

Our Father,

Who art in Heaven,
hallowed be Thy name;
Thy Kingdom come,
Thy will be done
on earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil

Amen.

A decorative flourish consisting of symmetrical, swirling lines that curve upwards and outwards from a central point, resembling a stylized 'W' or a floral motif.

In the days to come, we will be taking a closer look at the prayer which Jesus taught his disciples to pray. It is known as the Lord's Prayer. This title is both right and incorrect. It is right, in that this is the prayer which the Lord taught his disciples to pray. But it isn't the Lord's prayer in the sense that this is a prayer that Jesus could have prayed. We will get to that later as we study about God forgiving our debts.

For today, I want us to focus on the first word, "Our."

Why "Our" Father? Why not "My" Father?

So much of American Christianity is expressed as my faith, my beliefs, my God, my Savior. I think this is a fantastic corrective against our individualized understanding of faith.

Our. Not my.

Perhaps Jesus wants us to know we are most fully who God intends for us to be when we are in God's family, God's community called the church. Perhaps it's because it's impossible for anyone to be a follower of Jesus Christ without also belonging to his body, the church of Jesus Christ.

The simple truth is that we miss out on what it means to be a follower of Jesus when we are in isolation. There is no such thing as a Christ-follower in isolation. The moment we become a follower of Christ, we become sons and daughters in God's family. This family is called the church.

The New Testament word for church, *ekklesia*, literally means the assembly of the called out ones. The very word itself refers to a multitude of people. The word church excludes any idea of an isolated Christian. If we are a Christian, we are a member of Christ's family and Christ's church. If we are a Christian, we are one in relationship with others.

Here's what this means: No matter what you are going through today...

- You are never alone because you are a part of God's family
- You are never alone because God is always with us as our Father

Our.

I like it. Thank you God!

Our “Father”



When we recite the Lord's Prayer and say, "Our Father," it's ho hum. It's no big deal. Of course God is our Father. What else would God be?

The reason for this is because of over two thousand years of Christian history. We've become accustomed to something that would have been absolutely shocking, horrifying, and offensive to everyone in the ancient world. It would have been so offensive to the common Jewish person that the person who spoke of God in such intimate terms would have been punishable by death.

There were other religions, of course, during the New Testament period. All of them regarded gods with the utmost respect and reverence. To refer to god as god, Lord, Master, Elhohim, etc. was perfectly acceptable. However, no one referred to God in such an intimate term as Father.

Even in the modern world, even when monarchs have no political power, there are certain protocols that one must observe to have an audience with the Queen of England. Here are just a few examples:

- On presentation to the Queen, the correct address is "Your Majesty," and subsequently, "Ma'am."

- Be early. Guests should arrive before the royal.
- Take the Queen's lead. Don't talk unless spoken to. Don't sit until she sits. Don't begin eating until she does.
- Don't touch her majesty.
- Only shake her hand if she offers it.
- Don't turn your back on her majesty.

This isn't even all of it. There's more. There are protocols on what to wear, how to present yourself, where to sit, etc.

This is just to hang out with the Queen of England. She's not even our Queen. But if you and I were to have an audience with her, we would have to observe all kinds of protocols.

Imagine how much regard, reverence, and genuine fear there was when thinking about being in the presence of God.

The way the ancients revered and regarded God was with the utmost respect and honor. It was completely unthinkable to refer to God as Father.

Yet, this is exactly what Jesus teaches his disciples to do. So much so, two-thousand years later, calling God "Our Father" has become ho hum, no big deal, a matter of fact.

The reason why we can call God our Father is because that's who he is because of what Jesus has accomplished for us through the cross. We have been ingrafted and adopted. We have become heirs of God's kingdom!

Wowsers!!!

What makes this even more amazing is how we can't imagine a God who isn't our Father.

Thank you, "Our Father!"

Hallowed



"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name" (Matthew 6:9).

Hallowed? What is that? How does one "hallow"?

