up hearing you pray in secret more than they saw you post in public? What if your decisions were shaped by hidden moments with God?

This kind of prayer isn't glamorous. But the Father who sees in secret will reward you—with more of Himself.



Prayer: *Father, meet me in the quiet. Strip away the noise, the hurry, and the pride. Teach me to love the secret place where only You see. Let my heart be formed in prayer, that my life might reflect Your will. Make my home a house of prayer. Amen.*

Day 8: The Kingdom on the Streets

Matthew 6:10 "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Today begins Freeway: Save Our City—not just an event, but a kingdom moment. We gather with a focused mission: to declare that Jesus is King over addiction, despair, homelessness, incarceration, trauma, and spiritual death. He is Lord not just in church buildings—but on the streets, under overpasses, and in jail cells. His kingdom is not theoretical—it's powerful, present, and pressing in.

When Jesus taught us to pray, He didn't say, "Help us escape this world." He said, "Let Your kingdom come... here." Heaven breaking into earth. That's what we're asking God to do this weekend.

We long to see chains broken—literal and spiritual. We pray for drug addicts to be delivered, for prodigals to come home, for broken families to be reconciled, and for the spiritually dead to be raised to life.

But we also pray for the church—that we would be moved with compassion, stirred with courage, and mobilized in love.

This revival isn't just for the "hard to reach"—it's for all of us. Because the truth is, without Jesus, we're all lost. And in His mercy, He's come to seek and save the lost. The gospel levels the ground at the foot of the cross. So let us pray bold prayers today. Not small, safe, manageable ones—but kingdom-sized prayers. Pray for open hearts, Spirit-filled preaching, divine encounters, and lasting fruit. Pray for our police officers, elected officials, volunteers, and local churches to catch the vision of the kingdom come.



Prayer: King Jesus, let Your kingdom come to our city today. Break every chain. Lift every head. Restore every broken life. Let the gospel ring out louder than the lies of addiction. Move in power through every sermon, testimony, and conversation. Let the earth look more like heaven by tonight. In Your name, Amen.

Day 9: Chains Fall, Christ Reigns

Matthew 11:5 "The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them."

Day two of Freeway: Save Our City is not just about revival meetings—it's about kingdom manifestation. In Matthew 11, when John the Baptist questioned whether Jesus was truly the One, Jesus pointed to evidence: the blind seeing, the lame walking, the dead being raised, and the poor receiving good news. In short, Jesus said, "Look at the kingdom breaking in."

That's our prayer today: that the reign of Christ would visibly break into our streets, shelters, prisons, and homes.

Addiction, homelessness, fatherlessness, and hopelessness are not just social issues—they are signs of a spiritual war. The kingdom of darkness is real. But King Jesus has come to destroy the works of the devil and to rescue those in bondage.

His kingdom brings light to darkness, dignity to the outcast, and hope to the hopeless.

So we pray not just for a powerful event—but for eternal transformation. That men and women, teenagers and parents, addicts and atheists would encounter the living Christ and be changed forever. That moms who've lost children to overdose would find comfort in the arms of the Father. That city officials would see revival and not just reform.

And we pray for ourselves: that we would not forget these stories after the music stops. That we would be the kind of people who carry kingdom compassion long after the revival tent is taken down.



Prayer: Lord Jesus, let Your kingdom reign today. Open blind eyes. Break every chain. Save the lost and heal the broken. Raise the spiritually dead. Let Your gospel run freely through our streets. May the kingdom come and never leave. All glory be to Christ. Amen.

Day 10: The King Who Calms the Storm

Matthew 8:6 *"Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm."*

The Sea of Galilee was no stranger to sudden, violent storms. The disciples, many of them seasoned fishermen, knew the danger. But this storm shook even them. Waves crashed, winds howled—and Jesus slept. Fear and frustration boiled over. "Lord, save us! We are perishing!"

We've all been there, haven't we? Panicked in the middle of the storm. Crying out, "Where are You, Lord?" But Jesus rises. He doesn't panic. He speaks. And nature submits. There was a great calm. Not just in the sea—but in the souls of those who witnessed His authority. Storms are part of kingdom life. Following Jesus doesn't mean avoiding hardship—it means we're never alone in it. He is with us in the chaos. And more than that, He is sovereign over it.

