

What was the worst job you've ever had?

My worst ever job was at a local company and for some reason I had to type up orders for oversized mens clothing – it meant counting how many x's were on mens pants...it wasn't a good job, in fact it was boring data entry – but actually it was awful because of the way the boss spoke to the staff. Strolling around he would insult people for drinking water and call them names where all the females were called darling and leered at. It was not a happy environment. Postively or negatively, the boss, the king of a space shapes how things are.

These last few weeks we've been looking at the Lord's Prayer as the basis for how we ought to pray ourselves. Last week we looked and thought about how that phrase 'hallowed be your name' is a way of offering worship over to God – saying yes Lord you are holy and I worship you. One thing I was saving for this week is that it's also a petition prayer – a request. May your name be hallowed – may it be respected and not profaned. A very quick aside – we live in time when mild blasphemy – oh my God or using the name of Jesus to mean 'wow' is so common you barely hear it anymore but sometimes I hear it creep into the church too – for Jews the name of God is so holy you avoid saying it - let alone taking it in vain – blasphemy is way worse than a 'swear word' - we need to discipline ourselves to get this out of the church.

You know how through the whole bible, it is said that we must fear the Lord – or when we say about people – they've got the fear of God in them – it's not like regular fear. Regular fear brings flight, fight or freeze. Whereas the fear of God is different, it's a healthy fear, like a recognition of our place in the world. If you drive a car, you should have a healthy fear of crashing to your doom. So you wear seatbelts, you don't swerve all over the places...as a person living in the world, we pray that we don't get above our station, we see ourselves not as mini-Gods but as living under the shadow and shelter of God. Humility not pride is the way of the Christian. I love the image of Theodore Roosevelt – former president of the United States – most powerful man in the world, stepping outside to look at the stars to remind himself of his true. place

in our lives – God's name might be hallowed -but also out in the wider world – may God's name be hallowed – respected, loved and even worshiped now in this time, in this place, in our town, in our country. Hallowed be your name.

The second line for us today is another request – your kingdom come. The kingdom of God is a bigger topic than you want me to cover today – and it confuses people but two things might help firstly you know how at the beginning I said the boss sets the tone for the workplace – well throughout the bible – the king sets the tone for the kingdom. Secondly, we see this in the Old Testament so in judges, people did what they wanted it was chaotic because there was no king, then when there is a king – his life good or evil generally reflects and determines the life of the people.

The kingdom of God means the ‘reign of God’ in this place . So it’s not geographical like the United Kingdom or hereditary like our royal family – no, it’s like if God was ruling, if the rule of God was established what would it be like? How would we live and work? How would we lead and teach? What would it be like if God’s reign was here in Taunton?

It’s partly a work of imagination because it’s not here right now. We walk around our town and the need is clear. We read the news and the need is clear. We pray your kingdom come. Being a Christian can be a frustrating business, because we can see something more on the horizon, we can see the potential life of the kingdom of God and however far we progress, we see more hills ahead. Christians are a people of hope that sees beyond the current circumstance and into the far country, into the kingdom to come. Sees a time when the faithful will be gathered unto God in worship and in unity, we see children raised well, parents respected, women not mistreated, the hungry fed, the sick healed, the elders honoured, a place where Jew and gentile, black and white are brought together. We can see it. And seeing it we know we’re not there yet. Christians are a people of hope, hope that there is a better future, hope for justice, hope for life. St Georges maybe you’re bruised today and feeling like you’re just worn out and can’t see a way forward, maybe cynicism is creeping in and you know you just cant see it. I get it. There’s been a lot. From one crisis to from covid 1,2,3,4, to Ukraine, to incredible inflation to now a massive heatwave with fires raging through Europe. Phew – how can we do it? And this is the kicker. Let’s look at the line:

‘Your kingdom come’.

‘Thy Kingdom come’, not my kingdom come. I pray God you would break into these spaces that we inhabit and bring transformation. That your name might be hallowed and honoured, God that your kingdom might reign here in this place fully. We glimpse it. It’s here already says Jesus, and yet the kingdom is still to come. And this is why St Georges it becomes a dangerous prayer. For there will be a final day when the Kingdom of God breaks in and the world is changed but we are called to work for the Kingdom now, here, in this place God has given us. And God is calling us.

He's calling you to get involved, to serve, to lead, to see what needs to happen.

Lastly, what annoys you most. I don't mean like when the kids leave their socks on the ground. But what makes you spittingly angry – maybe it's something in church, maybe something in the wider community. Christians aren't called to be chilled out peaceful bods – we're actually called to be a bit angry – called to passionately say 'your kingdom come' and called to do something with the bodies, with the money, with the time we've got to make that a reality in our streets, in our town. How are you called to do something, to make God's name hallowed, that God's kingdom might come.