The Greek word "hallowed" is a derivation of the Greek word *hagiazō* which means holy. The Greek word for "hallow" has the word "holy" as its root. To hallow something means to greatly revere, to greatly honor, to treat as holy, and to set apart as holy.

Notice hallowing doesn't just happen. It is something that must be done, something that must be accomplished.

What is interesting is that this verb is written in the *aorist imperative passive* voice in the Greek. Let's break that down.

- Aorist refers to a single act in the past tense
- Imperative means it is a command
- Passive voice means that it refers to an action that is done unto it. For instance, "Let the book be carried home." The verb passive in this sentence is written in the passive voice. The book is not carrying, but is being carried.

Putting all this together. What does all this have to do with anything?

What is astonishing about this is that Jesus teaches his disciples that the disciples have an active role to play in God's name being hallowed. God's name is honored, revered, treated as holy, and set apart as holy and special by the actions being done by the disciples. At the same time, this means, that the disciples can live in a way that doesn't hallow God's name.

Not only is this a good idea, but Jesus makes it clear that "hallowing" is a command. It is something that disciples are commanded to do.

It is when disciples live lives that reflect God's glory and holiness that God's name is hallowed. Whether our world hallows God and God's name is dependent upon how God-followers live and reflect that reality.

When we pray, "Our Father in heaven, **hallowed** be thy name," we are committing to intentionally live in a way that honors, reveres God's holy name. Hallowing God doesn't happen by accident nor haphazardly. It is intentional. It is a way of life that must be chosen.

As we continue to look at the rest of the prayer, Jesus will teach us how we can go about hallowing God's name.

For today I invite you to choose to live your life in such a way that will honor God through your living.

Every day I pray that I can glorify and honor God as a husband, father, and pastor. This is my life mission statement.

That's the lens through which I want to make every decision.

- Does this decision and decision honor God as a husband to Helen, father to Karis, Kaitlin, Kailey, and Kaleb?
- Does this decision honor God as a pastor to the Little Church and Lakewood*grace*?
- If it doesn't I don't do it.
- If it does, I am wholly committed to it.

Choose today to hallow God's name. Start with writing a life mission statement for yourself. This should provide you with the framework through which you make every other decision in your life.

What's In a Name?



“Hallowed be thy name.”

For us, a name is just a name. It's something we call someone. Some names are more meaningful to us because of the person behind those names.

In the Jewish culture names were far more than just something we call someone. Names reflected a person's destiny, their character, the essence of their identity.

For us, we find certain names meaningful because of our experiences with those particular individuals. For the Jews the person became the persons that their names meant.

- God changed the name of Abram, meaning “exalted father,” to Abraham, meaning “father of the multitudes” after Abraham fathers Isaac.
- God changed the name of Jacob, meaning “heel catcher” or “trickster” to Israel, meaning “one who strives with God” after Jacob wrestled with God.
- Jesus changed the name of Simon, meaning “one who hears” to Peter, meaning “rock.”

Names weren't merely something we called someone but describes the character, the nature, the destiny of an individual. The individual became what the name meant.

When Moses asked God what name he should tell the Israelites was the name of the God sending him to rescue them from Egypt, God replied, “Say to this people of Israel, ‘I am’ has sent me to you. The name I am is YHWH or Yahweh. The name of God YHWH is linked to the concept of self-existence.

God's name was thought to be so holy that Jews not utter it aloud for fear of profaning God's name. Even today, many Jews will write "G-d" in order to show reverence to God's name.

So what does all this mean to us?

Great question.

Jesus says in John 14:14, "If you ask for anything in my name I will do it."

Also, we end every prayer with the phrase, "We pray this in the name of Jesus."

When we say this, we are simply saying, "This request expresses not only my wishes, but Jesus' will too." It reflects Jesus' will, his interest, his character, and his authority. When we pray in Jesus' name we are not only asking for this for ourselves. We are asking on behalf of Jesus.