During sabbatical, Jessica and I reflected on the storms that had tested our faith—seasons of exhaustion, grief, and uncertainty. And yet, every storm revealed this truth: Jesus is not absent, He's in the boat. His silence is not indifference. His delays are not denial. His presence is our peace. Some of you are facing storms right now—in your family, your health, your finances, or your emotions. You've cried out like the disciples, "Don't You care?" And heaven answers: Yes. I care. I'm here. And I reign. Let this day be a reminder that the King not only calms the storm—He uses the storm to calm His children.



Prayer: *Sovereign Savior, speak peace over our chaos. Calm the waves inside us. Remind us that You are near, even when the storm rages. Help us to trust Your power and rest in Your presence. Let our faith rise as fear falls. In Your name, Amen.*

Day 11: The Call to Follow

Matthew 9:9 "And he rose and followed him."

The call of Jesus is personal, powerful, and interruptive. When Jesus passed by Matthew, a tax collector despised by his own people, He didn't deliver a long sermon. He simply said, "Follow me." And with no hesitation, Matthew rose, left everything behind, and followed Christ.

That one moment changed everything.

Matthew didn't clean up his life before answering the call. He didn't ask for time to calculate the cost. He didn't make excuses or negotiate terms. He responded immediately and wholeheartedly. That's the nature of true discipleship—it begins with a decisive surrender.

Jesus still calls people today: tired parents, busy professionals, broken sinners, searching teens. He meets us where we are, but He never leaves us there.

He calls us out of our comfort zones, beyond cultural norms, and into a kingdom that demands our whole lives.

What might Jesus be calling you to leave behind? Fear of man? Control? A hidden sin? A worldly ambition? What would it look like to rise and follow Him today—not just in belief, but in obedience?

During sabbatical, Jessica and I realized how often subtle distractions had diluted our followership. Not outright disobedience—just slow drift. We recommitted to follow Him not with part of our lives, but all of them. Following Jesus means laying down our idols, our timelines, and our plans—and trusting that the life He leads us into is better than anything we leave behind.



Prayer: *Lord Jesus, thank You for calling me. Give me grace to rise and follow You without delay. Help me let go of what holds me back and run after what lies ahead. May my life reflect a deep, joyful surrender to Your call. You are worth it all. Amen.*

Day 12: Kingdom Rest

Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

We are a restless people. We live in a world of constant motion—deadlines, devices, distractions, and demands. Weariness has become normal, even praised. But Jesus offers something radically different: "Come to Me... and I will give you rest."

This isn't merely physical rest—it's soul rest. It's the rest that quiets the voice of shame, silences the need to prove ourselves, and releases the burden of trying to hold everything together.

The kingdom of God invites us to stop striving and start abiding. Jesus doesn't ask us to fix ourselves before coming. He simply says, Come. Come with your anxiety. Come with your exhaustion. Come with your guilt. His rest isn't a reward for the strong—it's a gift for the weary.

During sabbatical, Jessica and I realized how much we'd been carrying—responsibilities, expectations, and invisible pressures. Even good ministry can become burdensome when we lose sight of the rest found in Christ. We learned to let go and lean in.

Perhaps you've been trying to carry more than you were meant to—being everything for everyone, performing to be accepted, or clinging tightly to control. The King of rest is inviting you to lay it all down.

Sabbath isn't weakness. It's worship. Sabbath is a declaration that God rules while we rest.



Prayer: Jesus, I come to You today—not with strength, but with surrender. I am weary and in need of rest. Quiet my soul with Your peace. Teach me to stop striving and start trusting. Help me to lead my family into rhythms of grace. Be my rest. Amen.

Day 13: The Treasure Worth Everything

Matthew 13:44 *"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."*

Jesus describes the kingdom as hidden treasure—buried beneath the ordinary, waiting to be discovered. And when it is found, joy explodes. So much so, that the man sells everything to have it.

Notice, Jesus doesn't say the kingdom is a burden or obligation—it is a joy. The man sacrifices not begrudgingly, but gladly. Why? Because he's seen something more valuable than everything else combined.

This is the scandal and beauty of the gospel: when we truly see Christ for who He is—sovereign King, suffering Savior, risen Lord—everything else loses its grip. We gladly trade temporary comfort for eternal joy. But too often we want the treasure and the old field. We want Jesus and security. Jesus and our timeline. Jesus and our hidden sin. And slowly, our grip on heaven loosens because we're clutching the dirt of earth.

