

**Seeking God's
Kingdom and
Demonstrating
Kingdom Values**

Barna Reports the Top 10 Reasons Americans Pray

1. Gratitude and thanksgiving (62%)
2. The needs of my family and community (61%)
3. Personal guidance in crisis (49%)
4. My health and wellness (47%)
5. Confession and forgiveness (43%)
6. Things I suddenly feel compelled to pray about (43%)
7. Safety in my daily tasks or travel (41%)
8. A sense of peace (37%)
9. Concerns about the nation or government (24%)
10. Concerns about global problems and injustices (20%)

What about the Kingdom and praise in our prayers?

Matthew 6:9-13 (NKJV) ⁹ In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven Hallowed be Your name ¹⁰ Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as *it is* in heaven ¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. ¹³ And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Have you taken time to consider the content of your prayers?

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

Kingdom values are counter-cultural

Matthew 5:3 (NASB₁₉₉₅) "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:10-11 (NIV₂₀₁₁) ¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

"Poor" is the Greek word πτωχός (ptochos) meaning beggarly or having much humility. Without humility we will not inherit the kingdom.

We are not called to trade insults but to defend our faith with gentleness and respect.

If we are to follow in the footsteps of our Lord, we will be persecuted because the path of Christ is counter-cultural.

Are you humbling yourself in the sight of the Lord even in persecution?

The Kingdom still expands despite severe persecution

Acts 7:58 – 8:1, 4 (HCSB) ⁵⁸ They threw him out of the city and began to stone him. And the witnesses laid their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ They were stoning Stephen as he called out: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" ⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin!" And saying this, he fell asleep. ^{8:1} Saul agreed with putting him to death. On that day a severe persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout the land of Judea and Samaria. ^{8:4} So those who were scattered went on their way preaching the message of good news.

Are you willing to follow your King wherever He leads?

In the Kingdom, our love and allegiance is for our King

Matthew 10:37-38 (ESV) ³⁷ Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me,

and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

³⁸ And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Honoring your parents is still important, but your allegiance and greatest love is reserved for your King.

Faithfully following our King involves dying to our needs and desires and receiving supernatural joy and provision for seeking Him first.

In the 21st century, parents more frequently serve their children and their schedule as if they were king. Will your life show that King Jesus is the highest priority?

If you meet King Jesus face to face today, will He be pleased with your allegiance and your priorities?