Knowing this changes what we pray for. Are our prayers reflective of God's will? If not, we are not praying in Jesus' name.

Everything changes when we pray in the name of Jesus.

Thy Kingdom Come



"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come" (Matthew 6:9-10).

"Thy"

There it is. "Thy" not "my".

It's not about you, not about me. It's not about the Little Church on the Prairie nor Lakewood *grace*. It's not about the United States nor America. It's all about God. It's never been about you or me. It's always been about God.

When we pray, *"Thy,"* we are re-orienting ourselves from an ego-centric way of living to get our bearings on God. When we remember who God is and who we are, we begin correctly seeing everything as belonging to God – our lives, this world, time, finances, everything.

"Kingdom"

The Kingdom Jesus ushers in is not a physical location but refers to a way of living, a new reality. The kingdom Jesus refers to is a kingdom where God's will and purpose is being accomplished. It's the place where God's reign rules.

This is the kingdom where God's rule, peace, joy, and purposes are being lived out. People are living with purpose and meaning. Lives are being changed and impacted. People who are far from God find their place in God. This is the kingdom of God.

This kingdom is realized when disciples *"seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness"* (Matthew 6:33).

"Come"

To pray God's kingdom come means that we not only desire for God's rule to be the reality but that we participate in the coming of God's kingdom. God's kingdom comes through us. God's kingdom is established wherever disciples follow and obey God's will and purposes.

God's kingdom is not wishful thinking or a worthy desire. God's kingdom is the reality which we are invited to participate and establish by following and obeying God.

So, what does all this mean for us?

When we pray, "Thy kingdom come", it means we recognize:

- "Thy" – living a life that reflects that everything belongs to God, that this life is not about us. "Thy" tells us it's all about God
- "Kingdom" – this is the world God created. God has given to us everything to make our lives abundant. It's in God's kingdom where all our lives find meaning and purpose.
- "Come" – God establishes his kingdom through disciples who "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." God's kingdom is established when disciples follow and obey God's will.

Whenever we pray "Thy Kingdom Come" we get to participate in God establishing his rule and will in this world as we follow and obey God's will.

What a prayer!

Thy Will Be Done



"It naturally follows that if God's kingdom is in the process of coming, then it must be God's will that is driving it. That would make sense. And since the kingdom is God's and not ours, so is 'the will of God.' Of course, we wish it weren't, because we'd rather pray, 'My will be done.' But that's not what Jesus said," writes Dr. Bill Carl.

The verb for "be done" is written in the Aorist Imperative Passive. What that means is that God is the one who is accomplishing the being done of God's will.

There are a couple of realities we need to come to terms with when it comes to God's will:

1. God's will is sometimes mysterious.

2. God is good. God knows what is best for us. And, God only desires what is best for us. The scriptures tell us that God is the giver of all good gifts (James 1:17).

First, God's will is sometimes mysterious.

I have held the hands of youth kids who's mom is dying of cancer. And no matter how much the kid prays, the mom is dying. And the kid wants to know what God is not answering her prayers.

I wish I knew. I wish I had answers. I don't know. I don't know why some people live to their old age and why some die so young. I am not sure where God's will fits into all of this.

What I do know is that it would be cruel and wrong to say to this young kid that it was God's will to kill her mom through cancer.

Even though I cannot say that this was God's will, I can proclaim that God is good. That even a death like this cannot separate us from God's love. I can assert that God's heart breaks at the loss and pain that this kid feels. And I can have the audacity to claim, because of God's goodness, that even this loss and pain God will not waste but redeem.

You see, to pray "Thy will be done," means to believe in our core that God is going to surprise us in ways we never imagined.

So, what does it mean practically to pray, "Thy will be done?"

First, it means to get out of the way. God is at work in our world. God has a purpose and God is actively at work to bring about God's will. The way we join God in that plan and will is to get out of God's way. Don't let my will, my desires, my thoughts become obstacles.