During sabbatical, Jessica and I asked: What are we holding onto that keeps us from fully embracing the kingdom? Approval? Busyness? Control? Even good things—like ministry—can become stumbling blocks if they're placed above the King Himself.

Today, ask yourself: What am I clinging to that I wouldn't be willing to sell for Christ? What competes with the joy of knowing Him? The kingdom is not an add-on—it is everything. And He is worth everything.



Prayer: *Lord Jesus, You are the true treasure. Forgive me for settling for lesser things. Open my eyes to the surpassing worth of Your kingdom. Loosen my grip on what will not last. Fill me with joy that overflows into sacrificial obedience. Let my life declare: Christ is enough. Amen.*

Day 14: Forgiving from the Heart

Matthew 18:35 *"So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."*

Few things choke out kingdom life like unforgiveness. In Matthew 18, Jesus tells the sobering parable of the unforgiving servant—a man forgiven an unpayable debt who refuses to show mercy to someone who owes him a small amount. The king's verdict is sharp: he is handed over to torment until he pays his debt in full.

And Jesus ends with this: "So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

Forgiveness is not optional in the kingdom. It is central. Why? Because we have been forgiven a debt far greater than anyone could ever owe us. The cross is the proof—and the power.

Yet forgiveness is hard. Wounds run deep. Memories resurface. And sometimes we confuse forgiveness with excusing sin or ignoring justice.

But biblical forgiveness is not forgetting—it is entrusting. It is placing the offense in God's hands and refusing to live chained to bitterness.

During our sabbatical, Jessica and I spent time reflecting on people we needed to forgive—or ask forgiveness from. It wasn't easy. But it was freeing. Because nothing drains your joy like carrying a grudge. And nothing reveals the kingdom more than mercy.

Today, who do you need to forgive? A spouse? A friend? A parent? Yourself? Ask for God's grace to release the offense and love like He loves.

Forgiveness doesn't erase the past—but it redeems it.



Prayer: *Father, thank You for forgiving me. I have sinned against You more than anyone has ever sinned against me. Help me to release every offense. Heal my wounds. Soften my heart. Make me a vessel of mercy in a world filled with bitterness. Let forgiveness reign where Christ rules. Amen.*

Day 15: Kingdom Forgiveness

Matthew 18:21-22 *"Then Peter came up and said to him, 'Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.'"*

The kingdom of God is built on forgiveness. Not just one-time forgiveness, but ongoing, lavish, and unrelenting mercy. Jesus shocks Peter by lifting the number far beyond human generosity. "Seventy-seven times" isn't a math problem—it's a call to mercy without limit.

Forgiveness is not easy. It costs us.

But unforgiveness costs us more.

Bitterness corrodes the soul. It poisons relationships. It silences joy and suffocates love. Kingdom

citizens, however, know a deeper freedom. Because we have been forgiven an unpayable debt, we now walk in the power to forgive others—especially when they don't deserve it.

Jesus told a parable right after this exchange with Peter: a servant who was forgiven a massive debt but refused to forgive another a small one.

The story ends with judgment, not restoration. Why? Because a forgiven heart that refuses to forgive is a contradiction to the gospel.

During sabbatical, Jessica and I took time to reflect—was there anyone we were holding resentment toward? Were there old wounds or silent grudges that had lingered too long? Forgiveness, we found, doesn't make the pain disappear, but it opens the door to healing. It clears the heart to receive joy again.

Is there someone in your life you need to release? Forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting or excusing. It means entrusting.

Entrusting the offense to the King and choosing the way of the cross over the way of control.



Prayer: *Merciful Lord, thank You for forgiving my countless sins. Help me forgive from the heart—fully, freely, and without keeping score. Make me an agent of grace in a world full of wounds. Let our homes and church overflow with mercy. Amen.*

Day 16: The Greatest in the Kingdom

Matthew 18:4 *“Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”*

Jesus often flipped our definitions of greatness upside down. In a world that elevates achievement, charisma, and influence, He pointed to a child—a picture of trust, lowliness, and unselfconscious need—and said, “Be like this.”

In the kingdom, greatness is not about how high you climb, but how low you bow. Humility is not weakness—it’s the posture of the strong who know where their strength comes from. It’s not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less.

Children are helpless, yet full of confidence in those they trust. They don’t hide their dependence—they wear it freely. That’s the kind of heart Jesus calls us to: quick to ask, quick to forgive, quick to trust, and quick to rejoice.