Second, it means to trust that God is good. Not only is God at work to accomplish his will, our God is good. God knows what is best for us, and God wants what is best for us. We may not understand it at the time, but trust God anyway.

Yes, God. "Thy will be done."

As in Heaven So Also On Earth



“Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, *on earth as in heaven*”

What I find intriguing is that the English translations of this prayer reverse heaven and earth. What I mean is that in the Greek, it reads, “As in heaven so also on earth.” The entire phrase reads, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done as in heaven so also on earth.”

Is there a difference between saying “on earth as in heaven” compared to “as in heaven so on earth”? I’m not sure. But I kinda like sticking with the original language. I like the idea that we start with heaven as the baseline, and all that is wrong in our world is being transformed by the power of God into becoming what God intended the world to be.

This is a restoration project. This is a revolution.

When God created the heavens and the earth, it was good. But sin marred God’s creation. The kingdom Jesus ushers in launches the restoration project. The cross of Jesus marks the beginning of the revolution. One day, everything as in heaven will also be on earth. All that is possible because of what God does through his Son Jesus Christ.

Karl Barth said that heaven is the place where God’s will is perfectly done.

That will be reality one day.

For now, every time you and I trust and obey we establish a little more of heaven here on earth. Heaven is not something we have to wait until we die to experience. We get to experience and taste heaven

each time we trust and obey. Trust and obedience lays down another brick in the kingdom establishment project.

When we pray “As in heaven so also on earth,” we are asking God to turn everything upside down and inside out, including us until this earth mirrors heaven.

That is a revolutionary prayer.

Yes, God. “As in heaven, so also on earth.”

Amen.

Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread



There are three things I would like for us to notice about this prayer.

1. Give **us** this day **our** daily bread
2. Give us this day our **daily** bread
3. Give us this day our daily **bread**

First, much of the American Christianity is expressed and experienced from the perspective of the individual. The Lord's Prayer doesn't want any part of that. Remember, "Our Father..." And now, "Give **us** this day **our** daily bread."

Think about your prayer language, how much of our prayers are about us? My needs, my wants, my desires, my wishes, my hopes.

Jesus teaches us to take a broader perspective. The Christian life is lived in community. We were created for community. It is in community we will fully discover our place and role. So it is quite right that we pray "Give **us** this day **our** daily bread."

Secondly, Jesus commands us to pray for our **daily** bread. Notice it's not our weekly supply of bread, or our yearly need. We are commanded to pray for our daily need.

This is reminiscent of the feeding of the Israelites in the wilderness with manna. The manna was for the day. It was not permitted to grab more than what one needed for the day. You couldn't save manna. You needed to go out every day to get what you needed for the day. Manna that was saved for later rotted.

God gives us what we need for the day. What God gives us for the day is to be used up and spent for that day.

Finally, bread. At the most basic level this is speaking about physical bread, the bread that we need for nourishment. At the same time, the bread Jesus offers us is a spiritual bread. This is the bread Jesus promised that once we taste of it, we will never hunger again. There is a spiritual hunger for meaning, purpose, and identity. We find that in Jesus Christ. Jesus is the only one who can fulfill that longing and hunger.

So, pray every day: "Give us this day our daily bread."

Forgive Us Our Debts



The prayer we have been studying is known as the Lord’s Prayer. I said at the beginning of our study that this can’t be the Lord’s Prayer. It can’t be the Lord’s Prayer because Jesus could not have prayed this prayer. Jesus was sinless. This prayer is the prayer which Jesus taught his disciples to pray. This is the Disciple’s Prayer.

We pray this prayer – “Forgive us our debts” – because we are repeat sinners.

God has forgiven us of our sins. Not just today’s sins but all our sins. Because God has forgiven us, we have the audacity to pray, “Our Father,” for that’s who God is to those who have received Jesus as Lord and Savior. Our standing as children of God cannot ever be taken away. There is nothing that can change our standing before God as his children. Although our standing as God’s children cannot be taken away, the presence of sin damages our relationship with God.