During sabbatical, Jessica and I talked a lot about parenting—not just how we’re raising our kids, but how we’re showing them Christ. We were reminded that our children don’t need perfect parents. They need humble ones. What they remember most are not our polished moments, but our honest ones—when we admit fault, ask forgiveness, pray in weakness, and rejoice in grace.

In our homes, churches, and friendships, this kind of humility disarms pride and makes space for peace. It invites the presence of the King who is “gentle and lowly in heart.”

Are you trying to impress God—or simply trust Him? Are you striving for greatness—or stooping into it?



Prayer: *Lord, make us low before You. Strip us of self-reliance. Teach us to trust like children and serve like Christ. Help us model humility in our homes—apologizing first, listening well, and rejoicing in grace. Let true kingdom greatness mark our hearts, homes, and habits. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*

Day 17: The King's Compassion

Matthew 20:34 *"And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they recovered their sight and followed him."*

Jesus does not turn away from pain. He moves toward it. In a world that often ignores or avoids the suffering, Jesus listens to the cries of the broken. He stops. He sees. He touches. He heals.

The two blind men in Matthew 20 were considered a nuisance by the crowd—loud, disruptive, and expendable. But not to Jesus. While others tried to silence them, Jesus paused, moved by pity. That word—pity—comes from a Greek term for gut-level compassion. It wasn't just sympathy. It was an ache that led to action. That's what kingdom compassion looks like.

The compassion of Jesus is not weak—it's powerful. It doesn't avoid hard places or hurting people. It enters in. And this is the heart of our King. As His people, we're called to mirror that same compassion.

That means we don't scroll past pain. We don't sidestep the hard stories or cross the street from need. We move toward it—with open hands and prayerful hearts.

During sabbatical, I watched how Jesus consistently slowed down for people. And I asked myself—do I? Or am I too hurried to notice the blind men calling out around me?

Who in your life is crying out this week? A lonely teen? A discouraged coworker? A spouse with unspoken grief? Don't rush past. Like Jesus, stop. Listen. Pray. Step in.



Prayer: *Compassionate King, thank You for not turning away from our pain. Thank You for hearing our cries and drawing near. Fill us with Your heart. Slow us down to see the hurting. Make us tender, not numb—ready to act, not just observe. May our homes and lives be places of mercy. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Day 18: The King's Authority

Matthew 28:18 *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."*

These are the words of the risen Christ—declaring His absolute rule over all things. Not just over religious matters, but everything: heaven and earth, life and death, kings and kingdoms, hearts and history.

Nothing lies outside the scope of His dominion.

This is no small claim. It's the foundation of Christian confidence. When the world feels chaotic and headlines stir anxiety, we can rest in the truth that Jesus Christ is not pacing in heaven—He is enthroned. He is not reacting—He is reigning.

For families, this matters deeply. Christ's authority shapes how we parent, how we endure suffering, how we steward influence, and how we handle disappointment. It's not just that Jesus is able to help—it's that He's already in charge.

During sabbatical, this reality brought Jessica and me deep peace. In moments when ministry or family life felt uncertain, we remembered that we are not holding everything together—Jesus is. His sovereign hand rules over every diagnosis, every delay, every door that opens or shuts.

Do you believe that today? Not just in theory, but practically? His authority is not meant to paralyze us—it's meant to empower us. We move forward with boldness because we live under the reign of the One who has all power. And yet we do so with humility, because we are not the King—He is.

Teach your children, your friends, and your own heart to rest in this truth: Jesus rules. So we don't have to.



Prayer: *Exalted King, all authority belongs to You. Reign over our homes, our worries, and our future. Teach us to rest in Your power and not our plans. Let our boldness flow from Your throne, and let our peace rest in Your name. Amen.*

Day 19: Go, Make Disciples

Matthew 28:19 “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.”

The kingdom doesn't end with us—it moves through us. Jesus' final command before ascending was not passive or private. It was a charge to move outward with purpose: make disciples of all nations. Teach. Baptize. Walk with people toward Christ. Multiply the life you've received.

This isn't the job of a select few—it's the mission of every kingdom citizen. Disciple-making is not a church program. It's a way of life. It begins right where we are: in our living rooms, break rooms, classrooms, and neighborhood sidewalks.

Parents, your home is your first mission field. Making disciples means more than bringing your kids to church—it means opening the Scriptures at home, confessing your own sin, and praying with your children through their fears and questions. Model repentance. Show them a life under the Lordship of Christ.

In the workplace, disciple-making looks like living with integrity, loving others sacrificially, and being ready to give a reason for the hope within you. Sometimes, it's sowing seeds.

Other times, it's reaping fruit.

Always, it's relying on God.

Jessica and I were reminded during sabbatical that our witness is always speaking—even when we're not using words. Our posture, presence, and priorities all disciple those around us. The question is not if we are discipling, but what we are discipling people into.

We are not spectators in this kingdom—we are ambassadors, commissioned and empowered by Christ Himself. The gospel that saved us is the gospel we must now carry.



Prayer: Lord of the harvest, send us. Use our words, our work, and our witness to make disciples. Let our homes be training grounds for kingdom living. May our children, neighbors, and nations see Christ in us. Let every generation rise to proclaim Your name.

Amen.

Day 20: Until He Comes

Matthew 24:44 *“Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”*

The King is coming. This is not poetic imagery or wishful thinking—it is a sure promise from the lips of Christ Himself. Jesus will return in glory, power, and justice. And we will see Him with our own eyes.

But He did not tell us when.

Instead, He told us how to live in the meantime: ready. Not in panic or paranoia—but in faithful, steady, expectant obedience. Kingdom readiness means living today as if He could come tomorrow.

This changes everything. It changes how we raise our children—not just for success in the world, but for faithfulness to Christ. It changes how we spend our time—not just for productivity, but for eternity. It changes how we handle conflict, steward our finances, forgive offenses, and love our neighbors.

During sabbatical, Jessica and I talked often about living with eternity in view. We realized how easy it is to be lulled into spiritual sleep—to function like Christ’s return is far off and our days are limitless. But Jesus calls us to live awake, not distracted. Ready, not idle. Trusting, not fearful.

Are you living as if the King is returning? If He came today, would you be found faithful?

The world is passing away. But the kingdom we belong to is unshakable. And one day, it will come in fullness. Until then, we live with urgency, hope, and joy—because our King is not absent. He is coming.



Prayer: *Soon-coming King, make us ready. Awaken our hearts. Strip away distraction and lukewarmness. Let our homes, our church, and our lives reflect Your reign. Help us labor with joy, love with sacrifice, and live with eternity in view. Come quickly, Lord Jesus. Amen.*

Day 21: Kingdom Come, On Earth

Matthew 6:10 *“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”*

We end where Jesus taught us to begin—praying for the kingdom to come. This is the heartbeat of every believer who longs to see Christ reign not just in heaven, but here, now, on earth.

This isn't a passive wish. It's a bold, present-tense prayer. When we ask for God's kingdom to come, we're asking for His rule to invade our reality—for His values to shape our homes, His priorities to direct our schedules, His peace to settle our relationships, and His mission to fuel our lives.

The kingdom is not simply something we wait for—it's something we walk in. It's the Spirit's power in our weakness, the Father's will over our own, and the Son's reign in every sphere of life.

Let your life become an outpost of heaven. Let your marriage, your parenting, your singleness, your work, and your worship reflect the culture of the kingdom. Let your home be a place where prayer is normal, forgiveness is frequent, and Christ is treasured.

This 21-day journey wasn't about spiritual hype. It was about kingdom formation—training us to see, live, and pray differently. To hunger for the reign of Christ in our everyday lives.

Now, we live sent. As kingdom citizens. As faithful ambassadors. As joyful witnesses to a world desperate for a better King.

The prayer continues. The mission continues. The kingdom is still coming.



Prayer: *Father, let Your kingdom come. Let it reign in our hearts, homes, and city. May our thoughts, words, and actions align with heaven. Use what You've begun in these 21 days to form lasting habits of prayer, joy, and bold obedience. For Your glory and our joy, in Christ's name, Amen.*

FINAL REFLECTIONS:

Living as Kingdom Citizens After the Mountain

Like Moses descending from the mountain after meeting with God, we now return from 21 days of prayer. But the goal was never to stay on the mountain—it was to be transformed for life on the ground. This journey has not ended; it has launched us into deeper, more intentional kingdom living.

Resist the temptation to drift back to “normal.” Let the habits and hunger formed these past weeks carry forward. Let this kingdom mindset shape your rhythms, relationships, and responsibilities.