There are times when my children do things that hurt me. But there is nothing they can ever do to change the fact that they are my children. So it is with God and us.

If God has forgiven us our sins why then do we keep praying, “Forgive us our debts”?

Because we are repeat sinners.

It’s like taking a shower or a bath. Why do we take a shower or bath when we’ve already showered or bathed? Because we keep getting dirty.

There is no shame in asking for forgiveness when we sin. It would be a crying shame when we don’t ask for forgiveness when we have been dirtied and tainted by sin. We will continue to wrestle with sin until

the day we die. That we wrestle with sin, that we are bothered by sin, that we don't like the presence of sin in our lives is a good thing. It would be terrible if we weren't bothered by sin.

Father, forgive us our sins. We are repeat sinners in need of your forgiveness once again. Wash us anew and cleanse us from our sin.

As We Forgive Our Debtors



“Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” (Matthew 6:12).

Hmmm.

Does that mean our being forgiven by God is contingent upon us forgiving those who have sinned against us?

Yup.

Really?

Yup.

Jesus says, in the next sentence, *“For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins”* (Matthew 6:13-15).

When God forgives us our sins, he tells us that he has removed the sin so far away from us that it is as if they had never happened. We are told, *“As far as the East is from the West so far has he removed our transgressions from us”* (Psalm 103:12). God is able to forgive and forget.

But for us, when it comes to forgiving those who have sinned against us, it doesn't quite work that way. We are commanded to forgive, but we have a very difficult time forgetting. The scars are there. Whenever someone touches the scar, we are reminded of the pain all over again.

So what do we do with that? How can we forgive when it's difficult to forget? That's a great question.

Don't weaponize the memory.

What I mean by that is that when someone hurts us, the memory is stored in such a way that when they hurt us again, we bring that right back up to hurt them back.

When we forgive someone, we are refusing to weaponize such memories. We are refusing to use past memories to harm and damage another. We are choosing to let go of the power to use past memories as a weapon against another. That's forgiveness.

Lead Us Not Into Temptation



Hmmm. Why would God do that? Why would God lead us into temptation? Why would we pray that God not lead us into temptation?

We are told in James 1:13, *"When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone."*

If God doesn't tempt us, what is the meaning of this prayer?

In James 1:2-4 we are told, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face **trials** of many kinds, because you know that the **testing** of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

The Greek word we translate as "tempt" is the same word for "trial" and "testing." When we see this prayer as "Lead us not into a test or trial" it begins to make sense.

Although God never tempts us, God does test us. God tests us because testing makes us better people. That's why we are to consider it all joy when we face trials and tests of many kinds. The trials and testing makes us mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Even so. Let's say God does test us. Then why would we pray, "Lead us **not** into temptation/testing/trials"?

Perhaps what Jesus is really saying here is "Lead us not into more testing than we can handle."

An airline pilot goes through rigorous training before they are ever allowed to pilot a plane with passengers on it. At first, they begin in the simulator with just basic flying. Then as the pilot gets more accustomed to flying the airplane, the testing gets more difficult and the trials more severe. Eventually, the pilot is trained to respond to catastrophic failures of equipment. Every pilot would fail their training if they started with catastrophic failures of equipment. You don't start there. You build up to it.

So it is with us. "God, lead us not into more testing than we can handle. We do look forward to getting stronger and becoming a better people. You know best what we are able to handle. So we trust you."

This is our prayer when we pray, "Lead us not into temptation."

Deliver Us from Evil



Jesus tells his disciples to pray, "Deliver us from evil," to remind us that there is a war that is raging in our world. The war is not between nations but between God and forces that are waging war against all that God and his kingdom stands for.

There is no doubt about how this war ends: God wins, the kingdom of God wins, God's will is established here on earth as it is heaven. But until that is the reality at the second coming of Jesus, there are forces at work to destroy everything God stands for.