How to Live it Out:

- Prepare for the King’s Day. Don’t treat Sunday casually. Start preparing your heart and home on Saturday. Come ready to worship the King.
- Establish prayer rhythms. Guard time for personal and family prayer. Teach your children to pray—by praying with them.
- Live the kingdom ethic. Be poor in spirit, pursue righteousness, show mercy, and make peace. Let the Beatitudes shape your family culture.
- Stay battle-ready. Spiritual warfare often follows spiritual momentum. Stay rooted in the Word and prayer, and walk in community.
- Join the mission. You’ve been commissioned—start where you are. Home. Workplace. Neighborhood. Don’t wait. Go.
- Keep watch. The King is coming. Live like it. Let urgency, joy, and hope guide every decision.

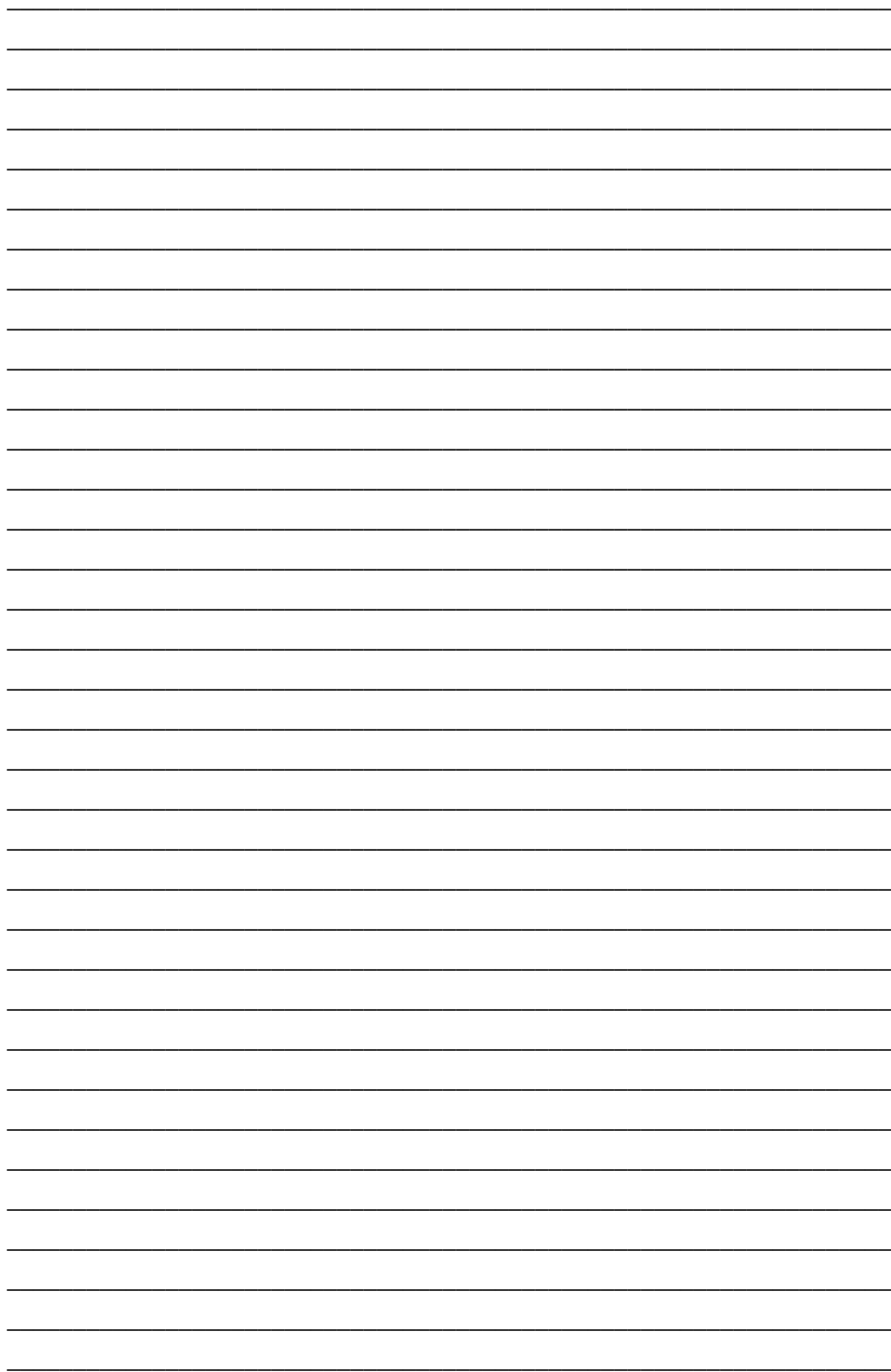
You haven’t completed something—you’ve entered something.