The Greek actually says, "Deliver us from the evil one."

It would be easy if the evil one was the guy in the red suit with a pitchfork. That guy would be easy to pick out. But the reality is that sometimes it's the colleague who wants us to lie to our clients, it's our friends who want us to join them in activities we know to be wrong, it's popular culture that wants us to turn a blind eye to injustice and wrong. And, sometimes, it's us. It's us when we know what is right and good and we want to do the very opposite.

"Deliver us from the evil one."

When we pray this we are asking God to deliver us from the evil that pulls us down, the evil that wants us to focus only on things on earth, the evil that wants to blind us to God's goodness and his will.

We pray, "Deliver us from evil," because we are powerless to deliver ourselves, no matter how hard we try. Only God can deliver us. Only God can save us. Only God can change us.

When disciples pray, "Deliver us from evil," we are asking God to give us the wisdom to discern God's will from the bad and to have the courage to change what needs to be changed. And, oftentimes, this prayer is asking God to change us. We are the ones who need to be reminded on a daily basis that God is

at work in our world. Evil will meet God's justice and righteousness. Evil will one day have to answer to God for its work.

Until that day, disciples pray, "Deliver us from evil," so that we can join God in establishing God's will here as it is in heaven.

For Thine is the Kingdom



The prayer which Jesus taught his disciples to pray is recorded for us in Matthew 6:9-13 and in Luke 11:2-4.

Matthew 6:9-13 – *“This, then, is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”*

Luke 11:2-4 – *“He said to them, ‘When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. Forgives us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.’”*

Notice something missing?!?!

Where is “Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever”?

It’s not there?

Then where did we get this phrase?

The early church added the last clause to the end of the prayer.

Why did the early church do that?

The early church added the last clause because you can’t end a great prayer without a great doxology, a great praise. The early church didn’t add anything that Jesus wasn’t already teaching and preaching. They added the clause because a great prayer deserves a great ending. You can’t end it with “Deliver us from evil” or “Lead us not into temptation.” That just wouldn’t do.

Jewish prayers ended with praise and God's glory. A good example of this is found in 1 Chronicles 29:10-11 which records David's prayer toward the end of his life.

"Praise be to you, LORD, the God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all."

Or, in other words, *"Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever."*

Jews would have been familiar with this prayer and doxology.

Now, thanks to the early church, we have a fitting ending to a great prayer.

In the next three days, we will explore the meaning of "Kingdom, power, and glory."

For Thine is the Kingdom



We pray this not because God needs to know this, but we need to be reminded of this reality. Whether we acknowledge this or not, it doesn't change one tiny thing about who God is. God is already God. God already created everything. God already knows all things belong to him.

But when we come to grasp this reality, we are changed. This changes our puny lives from mere existence for a few decades here on earth to being God's children who get to participate in God's plan to restore and redeem God's creation for all of eternity.

It's so easy to forget. We don't even have to try to forget. We just forget even without trying. And when we forget, we make life all about us. That's our autopilot: what we want, what we think, what we feel, what we desire...

When we pray, "For Thine is the Kingdom," we are reminding ourselves that life is all about God.

Most of the people living on planet earth have no clue about this reality. And the thing is, every soul who has ever taken a breath here on planet earth will come to realize the truth of this reality whether they acknowledge it or not. The only hope that our world has is for those who know this truth to live this truth out in such a way that they too come to grips with this reality.

When we watch the impeachment trial taking place in DC, as we watch the forecast of snow for this weekend, as we watch the roller coaster of the stock market, it's so stinking easy to forget that "Thine is the kingdom." It's so easy to forget that God is in control. That history is not mere chance. That all of

time and all of history is moving toward one moment in his-story when all living creatures will bend their knee before the Creator of all things.

We take ourselves and our lives much too seriously when we confuse ourselves to think that life is about us. That we get to participate and be a part of God's kingdom plan is a privilege and an honor.