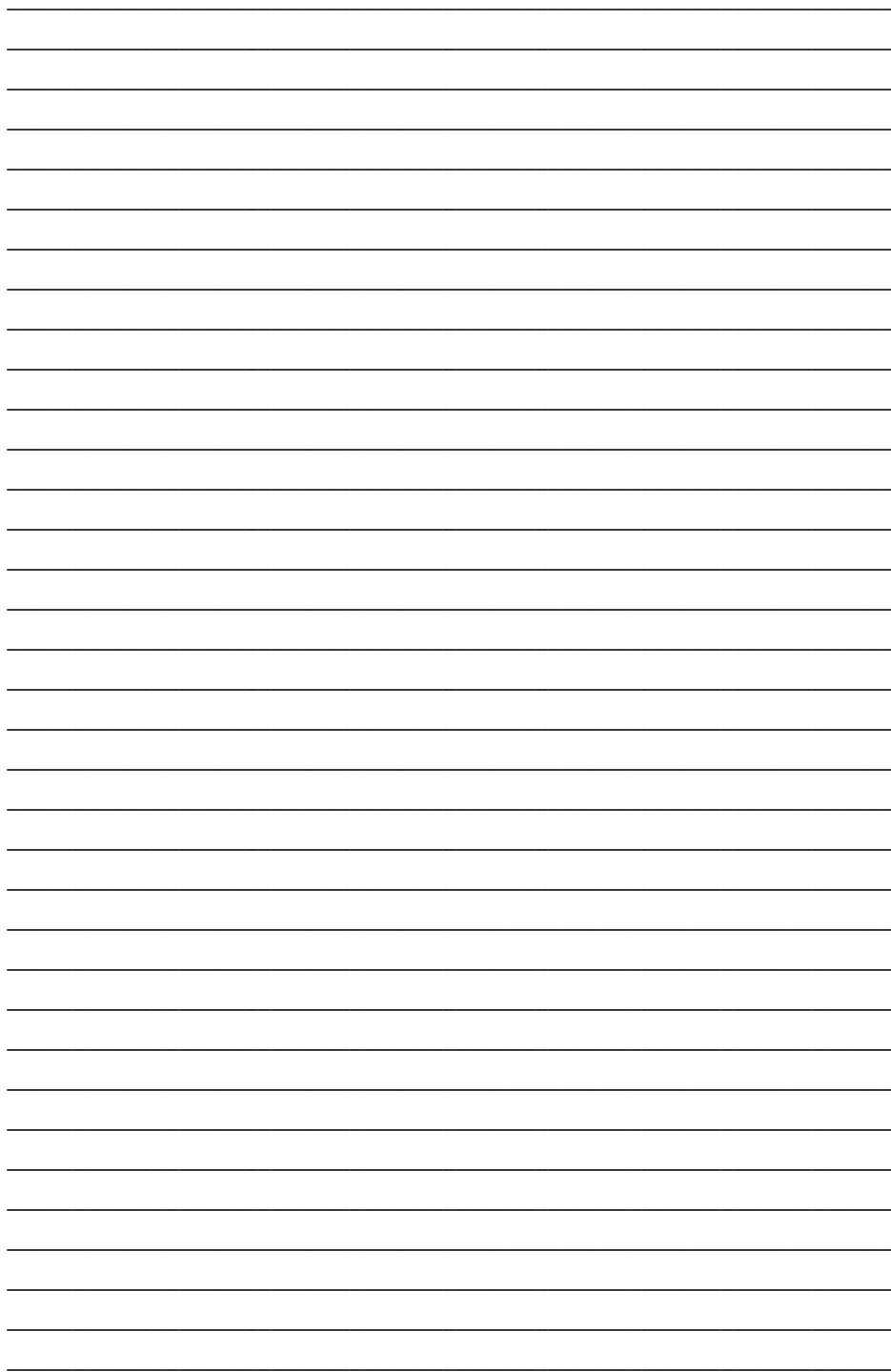
The kingdom is here. And by God’s grace, it’s advancing through you.



So rise, kingdom citizen. Let the world see the reign of Christ in your life.

Maranatha. Come, Lord Jesus.







The Kingdom Come