"Thine is the kingdom."

God, thank you for this daily reminder. We need a daily re-orientation to kingdom reality. We need a daily recalibration of our bearing.

"Thine is the kingdom."

Thine is the Power

DUNAMIS

We know nothing of power. The power we think we have is an illusion. Our education, bank accounts, titles, social standing are all illusions of power.

- When the doctor tells you it's stage four cancer, ALS, the onset of Alzheimers...
- As you sit with a loved one dying at the hospital bed...

In such moments we come to the cold realization that we are powerless.

We know nothing of power.

When we pray, "Thine is the power," we confess that the power we know pales in comparison to the power of God.

The Greek word for power is *dunamis*. This is where we get the word, "dynamite."

When we pray, "Thine is the power," we are saying that only God has power to create, heal, redeem, save, and to give life. God's power is explosive and transformative. God's power brings peace in the midst of chaos, joy in sorrow, life in hopeless situations.

"Thine is the power."

But that's the thing. This is not our power. This is God's power. We don't control God's power. We don't dictate how or when God's power manifests itself.

This is the recognition that God is God and we are not. Because this is God's power, we trust our loving Father, the giver of daily bread, the forgiver of all sins.

Even in the moments when God's power seems distant, we continue to believe and trust because God's power changed us from sinners into God's sons and daughters. We have already experienced and tasted of God's power. So we trust, we hope, we believe.

"Thine is the power."

Thine is the Glory



"Thine is the glory."

Is this a statement of fact? Or is this a statement of attribution?

What I mean is, is "Thine is the glory" a descriptive statement – one that describes who God is? Or is this a statement of attribution – a statement of faith?

You see, when you take the CEO of a multi-national corporation and strip him of his/her fancy suits and designer clothes and put them in regular clothes, when you strip them of their fancy titles and their office and leave them on a busy street corner in any downtown, there is no way anyone would notice anything different about them. That's because what makes someone glorious is their power, fancy suits and clothes, and their titles. Without them, there is no inherent glory in and of themselves.

Not so with God.

Where as a person is deemed glorious by their attributes, there is no glory apart from God. God, in his very being is glory. In fact, we can say, there would be no glory apart from God. Glory exists because God is glorious. You don't make the sky blue, it is blue. You can't make water wet, it is wet. You can't make the sun light, it is light. In the same way the glory is who God is.

"Thine is the glory," is a shout of victory. Because Christ has already won the victory over sin and death, we share in Christ's victory. It is the church's triumphant shout that death does not get the last word, that our past sins no longer define us, that those who have been saved by the blood of Christ share in his glory.

"Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory!"

Amen!

Amen!



What does it mean to end the prayer with, "Amen?"

Amen is a Hebrew word that literally means "So be it!", "I agree", "I affirm it", "May it be so".

Dr. Bill Carl tells us, "In Deuteronomy 27 Moses says that the Levites are to inform all the people they shall be cursed for making a graven image, dishonoring mother or father, moving their neighbors' stones, leading the blind astray, withholding justice from the stranger, the orphan, and the widow. After each of the admonitions, Moses declares, 'And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'"

Saying "Amen" is like saying "I do" at the end of marriage vows. When a couple declares "I do" at the altar, they are asserting that not only at that current moment but for the rest of their lives they will honor one another. As anyone who has ever been married knows saying, "I do," is easy. Living out our marriage vows takes everything we've got!!!

When we end the prayer Jesus taught his disciples with "Amen," it means we give ourselves not only at that moment, but for the rest of our lives to everything that Jesus taught in the prayer.

- Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name – Amen!
- Thy kingdom come, they will be done on earth as it is in heaven – Amen!
- Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors – Amen!
- Give us this day our daily bread – Amen!
- Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil – Amen!
- For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever – Amen!

When we declare “Amen,” it means we commit ourselves to living out the reality Jesus describes in this prayer to our last dying breath.

What a powerful prayer!!!